
Agile Project Management

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What does it all mean?

- Write down the first ten words that come to mind when you hear the words:

“Software Development Project”

What does it all mean?

- How many people got ten out of ten?
 - How many people got nine out of ten?
 - How many people got eight out of ten?
 - How many people got ... out of ten?
-
- How come we all work together in software development but it means different things to everybody?

The Burning Questions

■ what is a manager for and...



■ what does a manager do...

The Stigma of Management

- Whenever management is mentioned in agile discussions, it is always framed in a negative context
- The agile community focuses on self-organising teams and the manager is often seen as a distinct entity separate from this

Why?

The Business Value of Management?

- Any individual that interacts with the team on a daily basis can (and should) deliver at least as much business value as any other team member

- But can a manager do this?

Culture

Organisational culture is the biggest determinant of productivity

“your organisation's productivity is influenced by the production process itself”- Deming

Your team can only be as productive as their environment allows them to be

Whose Culture?

- The culture of an organisation is shaped by its management.
- The behaviour exhibited and encouraged by leadership determines the attitudes and behaviour of the employees.
- Managers are the people with the most influence in the organisation
- Managers have the most influence on the organisation's culture.

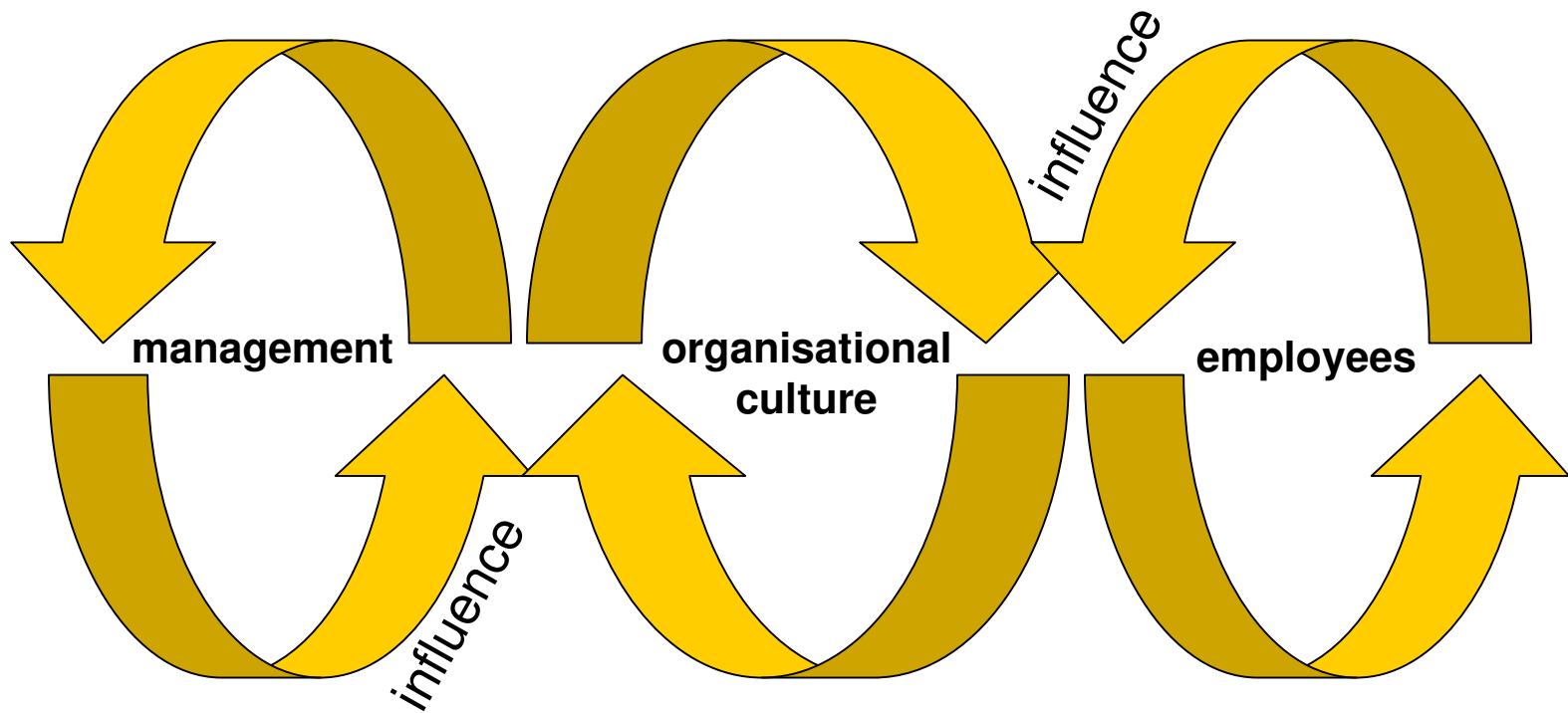
Enforced Culture



only management can influence the culture and
influence the way that employees behave

this has a direct effect on productivity

Emergent Culture



employees are also allowed to contribute toward the development of the organisation's culture.

the people doing the work determine how the work is done

Engendering Emergence

- An emergent culture requires:
 - Communication
 - Feedback
 - Simplicity
 - Courage
 - Respect

sound familiar?

Practising what you Preach

- Explanation is not good enough.
- Demonstrate by example
- The team will do what you do
 - not what you say

Facing the Furniture Police

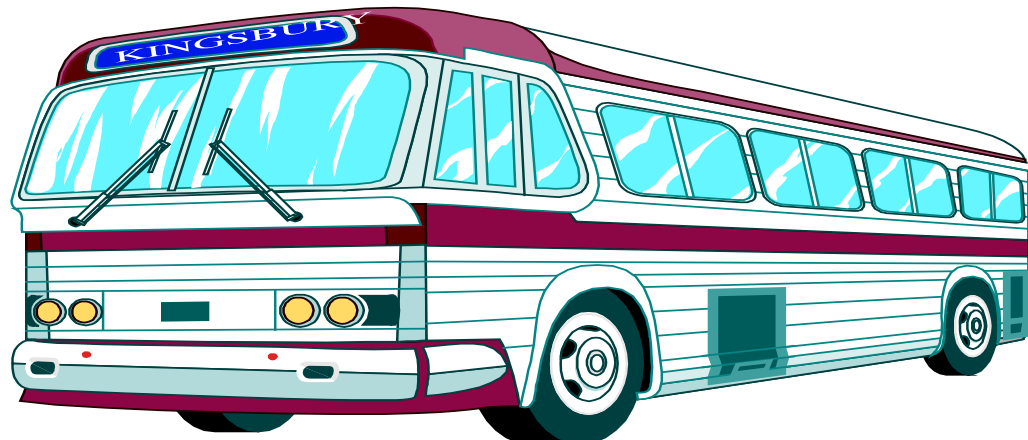
- It is impossible to transition to an agile way of working without moving desks around
- Reshaping the physical environment is necessary to improve communication and feedback
- The team takes control of its environment

Courage

- Build team courage by allowing them to choose their own goals and formulate their own purposes
- The practice of morning stand-ups allows individuals to develop their confidence and boosts their self-esteem
- The developer and customer rights reinforce this

get the right people on the bus...

- Everybody is an individual. Some crave predictability, some relish surprise
- These leanings define our political, intellectual, and cultural attitudes
- Not everybody can be agile



...get the wrong people off the bus

A problem employee is only a problem while they are an employee

Two big mistakes for a manager:

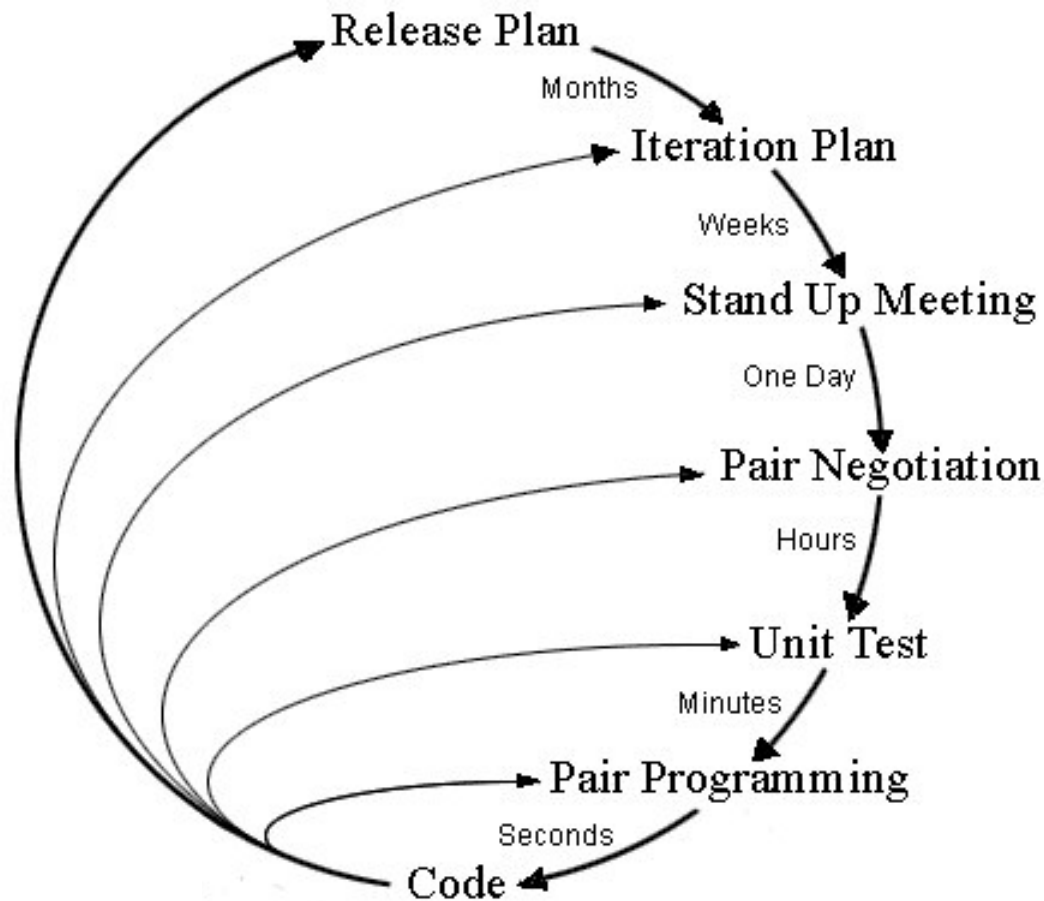
- Treating an employee with problems as a problem employee

- Treating a problem employee as an employee with problems



Implementing Feedback

Planning/Feedback Loops



- Feedback is the lifeblood of agile management
- The quicker we know of a problem, the quicker we can fix it

The Rules of Engagement

- Feedback loops need to be monitored to ensure that they are working
- Be aware of blockages and inferences
- The manager is a sentinel, ensuring that channels are kept open within the team and externally

Respect

- The team always does the best they can do with the resources available at the time
- The problems lie in the process, not the team
- There are no second-class citizens

Intimacy

- Promote honesty and openness, encourage the practice of intimacy.
- Intimacy is about being able to speak openly and honestly about issues that affect the team without fear
- Being able to discuss your uncertainties and true opinions without anger and without recrimination

Measuring

- Metrics are inappropriate for measuring or comparing the performance of individuals
- But we can use metrics to improve team morale and let them know when things are getting better
- e.g. measure the time spent **NOT** coding
- A non-intrusive way of obtaining feedback from the process
- Should be dropped when no longer useful

Breaking the Routine

- Development can be tiring
- The heartbeat can become monotonous
- It should be iterative not repetitive

- It's part of the manager's role to prevent this, use:
 - | Brown bags
 - | Outings
 - | Business Games

The Burning Answers

- what is a manager for...
delivering business value of his own and helping the team deliver their business value

- what does a manager do...
anything he can to improve the team's culture and environment because that is what will improve their productivity

The Agile Project Manager

- Is an important and integral part of the team not a separate, external entity
- Knows when to back off, lets the team lead themselves and doesn't rule by command and control

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