Coaching Heuristics: What's in Your Toolkit?

Victor Bonacci, CEC wannabe
@AgileCoffee
What is Coaching?

What does an Agile Coach do?

What tools do we use as coaches?
ACI’s Agile Coaching Competency model

Agile & Lean Practitioner

Content

Teaching
Mentoring

Process

Professional Coaching
Facilitating

Technical Mastery
Business Mastery
Transformation Mastery

Domain
http://agilecoachinginstitute.com/agile-coaching-resources/
How do we learn?
Sources of Self-Efficacy

Albert Bandura

- **Enactive Self-Mastery**: failure or success of actual performance.
- **Role-Modeling**: vicarious experiences by observing or visualization.
- **Verbal/Social Persuasion**: pep talks.
- **Physiological Cues**: somatic or emotional states.

Self-Efficacy: belief in your capacity to successfully perform a task.
Heuristic

heuristic  hyoo'ristik/

*adjective*

enabling a person to discover or learn something for themselves

*example* a “hands-on” or interactive heuristic approach to learning

*noun*

a heuristic process or method
Billy Vaughn Koen:

– A heuristic does not guarantee a solution
– It may contradict other heuristics
– It reduces the search time in solving a problem
– Its acceptance depends on the immediate context instead of an absolute standard

*Something you do to move yourself forward in your problem solving*
My Coaching Journey...

Lean Coffee meetups  ->  Kickstarter for Cards
The Agile Coach's Toolkit

Volume One

Contains 54 cards with definitions, charts, theorems, and other useful stuff.

This deck is not for sale and is only available as a free gift from Agile Coffee.
working with Self / Individuals
Dunning-Kruger effect

Confidence

Knowledge in Field

I know everything

Trust me. It’s complicated

There’s more to this than I thought

It’s starting to make sense

I’m never going to understand this

Huh?
Imposter Syndrome

What I know

What I think others know

What others know

What I know

Reality
World After Midnight

Rate of Change

Learning

Technological Change

Progression of Time
# Immunity to Change (Immunity Map)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commitment (improvement goal)</th>
<th>Doing / Not Doing Instead</th>
<th>Competing Commitments (hidden)</th>
<th>Big Assumptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

![Diagram showing the flow between commitment, doing/not doing, competing commitments, and big assumptions.](image-url)
Hierarchy of Needs - Maslow

- Physiological needs: food, water, warmth, sleep, rest
- Safety needs: security, safety, home
- Belongingness & Love needs: friends, meaningful relationships, family, love & intimacy
- Esteem needs: prestige, recognition, feeling of accomplishment
- Self-actualization: achieving one's full potential & creativity

Basic needs → Psychological needs → Self-fulfillment needs
Pair Share

Partner up and share one heuristic that you use in your day-to-day work life.
working with Teams
Motivation 3.0 - Daniel Pink

Moves the focus from a “reward - punishment” compliance approach to an engagement model.

**Autonomy** - having control over your work; managing your own time and making decisions on what you do and when

**Mastery** - being able to use and improve the skills that you enjoy

**Purpose** - making a difference; understanding that what you do has value
Communication between people drops off radically as soon as their distance from each other exceeds the length of a school bus (~10m).
“Regardless of what we discover, we understand and truly believe that everyone did the best job they could, given what they knew at the time, their skills and abilities, the resources available, and the situation at hand.”
T-shaped People/Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I-shaped</th>
<th>T-shaped</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Me</td>
<td>We</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1+1=2</td>
<td>1+1=3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can Teach</td>
<td>I can Learn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear</td>
<td>Networked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Breadth of Knowledge

- mentoring
- coaching
- technical skills
- Agile / Scrum
- facilitating
- business skills
- transformation skills

Depth of Knowledge

- expert opinion
- latest thinking
- core knowledge
- people implications
- planning implications
Zeigarnik Effect

When we finish a task, we get closure and stop thinking about it.

When we don’t finish tasks, we keep thinking about them.

We yearn for completion.
Consider the following scenario:

You work with a team that is always BUSY yet struggles to consistently get things DONE.
Effects of Project Switching - Jerry Weinberg

- Working Time Available Per Project
- Loss to Context Switching

Number of Simultaneous Projects:

- 1: 100%
- 2: 40%
- 3: 35%
- 4: 25%
- 5: 20%
working with Leadership
Blake-Mouton Managerial Grid model

- Country Club
- Team Member
- Impoverished
- Authority-Obedience
- Middle of the Road

People Concern:
- Low
- High

Task Concern:
- Low
- High
Brook’s Law

“Adding manpower to a late software project makes it later”
“Nobody 2 levels above or below you in the organization really understands what you do for a living.”
Ten Fatal Leadership Flaws

- Jack Zenger and Joseph Folkman

Lacks of energy and enthusiasm
Accepts own mediocre performance
Lacks clear vision and direction
Has poor judgment
Doesn't collaborate
Doesn't walk the talk
Resists new ideas
Doesn't learn from mistakes
Lacks interpersonal skills
Fails to develop others
Types of Power - French & Raven

**Coercive power** - the belief that a person can punish others for noncompliance.

**Reward power** - one person's ability to compensate another for compliance.

**Legitimate power** - belief that a person has the formal right to make demands, and to expect others to be compliant and obedient.

**Referent power** - a person's perceived attractiveness, worthiness and right to others' respect.

**Expert power** - based on a person's high levels of skill and knowledge.

**Informational power** - a person's ability to control the information that others need to accomplish something.
Another hopeful scenario:

You are a coach (manager / Scrum Master / etc.) in an organization undergoing an AGILE TRANSFORMATION.

Things started okay, but then got worse. Now many people (including those paying the bills) are having second thoughts.

What do you do?
Satir Change Model

- Performance
- Chaos
- Foreign Element
- Late Status Quo
- New Status Quo
- Practice & Integration
- Transforming Idea
working with Planning
Cone of Uncertainty

BDUF Project:
long feedback loop
and slow journey
to certainty

Iterative Project:
short feedback loop,
frequent learning &
quicker to certainty

Project Evolution
“If you haven’t thought of three possibilities, you haven’t thought enough.”
Act, Think & Communicate - from the INSIDE OUT

WHY - your Purpose
Your motivation. What do you Believe?

HOW - your Process
Specific actions taken to realize your WHY.

WHAT - your Result
What do you do? The result of WHY. Proof.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Creativity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What type of thinking is needed?</td>
<td>Imagining all kinds of solutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking about thinking.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facts</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do we know?</td>
<td>Positive points.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do I need to find out?</td>
<td>Why an idea may be useful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective information and data.</td>
<td>Logical reasons are provided.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feelings</th>
<th>Cautions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current feelings.</td>
<td>Weaknesses, risks, difficulties, dangers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intuition, hunches, gut instinct.</td>
<td>Logical reasons are provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No reasoning needed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
working with Conflict
Nonviolent Communication (NVC)
Ladder of Inference - Chris Argyris and Donald Schön

- Observations
- Selected data
- Meanings
- Assumptions
- Conclusions
- Beliefs
- Actions

Pool of shared data
Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode instrument

- Competing (domination)
- Collaborating (integration)
- Compromising (sharing)
- Accommodating (appeasement)
- Avoiding (neglect)
Five Dysfunctions of a Team
- Patrick Lencioni

- Inattention to Results
- Avoidance of Accountability
- Lack of Commitment
- Fear of Conflict
- Absence of Trust
One more scenario:

Form a group and come up with another real-world situation. *Make it a good one.*

What’s a heuristic (definition, chart, etc.) that you can use to be the hero once again?
Yerkes-Dodson Law

- Optimal arousal and performance
- Increasing attention and interest
- Impaired performance due to strong anxiety
Access the growing list at AgileCoffee.com/toolkit