My distributed (agile) background ...

Sonatype

consulting across industries

for hire

2001
2003
2008
2012
2013
2014

Agile Alliance

AGILE LOCAL LEADERS

ORLANDO

AGILE2016

AGILE2015

AGILE2012

AGILE2008

AGILE ORLANDO

AGILE OPEN Florida

AGILE Florida

AGILE ORLANDO

AGILE ORLANDO

AGILE Open

FLORIDA

 Volunteers
What about you?

Go to
http://sli.do
#DA18
Measuring up to agile

Manifesto for Agile Software Development

We are uncovering better ways of developing software by doing it and helping others do it. Through this work we have come to value:

- Individuals and interactions over processes and tools
- Working software over comprehensive documentation
- Customer collaboration over contract negotiation
- Responding to change over following a plan

That is, while there is value in the items on the right, we value the items on the left more.

Adapted from http://agilemanifesto.org
Right Stuff?
Satellite
one or a few remote from team

Nebula
whole team dispersed

Clusters
team in a few locations

more info at
http://remotelyagile.info / @mkilby
What kind of distributed teams have you worked in?

Satellite
one or a few remote from team

Clusters
team in a few locations

Nebula
whole team dispersed

Go to
http://sli.do
#DA18

more info at
http://remotelyagile.info / @mkilby
IF PEOPLE CANNOT COLLOCATE
OR
THEY CHOOSE TO WORK REMOTE...
HOW DO WE HELP PEOPLE BE SUCCESSFUL ON DISTRIBUTED TEAMS?
What’s your burning question?

Go to http://sli.do #DA18
PRINCIPLES
OVER
PRACTICES & TOOLS
8 PRINCIPLES

SEE WORKSHEET!
4 ENVIRONMENTAL PRINCIPLES
We get tangled up on time zones but is that really the problem?
Based on work preference (not time zones)

>8 hours/day - should indicate socialization or mastery focus; not more output

4-5 hours/day minimum to support collaboration, adaptability and resilience
How do we find overlap?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, FRIDAY</th>
<th>local hours of the day / hours worked by team member</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City / Person</td>
<td>5  6  7  8  9  10  11  12  13  14  15  16  17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raleigh</td>
<td>1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jane</td>
<td>1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike</td>
<td>1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ian</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berlin</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerrit</td>
<td>1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1  1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overlap Probable</td>
<td>17% 17% 50% 50% 100% 100% 92% 42% 83% 83% 83% 50% 33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cockburn’s limit
45 ft / 13.75 m
(length of US school bus)

Allan’s limit
90 ft / 30 m
(distance between Baseball bases)
Distributed Collaboration Limits?

Implication: Team members in the same building can be distributed.
May or may not be based on work preference

Distributed Collaboration Limits?

Hours of Overlap

Cockburn’s limit
45 ft / 13.75 m
(length of US school bus)

Allan’s limit
90 ft / 30 m
(distance between Baseball bases)

Physical distance ???

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Does the team have a CHOICE?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City / Person</th>
<th>local hours of the day / hours worked by team member</th>
<th>TUESDAY, THURSDAY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Raleigh</td>
<td>5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Overlap Probable: 17% 17% 50% 67% 100% 100% 92% 42% 67% 83% 83% 50% 33%
How Many Acceptable Hours of Overlap?

- Fewer than 3 Hours of Overlap
- Minimum of 4 hours of overlap
- More than 8 hours of overlap

Put an “X” where your team is now
Principle: Create Transparency at All Levels

- Keep team spaces as open as possible
- public appreciations
- ask questions in public
What level of transparency can your organization support?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No team transparency</th>
<th>Transparency in the team</th>
<th>Partial corporate transparency (excludes some financial and privacy info)</th>
<th>Full corporate transparency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cross-team transparency (sharing roadmaps, blockers, dependencies between teams)</td>
<td>Put an “X” where your team is now</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Principle: Create Culture of Continuous Improvement

- Change leaders should model improvement first
- Then focus on the team
- Works with rhythm
- Key idea: EXPERIMENT!
Principle: Create Culture of Continuous Improvement

- Examples:
  - Personal - Improvement Days / Mentoring
  - Team - Retrospectives / Training
  - Org - Lean Coffee / Meetups (in person)
(Can the org) Create a Culture of Continuous Improvement?

"By the book": We've always done it this way.

"Try something": Minimal assessment of results or data

Strict Experiments with defined metrics or expected results with feedback

Put an “X” where your team is now
Principle: Practice Pervasive Communication

“To move, to breathe, to fly, to float,
To gain all while you give,
To roam the roads of lands remote,
To travel is to live.”

— Hans Christian Andersen
"To move, to breathe, to fly, to float,
To gain all while you give,
To roam the roads of lands remote,
To travel is to live."

— Hans Christian Andersen
(Can your org) practice Pervasive Communication?

One-time Communication
(Say it once)

Pervasive Communication
(Repeat message in various ways)

Overcommunication
(Multiple channels, from and to multiple people)

Put an “X” where your team is now
Shifts in how to coordinate & communicate

**Back Channel** - always have all hailing frequencies open (chat); someone should always monitor

**Buddy System** - each remote person has a “buddy” in the room to make sure they are connected to the team (paired communication)

**Co-Pilot** – someone at another location that can help you coordinate the whole team (paired facilitation)

more info at [http://remotelyagile.info](http://remotelyagile.info) / @mkilby

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Shifts in how to coordinate & communicate

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Principle: Assume Good Intent

Satir Interaction Model

Person 2 says something to Person 1

- Intake (What Person 1 Hears)
  - Meaning
  - Feelings
  - Feelings about the Feelings
  - Defenses
  - Commenting Rules

Invisible to other person

Person 1 says something to Person 2

- Intake (What Person 2 Hears)
  - Meaning
  - Feelings
  - Feelings about the Feelings
  - Defenses
  - Commenting Rules

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Learning natural tendencies within a team

Ease of Adoption

more difficult

easy

Time to Introduce

Compass activity (DIY)

1-2 hours

week

weeks or months

MBTI

DISC

Strength Finder 2.0

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North: Acting - Always in motion. Likes to try things and plunge in.

West: Detail focused - Likes to know what, who, when, where and why before acting.

East: Speculating - Likes to examine the big picture and options before acting.

South: Caring - Likes to know that everyone’s voice has been heard before acting.
Learning natural tendencies within a team

Ease of Adoption

more difficult

easy

Time to Introduce

1-2 hours

week

weeks or months

Other benefits - shared vision, working agreements?

Compass activity (DIY)

Liftoffs (diy)

Prelude

MBTI

DISC

Strength Finder 2.0

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(Can the team) Assume Good Intent?

Put an “X” where your team is now

Placate others  Assume good intention  Blame others
Principle: Create a Project Rhythm

- Whether time-boxed (e.g., Scrum, XP) or in Flow (Kanban), all teams have a rhythm
- Encourage team to decide rhythm as they form
- Encourage the team to change rhythm when they are not “keeping a beat”. (e.g. retrospect)
(Can the team) Create a Project Rhythm?

Plan on Demand (Flow)  Cadence of Planning, Demos, more  Strict Timebox, where the work stops at the end of the timebox

Put an “X” where your team is now
Principle: Create Resilience

Can we…

- quickly adjust to meet a goal?
- adjust to hardship?
- provide an “adaptive environment”?
  - e.g., how much can team control their workspace?
Checking Resilience

- **Example - Communication**
  - Can *anyone* on the team start a new communication channel at any time?
  - Will *anyone* on the team initiate communications?
  
  Is there *psychological safety*?

- **Example - Facilitation**
  - Can anyone on the team facilitate any meeting? (backlog refinement, planning, standup, review, retrospective)

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Promoting Resilience through Holistic Culture

- Only communicate about work
- Only communicate about personal
- Only communicate about growth
- Communicate about work, personal, and person’s growth
Promoting Resilience
(Can the team) Create Resilience with Holistic Culture?

Put an “X” where your team is now
Principle: Default to Collaboration

- Deep Focus can be important, but …
- Collaboration can help you explore problems and solutions faster
(Can the team) Default to Collaboration?

Solo Work (Including asynchronous work)  Pairing and other Real-Time Communication  Mobbing

Put an “X” where your team is now

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On worksheet, now place O where you want to be ...
### How to reach O?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Small Step Practices</th>
<th>Giant Leap Practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acceptable Hours of Overlap</td>
<td>Select team members in nearby time zones</td>
<td>Allow team to choose core hours and meeting times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparency at All Levels</td>
<td>Public appreciations; Encourages questions in public</td>
<td>Open team channels to organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture of Continuous Improvement</td>
<td>Retrospectives; lean coffee Q&amp;A (across org)</td>
<td>Mentoring; Improvement Days or Hackathons; Meetups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pervasive Communication</td>
<td>Backchannel, Buddy System, Copilots</td>
<td>Multi-channel communications (some automated)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assume Good Intent</td>
<td>Learn team member tendencies (e.g. Compass activity)</td>
<td>Continual coaching on listening skills, default to high bandwidth communications in conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Rhythms</td>
<td>Time-boxed synchronous activities if &gt;6 hours overlap; varied cadence for flow-based</td>
<td>Allow team to set and adjust all cadences via retrospective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilience Through Holistic Culture</td>
<td>Establish psychological safety; model “asking for help”; share some personal context</td>
<td>Set rituals (1-1s, retro) where team members share interests and goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Default to Collaboration</td>
<td>Encourage daily check-ins beyond a stand-up</td>
<td>Support pairing and mobbing activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some distributed teams can look odd.
or they have shiny new tools
Focus on principles to get your distributed team on the right course
Thanks! Questions?

more info at
http://markkilby.com

Twitter: @mkilby

http://www.linkedin.com/in/mkilby

Watch for updates to my book on building distributed agile teams at https://leanpub.com/geographicallydistributadagileteams and via my website markkilby.com
References
(in order of mention)

- http://agilemanifesto.org

- DISC vs MBTI assessments. https://coachfederation.org/blog/index.php/8211/

- Strengthfinder 2.0 - https://www.gallupstrengthscenter.com/

- Compass exercise adapted for online teams from “A Simple Exercise to Strengthen Emotional Intelligence in Teams” KQED Mindshift https://ww2.kqed.org/mindshift/2015/06/22/a-simple-exercise-to-strengthen-emotional-intelligence-in-teams/

- Play Prelude for forming virtual teams http://www.playprelude.com/


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EXTRAS
Collocated Team

6-Person Cross-Functional Collocated Team

Entire team sits within 30 m of each other.
Maximum hours of overlap.

Communication within 30m and synchronous 6+ hours
Types of Distributed Teams

**Satellite**

Distributed and Cross-functional Satellite:
- Bulk of Team in One Location;
- One or Two Remote from Team

**Nebula**

Distributed & Cross-Functional (Cluster)
- Subgroups collocated in various locations.

**Clusters**

Communication within 30m and synchronous 6+ hours

Communication beyond 30m and synchronous 4-6 hours