

Experimenting with my agile community of practice

Joelle Garden

Enterprise Agile Coach, Program Manager – Operational Excellence
Carl Zeiss

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Agile Cambridge 2025

While we're waiting to start...

What has been your **favourite learning**
from Agile Cambridge 2025?

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How confident would you be to teach this topic to a room full of people...
...**tomorrow?**

What would enable you to do so?
In what timeframe? What support or materials would you need?

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Early career – Aerospace programme manager



Second career – Agile practitioner



Early career themes

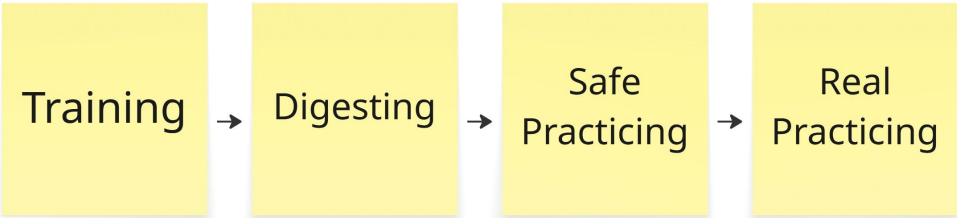
- Training & theory vs execution
- Project management is lonely
- Writing processes means people think you're an expert, even without experience
- Internal mentors/peer groups & external CoPs supported my experiential growth

Second career themes

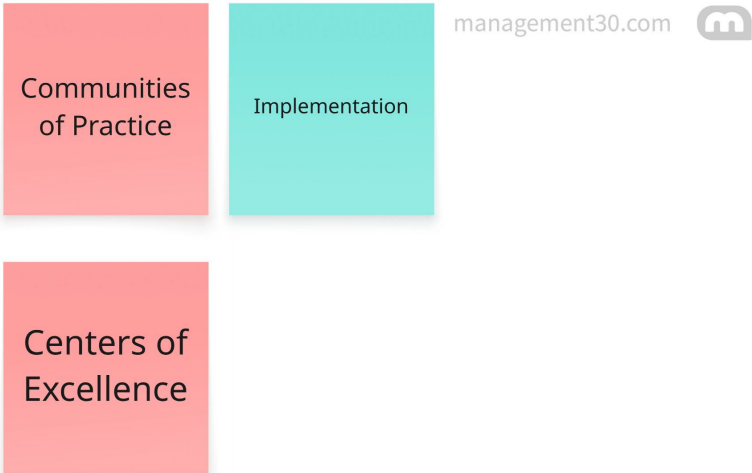
- Many concepts from first career apply, just with different labels
- New concepts were learned and first executed within days or weeks
- The Agile CoP has been an essential playground for embedding learnings
- The ICE-EC cohort was essential support for reflecting on learnings & catalysing interpretation & action for my context

safe learning journeys

What?



How?



management30.com

The beginning

From local to global CoP moderator



"Moderate the monthly
RMS R&D Agile Practices
meeting"

Organisational &
communications
platform



Wiki site
Knowledge
repository



Intranet page: CoP listing

#teamZEISS

Digital whiteboard
for facilitation



Organisation-wide forum



Viva Engage

Agile Practices monthly meeting



Month

SUNDAY	Mon	Tue	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	Fri	SATURDAY
1	1st Monday 15:00CET 	 1st Tuesday 09:00CET				
2						
3	 3rd Monday 14:00CET				3-weekly 9:15CET 	
4					 4th Friday 13:00CET	

Agile Practices

This was already in place when I took up the moderation role.

- **Purpose:** To share what's going on across ZEISS, and to learn agile methods and facilitation techniques. Learning, teaching and experience-sharing.
- **Value:** Community learning, to return knowledge back into your business area.

Format: Similar to an ICAgile Coaching Circle.

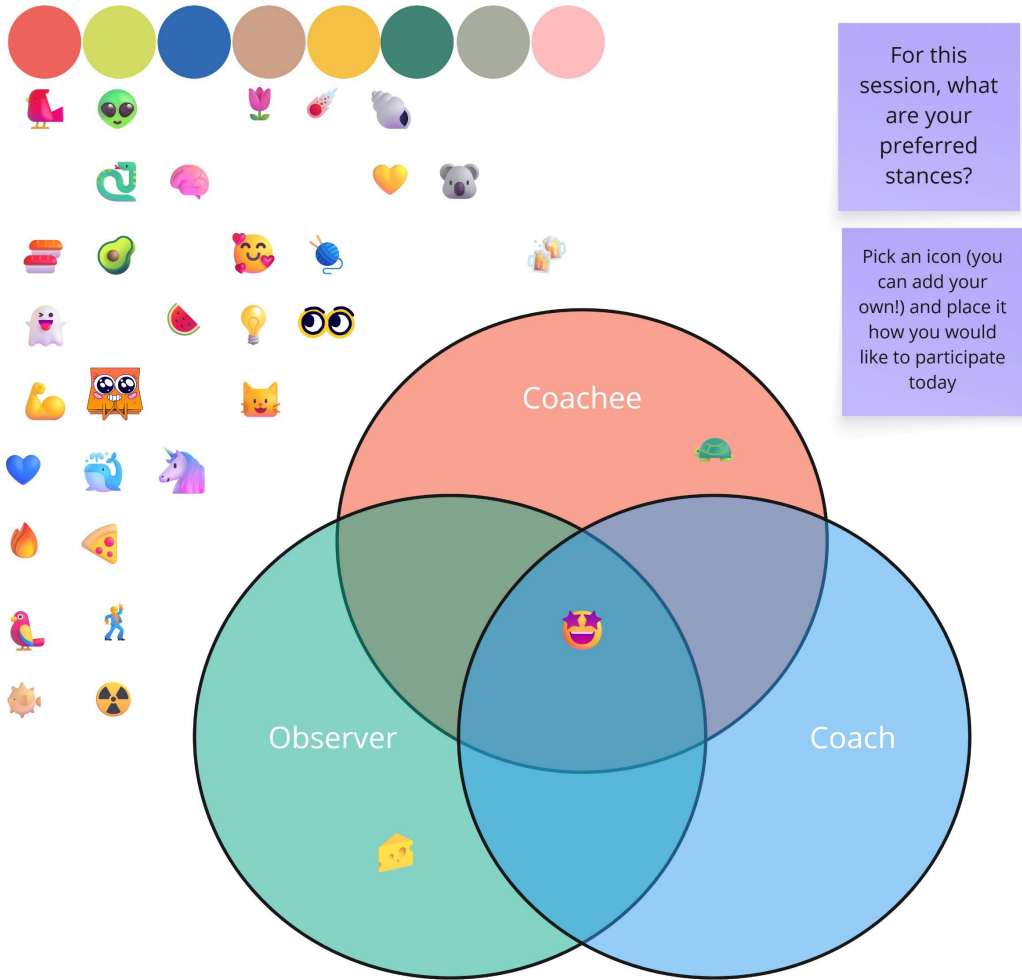
This is a safe space. By default, coaching topics discussed are not shared without explicit permission and anonymisation. Any difference to the default must be confirmed during the practice session.

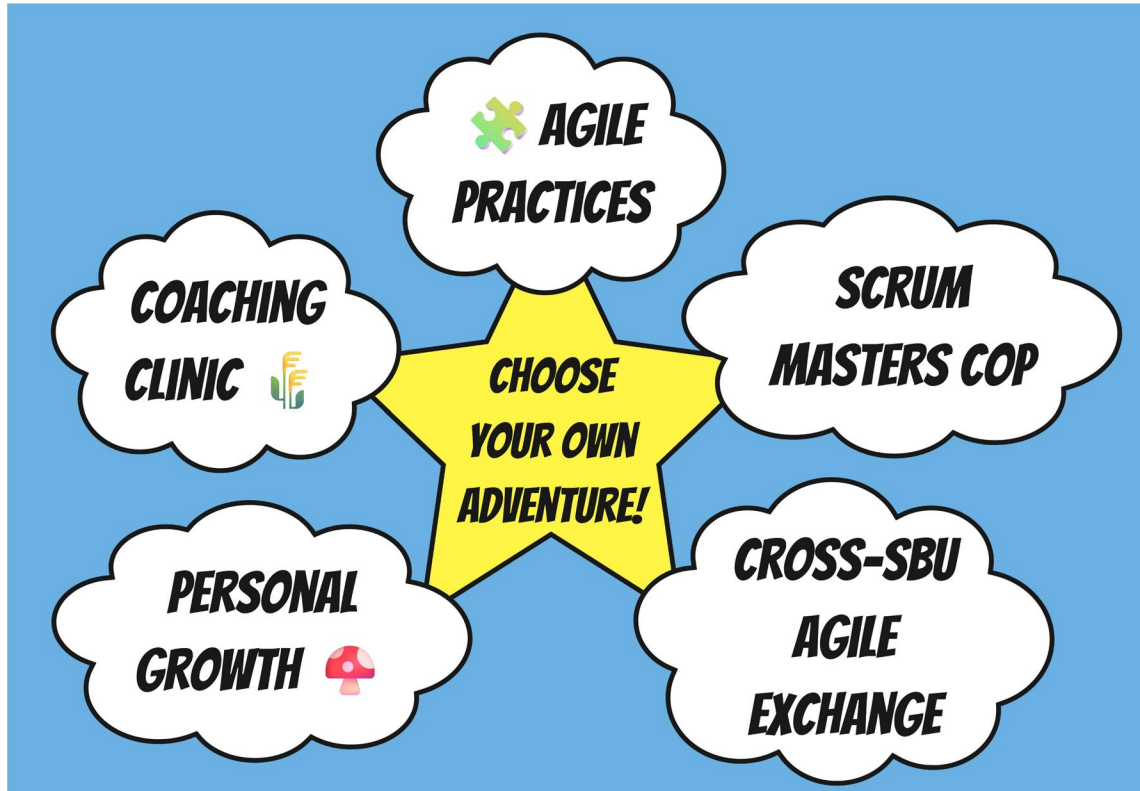
We bring our whole selves to this session: Active listening, no distractions! Be explicit if you are unable to do so.

Be explicit to the host (can be privately, within the session or beforehand) if there is a potential conflict situation, and if there is a preference to address this during the session.

A coachee, coach or observer can call a time-out if the session is really not working.

this is about coaching the person, not delivering readily designed solutions.





“  Levelling ourselves up: Improving the quality of every interaction we have at ZEISS, day by day”

Format: Informal “study group” type setting to digest and discuss recent trainings or learnings from the group – usually centred around leadership principles.

Why the mushroom? 

This was inspired by the concept of the Super Mushroom from Nintendo's Super Mario, which helps him grow, heal and improve himself along his journey.



Our Alliance

- 1. We raise the profile of agile changes company wide, to accelerate momentum**
- 2. We raise the profile and perception of importance of change agents in the organisation**
- 3. We are not projects, our roles are functions closely linked to organizational development**
4. We pull each others' superpowers when needed
5. We exchange good practices, or combine forces
6. We combine our knowledgebases into the Agile CoP wiki
7. We are the contact people in the wiki for our business areas

Format: Self-managed agenda for the 3-weekly sessions; quarterly deep dives on focus topics designed on demand.

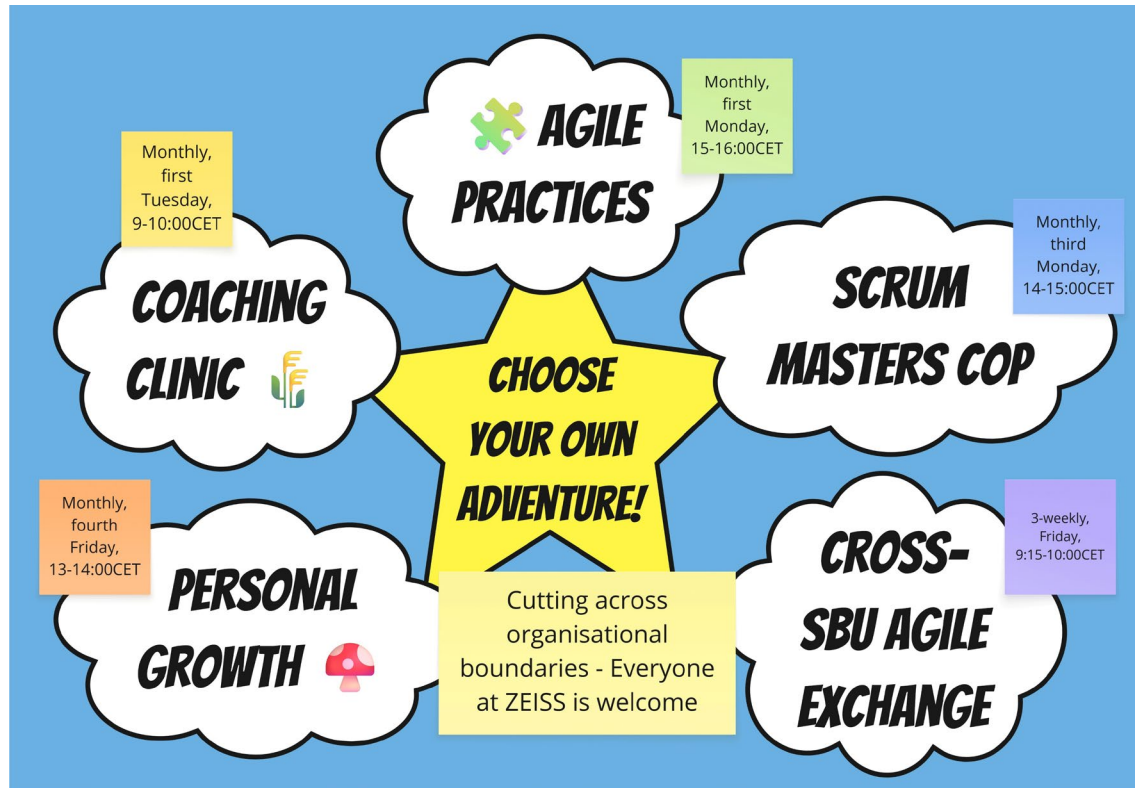


Collaboration with CurioZ (internal training platform team)

- Lower costs due to an internal employee delivering the training
- Cross-organisational knowledge sharing, as the trainers may not be in the same business area as the trainees.
- Local use cases and examples - both in the training materials, and anecdotally able to be provided by the trainers giving real-life examples of their own experiences during the training. This makes things much more relatable to the trainees.
- An increased awareness and involvement in the Agile CoP post training.

Activate the annotation tool

- Activation of the tool
- Visualization of the proposed predicted structure



Scrum Masters CoP

This was started by a Scrum Master and fellow CoP moderator.

- **Purpose:** To share knowledge, experience, best and worst practices, cross-division and cross-location as practicing Scrum Masters or those interested in working in that role
- **Outcome:** Find support in a community of Scrum Masters who might face similar challenges & get inspiration (and maybe even encouragement 😊)

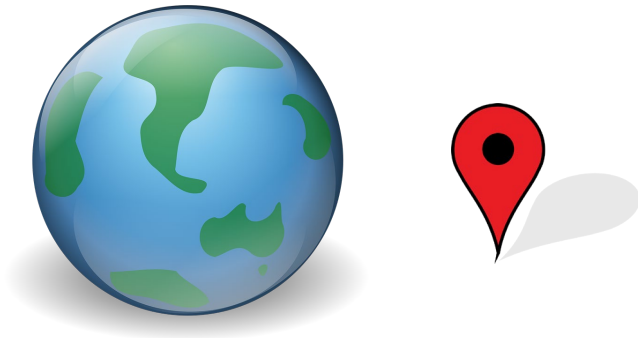
Wishes and Perks

As a CoP moderator



Wishes

- Group dynamics of local vs global communities: more inter-community mixing



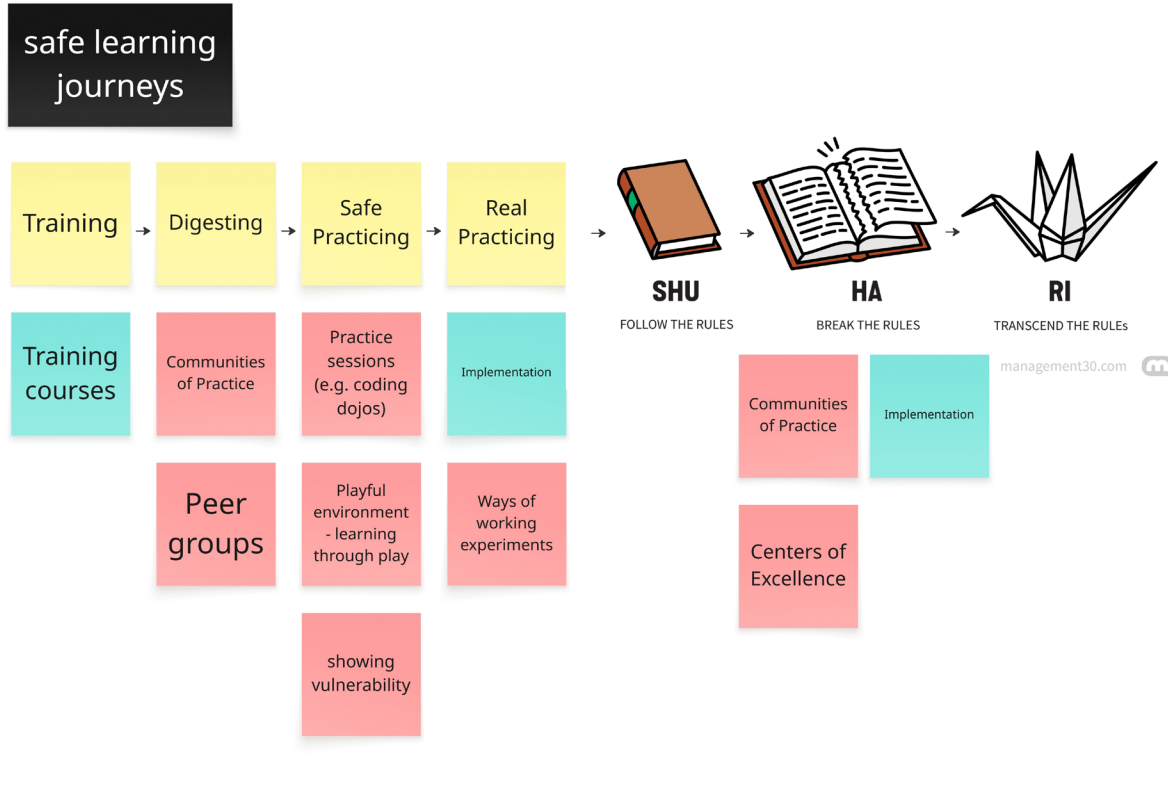
- More regular moderators
- More corporate-level support for CoPs e.g. Moderator support; CoPs more prominently recognised as part of learning, knowledge & networking ecosystem
- Recognition of CoP work (moderation or participation) as value added throughout the organisation

Perks

- Being the face of the Community of Practice, recognition outside of the CoP
- Onboarding new people, introducing them to the regular opportunities for community engagement
- Building a picture and a network of the agilists and agile enthusiasts in the organisation
- Helping connect people from far-flung reaches of the global organisation
- Learning from an amazing, diverse community!



Ingredients for your CoP



- A core group of moderators for community leadership
- Getting support from the organisation
- Active participants willing to be occasional facilitators & speakers



Takeaways



- A ZEISS endless graphite pencil
- What do you take from my experiences?
- What have you done in your communities of practice, that we in this room (community!) can learn from?



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What has been your **favourite learning** from Agile Cambridge 2025?

How might you use a Community of Practice to support implementation of this learning into your daily work?



Let's connect!

[/in/joellegarden/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/joellegarden/)



Seeing beyond