



Free Resources

Are you looking for another great resource to learn more about Agile? 3Back has just introduced a brand new blog with MANY interesting posts already! Doug Shimp is a great friend and you can visit the blog at: <http://www.3back.com/blog>

Agile Mentor December 2008

Agile Dad

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Credits:

• The Agile Checklist:

V. Lee Henson CST
<http://agiledad.blogspot.com>

• As The Belt Tightens:

V. Lee Henson CST
<http://agiledad.blogspot.com>

• Agile Q&A:

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December 2008

Agile Mentor
Agile World

Agile Mentor

Proactive Monitoring & Maintenance		Vendor Services & IT Purchase Management	
Hardware & Windows Services Monitoring	✓	ISP Management	✓
Windows Event Log Monitoring	✓	Web Host Support	✓
Application Service Monitoring	✓	3rd Party Vendor Management	✓
Device Monitoring	✓	Product Research & Proposals	✓
Resource Utilization Monitoring	✓	Product Purchase History	✓
Monitored Event Notification	✓		
Software Patch and Update Management	✓	Planning & Reporting	
Infrastructure Management	✓	Annual Technology Planning Meeting	✓
User Account Maintenance	✓	Periodic Reporting	✓
24/7 Support		Extras	
Unlimited Phone Support	✓	Free IIS Website Hosting (200 MB Max)	✓
Unlimited Remote Control Support	✓	Discounted Self Managed Email Hosting	✓
Emergency After Hours Help Desk	✓	Discounted Onsite Hourly Rate	✓
Unlimited Remote Hands	✓		

About the Author:

V. LEE HENSON CST

This Certified Scrum Trainer's experience spans a broad array of technical software production roles and responsibilities. Lee has worked hands on as a GUI web developer, quality assurance analyst, automated test engineer, senior product manager, senior project manager, ScrumMaster, agile coach, consultant, and ADDIE training professional. He has worked with hundreds of teams to assist them in successful implementation of thousands of projects. His client list includes Fortune 500 companies, Government sector projects, small and large software production facilities, and multiple successful large scale e-commerce implementations.

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The Agile Checklist

On more than one occasion I have encountered organizations who were ready to adopt an agile method in one form or another. The questions that come out are in many cases very interesting. Some ask what tool they need in order to help them adopt the process. Others ask what internal policies and procedures need to be put in place in order to make certain everyone makes the transition. What most teams fail to recognize is the need for an Agile Champion to emerge and help the entire organization get excited about Agile.

Many teams still struggle to establish a baseline when it comes to the critical things needed to best adopt agile practices. Boris Gloger did an outstanding job establishing the baseline for Scrum by building the Scrum Checklist. Many teams have successfully used this list as their getting started baseline and refer back to it as the default to-do list for all things Scrum.

A bigger challenge was to attempt to create a list that was more encompassing of multiple methods that allowed any team to establish a baseline with or without Scrum as a selected method of choice. With the new year just around the corner, I thought I might leave you with a parting gift in 2008.

On the right side of the AgileDad blog under downloads you will find the first draft of what I hope will become the industry standard Agile Checklist. Please feel free to download the checklist and distribute the PDF as much as you like. Print it out and distribute as widely as you can.

I welcome feedback regarding the list itself or its contents. I expect that many of you will find this document useful as a baseline or as a checklist to help you solidify your adoption of Agile within your organization.

The second critical part to a successful Agile Implementation is the ability to establish an organizational foundation and throttle the rollout to teams that are prepared, working on visible projects, and are ready to become Agile Champions. Once other teams see the success happening before their own eyes, they will long to be part of the success and will want to adopt whatever practices are helping make it happen.

One last note, old habits are often hard to break. Having a good Agile Coach on staff often makes life during the transition a much more delightful pill to swallow. In a tightening economy, follow a guide and hire a fearless leader!

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Agile Dad



Seven Traits of a Highly Effective Agile Coach:

- 1) Agile Knowledge
- 2) Agile Leadership Skills
- 3) Consultancy Skills
- 4) Communications
- 5) Facilitation
- 6) Organization Development
- 7) Hands-on Experience

Ten Keys Finding Great

Agile Training

- 1) Ask for references
- 2) Review prior client feedback
- 3) Ask to see sample materials
- 4) Ask the trainer direct questions about your specific situation
- 5) Ask to meet / speak with the trainer
- 6) Ask to read contributions the trainer has made to the Agile community
- 7) Review the trainers online profile
- 8) Ask about coaching as well as training experience
- 9) Ask for an agenda in writing to insure you get everything that is promised
- 10) Tie training and coaching together whenever possible to get the best package solution for your organization

AgileDad can help! Email lee@agiledad.com



As The Belt Tightens...

"The first place I would invest money in is process improvement.. "

- V. Lee Henson CST

The talk within organizations seems to be focused on managed spending and staying within a tight budget. How does this effect project and product management within your organization? How do you know when and where to spend the dollars? The great news is that a solution is out there. Countless reports have reflected that as the belt continues to tighten, it is critical that we let out key people know that they are appreciated and will be around for the long haul.

One way to instill this confidence is by providing a workplace and atmosphere that are enjoyable to work in. What most fail to recognize is the return on investment by spending a few dollars to receive the best training and or coaching. This naturally turns to the question how do we know we are getting the most for our money and what counts as a worthwhile investment?

The first place I would invest is in process improvement. For some this means having a course that gets everyone refocused and energized on the basics and assists new team members in understanding the benefits of embracing Agile Method.

A second clear investment would be in sound Agile Coaching. There are multiple organizations out there who provide such a service, but finding one that has both the book knowledge and the ability to establish leadership within your organization is what separates the mediocre from the true performers.

The right Agile Coach will not only teach your team to succeed, they will establish leadership within your teams much in the way of teaching a person how to fish instead of catching all the fish they need for them.

I often hear from teams that once the coach is gone, the knowledge leaves with them. A good coach will promote leadership and teach others how to be effective and leave the team with the tools it needs.

A third item that is fundamental to Agile success is having the right tool selection for the team. It does no good to have all things in place from a foundation perspective if the team has no place to track and work from. Once again, there are MANY tool choices

on the market today. Selecting the tools that will best suit your organization size and skill wise often presents a unique dichotomy. We want the tool that is the most flexible and versatile, yet we also want it to support best practices. Teams appreciate flexibility, however, this should not come at the expense of meaningful reporting. Of the three mentioned, this could be the most challenging to tackle.

"The key is to invest now or pay later."

- V. Lee Henson CST

The trick here is to remember that becoming Agile does not happen overnight. The team will get better with time as long as the

groundwork is set for them. Teams and organizations long to be successful and it is our mission to get them there.

In the left column you will find some pointers to assist you in finding the right training, coaching, and tools. You may also want to start by downloading the Agile Checklist and see where your team falls in its current process picture. The key is to invest the money now or pay much more later.



Agile Methods:

Did you know there is a complete review of the various Agile Methods available for free on the AgileDad website? It can be found in the downloads section and covers everything from:

Scrum -
Extreme Programming (XP) -
DSDM -
Agile Unified Process -
Crystal Clear -
Feature Driven Development -
Test Driven Development -

Learn more from the download!

Drink from the well often!
~ AgileDad

AgileDad- What others are saying:

- Thanks for all the notes & documents, and thanks so much for your time! I received great feedback about your depth and leadership here.
- Everyone very much appreciated learning from someone as experienced and insightful as you.
- The greatest benefit of having AgileDad on-site is the combination of real-world experience and knowledge. No other Agile coaching group has more experience or offerings as AgileDad.
- Two words... Simply AWESOME!

Have Something to Say?:

Are you looking for the perfect outlet to tell the world about your agile experiences? The Agile Mentor Newsletter may be just the place! The subscription base is growing and people are becoming more excited about Agile every day! Submit your idea for an article and you may just find yourself published here! Act now while people are excited to hear about your Agile Experiences!



This Month's Agile Q&A

Q: Where can I find an Agile Checklist?

A: Did you even read this newsletter? The Official AgileDad Agile Checklist can be downloaded today by visiting: <http://agiledad.blogspot.com>

The checklist is for anyone that knows how to spell the word Agile. What are you waiting for? Go now and download your copy today while supplies last!

Q: Does AgileDad have a website outside of the blog space?

A: Great question! And the answer is... Yes! We are in the process of building out AgileDad.com to be a one stop resource for all of your agile coaching, training, and consulting needs.

The best part about this is even if you do not have an immediate need for any of what's listed above, the website will be filled with loads of white papers, slide decks, presentations, and book previews that make the site a viable stop for anyone looking to learn more about Agile.

The launch of AgileDad.Com is coming in early 2009! Previews will begin soon.



EYE ON IT Upcoming AgileDad Engagements:

Certified ScrumMaster Offerings:

Late Feb Early March - Provo, UT Date to be announced in Early February.

Orlando Scrum Gathering - March 16-18 Orlando, FL

Better Software Conference - June 8-12 Las Vegas, NV

AgileDad Private Course Offerings:

Private course offerings are available including:

Agile For Executives
Agile Boot Camp
Agile Business Requirements
ScrumMaster Certification
Scrum Product Owner Certification
Managing & Grooming The Product Backlog

On-Site Agile Coaching and Consulting are also available.

For more information or to book a course today, please contact:

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