# Why so serious? The Power of Play

Incorporating Playfulness and Gamification into Agile Practice

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# Virtual Bing Game

- Use this link in the chat to access your virtual Bingo card. Play Bingo as I go through today's session.

- If I say a word or if you see a word on the slide and it's on your Bingo card, interrupt me and shout "Bingo" or put it in the chat!
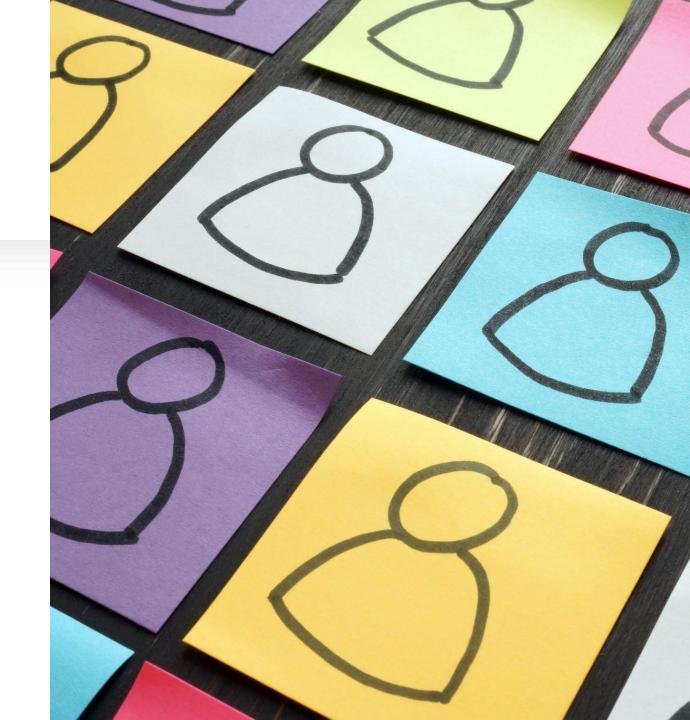
# Session Overview

1. Introduction to Playfulness & Gamification
2. Science and Play
3. Benefits of a Playful Mindset in Agile Teams
4. Techniques in play
5. Key Takeaways & Q&A

# Science and Play

**Playfulness Improves Creativity and Performance**

In the 1990s, Dr. Mary Ann Glynn and Dr. Jane Webster found that **playfulness** was positively related to work outcomes, including task evaluations, perceptions, involvement, and performance. (APA)

Playfulness was related to a set of psychological traits, including cognitive spontaneity and creativity. (APA)

# Why Playfulness in Agile?

- Enhances creativity
- Boosts collaboration and problem-solving
- Encourages experimentation
- Creates psychological safety
- Improves team adaptability
- Lilo's Theory: Improves responses to crises

# Charles M. Schwab

- Problem: Charles Schwab wanted to increase steel production, but traditional methods like firing threats didn't work.

- Tactic: Schwab visited a mill and asked how much steel the day shift had produced.

- Action: He wrote the number on the floor with chalk at the end of the day.

- Challenge: When the night shift arrived, they saw the number and took it as a challenge.

- Result: The night shift worked to outproduce the day shift, creating healthy competition and boosting productivity.

# Techniques for Gamification

- ## Lego4Scrum
  - Use Legos to simulate product development and collaboratively establish a Way of Working (WoW).

- ## Retrospective
  - Incorporate gamification elements like points and badges to reward teams for achieving specific success metrics.

- ## Leveling Projects
  - Break projects into smaller "levels," similar to advancing in a video game, to track progress and milestones.

# Techniques for Gamification

- **Role Play and Theater**
  - Practice sales calls, responding to customer complaints, and handling difficult HR conversations.
  - Give awards for the best performance.
- **Leaderboard**
  - Example: An ongoing leaderboard tracks which customer service representative handles the most challenging customer calls.
- **Time Challenges**
  - Track tasks using Kanban boards or user stories, and implement a personalized point system to gamify work completion.

# Q&A + Final Thoughts