Let's start with a story !

A pretty common story

This is Julia...

She has been working for her new company, as **Chief Product Officer** (CPO) for several months now.

Her company is a **leading media group** - in the middle of its "digital transformation".

A pretty common story

Every day...

Julia notices that the
Product Owners and the
whole Scrum teams **work hard**
to strive for **company's success**.

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A pretty common story

Over time...

Julia notices that her Product Owners are seeking conversation about very **operational product questions** more and more frequently.

...and they **want Julia** to **take these decisions.**

A pretty common story

But Julia has a lot of experience as agile product leader. So she sees the responsibility to make this kind of **product decisions in the Scrum teams**.
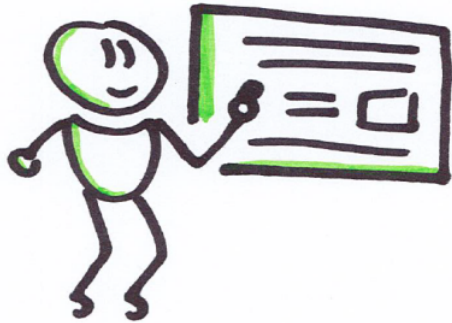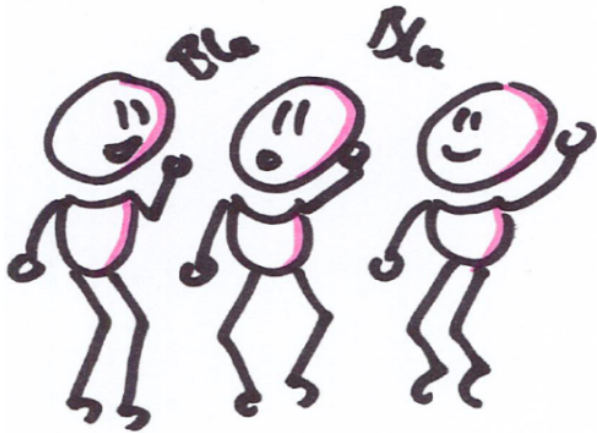
So she tries to explain to them again and again that as **product owners** they have to **take such decisions** together with their Scrum teams.

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A pretty common story

Nevertheless, the **behavior** of the product owners **is not changing** in the coming weeks.

They complain to their managers that they **feel unsafe** to take these product decisions and see this responsibility more at Julia.

They prefer to **focus on delivering output** by developing solutions with the Scrum teams.

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A pretty common story

As Julia doesn't know how to help herself any other way, **she makes** the **product decisions** after all.

Hence, the teams' **courage and commitment** to take ownership for the success of the products is **more and more suffering**.

Finally, Julia becomes aware:

My teams don't take Product Ownership!

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Our Understanding of…

Product Ownership

*Taking **responsibility** for the product
in your own **context**.
And to **know** and **decide** at all times,
which is the most **valuable** thing,
on which we work with **focus**.*

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But how to get there?

Will the Scrum Guide help?

Julia is asking herself if the **Scrum Guide** would help.

Does it say anything specific about the following questions:

... who should make **product decisions**?

... **product responsibility** in general?

... or even a definition of **product ownership**?

Will the Scrum Guide help?

The term "ownership" does not even appear in the Scrum Guide!

…only little is said about the Product Owner:

"…is responsible for **maximizing the value of the product** resulting from work of the Development Team."

"… is the sole person responsible for **managing the Product Backlog**. (…) may do the above work, **or have the Development Team do it**."

"For the Product Owner to succeed, **the entire organization must respect his or her decisions**."

Be aware: only very few teams have really read the Scrum Guide ;)

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Will the Scrum Guide help?

So, product ownership and further specific areas of **product decisions** are **not explicitly defined** in the Scrum Guide.

But that's ok!
… cause it's just a **framework**
… organizational implementation
   must be **context-related**

So let's take a look how product ownership is usually lived in organizations.

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Context-related issues we saw

Situations we've experienced	Product Ownership	...has impact on:	
		Outcome	**Scrum values**
CEO made product decisions for the teams	was <u>not</u> clarified ➡️	Simple decision mechanism for complex problems: bottleneck	*Courage* of the teams suffered
PO's did not feel in charge for roadmap decisions	was <u>not</u> clarified ➡️	Slow decision making processes in product org	No real *commitment* of PO's for product strategy
Large number of Epics were tried to be develop in parallel; little was finished	after it has been clarified ➡️	Improved flow efficiency & reduced time-to-market	Shift to *focus* on the most valuable features
Collaboration between int. PO and ext. develop. team	after it has been clarified ➡️	Better product decisions due to more product ownership by the development team	increased *openness* & *courage* in the ext. team

So is it clarified in organizations?

From our experience: it is NOT!

Usually the responsibility for **Product Ownership** is **not explicitly agreed** and therefore **not transparent**

   … leads to **uncertainty**
   … poorly defined collaboration between the
     different roles leads to **misunderstandings**

We got curious: Why is it never talked about? How to handle that problem?

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Our basic Thesis

**Product Ownership
is the responsibility
of the entire Scrum team!**

Our Assumption

Decision-making responsibility must be made explicit between all actors in the specific organizational context.

This transparency of empowerment fosters environmental safety.

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Our Solution

We have created a **model** that triggers valuable communication for **clarifying product ownership**:
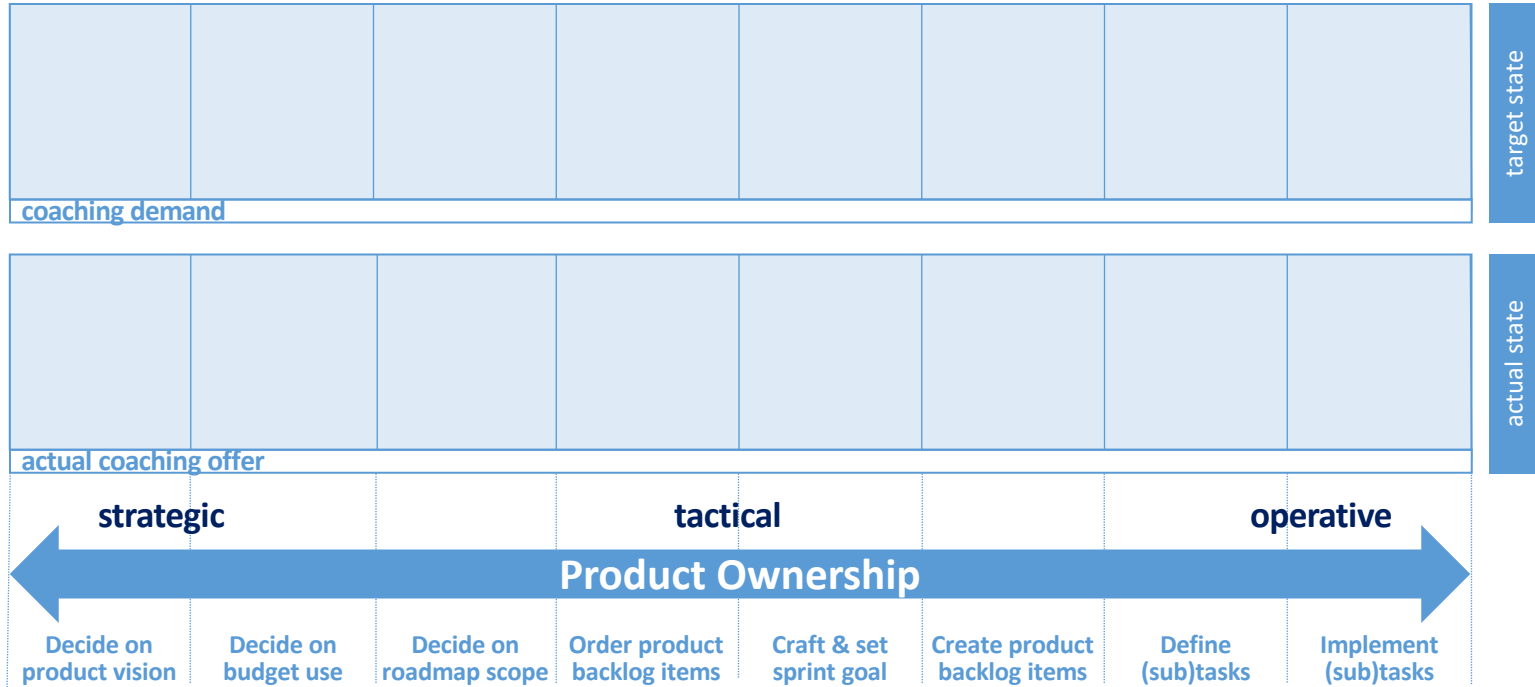
POEM – Product **O**wnership **E**volution **M**odel

POEM
… makes Product Ownership **explicit**
… improves **transparency** of authorization
… fosters **psychological safety**

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Product Ownership Evolution Model (POEM)

target state

coaching demand

actual state

actual coaching offer

strategic			tactical			operative	

Product Ownership

Decide on product vision	Decide on budget use	Decide on roadmap scope	Order product backlog items	Craft & set sprint goal	Create product backlog items	Define (sub)tasks	Implement (sub)tasks

Apply POEM in team session

After getting to know POEM at **SGVIE19** ;-), Julia immediately calls her product owners together.

Everyone fill in their views of the **current situation** in POEM - as well as their individual expectations for a desired **future state** of decision responsibilities.

The **comparison** of their assessments immediately uncovers **misunderstandings** and a great **conversation** starts...
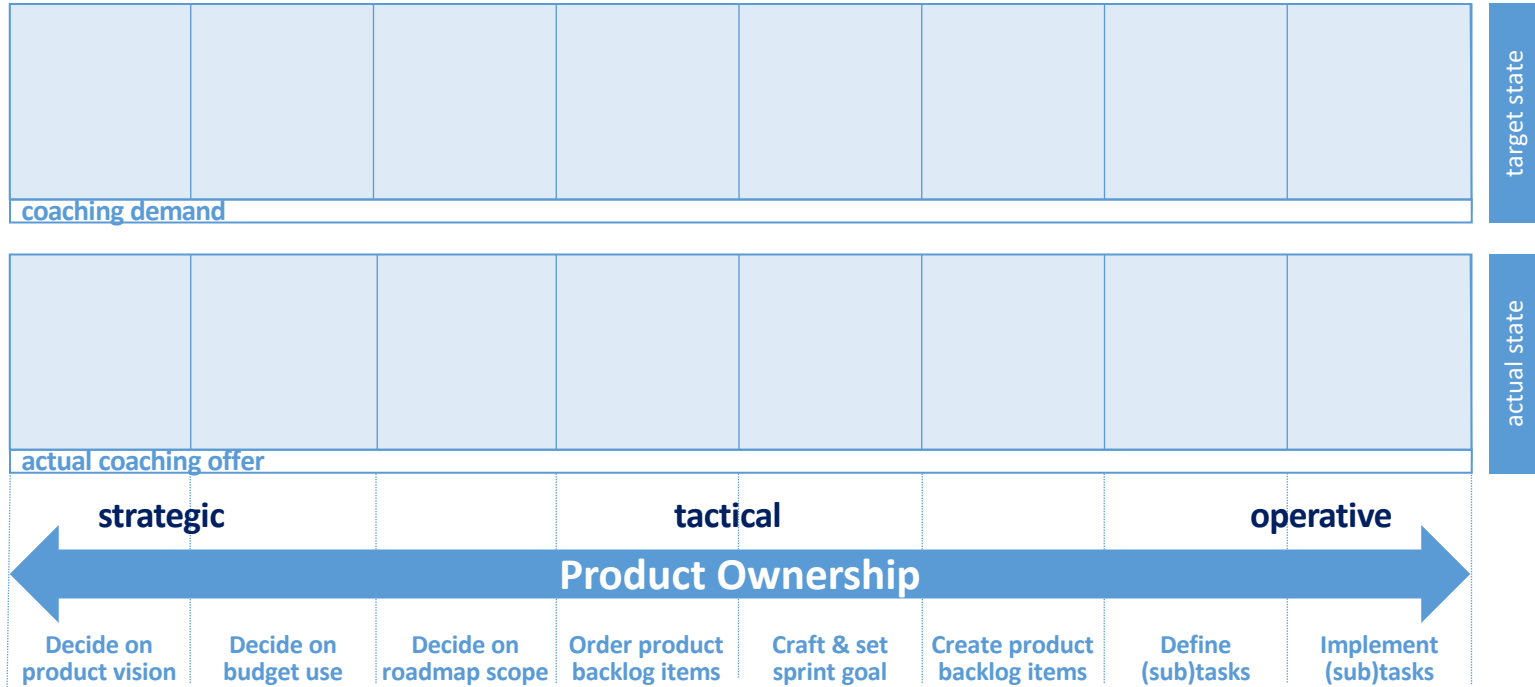
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But how POEM works exactly?

Product Ownership Evolution Model (POEM)

								target state
coaching demand								

								actual state
actual coaching offer								

strategic   **tactical**   **operative**

Product Ownership

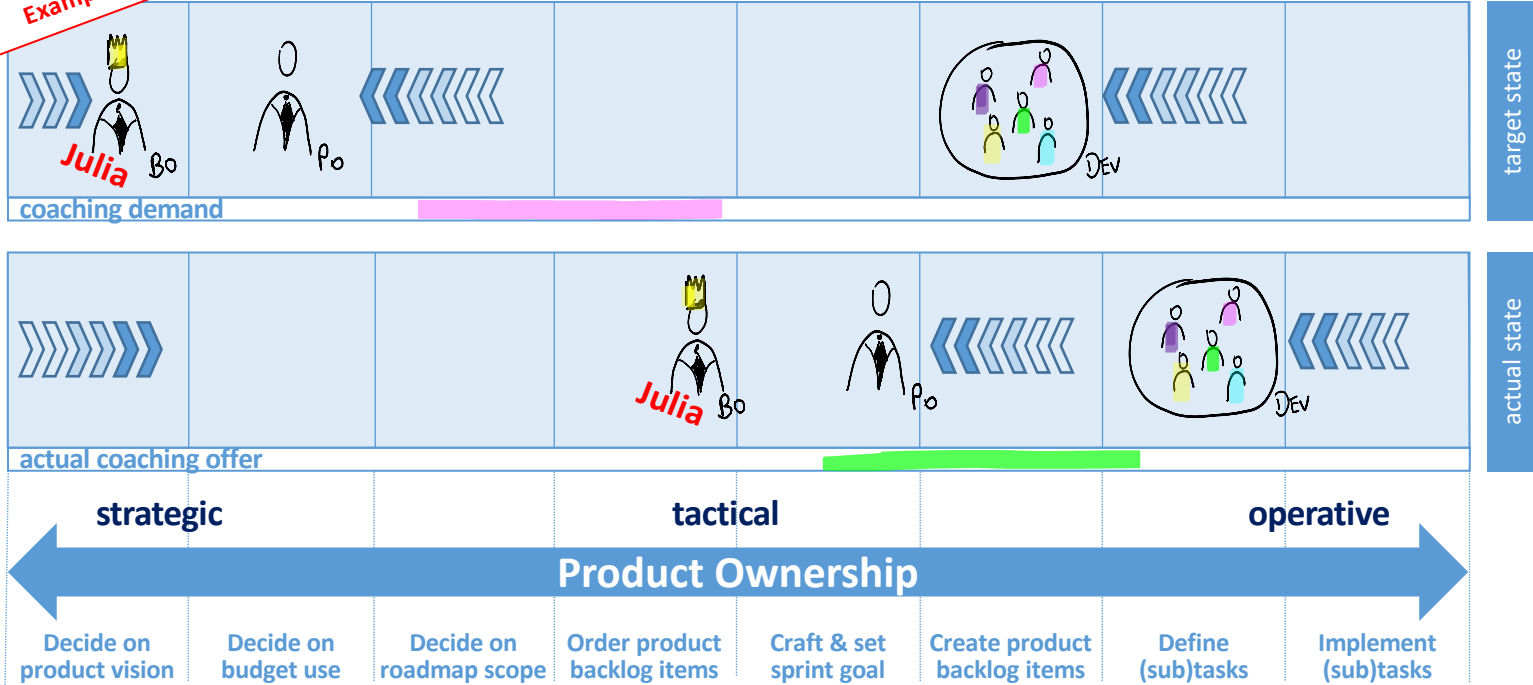| Decide on product vision	Decide on budget use	Decide on roadmap scope	Order product backlog items	Craft & set sprint goal	Create product backlog items	Define (sub)tasks	Implement (sub)tasks

Which tasks can the different roles <u>finally decide</u> on?

"For the Product Owner to succeed, the entire organization must respect his or her decisions."

Decide on product vision

Decide on budget use

Decide on roadmap scope

Order product backlog items

Craft & set sprint goal

Create product backlog items

Define (sub)tasks

How to implement (sub)tasks

Right up here?

...or from here to there?

strategic

tactical

operative

Areas of product decisions

Product Ownership Evolution Model (POEM)

How to facilitate POEM

1. You should **explain** the POEM template only very **briefly**.
   Don't allow deeper questions about the levels (may create bias).
2. Let **everyone fill out** POEM template in silence (actual & target state)
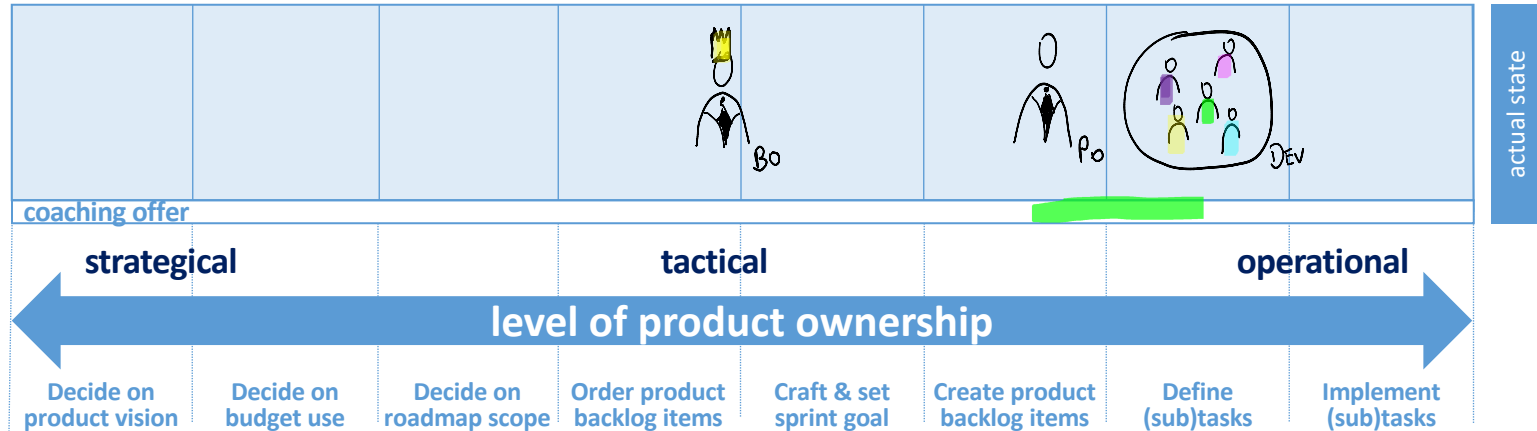3. Now hang all results next to each other:
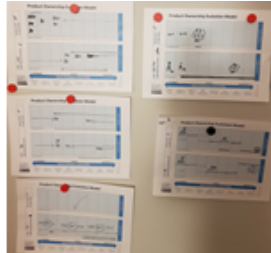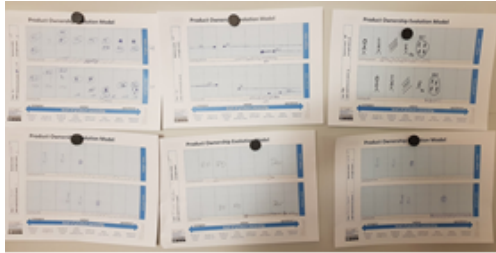
4. Let them **all explain their individual sheet** (one after the other).
5. ...misunderstandings become obvious and
   a wonderful discussion is kicked off!

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Our Learnings

Some of
our observations…

Typical pattern A: Who is Product Owner here?

strategical			**tactical**			**operational**	

level of product ownership

| Decide on product vision | Decide on budget use | Decide on roadmap scope | Order product backlog items | Craft & set sprint goal | Create product backlog items | Define (sub)tasks | Implement (sub)tasks |

Reflection:

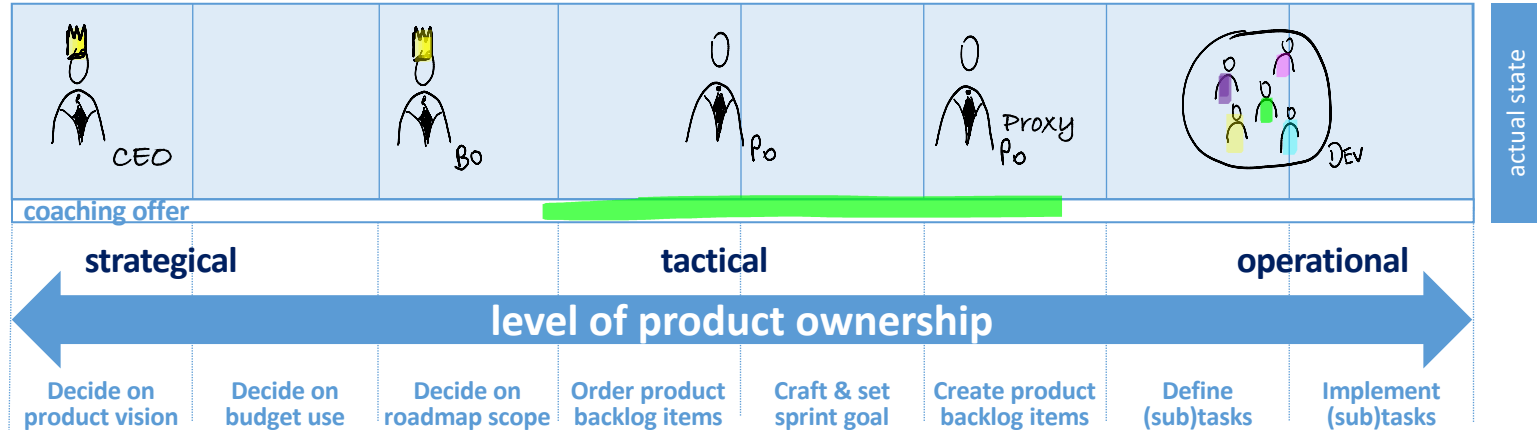*"Isn't the business owner the true product owner here?"*

Typical pattern B: Product Owner proxy
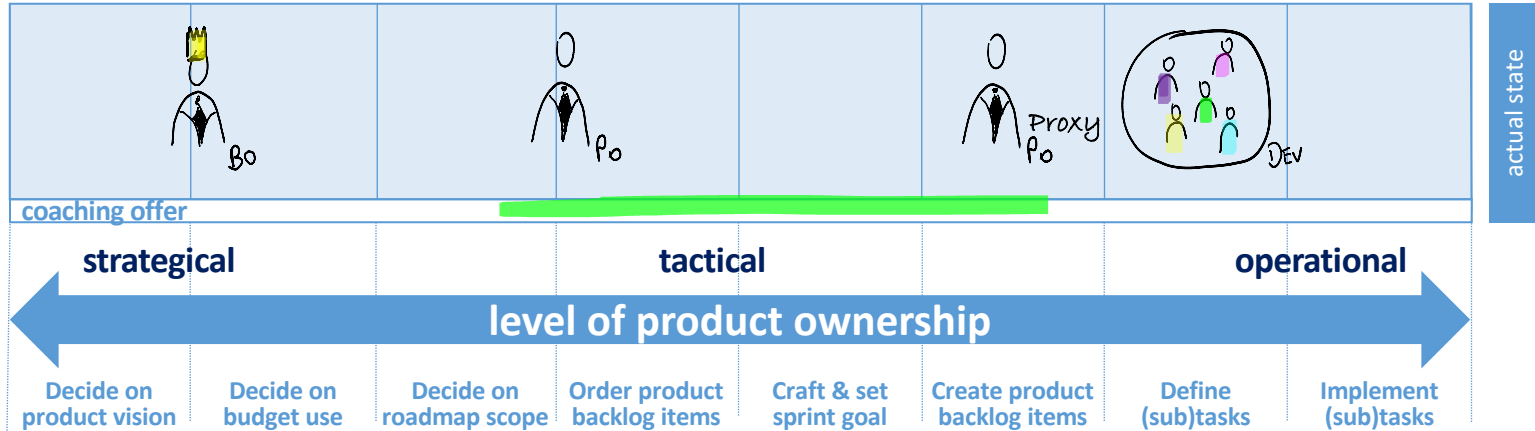
Reflection:
"Why not integrate the proxy PO into the cross-functional team?"

Typical pattern C: Kind of waterfall…

	strategical		tactical			operational	
Decide on product vision	Decide on budget use	Decide on roadmap scope	Order product backlog items	Craft & set sprint goal	Create product backlog items	Define (sub)tasks	Implement (sub)tasks

level of product ownership

coaching offer

actual state

Reflection:
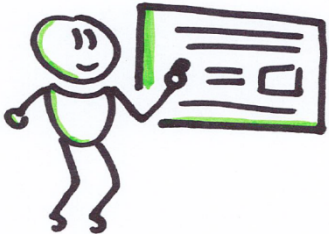*"Flow efficiency and understanding of requirements suffering?"*

POEM application scenarios
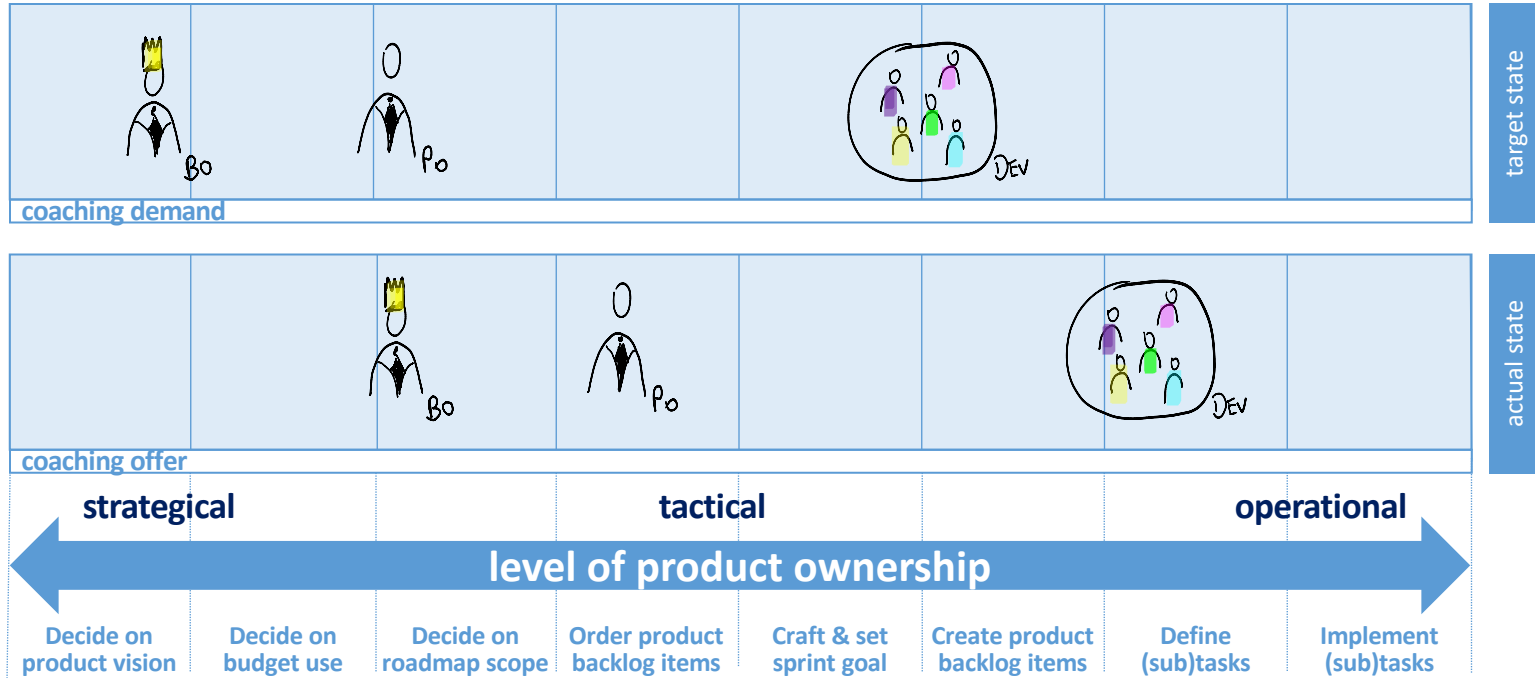
Self-Assessment of your Scrum implementation

Recruiting for the Product Owner role

Development dialog with Product Owners

Reorganization / Scaling / Restructuring

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Self-assessment of PO's from our survey

target state

coaching demand

actual state

coaching offer

strategical   **tactical**   **operational**

level of product ownership

| Decide on product vision | Decide on budget use | Decide on roadmap scope | Order product backlog items | Craft & set sprint goal | Create product backlog items | Define (sub)tasks | Implement (sub)tasks |

* Data basis: own survey in the context of workshops & conferences / period July 2017 to March 2018 in Germany

We think that

Many companies make large
"organizational debts"
when they introduce Scrum.

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We think that

Development Team has to move first to get the Product Owner moving.

Product Ownership Evolution Model (POEM)

Questions?

target state

coaching demand

actual state

actual coaching offer

strategic   tactical   operative

Product Ownership

| Decide on product vision | Decide on budget use | Decide on roadmap scope | Order product backlog items | Craft & set sprint goal | Create product backlog items | Define (sub)tasks | Implement (sub)tasks |

Download → Use → Feedback!

www.productownership.de/en/

Feedback welcome to improve the model

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Questions?

Template download: http://www.productownership.de/en/

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