Rachael Gibb

Senior Agile Coach, Product-Process-People Facilitator, Distributed Working Coach, Trainer and Mentor

With cybersecurity teams at Spotify and product teams at Mentimeter, I've coached leaders to bridge gaps across their teams and departments. I've partnered with leads to create the conditions for teams to work congruently, see the bigger picture, and deliver the right thing for impact. Deep in the platform world and closer to the direct customer experience, I've applied these techniques with product leaders, engineering leaders, designers, engineers, data, and other supporting roles. I've built trust which enabled people to be frank about aligning goals and roles, reveal their assumptions, and test new structures to boost how they deliver impact.

I'm especially creative, analytical, inquisitive, and able to distill complex issues into simpler, clear steps for action. My unorthodox entry into tech gives me a diverse edge with product and platform teams. I contrast many in the tech world with a background in ethics, conflict resolution, communication and social contracts. I flexibly take principles from Agile and Lean; practices from Scrum, XP, Kanban, lean product discovery and experimentation; and draw on wider research and disciplines. I understand the common challenges product organisations face and how to navigate them in a calm, pragmatic, authentic way.

Together we can elicit what challenges we need to work through, and discern what makes the most sense to get the best outcome for your teams, customers, and company. My experience in various product organisations helps me as a Product Manager, coach to PMs, or coach to the organisation, its teams, and the layers in between. I'm passionate about unlocking the power of the whole system, being greater than the sum of its parts, to drive needed change to maximize impact.

Some of my Clients

Spotify	Mentimeter	Xero
Cambio	Tele2	Trade Me

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Where I've made a difference

Agile Coach - Spotify, May-21 - Sep-23

I brought a sense of belonging, cohesion, and clarity to the ~60-person Security department at Spotify, spanning 7 countries and 9 hours across time zones. I mixed leadership coaching, team coaching, and facilitation to renew the sense of cohesion in the studio. I reformed how they plan and align, sparked a culture that shares learning more widely, and enabled the leads group to align on roles to work at the steering and collaborating level (beyond the tactical team level). After leadership changes and attrition, I brought PMs and EMs together, clarified purpose in the groups, facilitated a full studio meeting re-alignment, and implemented several feedback loops to optimise organisation, structure, and rituals. At the product area level, I created a frame for teams to identify silos and fill gaps, mediated cross-squad conflict, re-organised squads to increase their ownership to solve business problems, and guided problem solving around product, process and people. I worked remote and on site, created asynchronous facilitation formats for teams tasked with keeping the whole company secure while distributed, as well as a hybrid offsite that increased the sense of belonging from a mean score of 5.6 to 8.9/10. I partnered with leaders and teams through turbulence with openness and warmth, to evaluate trade offs in structure and ways to work.

Agile Coach - Cambio Healthcare Systems, Oct-21 - Feb-22

I shared results from the Dandy People 9 Dimension analysis, working with the CTO to identify where challenges existed, and where to act on first. I gathered the LACE team together to identify short, mid and long term goals, metrics to evaluate if we achieved them, and activities to move the needle. The first goal addressed psychological safety; I co-authored several blog posts and hosted a discussion with managers. Survey results showed an increase in awareness, understanding, and confidence in tools to support psychological safety. I focused on transformational leadership, presenting to the LT, creating material for all managers for a leadership program, finalised material for the pilot of the program, and hosted a short series of "leadership brunches" to inspire and connect leaders in the organisation to learn from each other, whether in Sweden or Sri Lanka. Cambio is a leading supplier of e-health products and services in the Nordics.

Agile Coach - Mentimeter, Apr-21 - Oct-21

I built agile capabilities with Product Managers and teams to enable value driven deliveries and grow high performing teams. My impact spanned different value

streams in product, across design and engineering, identified alignment opportunities and boosted strategy. I coached teams through discovery and experimentation processes, and aligned role responsibilities, delivery frameworks, cross-team expectations and the balance of collaborative autonomy. I shifted mindsets and capabilities from unclear, chaotic work habits to clear roles, processes, and expectations; from fixed, large scope plans to an ability to slice, deliver, test and learn faster. I engaged teams in co-creating solid, fit-for-purpose OKRs and habits to support their success. Mentimeter is a Swedish startup that is rapidly scaling and expanding internationally.

Agile Coach - Tele2, Dec-19 - Mar-21

I coached multiple departments; created and facilitated workshops on OKRs and product vision across departments and roles; prepared and facilitated Big Room Planning with hundreds of participants; started and grew the Product Owner Chapter, revamped the Agile Chapter; aligned POs, coaches and managers across departments; helped onboard a department into the biggest IT program's process; created and delivered trainings on better remote meetings, roles, and feedback. Tele2 is a Swedish telecommunications company in Stockholm.

Agile Team Coach - Xero, Mar-18 - Sep-19

With teams and leaders across many product areas, I engaged new teams quickly, coached POs, PMs and Development Managers, unblocked their access to customers, uncovered wastes in the "fuzzy frontend" of product strategy, facilitated discovery workshops, ran interactive education sessions, wrote blogs, collaborated and illustrated guidance on product discovery in practice, lead teams through trust building, guided improvement beyond the sprint cycle, helped uncover issues, guided clarity, referred to as a rock for teams through uncertainty and stress. Xero is an international cloud-based accounting software.

Scrum Master & Business Analyst - Trade Me, Feb -17 - Mar-18

I rapidly learned to facilitate ceremonies and workshops, write user stories, break work into slices, refinement, retrospectives, and kick off sessions for multi-team projects**.** Trade Me is New Zealand's largest e-commerce site.

Investigator, Trust and Safety - Trade Me, Dec 14-Mar 18

Records Officer - NZ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Sep 11-Dec 14

Skills and Experience

Delivering Value

- Coached a team to reduce its average cycle time to 1/6th in three months by helping them define problems, call out complexity and scope, minimise waste, and strengthen team trust and accountability
- Doubled a team's release cadence after experimenting with visual data to validate different WIP limits
- Mapping assumptions and impacts for product clarity, learning faster to avoid late risk discovery
- User story mapping, slicing value to test and learn fast; enabling teams to deliver experiments on time by guiding them through activities to isolate the most valuable work to test
- Challenging Product Managers (PMs) to use smaller tests to evaluate whether their product bets are viable, to discover more while spending less to deliver, facilitating team involvement for the best slice
- Amplifying concerns to prioritise technical debt as well as customer value
- Pulling engineers closer to customers, discovery, and aligning their success with business strategy

Building great teams

- Highlighting what teams need, sharing frequent feedback with leaders to help them empower their people and create better conditions
- Thriving in new team cultures with conscientiousness and rapport
- Teaching theory on high performing teams and coaching activities to get there
- Introducing trust-building exercises, team agreements, mediating disputes, clarifying objectives
- Facilitating team-work and shared vision across roles (dev, UX, content, customer service, product, and more)
- Offering frameworks for discovery, experimentation and cross-discipline work
- Visualising the discovery process with the Product Trio
- Role modelling compassionate curiosity; direct but kind communication
- Coaching PMs and Product Owners (POs) on story writing, leadership, visualisation and stakeholder collaboration
- Reviving agile and product chapters/craft forums

Facilitating problem solving

- Uncovering reality with data, visualising the impact
- Highlighting systemic blockers, gatekeepers and bottlenecks: e.g. helping POs take ownership over connecting with customers, revealing where teams have misaligned goals and incentives
- Enabling Product roles to collaborate and close product strategy gaps
- Designing and facilitating team and project kick offs
- Uncovering cross-team conflict based on team topologies, strategy, alignment, and clear purpose, showing leaders where to focus
- Creating original retrospectives, then growing the competence in others
- Dispute resolution, interest-based negotiation, courageous conversations
- Coaching leaders to bring their teams together to solve shared, department level problems

Fostering growth mindset & culture

- Advocating agile and lean mindset daily while embedded in multiple teams
- Forming relationships with managers, Directors, and VPs; providing feedback on culture and self organisation
- Coaching collaboration, goal alignment, conflict resolution
- Creating blogs, company talks, agile graduate training, agile learning mini-sessions on deeper questions (e.g. dual track, WIP limits, batch size)
- Pursuing my own development so I am a thoughtful and available leader

Education and Certifications

Formal Agile Training

ICAgile Authorised Instructor (ICAgile, 2022)

CSPO Certification - 2019
Jeff Patton's Passionate Product Ownership workshop (incl Product Owner certification)

ICAgile Certified Professional - 2017
Lynne Cazaly's Visual Facilitation & Leader as Facilitator workshop

ICAgile Fundamentals - 2017

Broader Education

- Enrolled barrister/solicitor of the High Court of New Zealand
- PEACE Ethical Investigative Interviewing (NZ Police)
- Bachelor of Laws (LLB) Victoria University of Wellington
- B.Sc. Political Science (Honors) Arizona State University
- Spanish Minor, International Studies Certificate (ASU)
- Successfully defended honours thesis via the Community Action Research Experience (ASU)

Community presentations and writing

- Agile 101 interactive lecture for Master of Business Analysis students at Victoria University (Nov 2018)
- Create Camp mentoring 2018, and coaching mentors 2019. I facilitated story mapping, mini-Scrum ceremonies, and helped prioritise teamwork, intro to Agile.
- Connect to peers at Meetups for agile, product, coaching, and leadership
- Medium: “If you can clean, you can Lean” for lean product management https://devblog.xero.com/if-you-can-clean-you-can-lean-f0f398d41b45
- Medium: “Coaching with Consent” https://medium.com/@rachael.e.gibb/coaching-with-consent-collaborating-with-your-new-team-to-build-transparent-influence-84a8f007167c

Languages

English - Native Swedish - Intermediate Spanish - Intermediate