

Why isn't there a good  
product owner?!

BCS SIGiST  
Summer  
Conference  
2024

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The  
Chartered  
Institute  
for IT

Hello, assumption,  
my old friend!

Hristina Koleva



# Waste

- “It might be cool”
- “We can’t use that”
- “There must be a button below the field as shown on the UI mockup”



# What makes a good product owner?

“Do You Want to Know a Secret”



Why isn't there a good  
product owner?

“Nowhere Man”



# Facts, Assumptions, Opinions

X “It’s not working.”

! “The user wants this now.”

? “Can we change this?”

“Tom or row Never Knows”



# A Clash of The Needs

Expected result vs Strategy

“Fixing a Hole”



# Culture Matters

“Let’s give it a try...”



“Yellow Submarine”

There are bugs we can live with.

Some bugs are...  
features.





# Why there isn't a good product owner?

Assuming a good product owner:

- Must be always available
- Has technical knowledge & skills
- Has domain expertise
- Can write & explain well
- etc.

One in how many product owners is a really good one?



“It’s All Too Much”

# Start talking!

for the testers

“Why have you written this (test case) like that?”

vs.

“Why have you written this (user story) like that?”



“I Want to Tell You”

“Ask Me Why”

“Think for Yourself”

“Tell Me What You See”

“Tell Me Why”

# Fix the Assumption, It's Not Hopeless

for the product owners

- Build trust with moderate humility
- Keep learning the domain, architecture, design, dependencies, process and practices, etc.
- Master your writing & negotiation skills

Use the Test Design Techniques  
for the Acceptance Criteria

“Getting Better”



Work first vs. PEOPLE first



“All You Need Is Love”

If it takes a whole Team to deliver working software, then why we think it takes one person to define it?!

“Things We Said Today”



♪ “You Know What to Do”

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Thank you!

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Figures by @cuputo

“Hello, Goodbye”

