



Free Resources

In the software development industry free is a magical word. Open or free reflect willingness for someone to contribute to the betterment of your team. We have a free agile poster for you to print and hang in your team area!

VersionOne.com/AgilePoster.asp

Credits:

• Independence: To Celebrate Our Freedom!:

- V. Lee Henson CST
- Agile Manifesto – <http://agilemanifesto.org>
- Declaration of Interdependence – <http://pmdoi.org>
- Independence Day Facts - Wikipedia

• Agile = Fireworks For The Team:

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

• Should I Empower The Team?

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

Agile Dad

12359 South Huron Road
Riverton UT 84096
<http://agiledad.blogspot.com>



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.

agiledad@gmail.com

Independence: To Celebrate Our Freedom!

In the United States, Independence Day is a federal holiday commemorating the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, declaring independence from the Kingdom of Great Britain. What a glorious day it must have been for our nation to stand tall and declare their freedom.

Likewise in the world of Agile project management and software development, we have had a few occasions where much like our forefathers who have preceded us a group of like-minded individuals who did not always agree on things joined together to unite in a common cause.

On a cold winter morning in February 2001, at The Lodge at Snowbird ski resort in the Wasatch mountains overlooking the gorgeous Salt Lake Valley, seventeen pioneering individuals gathered to declare independence from traditional process and form what would be known as the Agile Alliance.

In accordance with that very first meeting where independence was declared, there was finally an air of agreement. Out of this agreement, a document would be forged that would revolutionize the way agile software would be developed all over the world.

this issue

- To Celebrate Our Freedom **P.1-2**
- Calling All Writers! **P.2**
- Agile = Fireworks For The Team **P.3**
- Resources & Credits **P.4**

The Manifesto for Agile Software Development was born:

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 to the items on the right, (not bolded), we value the items on the left more.

On this day where we celebrate independence in the United States, I have added my signature to the Agile Manifesto to show my support for the beliefs we hold true. We should each take some time to reflect and refocus on what we can do to better the Agile community as a whole. I hope my contribution of the Agile Mentor newsletter serves with some value.

Calling All Writers!

Please do not be mistaken, I have plenty of content to present in this newsletter, but after much thought, I want this to be your newsletter. With that being said, here is your chance!

I am looking for like-minded people who desire to get their Agile message published in a reputable newsletter. All submissions will be reviewed and only a select few will make the cut.

This is a great chance to share your message with a very active group of readers who share a passion for Agile development practices.

Here is the fine print. All submissions need to be submitted in MS Word or comparable format. The article should be clear and concise. We have plenty of room here to get your point across. All entries should be submitted electronically to agiledad@gmail.com for consideration in the next month's publication.

There is no cash payment of any kind for the article being published. You will be paid with deepest gratitude from your peers in the Agile community for your contribution. You will also get to publish a short bio about yourself in the about the author section. This could be your chance to introduce yourself to the world!

Thanks & See You Real Soon!



The Oath of Allegiance

Independence: To Celebrate Our Freedom Continued

“You cannot build character and courage by taking away man's initiative and independence.”
– Abraham Lincoln

In February of 2005, almost as if a tribute to the creators of the Agile Manifesto, the APLN desired to take these thoughts even one step further. The Declaration of Interdependence was born.

This declaration has multiple meanings. It means that project team members are part of an interdependent whole and not a group of unconnected individuals. It means that project teams, their customers, and their stakeholders are also interdependent. Project teams who do not recognize this interdependence will rarely be successful.

These values also form an interdependent set. While each is important independent of the others, the six form a system of values that provides a modern view of managing projects, particularly the complex, uncertain ones. The six statements: value, uncertainty, customers, individuals, teams, and context define an inseparable whole.

The APLN has stated the following as the Declaration of Interdependence:

We **increase return on investment** by making continuous flow of values our focus.

We **deliver reliable results** by engaging customers in frequent interactions and shared ownership.

We **expect uncertainty** and manage for it through iterations, anticipations, and adaptation.

We **unleash creativity and innovation** by recognizing that individuals are the ultimate source of value, and creating an environment where they can make a difference.

We **boost performance** through group accountability for results and shared responsibility for team effectiveness.

We **improve effectiveness and reliability** through situationally specific strategies, processes, and practices.

Each of the statements convey what the group thinks are the most important aspects

of modern project management, and they also attempt to differentiate an agile-adaptive style of project management.

These declarations have helped many people in the agile community see eye to eye in terms of Agile project management expectations.

Countless other individuals have contributed by the way of whitepapers, blog posts, and even newsletters.

“Interdependency follows independence.”

– Stephen R. Covey

Some have contributed via podcast or conference talk. We each do our part to add great value .

On this 4th day of July 2008, I hereby declare that I can make a difference by: **Mentoring and teaching individuals with a desire to learn**

Providing meaningful reading materials via blog post, newsletter, and books

Speaking at conferences and sharing my experiences with all who desire freedom!



Agile = Fireworks For The Team

How many times have we been counseled to celebrate our successes and cherish the moment?

On an agile team, many times we feel like our successes are overlooked. Even worse is when a Product or Project manager showcases our work and makes it appear as if they coded every single line taking all of the glory that goes along with the moment.

The question I propose is how do we let the team experience 'that feeling'?

I remember the first time my children saw fireworks. As simple as they were, there was still a glow in their eyes that I could not replace.

I then remember when they were a little older and I took them to a local park to see July 4th fireworks. That same wide-eye look was there as they looked on in amazement at the much larger spectacle.

Most recently I remember taking my children to Disneyworld and seeing the fireworks there.

This was where the greatest sense of awe kicked in. For those who have not had a chance to witness it live and in person, it is almost surreal.

My point is every team needs a chance to showcase their fireworks. The first try may only be a sparkler but over time the demo will get better and before you know it you will be sitting there in wonder and amazement! Make every demo a special day for the Agile team!

This Month's Agile Q&A

Q: Should I empower the team to make most of the decisions?

A: People have argued since the inception of Agile that giving the team all of the power could yield less than desirable results. Many managers feel letting go of the reigns will result in chaos for all people who are relying on this project to be completed.

The fact is, empowering the team to make many of the decisions typically yields greater results and productivity then by leaving all of the decisions to a single or specific individual. We need to keep in mind that the worst decision that can be made is to not make a decision at all. We do need to remind the team that:

'With great power comes great responsibility'



The team not only gains ownership, but also gains accountability for the success of the solution they create and implement.

At the end of the day it is very easy to look back and point fingers at the 'responsible party'. Instead I challenge teams to win or lose together. Stand united and show the organization why they can trust you with such large decisions.

These changes do not happen overnight. Management needs time to understand why these types of changes are effective and oftentimes they need to hear it from an unbiased voice.

I will be presenting on this very topic at the SQE conference this November in sunny Orlando FL.

<http://www.sqe.com/agiledevpractices>

EYE ON IT The Index Card

Building great requirements comes with a great deal of practice. In many cases, people are still creating large scope documents to try and drive home every detail of the work that needs to be done. It still amazes me how many people believe that an agile team cannot be intuitive and creative to the point that you may wind up with something created that exceeds your greatest expectations!

In classes I offer, I often refer to the index card. If you cannot tell me what your expectations are on one side of an index card using reasonable sized font, you are providing me with information I will likely overlook anyways. Likewise, you should practice getting your point across in as clearly and concisely as possible.

In a previous issue we studied at great length the INVEST model for building effective requirements. I encourage teams to re-visit the issue and create personas to help in writing effective user stories. If we could overcome this simple giant, and focus on the simple things, the agile world would be a better place for all of us.

CSM Course Course offering in Alpharetta, GA

On July 15-16 all of Greater Atlanta will be abuzz! The first highly interactive Certified ScrumMaster Course will be offered in the South East Region!

This two day course offers all of the materials required to achieve certification, and also offers a series of real-world exercises that let you experience a complete Scrum project from start to finish in varying roles.

The cost for this class has been reduced to \$1250 / person for Agile Mentor Newsletter subscribers. This will sell out so act fast!

www.scrumalliance.org/courses/2828-certified-scrummaster