



Empowering Agile Teams

“With Great Power
Comes Great Responsibility”



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The Agile Manifesto

We are uncovering better ways of developing software by doing it and helping others do it.

Through this work we have come to value:

Individuals and interactions over processes and tools

Working software over comprehensive documentation

Customer collaboration over contract negotiation

Responding to change over following a plan

That is, while there is value in the items on the right, we value the items on the left more.

[*www.agilemanifesto.org](http://www.agilemanifesto.org)

The What If's?

- All too often embracing even the most basic Agile Principles requires us to address the What If's:
- Agile Teams are nearly as inquisitive as our own children.
- We need to say what we'll do and do what we say in order to be successful.



More What If's?

- What if we could engage Agile methods without Pain?
- What if we prescribe to one Agile Method and follow it to the Letter of the Law?
- What if we stop worrying about time and start focusing on end delivery?



How Does This Apply To What I Do?



- Can making even the smallest of changes have an impact on the success of an Agile project?
- What can I do in my role to make a difference on my team?
- Is it really possible to let go of the reigns without inciting chaos?

Who's Fault Is It?

- Once it is discovered that the project is going to exceed the deadline or go over budget, who accepts responsibility?

The Executive?
Other Management?
The Product /Project Manager?
The Team?



Levels of Agile Planning

- A great place to start is by analyzing the levels of Agile Planning and assessing if each party played in their respective sandbox



Strategy
Release
Iteration
Daily
Continuous

Does The Executive Lack Vision?

- To what detail should the Executive team be involved in the day to day operational issues of a project?
- Can executives still feel in power by not using the iron fist approach?



Sail Well!



- Managing Direction
- Charting The Course
- Use Strategy When Planning
- Recognize The Executive is NOT At Fault
- Maintain Visibility for the Executive
- Do Sail Well!

Empowering The Agile Team!

1. Learn To Sail Well!

- Understanding the Strategy gives the Team the why behind the vision.



Is It The Product or Project Manager?

- To what detail should the Product Owner / Manager have the backlog defined?
- Since when is a thorough PRD not enough to get started?
- The Project Manager should be trained to assist the team in breaking down a Product Requirements Document, after all, they are responsible for removing impediments right?



Is It The Team Lead or Other Manager?



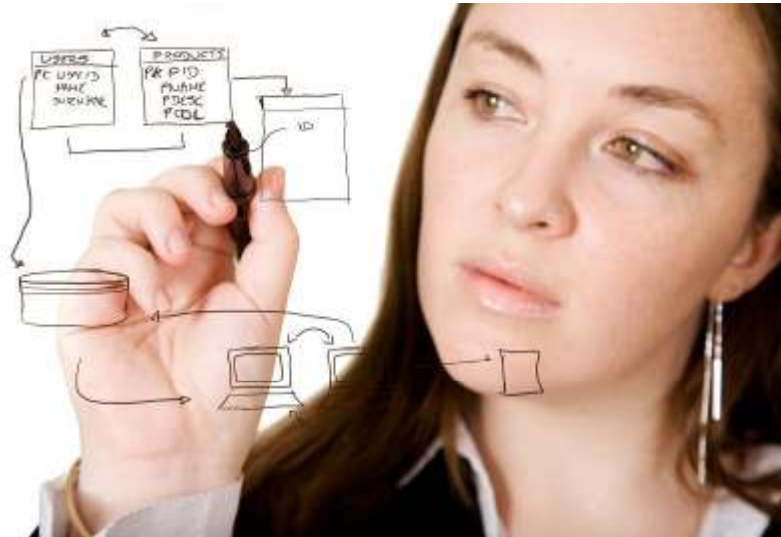
- Did the Team Lead follow through on being available to assist team members as needed?
- Did the Senior Assistant to the Vice Co-Chair Administrative Director over Employee Satisfaction see to it that the teams needs were met?
- Did the Development Manager provide the Team with the tools it needed to be successful?

Empowering The Agile Team!

1. Learn To Sail Well!
2. Manage From the Outside In!
 - When managers use discretion and work from the outside in, this allows the team to remain focused and feel confident that obstacles will be removed in a timely fashion! This also assures the best level of project visibility.



How Do We Know If They Are Effective?



7 Traits of a Highly Effective Manager:

1. Ability to Manage and Deal With Risk
2. Results Oriented
3. High Energy
4. Team Player
5. Multitasking Ability
6. Improvement Oriented
7. Listen First Speak Second

How Do We Know? (Cont.)



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If Not The Leadership...



- Once all the dust has settled, it is easy to determine that the leadership is not generally responsible for the team failing to complete the project they committed to.
- Could it possibly be...

It Must Be The Team?

- Could it possibly be the team at fault here?
- What could the team have done differently?
- Could this be the result of multiple external factors affecting the team?
- Is it possible that they really did not have a clear understanding of what they were committing to?
- At what level should the team be held accountable for the level of work they committed to?



Is The Team Being Effective?

1. The team embraces the truth
2. The team works in a culture that supports learning
3. The team has the authority and makes regular decisions
4. The product owner is consistently available to the team and the team takes advantage of it
5. The team has a GREAT ScrumMaster
6. The team meets daily and is aware of current and upcoming projects
7. Everyone required attends regular Agile Meetings
8. The team effectively uses the retrospective to inspect & adapt
9. The team has set the rules and understands the definition of done
10. The team is accountable for the work they commit to and they take that commitment seriously

Empowering The Agile Team!

1. Learn To Sail Well!
2. Manage From the Outside In!
3. Enable the Team to follow the 10 keys to effectiveness!
 - The 10 keys listed on the previous slide are a critical path for the team to follow in order to be empowered and trusted.



Is The Team Empowered?



Efficient
Motivated
Productive
Organized
Well managed
Engaged
Responsible
Energized
Dedicated

Team Empowerment 'moments'

- Every team has a moment where they realize that they are an empowered team
- It is usually like a light switch going on
- The stakes become much higher and the value & unity of the team greatly increases
- People will see, feel, and 'smell' the difference in an empowered team



Smell Of An Empowered Team

- Collaboration – If the team works in silence, you will get what you hear as a deliverable
- Teambuilding – The team should work together and act like a team
- Accountability – The team should stand tall and be accountable for both completed and uncompleted work
- Productivity – The team should not be measured by the duration of time they put into building the widget, but by the quality of the end result
- Quality Demos – Teams should be proud to showcase their work. If they are not, a different problem could be brewing
- Meaningful Retrospectives – Empowered teams look for EVERY opportunity to inspect and adapt

Foul Team Smells

- Loss of Rhythm
- Talking Chickens
- Missing Pigs

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The REALLY SMELLY Team

- Persistent Signatures
- Project Manager or ScrumMaster Assigns Work
- The Daily Meeting is NOT for the Team
- Specialized Job Roles



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Pitfalls and Warnings of a Damaged Team

1. Lack of Energy
2. No regard for commitments
3. Team more worried about time than productivity
4. Team does not want to demo
5. Team finds daily standup meetings useless
6. Team Frequently overestimates or pads estimates
7. Team becomes dejected



Empowering The Agile Team!

1. Learn To Sail Well!
2. Manage From the Outside In!
3. Enable the Team to follow the 10 keys to effectiveness!
4. Keep the Team Smelling Fresh!



How Do We All Win?



- Stop the finger pointing!
- Work together as a cohesive unit.
- Play in our own areas of the planning playground. No time games.

AND MOST IMPORTANTLY...
Realize as a team that:

“With Great Power Comes
Great Responsibility!”

Empowering The Agile Team!

1. Learn To Sail Well!
2. Manage From the Outside In!
3. Enable the Team to follow the 10 keys to effectiveness!
4. Keep the Team Smelling Fresh!
5. Start Today!



Conclusion

- You now hold the keys to success!
- Visit often and drink from the well!
- Download the slide deck & notes from:
<http://www.agilepalooza.com>



