Retrospective Dialogue Sheets

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97 Things Every Programmer Should Know
Henry, 2010

*Context Encapsulation in Pattern Languages of Program Design*
Volume 5, 2006

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Dialogue Sheets
What people have said...

Just to let you know we had our retrospective this morning using a cobbled together print out of the T2 dialogue sheet (I have since found an appropriate printer) and **the difference from the last few times was like night and day**. I had some worries going in some team members would be reluctant to engage but found that **no one held back and everyone got involved in scribbling on the sheet and talking about the sprint**.

Afterwards I got some very enthusiastic feedback from the people who I'd originally worried about! One big plus for us, I think, was the written instructions around the outside and that there was no need for anyone to "buy in" to using the sheet (no long induction process or training).
What people have said...

I've used one of the sheets now one time. The team thought it was a fun way of doing a retrospective, it felt fresh. When I asked them if we should try using them in the future, the answer was a definite yes.

Using the sheet definitely promoted discussion in the retrospectives and, by bringing the focus away from the facilitator, the team concentrates more on the project.
What people have said...

First let me say as a manager, I was impressed by the Dialog Sheets, especially in the way it provides a simple path that pulls everyone into being a contributor, helps analysis by introducing/recommending tools (Fishbone), and finally leads to action steps. Walking around the pods, it was interesting to see that the teams posted their resulting sheets, and in one case had referenced it several times during a conversation about an issue they were discussing.
I was a bit nervous about trying something … but the energy in the room was tremendous. In fact I had several people tell me it was the best retrospective they have had in years.
**Statnett - Norway**

* The sheet **stimulates equality among team members** during the discussions, by the fact that all must be seated around a table (no one standing up and facilitating the discussions).

...  

* The sheet is very physical and with **few/no barriers for participants to express themselves** on the sheet for everyone to see - even if it is only by drawing "stick men" on the edge ...

* The sheet and rules (when followed) **prevent the Scrum Master from falling into a "team leaderish" role** when the rest of the team gets lazy and wont't bother to involve in the process - they all have to take their part of a common responsibility for getting through the questions and to the end of the "game".

...and there are more.

These characteristics make our retrospective **sessions less bureaucratic and more inspiring** than with our old technique. We have been using the more traditional technique for several years...

... **we spend our time on issues of real value to the team instead of ceremony parts no one really likes**, and more in line with the original intentions for this session. And the **sheet can be put directly on a wall after the meeting**, for everyone to see. ...
More....

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