

The Agentic Agile Team

Leading the Hybrid Human-AI
Workforce



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Preface

For over two decades, we have been told that Agility is the answer. We've mastered the ceremonies, we've rearranged our office furniture, and we've moved our sticky notes from physical walls to digital boards. Yet, if you ask the average Product Owner, Scrum Master, or Developer today how they feel, the answer likely isn't "agile."

It's probably "exhausted."

We are buried in "work about work." Product Owners spend more time refining backlogs than talking to customers. Scrum Masters spend more time chasing status updates than fostering team health. We promised "individuals and interactions over processes and tools," but in many cases we've ended up with more processes than ever before.

Then, the world changed.

In the last few years, Artificial Intelligence moved from a parlor trick to a teammate. But the real revolution isn't a chatbot that can write a polite email. The revolution is **Agentic AI**—systems that don't just talk, but *act*. Systems that can reason through a goal, pick up a tool, and execute a plan.

This book is born from a simple realization: The "Team" of 2026 and beyond is no longer exclusively human. We are entering the era of the **Hybrid Team**, where three humans might work alongside a dozen autonomous agents.

If you are a **Product Owner**, this means your backlog is no longer a graveyard of "maybe" ideas; it is a living, breathing engine that refines itself while you sleep.

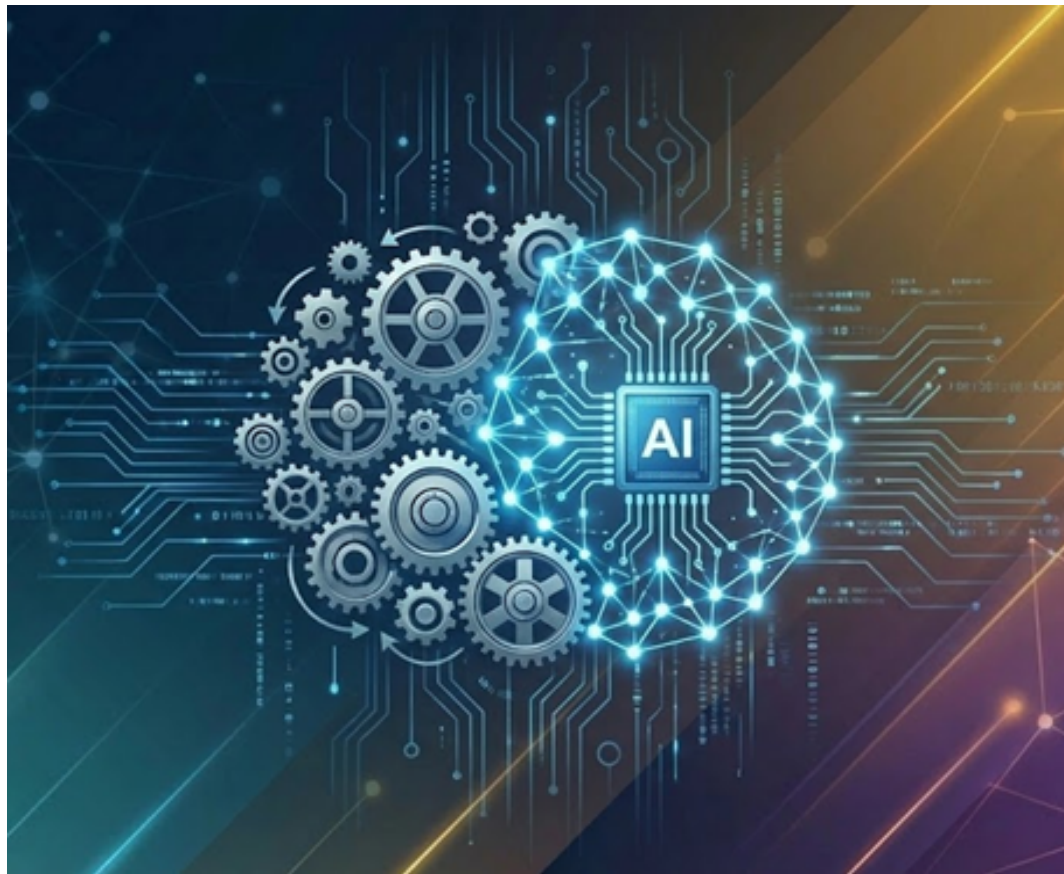
If you are a **Scrum Master**, this means you are finally free from the role of "Jira Secretary." You can return to being a true leader, an orchestrator of flow, and a guardian of psychological safety, while your digital agents handle the logistics of the sprint.

This book is not a technical manual for developers. It is a leadership guide for the people who make products happen. We will explore how to lead, govern, and scale teams where the most productive "members" don't have a heartbeat, but do have a clear mission.

The "Agile Theater" is over. The era of **Agentic Agility** has begun.

Let's build something extraordinary.

Part 1: The Paradigm Shift



Chapter 1: The End of Agile Theatre

The Ghost in the Machine

For years, "Agile Theater" has described the phenomenon of following the motions of Scrum without the mindset of Agility. We have high-velocity sprints that deliver zero customer value. We have daily standups that feel like depositions. Even teams that aim to embody the Agile mindset often find themselves trapped in the monotony of predictable, routine ceremonies.

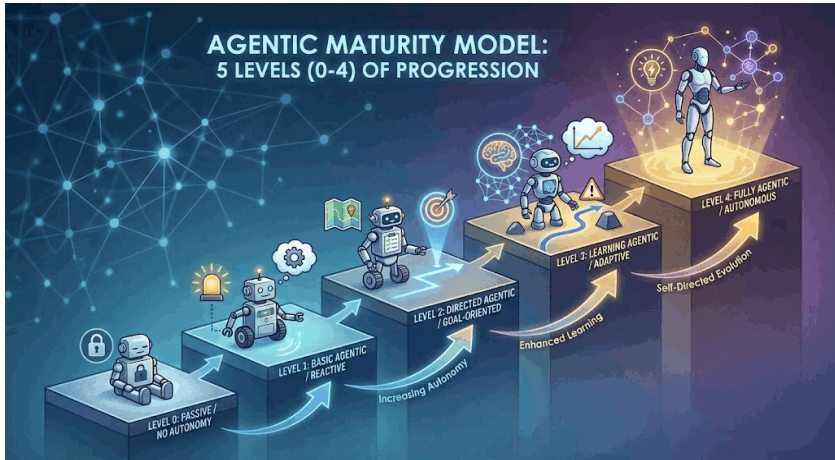
Agentic AI ushers in the "Great Reset," providing a chance to concentrate on what's truly important by automating monotonous tasks. *When an AI agent can perform the manual labor of a sprint in seconds, the theater collapses.*

You can no longer hide behind "being busy." You are forced to focus on **outcomes**.

The Agentic Maturity Model

To lead this shift, Scrum Masters and POs must understand where their team sits on the spectrum of AI integration. We call this the **Agentic Maturity Model (AMM)**. It defines how deeply "Agentic" your team's operations have become.

The five levels of the AMM are illustrated in the subsequent image. Take a look, after which each level will be individually explained.



Level 0: Passive (No Autonomy)

Level 0 marks the initial phase. At this stage, teams utilize basic tools like chatbots or "If This Then That" (IFTTT) automation, but AI operates with minimal (if any) autonomy.

- **Behavior:** Basic "IFTTT" logic.
- **Agile Impact:** Minimal
- **The Constraint:** There is no reasoning, the human is still solely involved in complex decision making and understanding.

Level 1: The Reactive Tool (Generative AI)

At this stage, the team uses AI as a high-speed intern.

- **Behavior:** A human prompts; the AI responds.
- **Agile Impact:** You use ChatGPT to write a user story or summarize a meeting.

- **The Constraint:** The human is still the "engine." If the human doesn't prompt, nothing happens.

Level 2: The Connected Assistant (Interconnected AI)

AI is connected to your tools (Jira, Slack, GitHub) but still requires permission for every move.

- **Behavior:** "Triggered" actions.
- **Agile Impact:** When a developer moves a ticket to "Done," the AI automatically drafts the release notes and waits for a human to click "Publish."
- **The Constraint:** The AI can see your data, but it doesn't "reason" about the project's health on its own.

Level 3: The Specialized Agent (Autonomous Tasking)

This is where we enter true "Agentic" territory. You give the AI a **role** and a **goal**.

- **Behavior:** Goal-seeking.
- **Agile Impact:** You have an "Audit Agent" that autonomously monitors every ticket for security compliance. If it finds a gap, it doesn't just alert you—it researches the fix and creates a sub-task.
- **The Transformation:** The AI is now a "Collaborator."

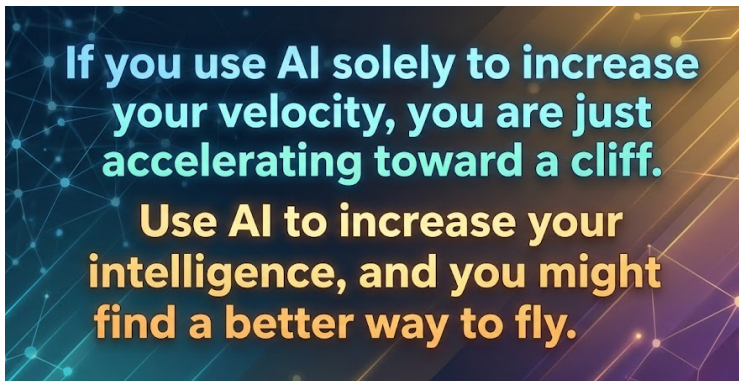
Level 4: The Agentic Team (Orchestrated Autonomy)

The final stage. Multiple agents interact with each other and with humans to manage the flow of value.

- **Behavior:** Multi-agent orchestration.

- **Agile Impact:** The "Shadow PO" agent argues with the "Architect" agent about the feasibility of a feature, presenting the human PO with three viable, de-risked options.
 - **The Transformation:** The human role shifts from **Management** to **Orchestration**.
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Key Concept: Velocity vs. Intelligence



I admit that this may be a controversial part of this book. For decades, the Scrum Master's primary "health check" has been the Velocity Chart. We've been conditioned to believe that a line moving up and to the right is the ultimate sign of a high-performing team. But Velocity is a metric of **motion**, not **direction**.

The Velocity Trap

Velocity was designed to measure human capacity. It assumes that a "point" represents a certain amount of human effort,

focus, and time. When you introduce Agentic AI into your team, the "capacity" of the team becomes virtually infinite.

If an agent can refactor a legacy codebase, generate 100% test coverage, and update the documentation in the time it takes you to pour a cup of coffee, how many "story points" was that? If we continue to measure success by the volume of output, we will find ourselves drowning in a sea of high-velocity, low-value features.

The Velocity Trap is simple:

In the age of AI, it is easier than ever to build the wrong thing perfectly.

The Shift to Intelligence

In an Agentic Agile framework, we trade **Velocity** (how much we did) for **Intelligence** (how right we were).

Consider the following paradigm shifts from the old world to the new world:

Metric	The Velocity Era (The Old Way)	The Intelligence Era (The New Way)
Primary Goal	Maximizing Output (Features)	Maximizing Outcome (Value)
Bottleneck	Developer Coding Speed	Decision-Making Quality
Role of AI	Writing code faster	Validating assumptions faster

Success Sign	All tickets moved to "Done"	The Agent proved the feature wasn't needed
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With the increasing prevalence of AI in our industry, the focus must shift from merely increasing output to enhancing the *quality* and the *value* of what we produce.

The "Deep Thinking" Sprint

In the Intelligence Era, the Scrum Master's job shifts from "removing blockers of speed" to "removing blockers to clarity."

Imagine a sprint where the team "completed" zero story points. In the old world, this is often considered to be a failure. In the Agentic world, if the team used their agents to run 50 automated market simulations and discovered that the planned feature would have a 90% failure rate—saving the company \$200,000 in development costs—that is the most "productive" sprint in the company's history, despite delivering zero story points..

We are moving from the "Industrial Agile" (output) to "Architectural Agile" (insight).

I have long contended that a team's success should not be measured by story point velocity. This has been a controversial discussion in many circles. However, as we move into this new era, it is even more crucial to fundamentally shift our perspective from prioritizing speed to *focusing on the delivery of value*.

Leading the Shift

As a leader, your challenge will be convincing stakeholders that a "quiet" team is often the most intelligent one. You must move the conversation from "When will this be done?" to "How do we know this is worth doing?"

Agentic AI doesn't just help us work faster; it gives us the "Cognitive Surplus" to finally think about the *why*.

Don't move fast; think deep.

The Call to Action

You've seen the horizon. You've glimpsed a world where velocity is a commodity and intelligence is the only true currency. But before you can lead a Hybrid Team, you must face the hard truth of your current operation.

The "Velocity Trap" Diagnostic

I would like to invite you to reflect on where your team is right now. Consider taking ten minutes to review your last three Sprints.

Once you're ready, answer these four questions *honestly*:

1. **The "Why" Test:** If you asked a developer *why* they are building Ticket #402, would they give me a business outcome? Or just a technical description?

2. **The Manual Labor Tax:** What percentage of your "Sync" meetings are spent simply moving data from one place to another (e.g., updating Jira, writing status emails, chasing updates)?
3. **The Pivot Speed:** If a massive market shift happened tomorrow morning, how many "process layers" (approvals, ceremonies, re-planning) would it take to change the team's direction?
4. **The Agentic Gap:** Do you currently use AI to simply *generate* content (emails/tickets) or so you use it to help *decide* strategy?

Now take another 10 minutes to reflect on how you answered.

If you, like many others in 2026, I would like to now challenge you to a "mission" to take the first step towards getting to level 1.

Your "Level 1" Mission

Don't try to build a fully autonomous team by Monday. This is both unrealistic and likely to end up with a system that does not provide value. Instead, aim to perform one *Agentic Extraction*.

This is your mission:

The Task:

Identify the single most repetitive, "non-thinking" task you perform every week as a PO, SM, or developer. It might be summarizing the sprint's progress for a stakeholder or checking that every Jira ticket has a "Definition of Done."

The Action:

1. Define the **Goal** of that task.
2. Identify the **Tools** needed (Jira, Gmail, Slack, etc.).
3. Draft a "**System Instruction**" for an AI to handle the reasoning of that task.

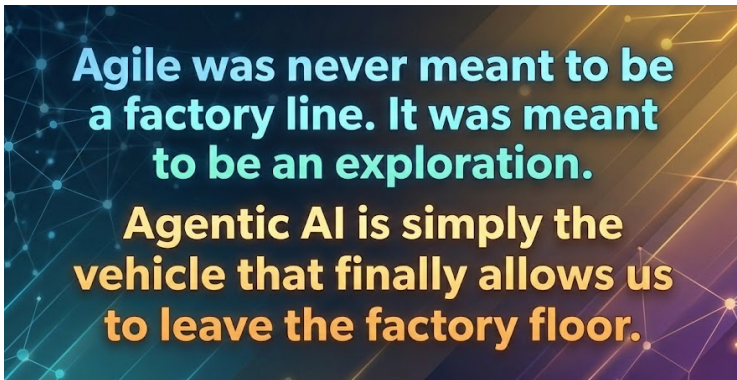
Define your experiment. Implement the changes. Measure the outcome.

Rinse and repeat.

The "Intelligence" Commitment

Starting tomorrow, stop asking your team "Is it done?" during the standup. Start asking, "**What have we learned today that makes our original plan look wrong?**"

If your team is silent, you are still in the Velocity Trap. If your team starts a discussion, you are on the path to Intelligence.



Moving Forward

Join us as we explore the impact of Agentic AI on the world of Agile development in this book.

We will begin in chapter 2 by providing a non-technical leader's explanation of Agentic AI. We then detail, in chapters 3 through 6, what Agentic AI could mean specifically for the Product Owner and the Scrum Master roles.

Following this, in chapters 7 and 8, we will address critical topics such as governance, ethics, and the innovative concept of "un-scaling" Agile.

Finally, chapters 9 and 10 will examine the future of development as we fully embrace this new era.

<End Chapter 1>