

Flow Manager



2

- At ML2, the need for introducing the role of a Flow Manager to oversee the service delivery-related aspects of work arises.
- A typical approach: Assign it to a team member who has volunteered for it and has appropriate knowledge and skills to do the job.

ML1	ML2	ML3	ML4	ML5	ML6
Team Lead	Team Lead	Team Lead	Team Lead	Team Lead	Team Lead
Team Lead	Team Lead	Team Lead	Team Lead	Team Lead	Team Lead
Team Lead	Team Lead	Team Lead	Team Lead	Team Lead	Team Lead
Team Lead	Team Lead	Team Lead	Team Lead	Team Lead	Team Lead
Team Lead	Team Lead	Team Lead	Team Lead	Team Lead	Team Lead

Flow Manager

- When organizations make a transition from Maturity Level 1, Team-Focused, to Maturity Level 2, Customer-Driven, we observe a shift from managing tasks to managing Customer-valued and Customer-requested deliverables.
- At ML2 we recognize that upstream and downstream flows may still be indistinguishable from one another and that the commitment point remains ambiguous. Or the Upstream system functions in a degenerate form of To Do—In Progress—Ready for [downstream activity] states in the process.
- The Flow Manager is responsible for the end-to-end flow of work in its current shape with no distinction between Upstream and Downstream Kanban.

Typical Functions of a Flow Manager

- Create the consciousness that the service team is delivering a service to identified Customers.
- Ensure that flow metrics are collected.
- Facilitate the workflow Kanban Meeting.
- Facilitate the understanding of Customer requests.
- Facilitate the resolution of blockers, rework, and aging WIP-related issues that are escalated from the service team.



Source: Kanban University, ML 2.0 Flow Manager role

Lack of Flow Manager

When no one is responsible and accountable for keeping the work moving, it tends to fester in the buffers between siloed teams.



KMM Guidance on Roles

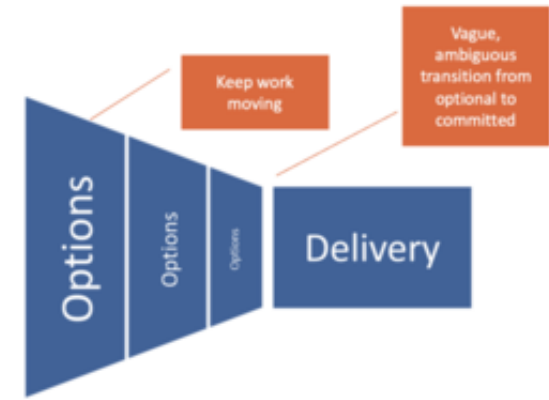
- Remember, like in theater, roles are "to be played", in various forms.
- Specifically, a role does not have to be a job title
- Roles can be introduced as an individual or a group responsibility, a job title, or a position in the organizational structure
- The title of the role can vary in each organization, and the functions need to be adjusted to the nature of the services that are managed

Reading reference: **MF 2.0 Implement Roles**
<https://all.kanban.plus/en/content/kanbanplus/kmm/default/kmm-posters/poster/barriers-poster/barriers-44-eng>

Adjust the role implementation to the organizational culture. Consider existing roles and titles first!

KMM Guidance

Maturity level 2: Flow Manager Role



- Flow Manager
 - Manages flow end-to-end
 - Doesn't distinguish upstream from downstream
 - At ML2 vague understanding of committed versus optional work
 - Focuses on keeping things moving

Breakout 6 5 min

Flow Manager Role

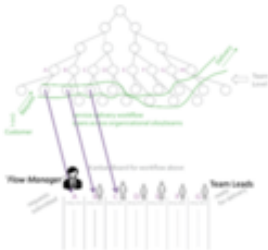
A flow manager, in part, leads the organization to maturity level 2. Does this role currently exist in your organization? If not, who might step up to take on the responsibility?



FM Discussion

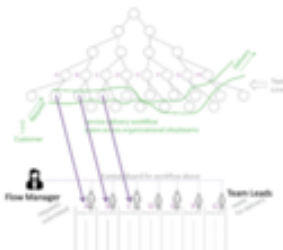
2. Individual Adds Responsibilities

A team lead often at the beginning of the workflow accepts additional responsibilities and plays the flow manager role



3. Formal Job Title

Flow Manager owns the workflow, coordinates team leads from each function/activity



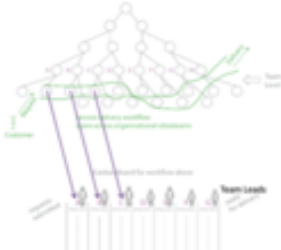
Implementing the role: 4 Patterns



Reading reference: **Implementing Roles**
<https://all.kanban.plus/en/content/kanbanplus/kmm/default/kmm-posters/poster/barriers-poster/barriers-44-eng>

1. No Flow Manager – Shared Responsibility

Everyone involved shares the responsibilities of flow manager. There is group accountability for delivery results.



4. Organizational Change

Flow Manager owns the workflow, team leads from each function/activity report up to the flow manager

