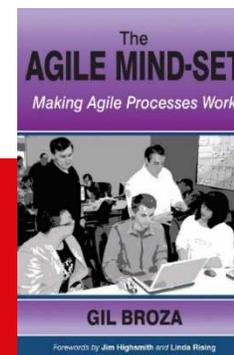
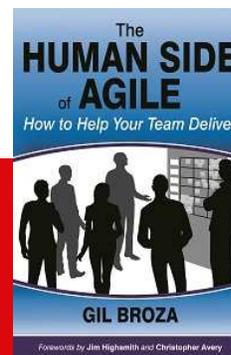


How to Help Your Non-Software Colleagues Adopt Agile

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Almost ready!



The angle we're taking in this session

The manager of a non-software function or a business unit is interested in Agile for their team(s) and has asked for your help. We'll refer to them as your clients.

We'll see how to empower and support them as they consider, start, grow, and sustain Agile ways of working.

What your client needs to do to make Agile work for them

1. Articulate the motivation
2. Realize how Agile differs from their current way of working
3. Address everyone's concerns
4. Determine where to try Agile for the first time
5. Understand that it will be a journey, and it can go wrong
6. Prepare for the journey
7. Learn enough about the Agile principles to get started
8. Design the initial way of working
9. Support the team during the first few months

1. Help your client...

Articulate the motivation

- Retaining and gaining market share (time to market)
- Fulfilling customers' needs earlier
- Adapting quickly to shifting landscapes
- Greater IT-Business collaboration
- Deliver solutions that better fit their purpose
- Higher transparency within and across functions
- Greater application of team members' skills and smarts
- Increased engagement
- General process improvement
- Less wasted work
- Healthier culture
- Something else?

The motivation should be clearly tied to improved business outcomes

Only a couple of these will matter to them

2. Help your client...

Realize how Agile differs from the current way of working



2. Help your client...

Realize how Agile differs from the current way of working

Agile values	What they may value now
Delivering value early and often Adaptation Customer collaboration Putting people first	Getting deliverables right the first time Following industry standards Minimizing cost and time

Agile beliefs	What they may believe now
Team > individuals Team > their manager Don't/can't have all answers upfront	Tasks should be done by specialists Must do what stakeholders want

Make sure they understand what they're asking for

3. Help your client...

Address concerns

Listen
Empathize
Respect



Treat it as an experiment, not as a binding change.

4. Help your client...

Determine where to try Agile for the first time

1. Inventory all major deliverables and the work that goes into them
 - products, services, solutions
 - other major responsibilities and activities
 - distinguish sub-cases or variants that are treated differently
2. Narrow down the list to items that
 - require a chunk of the team's effort (but don't bet the farm)
 - have a large development component
3. Pick one target for the first Agile experiment

4. Help your client...

Determine where to try Agile for the first time: frame the work

Who are the customers?

Example

The organization: An investment fund

The team: Talent Acquisition

The work: Presenting promising candidates to hiring managers

Customers:

- Hiring managers
- Managing directors
- Every candidate we speak to (even if we don't hire them!)

4. Help your client...

Determine where to try Agile for the first time: frame the work

What's the value to the customers and the organization?

Example

- “We help hiring managers invest the minimal amount of time filling a position with someone great.”
- “We increase the firm’s success and affect its culture through hiring.”

4. Help your client...

Determine where to try Agile for the first time: frame the work

What does success look like?

Example

- “The people we hire integrate well, perform well, and stay long-term.”
- “We don't lose good candidates through our own actions.”

4. Help your client...

Determine where to try Agile for the first time: frame the work

What are the constraints?

Example

- “Hiring managers’ busy schedules cause an otherwise straightforward process to stretch out over a couple of weeks, which can cause us to lose candidates.”
- “Our understanding of the work in each department is not enough to answer candidates’ questions.”

4. Help your client...

Determine where to try Agile for the first time: values

Different but equivalent elicitation questions:

- Which values will maximize the chance of success?
- As the team works, what should they optimize for?
- What are the top 3-5 values that should guide all choices?
- What about their work is non-negotiable?
- What is critical for their success?

aspirational > current or assumed

Example

- Great candidate experience
- Close collaboration with both hiring manager and candidate
- Taking a holistic, long-term view

Choosing the values using the inventory method

- Delivering value early and often
- Getting deliverables right the first time
- Following industry standards
- Putting people first
- Minimizing cost and time
- Adaptation
- Innovation
- Customer collaboration
- Avoiding disaster
- Being able to replace the workers easily
- Keeping the auditor/regulator happy
- ...

4. Help your client...

Determine where to try Agile for the first time: beliefs

What do we (*or should we*) believe about the people, the work, the customers, the business landscape, and changes?

Current state + beliefs to question + beliefs to try on

Example

- “We try to hire the best people, but we really need to hire the right people.”
- “Potential often trumps ‘hitting the ground running’.”
- “The hiring manager may not have asked all the right questions.”
- “Our perspective on the manager–needs–candidate triangle may be partial.”
- “The first 90 days matter.”
- “Candidates appreciate our honesty with them.”

Eliciting beliefs

Different but equivalent elicitation questions:

- “What are some things we take for granted? (and perhaps shouldn’t?...)”
- “What sort of things do we usually say to each other about [the work / the customers / the business landscape]?”
- “Which issues keep coming up in our work? What assumptions can explain them? What could we change?”
- “What kind of changes do we face (or regularly get surprised by)?”

Current state + beliefs to question + beliefs to try on

4. Help your client...

Determine where to try Agile for the first time: alignment

How aligned are your values & beliefs with the Agile ones?

Example

The organization: A facilities management company

The team: IT operations

The work: Deploying software updates to production

Values: correctness, zero user impact, minimize turnaround time, team health

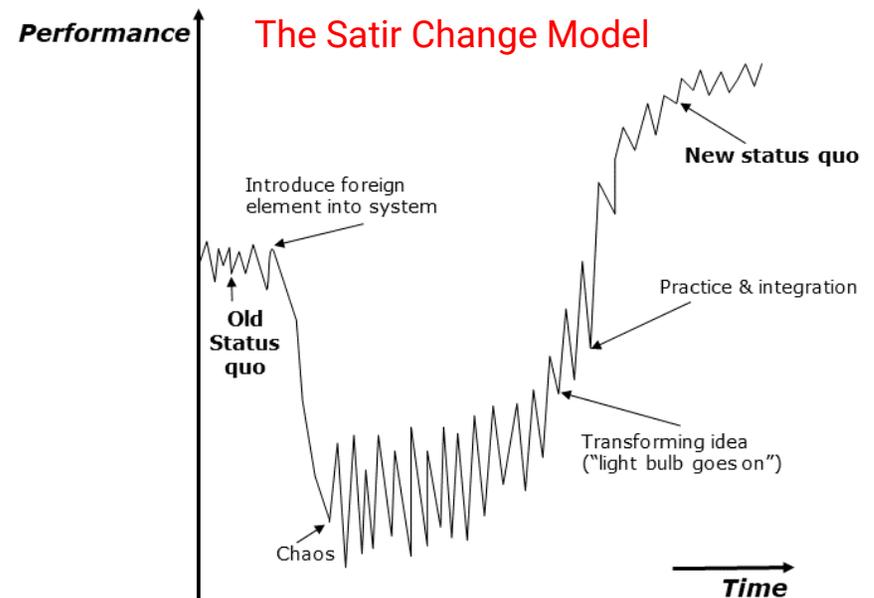
Beliefs:

- The packages we receive are correct
- Sometimes we need to roll back
- All our team members are cross-skilled
- There's no single, obvious customer to talk to
- We don't receive advance notice of need or content, but we *should*

5. Help your client...

Understand that it will be a journey, and it can go wrong

- Voluntary participation (safety, respect, trust, transparency)
- The experience of change
- Don't start with practices, frameworks, or tools
- Real risk of misalignment



The risk of misalignment

Practice/role/artifact	Was designed as	A traditional mindset sees it as
Daily standup	Regular check-in to maximize the team's value output	Daily status for maximizing work-the-plan
Product backlog	Prioritized list of valuable deliverables we might get to	Project plan
Pairing	Collaboration to minimize the risk of employing humans	Under-utilization
ScrumMaster	Servant leader, helping the team succeed as a team	Project manager; process compliance officer
Sprint demo	Feedback – for effectiveness	Frequent deadline for sign-off (and keeping people busy)

6. Help your client...

Prepare for the journey

- Choose a good time to start
- Get managers and stakeholders on board
- Prepare the team
- Team leadership – the Agile way

7. Help your client...

Learn enough about the Agile principles to get started

Organize around value creation
Collaborate on a product/service/solution
Produce outcomes of value
Always work on what's most important
Get feedback frequently
Minimize the cost of change
Constrain the intake of work
Visualize the work
Break work down
Bounded team autonomy
Self-organization
Collaboration
Continuous improvement

8. Help your client...

Design the initial way of working: choose the principles

Pick principles that implement the chosen values and beliefs: from Agile, from the current way of working, and others that seem important.

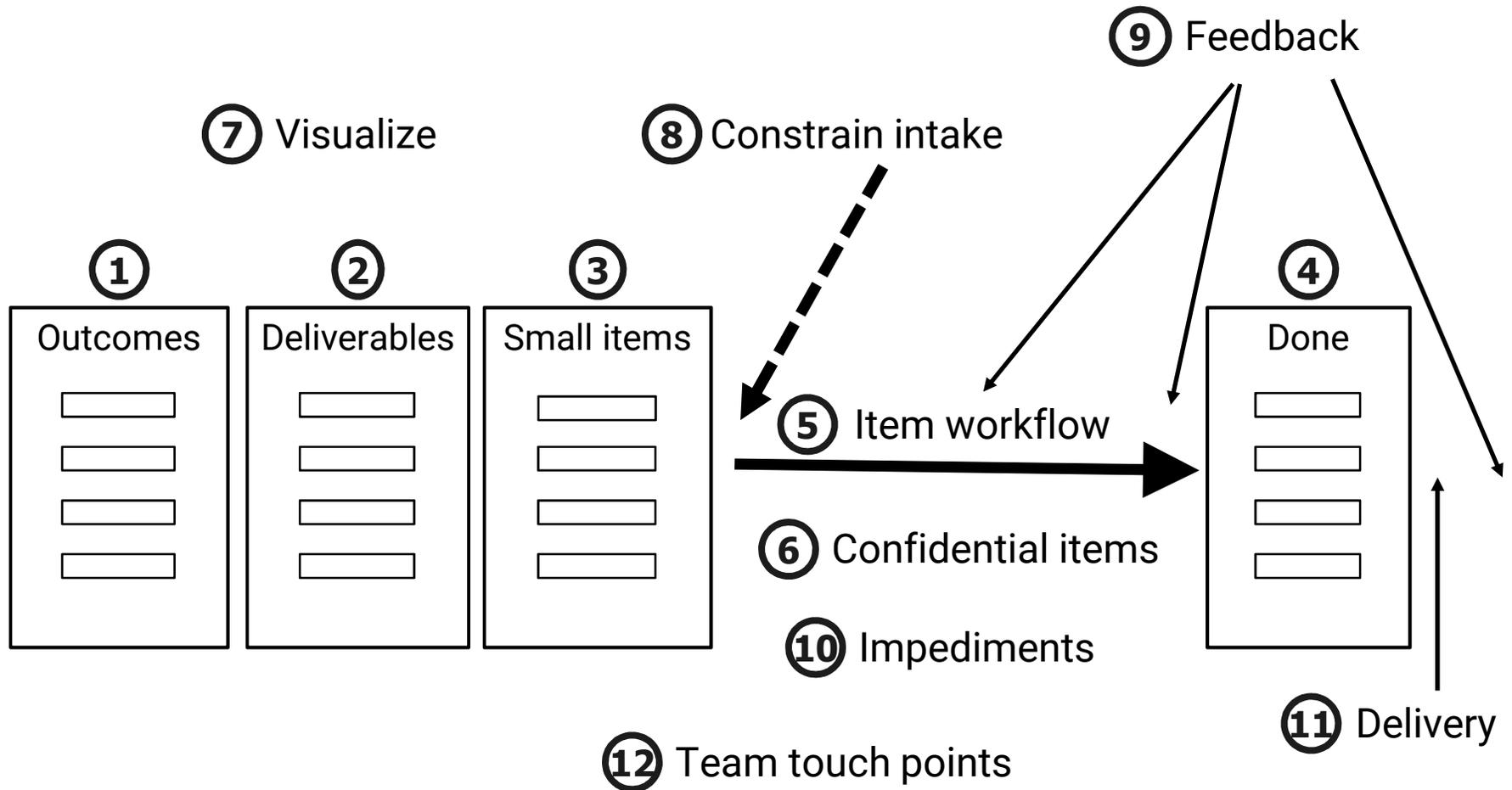
Example

The team: IT operations (shown earlier)

Team empowerment
Team collaboration
Learn from mistakes (ours and devs')
Get early notice of deployments
Plan each deployment
Deploy off-hours
Maximize automation
Minimize on-call time & off-hours work

8. Help your client...

Design the initial way of working: design the workflow



8. Help your client...

Design the initial way of working: structure the team

Maximize their likelihood of succeeding as an Agile team

- Interpersonal dynamics
- Skills & knowledge
- Availability
- Ability to finish without delay
- Size

Don't lean on them to work in an open space

8. Help your client...

Design the initial way of working: structure the team

List all current responsibilities, plus

- managing outcomes
- determining and sequencing deliverables
- soliciting and processing feedback
- looking after the way of working
- looking after team health
- removing impediments
- facilitating team meetings

It's an experiment, so don't change formal titles, job descriptions, reporting lines, authority levels, or compensation

Then identify a “home” for each.



9. Help your client...

Support the team during the first few months

1. Start with a kick-off
2. Mantra: Finish Small Valuable Work Together
3. Working agreements
4. Stabilize the system (WIP, delays, sustainable pace)
5. Watch for attitudes and behaviors that hamper agility
6. Reflect frequently
7. Lead intentionally
8. Assess how it's going
 - How well are they following their chosen principles?
 - Effect on outcomes? Downsides?

Learn more from me

“Something Happened on the Way to Agile”

Practical tips for common challenges: free 20-day email-based program

Get it at OnTheWayToAgile.com

“The Human Side of Agile”: how to lead Agile teams of imperfect humans

“The Agile Mind-Set”: how to be Agile... without prescribing practices

Both available in print, Kindle, PDF, and audio.

Find them at TheHumanSideOfAgile.com and TheAgileMindsetBook.info

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