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Credits:

• Agile Adoption For Managers

V. Lee Henson CST

<http://blog.agiledad.com>

• Free Resources

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• Agile Q&A:

V. Lee Henson CST

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Agile Mentor December 2009

Agile Dad

14643 South River Chase Road
Herriman, UT 84096
<http://blog.agiledad.com>

December 2009

Agile Mentor
Agile World

Agile Mentor



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.

lee@agiledad.com

Agile Adoption For Managers

One item that I have run across quite often is the age old question, what will Agile do for my organization? What many people mistakenly do is equate Agile with doing more work, with less documentation and fewer people. Although the premise is to get more done in a more favorable way, I have never met a team that could successfully implement Agile principles without having to slow down first.

In fact, I would challenge that initially Agile causes teams to move slower! I know what your next question is, why bother? Well, please allow me to clarify. Agile is your friend! Many managers do not take the time to understand what Agile of any flavor will do and are completely caught off guard when they discover that things do not always fall out exactly like they had envisioned.

After enduring endless nagging by my peers, I decided that a guide was needed for managers to set true expectations with regard to an agile process rollout. When I consulted with some of the organizations I have worked pretty extensively with, they all replied that they would be delighted to give me input but commented just how disappointed they were that it would take me this long to put a list like this together. For all of you who wish you would have had this, I am sorry in advance. Now is the time to get busy and take action!

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This two part series will engage managers and help them best understand the fundamentals and embrace what they need to know about Agile.

The long preserved secret is that Agile managers really only need to know three things to be successful.

- 1) Become a servant leader. Although it may take some time to redirect your energy to ward removing obstacles, the new focus will allow you to focus more on the larger picture and less on the day to day needs of the team that works for you. Less command & control and more accountability will make you a sure winner.
- 2) Allow Agile to identify areas where improvement is needed. I nearly had a heart attack when I recently engaged an organization and met a non-believer. When I asked him about his experience with Agile he explained it simply does not work. All it did was identify all of the things we were doing wrong. I just smiled and nodded. Those are the things that you were meant to be doing better. Take advantage of this Golden opportunity and allow Agile to help you get better!

Agile Dad



Agile New Year!

As the Agile New Year quickly approaches, it becomes time for me to make commitments to you the Agile Mentor Newsletter audience. My first commitment is a reenergized focus on the newsletter content. I never have professed to be the keeper of all knowledge, as such, I will seek out those who are authoritative in their respective fields and ask them to contribute to the newsletter offering. In addition, I will update the blog on a more regular basis allowing you the most accurate & up to date information in the community.

In consideration that you are the key audience here, I would like to hear from you about what I can do to make this blog, website, and newsletter more enjoyable to you.

One last thing, the website will be launched very soon! I am very excited to provide you with this additional resource as a place to turn for All things Agile!

Until next time I remain:

~ AgileDad



Cont: Agile Adoption For Managers

“One of the keys to Agile Success is transparency “

– V. Lee Henson CST

3) Take the time to understand the fundamentals of the framework, methodology, and terminology! How much more will the team respect you for taking the time to invest in their success by learning more about what you are asking them to do. We all know that things will need to storm a little prior to a team becoming a high performing team.

The first step will be the easiest one. It is all a matter of breaking down where and how accountability may rest. Most managers fail to realize that there are qualified people that work for them that can take on most of what you throw at them. I often find myself in management sessions telling them to try and delegate their way out of a job. I assure them that by doing so, they will find new ways to engage and work with the organization and find new ways to help them be successful.

You must first recognize that a large number of the problems teams face can be and should be handled by the team themselves.

If the team ever encounters a problem that is out of their league, they will always have someone to turn to in the form of a project manager, scrummaster, or product owner who can assist them in resolving most common issues. This is the second line of defense.

In rare cases where this second group cannot bring resolution to an issue, the issue is sometimes brought to the attention of management. I guess this begs the question, how do I keep busy now?

Well, for starters, this allows you to better focus on delivery and execution of the vision. Many Agile organizations get lost in the vision and lose focus on the strategy needed to execute the vision. If the team has a clear path and direction from you, they WILL be successful.

Once you realize that you can relax, the final step is to help the team understand commitment and responsibility.

Many people comment when I am working in the role of management that I allow my teams an excessive amount of responsibility. I let the teams for the most part self regulate and hold each other to the highest standards. As a result, I am able to set my expectations VERY high. They have a complete understanding that I expect them to complete what they commit to.

“If the team has a clear path and direction from you, they will be successful.”

– V. Lee Henson CST

There is no confusion surrounding my expectations. I fully expect that you will do ALL that you have promised.

This type of relationship is healthy and the teams enjoy both the freedom and the level of accountability I hold them to.

The second step is to allow Agile to identify key areas for improvement. Do not fear what the Agile process identifies! In fact, I hope that you would embrace and address all that comes to the surface.

One of the keys to Agile success is transparency. The right hand needs to know and understand what the left hand is trying to do. Managers become part of a brain trust that will rely on results of the delivery team in order to make sound financial and business decisions.

The teams will have the greatest chance of success when common obstacles can be identified and removed. Teams actually like how the business transforms into a place that they actually enjoy coming in to work. Without transparency, this could not be possible.

Embracing transparency and what it exposes is not intended to be an easy undertaking. Expect the storm and celebrate the success once the storm dies down and the team embraces accountability.

The key here is to teach the teams that with great power comes great responsibility. They will continue to be cast in a positive light for as long as they continue to deliver.

Finally, in order to be ultimately successful, you need to show the team that you have a vested interest in their success.

This is your chance to do the research needed and show the team that you do understand what they are trying to do and do support their effort. In early 2010 I plan to publish a glossary for managers that will assist them in finding the information they need to help their teams taste success.

Until then, I have left you with enough to work on. Enjoy the holidays and I will see you all next year.



EYE ON IT Upcoming AgileDad Engagements:

- Dec. 7th – 11th Atlanta, GA
- Dec. 13th – 16th Herndon, VA
- Dec. 25th Merry Christmas!

AgileDad Private Course Offerings:

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- Scrum Product Owner Certification
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On-Site Agile Coaching and Consulting are also available.

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

Lee Henson – 801-898-0295
lee@agiledad.com

All courses are offered through VersionOne and Elite Participating Partner Providers.



This Month's Agile Q&A

Q: Can you speak to our group?

A: Although my days recently have been VERY busy, I am going to go out on a limb here and say call for an appointment! I have always found time to help teams and Agile groups, especially when you see I will be visiting in an area near you!

Q: Does AgileDad provide any additional services?

A: In fact, with a degree in psychology and a general belief that people are generally good, I have been asked to do a large number of public speaking appearances, as a keynote address and to offer words of inspiration from a motivational perspective.

I have been recognized by multiple organizations for excellence in public speaking and as a result have been asked to share my personal success story to many different audiences. Call and check for availability.

