Agile Leadership: Practical Steps to a Delicate Balance

Susan K DiFabio
Agile 2016
Lean toward “too little”

Get out of the Way!
Step back!
Make room for others.
Failure is key to learning!
The Product Owner decides!

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OUTCOME
Lean toward “too much”

Make it happen!
Step up!
Drive success!
Failure is not an option!
Remove impediments!

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Make it happen!

Get out of the Way!

Step up!

Drive success!

Failure is not an option!

Remove impediments!

Step back!

Make room for others.

Failure is key to learning!

The Product Owner decides!
Make it Possible!
Make It Possible

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 Outcome

Make it Possible

1. Supply the context
Outcome

Make it Possible

1. Supply the context
2. Supply the capability
Outcome

Make it Possible

1. Supply the context
2. Supply the capability
3. Supply the environment
Outcome

Make it Possible

1. Supply the context
2. Supply the capability
3. Supply the environment
4. Be the role model
“The manager’s function is not to make people work, but to make it possible for people to work.”

Tom DeMarco & Timothy Lister - Peopleware
PROCESS
Lean toward “too little”

Let the team decide!
Emergent design!
Self organization
It depends
PROCESS
Lean toward “too much”

Standardize the process!

Best practices!

Do Agile the “right” way!

Agile assessments.
Standardize the process!

Best practices!

Do Agile the “right” way!

Agile assessments.

Let the team decide!

Emergent design!

Self organization

It depends

It depends
Establish the boundaries.

Standardize the process vs. Let the team decide
Process

Establish the boundaries

1. Decision-making boundaries
Process

Establish the boundaries

1. Decision-making boundaries
2. Time boundaries
Process

Establish the boundaries

1. Decision-making boundaries
2. Time boundaries
3. Make policies explicit
Lean toward “too little”

Empower the team!

Team ownership...

Trust the team

Transparency
Lean toward “too much”

You are accountable!

Annual goal setting...

Metrics drive behavior.

Managers write performance reviews
You are accountable!

Annual goal setting...

Metrics drive behavior.

Managers write performance reviews

Empower the team!

Team ownership...

Trust the team

Transparency
Environment of anxiety

Make it safe!
People

Make It Safe

1. Turn blame to curiosity
People

Make It Safe

1. Turn blame to curiosity
2. Rethink the meaning of “accountable”
People

Make It Safe

1. Turn blame to curiosity
2. Rethink the meaning of “accountable
3. One on ones – with active listening
People

Make It Safe

1. Turn blame to curiosity
2. Rethink the meaning of “accountable”
3. One on ones – with active listening
4. Encourage equal air time
“What are so you afraid of? No one is going to die if we get this wrong.”

~Powerful question from director to team member
FOCUS ON CHANGE
Lean toward “too little”

Embrace change!
Emergent planning and design...
Change shouldn’t bother you; we’re Agile now!
Inspect and adapt!
FOCUS ON CHANGE
Lean toward “much”

Don’t disrupt the team!

Commit to the Sprint!

We can’t run a business without a due date!

Improve predictability!
Improve predictability!

Don’t disrupt the team!

Commit to the Sprint!

We can’t run a business without a due date!

Embrace change!

Emergent planning and design...

Change shouldn’t bother you; we’re Agile now!

Inspect and adapt!
Get comfortable with change. Embrace change!
Get Comfortable With Change

1. Understand the Satir change model
Get Comfortable With Change

1. Understand the Satir change model
2. Predict change
Change

Get Comfortable With Change

1. Understand the Satir change model
2. Predict change
3. Understand “complex” work domains
Change

Get Comfortable With Change

1. Understand the Satir change model
2. Predict change
3. Understand “complex” work domains
4. Communicate the “Why?”
Change

Get Comfortable With Change

1. Understand the Satir change model
2. Predict change
3. Understand “complex” work domains
4. Communicate the “Why?”
## Practical Steps

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### Practical Steps

#### Outcome - Make it Possible
(vision, capability, environment, role model)
1. ______________
2. ______________
3. ______________

#### Process - Set the Boundaries
(decisions, time, explicit policies)
1. ______________
2. ______________
3. ______________

#### People - Make It Safe
(curiosity, “accountability”, one-on-ones, equal air time)
1. ______________
2. ______________
3. ______________

#### Change – Get Comfy With It
(understanding, complexity, “Why?”, prediction)
1. ______________
2. ______________
3. ______________
Thank You – Feedback Please

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