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You're sold on the benefits on agile software development: higher product quality, increased customer satisfaction, and earlier and more predictable delivery. But self-organizing teams are a key principle for all agile methodologies, so where does that leave managers? The truth is that leaders are still very necessary for agile teams. This eGuide provides resources to help you get your team to embrace an agile culture, methods and metrics for transforming your already agile team into a high-performing powerhouse, and critical ways you can provide leadership to your self-directed team.

In this Leadership for Today's Agile Team eGuide

What Does It Mean to Have an Agile Mindset?

There has been lots of talk about the "agile mindset," but what does that mean? It does not merely encompass the skills that make a successful agile team member, but rather what drives a person to want to be part of an agile team. It should include the quest to learn (even when you fail) and leveraging what you learn to continuously improve on what you do.

The Role of the Agile Coach

One of the new roles introduced by agile software development is that of the team coach. Until agile came along, coaches were confined to the executive suite or the sports field. As with any new role, it will take awhile before it is fully understood and scoped. Agile teams can—and do—exist without the coach role, but such teams do not necessarily achieve peak performance.

8 Keys to Transforming into a High-Performance Agile Team

Following an agile process alone will not guarantee your teams will be high performers. Teams undergo various challenges while transforming into a highly productive team. This article looks at the areas where teams generally struggle in adopting agile principles and the typical root causes for those struggles, as well as eight behaviors that can help drive teams toward greater success.

4 Balanced Metrics for Tracking Agile Teams

Whatever your feelings on metrics, organizations will expect them for your team. You don't want to measure only one aspect to the detriment of other information, but you also don't want to measure too many things and scatter your team's focus. Here are four metrics that balance each other out and help gauge an agile team's productivity, work quality, predictability, and health.

The Role of the Test Manager in Agile

In traditional software processes, test managers are responsible for all management aspects of their team. Agile, however, is self-directed, so teams handle all the usual duties. Still, there is a role for test managers in agile, and it's much more strategic than it was before. Here are the opportunities for the role.

Scrum Isn't the Only Path to Agility

Scrum can really help a team to become more agile. But that doesn't mean it is the only way for a team to become agile. Agile is all about self-organizing teams collaborating to find what works for them, so if a nontraditional approach helps your team get started, then you're just forging a new path to agility.

Building a Culture of Continuous Improvement

A culture of continuous improvement means you are open to improving how you build and deliver. You don't accept the status quo; you choose how to work and feel empowered to change it if it no longer makes sense. Kevin Goldsmith gives some ideas for frameworks to adopt in order to move toward this people-first culture.

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What Does It Mean to Have an Agile Mindset?

By Leanne Howard

Definition of Agile Mindset

A mindset is a set of assumptions, methods, or notations held by groups of people that is so established that it creates a powerful incentive within these people to continue to adopt or accept prior behaviors, choices, or tools. Simply put, it is a way of thinking about things that those in a group share or have in common to the point that it becomes a way of life.

There are several characteristics I believe make up the agile mindset:

- Positive attitude
- Thirst for knowledge
- Goal of team success
- Pragmatism
- Willingness to fail

To me, an agile mindset is “There is no failure, only feedback.” It’s about taking everything as lessons, adjusting actions according to the feedback, and proceeding toward desired outcomes, resulting in continuous improvement.

The ideal is for everyone to have what the team decides is its collective agile mindset, but that all starts with the individual. I have worked with some great people who I think embody this mindset. They attack their work with a positive attitude, providing suggestions to overcome obstacles. They ask questions to understand what is in the best interests of the business, often coming up with innovative solutions as they experiment. They have realistic and practical attitudes focused on helping the team succeed.



When looking for people to be part of my agile teams, these are the mindsets I look for. It is difficult to change people’s intrinsic personalities and ways of thinking, so it is important to get the right selection of people for your team.

Positive Attitude

There are always challenges on projects; people are human and make mistakes, and everything is not always going to go well. What is most important is how the team members deal with these situations. As issues are identified, they need to be dealt with in a timely manner with a positive attitude. In most cases something that may look negative can be turned into an opportunity for improvement. I expect my team to recognize problems—or, even better, potential risks—quantify them, and come up with suggestions for solutions. For people new to agile, self-management is often difficult. This is