QAI Global Institute Presents:

Essential Patterns of *Mature* Agile Leadership

Featuring
Bob Galen & Shaun Bradshaw

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Essential Patterns of Mature Agile Leadership

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Director, Agile Practices

Shaun Bradshaw
VP of Consulting Solutions
Zenergy Technologies - Solutions

- Agile Implementations & Transformations
- Agile Training & Coaching
- Software QA & Testing Facility
- On-Demand (Swarm) Testing
- Test Automation – Open Source & Commercial

zenergytechnologies.com
Zenergy Technologies - Solutions

- Agile, QA, and Automation Staffing
- Outsourced & Managed Testing Services
- DevOps Automation
- Performance Testing
- Mobile Device Testing

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Agile Coach Test Drive

- Zenergy agile coach/expert visits your location for an agile lunch and learn with your team.
- The agile expert will also spend time with your leadership team afterward for a round table conversation of your agile challenges and discuss how we’ve solved those challenges in the past.
- We only require that travel expenses are covered.

For more info or to schedule please contact us at: contact@zenergytechnologies.com
Presenters

Bob Galen
Director, Agile Solutions

- In-demand agile adoption coach, trainer, and consultant
- 10+ years of agile experience across Software, QA/Test, and Project Management
- Specialty in Agile at-Scale challenges
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Shaun Bradshaw
VP of Consulting Solutions

- Experienced test manager, consultant, trainer
- 15 years of multi-domain experience
- Software QA/Testing strategist with deep Agile experience
- Scrum Master
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Essential Patterns of Mature Agile Leadership

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One debate in the agile community surrounds agile maturity. A way of characterizing it surrounds:

- **Doing Agile** – focusing on tactics, ceremonies, and techniques vs.
- **Being Agile** – focusing on team mindset, leadership mindset, behaviors, organizational adoption, etc.
VersionOne Survey, Barriers to Agile Adoption

1. 55% - Ability to change organizational culture
2. 42% - General organizational resistance to change
3. 40% - Pre-existing rigid/waterfall framework
4. 39% - Not enough personnel with necessary agile experience
5. 38% - Management support

All five can be influenced, improved, and changed by leadership engagement

Organizational culture increased from 44% in 2014 and resistance to change increased from 34% in 2014. Trends increasing...
Leadership Maturity Patterns

1. Leading with V-M-G-T
2. 3-Tier Adoption Strategy
3. Trusting Your Teams
4. Always Remember the TEAM
5. Champion Your Teams’ Results
6. Continuously Reinforce Accountability
7. Foster Innovation and Slack Time
8. Say NO as a Leader
9. Personally Engage Agility
10. Foster FUN!
1) Leading with… V-M-G-T

- Vision & Mission
  - Competitive Landscape
  - Have a *Why* behind everything

- Goals
  - Release Goals/Criteria
  - Sprint Goals/Criteria
  - Done-Ness Criteria
  - Standards

- Transparency
  - Straight-talk
  - They can handle the truth

- Continuous talking about Being Agile
Motivating Your Team

1. Talk Straight
2. Demonstrate Respect
3. Create Transparency
4. Right Wrongs
5. Show Loyalty
6. Deliver Results
7. Get Better
8. Confront Reality
9. Clarify Expectations
10. Practice Accountability
11. Listen First
12. Keep Commitments
13. Extend Trust

Stephen M. R. Covey’s book – 13 Behaviors that Foster & Increase Trust
2) 3-Tier Adoption Strategy

- Establish an adoption tempo that is organizational-wide, not technology-wide
  - Teams
  - Mid-level Management
  - Senior Leadership

- HR plays a significant role

- Middle management is a critical part of your adoption
  - Typically undermine the teams
  - Uncomfortable with the role shift
  - Command-and-control continues

It's not a methodology… It's an organization-wide transformation play
3) Trusting Your Teams

- Provide guidance & advice, but trust the team to solve their own problems
- Foster environment of experimentation and innovation
- Allow, tolerate, and foster failure
- Focus on roles and the endpoints of sprints
  - Accountable for commitments & results
Do you REALLY trust your Team?

✓ Their estimates?
✓ Their craftsmanship?
✓ Their judgment & decision making?
✓ Their level of effort or work ethic?
✓ Their plans?
✓ Their code quality?
✓ Their recommendations?
✓ Their motives?
✓ Their skills?
✓ Their preferred approaches?

➢ Do you actively give them feedback & coach them in areas where you consider them weak?

➢ It’s easy to trust when things are going well:
  • What about when the going gets tough?
  • Or when you feel they’re not doing what you would do?

➢ Remember: your words, actions, and body language need to align
4) Always Remember the TEAM

- Shift from individual rewards... to team rewards
- Recognize and acknowledge the behavior within teams
- Change your language:
  - Why didn’t we find that in test?
  - Why aren’t the developers coding right now?
  - Stop referring to developers vs. testers
- Hold the TEAM accountable to results, commitments, and support
5 Dysfunctions of a Team -- Lencioni

Inattention to Results
Avoidance of Accountability
Lack of Commitment
Fear of Conflict
Absence of Trust
5) Champion your Teams’ Results

- Always the cheerleader
- Sharing agile stories of success and learning everywhere
- Look back at your progress:
  - Contrast against historical performance
  - The improvement journey
- Defend your teams; defend your agile journey
  - Focus on transparent RESULTS
6) Continuously Reinforce Accountability

- Influence at the sprint/release endpoints
  - Goals and commitment,
  - Quality and delivery
- Call it - success or failure
  - Sprints and releases
- Expect significant & continuous improvement
- Reward – results, effort, and attitude

Accountability is the obligation of an individual or organization to account for its activities, accept responsibility for them and to disclose the results in a transparent manner.
7) Foster Innovation & Slack Time

- Beyond reducing multi-tasking

- Google, 20% time
  - Innovation Days
  - Hackathon’s

- Collaborative projects
  - Sign-up for what interests you

- Time to think
  - Immersion
  - Innovation & Creativity

- Slack Time and Flow Time
Slack is the degree of freedom in a company that allows it to change. Allowing people room to breathe, increase effectiveness and recreate themselves.

--Tom DeMarco

- Be careful of too much multi-tasking across projects
  - Task switches take (waste) up to 20% of your time (per switch)
- Defining projects with 100% availability assumptions
- Overloading key resources – hard or soft overload
8) Saying NO as a Leader

- Knowing when to say...
  - Sometimes direction is required

- Putting on the hat of the observer and laying it on the table for the team
  - Asking questions, trustfully inquisitive

- **Courage** to tell it like it is
  - Of elephants and 800 lb. gorillas

- Behind the scenes, 1:1 Coaching – toward Agile behaviors
Knowing when to step in, step out?

- When have you stepped in as a leader and realized that it was a mistake?
- When have you stepped in and realized it was the right decision?

How do core agile principles help or relate?

Self direction... hard or easy? Context-based?

- What about fostering exploration? Or failure?
When it comes to risky, controversial, and emotional conversations, skilled people find a way to get all relevant information out into the open.

That’s it. At the core of every successful conversation lies the free flow of relevant information. People openly and honestly express their opinions, share their feelings, and articulate their theories.

They willingly and capably share their views, even when their ideas are controversial or unpopular.

-- Crucial Conversations, Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, Switzler
9) Personally Engage Agility

- Start practicing agile techniques at a leadership level
  - Stand-ups, backlogs, transparency, and information radiators,
  - Prioritization & focus?

- Be coachable; be inquisitive
  - Become a student of agility
  - Ex: Personal Kanban

- Understanding that agile isn’t a speed play, it’s a quality, flow/predictability, and value play
10) Fostering FUN!

- Have a sense of humor; self-deprecation
  - Be playful as a leader
- Find partners in your teams that identify opportunities for having fun
- Don’t allow the teams to get too serious:
  - Take breaks, Team-building, Fund event ideas
- Hire positive, can-do people
Ask, Don’t Tell… did I say ASK?

- In the end, you need to engage agility; make the time!
- Attend your teams collaborative ceremonies:
  - Respect the team dynamic, but ask questions
- Show honest interest, be inquisitive
- Look for opportunities to help
- Be interested in principles, behaviors, and results
Webinar Wrap-up

- What were the most compelling patterns?
- What essential patterns did we miss?
- Final questions or discussion?

Thank you!
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