How to SWITCH to Agile in the Federal Landscape

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AGILE2015
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NGA contributed throughout the decade-long search and 2011 takedown of Usama bin Ladin, including creating a replica of the terrorist leader’s compound in Pakistan, which was used by a U.S. military assault force to train for and complete the bin Ladin mission.
NGA’s U.S. Facilities *Enhance* Mission Performance

St. Louis, MO

Arnold, MO

Springfield, VA
Adolphus Busch

• One of 21 siblings, emigrated to St. Louis at the age of 18 in 1857
WHERE
WE
WERE
Contract


Curabitur orci arcu, suscipit ac erat non, pretium mollis odio. Curabitur orci arcu, suscipit ac erat non, pretium mollis odio. Curabitur orci arcu, suscipit ac erat non, pretium mollis odio.


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WHERE
WE’RE
GOING
NGA’s Agile Plateau

- The early adopters got on board
  - They made the efforts to change and started asking the hard questions
- They were trying to make it part of daily business
- Still have people asking “how do I fit?” in the SAFe Big Picture
- We had some early wins with processes, but people were going through the motions without knowledge of the values, principles, methods, and practices
Plateau

• Beer was out of favor
  – any beers that were drank were Ales
• Whiskey was the beverage of choice
• 1865 worked for Father in law’s brewery
• 15 years as company secretary
“In a compelling, story-driven narrative, the Heaths bring together decades of counterintuitive research in psychology, sociology, and other fields to shed new light on how we can effect transformative change. Switch shows that successful changes follow a pattern, a pattern you can use to make the changes that matter to you, whether your interest is in changing the world or changing your waistline.”
SWITCH
Find the Bright Spots

Investigate what’s working and clone it.
Script the Critical Moves

Don’t think big picture, think in terms of specific behaviors.
Point to the Destination

Change is easier when you know where you’re going and why it’s worth it.
Find the Feeling

Knowing something isn’t enough to cause change. Make people feel something.
Shrink the Change

Break down the change until it no longer spooks the Elephant.
Grow Your People

Cultivate a sense of identity and instill the growth mindset.
When the situation changes, the behavior changes. So change the situation.

Tweak the Environment
When behavior is habitual, it’s “free”—it doesn’t tax the Rider. Look for ways to encourage habits.
Rally the Herd

Behavior is contagious. Help it spread.
History lesson

• Rider
  – “It is my aim to win the American people over to our side to make them all lovers of beer and teach them to have respect for the brewing industry and the brewer. This work has got to be done systematically…” (Point to the destination)
    – Pasteurized first (bright spot)
    – Put Busch on tap everywhere (script the critical moves)

• Elephant
  – Bottled first (shrink the change)
  – Collectors (find the feeling, grow your people)

• Path
  – 1878 – St. Louis Refrigerator Car company (tweak the environment)
Our Bright Spots methodology

1. Gather data on the issue
2. Study the data to find the bright spots (the unusually positive performers)
3. Make sure you understand the “normal way” things are done
4. Next, study the bright spots to see what they’re doing differently
5. Make sure none of those practices are “exceptional” in some way
6. Find a way to reproduce those practices of the bright spots among other people

Source: http://heathbrothers.com/resources/
Our survey

• Does the program know who the users are?
• Is the program addressing problems defined / described by the users?
• Is the program delivering value against the users’ problems on a regular cadence?
• Is the regular cadence 90 days or less?
• Is the program measuring the value delivered to the users on the program cadence?
  – Are the users represented in the value measurement?
  – Is the value delivered by the program to the users measurably increasing?
• Is the program measuring the value delivered from architectural features on the program cadence?
  – Has the program identified outcomes not outputs, to represent value (e.g., decrease in processing time by a specific amount instead of amount of code produced)?
  – Does the program determine architecture value based on enterprise perception and return on investment?
  – Is the value delivered by the program to the enterprise measurably increasing?
Results of Bright Spots

1. Does the Program know who the users are?
   - The bright spots across 3 programs consisted of programs knowing users down to specific user sets; usually by mission branch.

2. Is the program addressing problems defined / described by the users?
   - The bright spots across 3 programs consisted of direct user feedback being addressed on a regular basis. The users were involved in user engagement sessions and backlog refinement.

3. Is the program delivering value against the users’ problems on a regular cadence?
   - The bright spots across 3 programs consisted of code demonstrated to users at the end of each release. User engagement afterwards ensures code is validated or improved.

4. Is the regular cadence 90 days or less?
   - Almost all NGA agile activities had a planning cadence of 90 days or less
Results of Bright Spots

5. Is the program measuring the value delivered to the users on the program cadence?
   - The bright spot on this question was related to active user engagement every two weeks or less.
   a. Are the users represented in the value measurement?
      • The bright spots across 5 programs consisted of users being involved in Release Planning Events and backlog grooming.
   b. Is the value delivered by the program to the users measurably increasing?
      • The bright spot here included a program that could demonstrably show that their new feature requests were a direct result of their user growth.
Results of Bright Spots

6. Is the program measuring the value delivered from architectural features on the program cadence?
   - The bright spot here included a program who actively uses DoDAF architectural artifacts to plan, guide, and develop business features.
   a. Has the program identified outcomes not outputs, to represent value (e.g., decrease in processing time by a specific amount instead of amount of code produced)?
   - The bright spot here was based on a program that measured the improvement of its user experience (decreased latency) as a result of code delivered.
   b. Does the program determine architecture value based on enterprise perception and return on investment?
   - The bright spots across 3 programs included programs that were either an enterprise service, or were impacted by many enterprise systems.
   c. Is the value delivered by the program to the enterprise measurably increasing?
   - No bright spots were found.
NGA’s next steps

• Script those “bright spots” in our current processes
• Make it emotional
  – Appeal to the elephant
• Tweak the Environment
  – So going Agile is the “easy” path
• Rally the Herd
  – Continue the momentum by influencing leaders
Commendations to the Agile Community

• Here’s what we love about you:
  – Transparency
  – Openness
  – Willingness to share
  – Ever learning
  – Continual risk taking
Historical result

• Died in 1913 with an estimated worth of $60M
• His pioneering across the US as a distribution led to Budweiser being a “premium” beer
• At turn of 20\textsuperscript{th} century, Anhueser-Busch was producing 1.6 Million barrels of Beer annually
• Even started shrinking the change to prepare for the oncoming prohibition
Call to Action

• Learn.
• Read.
• Network.
• Look outside of traditional government sources
• Think about how you can apply the SWITCH framework to your office
Questions?

• Jim Barclay
  – [James.barclay@nga.mil](mailto:James.barclay@nga.mil)
  – "Any intelligent fool can make things bigger, more complex, and more violent. It takes a touch of genius -- and a lot of courage -- to move in the opposite direction." Albert Einstein

• Jon Ruark
  – [Jonathan.T.Ruark.Ctr@nga.mil](mailto:Jonathan.T.Ruark.Ctr@nga.mil)
  – “A complex system that works is invariably found to have evolved from a simple system that worked. A complex system designed from scratch never works and cannot be patched up to make it work. You have to start over with a working simple system.” John Gall