HACKING THE WORKFORCE OF THE FUTURE

Based on personal observations and discussions...
Use at your own risk!

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Our team. Your advantage.
LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Understand (some) of the needs of a future workforce, in particular, understanding 'team', 'purpose', 'impact' and 'us'.

2. Understand how leadership has to change to adapt to new culture, processes, and tools.

3. Understand what needs to change in agile organisations to support the future workforce.
SOUTH AFRICA

OUR ROADS

OUR HOMES

OUR PETS
THE REAL SOUTH AFRICA

OUR ROADS

OUR HOMES

OUR PETS
THE ‘ULTIMATE’ AGILE TEAM MEMBER

1. Self-directed
2. Accountable
3. Team before self
4. Multi-skilled
5. Optimist / Realist
6. Upholds the social contract
7. Freely shares work product
I’m fortunate to be surrounded by new software engineers, analysts, and testers. I used this as an opportunity to ask just one question: **What do you want to gain from working in this team?**

- “I’m here to grow my talents, as fast as possible.”
- “I want to do things that are meaningful to me.”
- “I’m interested in why I should do the work, I don’t need to be told how to do the work.”
- “I want to know that my work is changing things for the better and that my contribution is recognised by my peers.”
EMPLOYEES STAY WHEN THEY ARE:

- PAID WELL
- MENTORED
- CHALLENGED
- PROMOTED
- INVOLVED
- APPRECIATED
- VALUED
- ON A MISSION
- EMPOWERED
- TRUSTED
CREATE PURPOSE
CREATE SAFETY
CREATE REWARDS
CREATE TALENT GROWTH
CREATE PURPOSE

“More men fail through lack of purpose than lack of talent.”
– Billy Sunday
THE FUTURE OF WORK

“...complex problem-solving with drastic business consequences...”
BAD IDEAS OFTEN WIN

LARGE FINANCIAL INSTITUTION

Project commenced 8+ months ago

Team constituted people who were not ‘assigned’ to other work

“Product Owner/s” change frequently

Continuous pressure to deliver based on money already spent

RESULT:

75% team churn

No defined roadmap – changes as leadership changes

No mandate or authority

Millions wasted

Highly demotivated team
PRACTICES FOR CREATING PURPOSE

1. Allow people to solve problems without defined end states
2. Kill the backlog of requirements
3. Nurture the effort of clarifying problems
4. Focus on finding the right people for the right problems
GROUP ACTIVITY 1

Using the cards provided:

1. Pick the **hardest** of those actions to implement in your organization.
2. Discuss with your table (quickly)…
CREATE SAFETY

“At the end of the day, the goals are simple: safety and security.”
- Jodi Rell
THE GIFT OF STRUGGLE

“If people knew how hard I worked to get my mastery, it wouldn't seem so wonderful at all.”
- Michelangelo
DON’T SQUEEZE THE OREO

LARGE FINANCIAL INSTITUTION

Multi-million-Rand compliance project

50%-60% of the team’s “work” was dependent on external teams or organisations

Traditional project management layered on ‘pseudo-agile’

Blame filters down from C-Level to Mid-management to team

RESULT:

<10% of ‘committed’ outputs achieved

Team has no room for learning, development or negotiations

60% of the team are actively looking for new employment
PRACTICES FOR CREATING SAFETY

1. Create safety at all levels
2. Create telemetry that is unbiased towards the type or state of feedback
3. Ensure that teams aren’t scape-goated or bullied into ‘hospital pass’ situations
4. Create learning opportunities that promote the need for reaching mastery
GROUP ACTIVITY 2

Using the cards provided:

1. Pick the **easiest** those actions to implement in your organization.
2. Discuss with your table (quickly)…
CREATE (PURPOSE-DRIVEN) REWARDS

“Notice the small things. The rewards are inversely proportional.”

- Liz Vassey
THE CARROT AND STICK PARADOX

“Rewards and punishments are the lowest form of education.”

- Zhuangzi
PAYING IT FORWARD

SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT HOUSE

Large contingent of analysts, technical specialists, engineers, quality engineers, and customer experts

Each group is measured and rewarded differently i.e. analysts are rewarded based on the completion of written specifications.

Engineers are rewarded on the # of lines of code written and penalized for # of defects.

RESULT:

Large and complex project / product pipeline

Long-standing customer commits (+12 months)

Little to no tangible product-benefit links
PRACTICES FOR CREATING REWARDS

1. Make sure the base metrics that the reward system is based on do not move

2. Change the reward mechanism to drive new behaviour

3. Start creating better challenges

4. Align the rewards and measures to solving problems (as opposed to delivering work off a backlog)
GROUP ACTIVITY 3

Using the cards provided:

1. Pick the action that would most **positively** impact the team.
2. Discuss with your table (quickly)...
CREATE TALENT GROWTH

“It is not true that people stop pursuing dreams because they grow old, they grow old because they stop pursuing dreams.”

- Gabriel Garcia Marquez
SYSTEMS OF INFORMATION
OUR PEOPLE ARE OUR GREATEST ASSET

LARGE(ST) INDEPENDENT CONSULTING FIRM IN S.AFRICA

Actively promotes upskilling (structured learning, informal info shares, inter-team knowledge sharing)

Encourages and supports movement of people between business domains and specialists areas

Maintains strong alumni network

RESULT:

Low attrition rates

High employee engagement

“A great place to work”
PRACTICES FOR CREATING TALENT GROWTH

1. Value practical learning above certifications
2. Actively seek growth opportunities for your people, even if it's outside your organisation
3. Create graceful exit and entry points for talent
4. Invest in knowledge acquisition
GROUP ACTIVITY 4

Using the cards provided:

1. Pick the action that is least practiced by your organization today.
2. Discuss with your table (quickly)…
WRAP-UP

• Create purpose alignment
• Create safety
• Create purpose-driven rewards
• Create talent growth

As leaders, we have to spearhead these initiatives.

We have to embed these as the foundation of culture for

NEW WAYS OF WORKING
FINAL THOUGHTS

• Our circles of influence run wider and longer than we may think. The impact of what we do and say, and how we act today, will directly and immediately influence those in our closest circle.

• They will go on to pass some of these lessons on into their future interactions. Your actions today could become the ripple of change for the tidal wave in 10 / 15 / 20 years’ time.

• Let’s make sure we pass on the best possible messages and actions so that the future ways of doing work are better than anything we can currently even imagine.