

Agile TODAY

PERSPECTIVES FOR THE ENTERPRISE INNOVATOR

Volume #3 | MARCH 2012

Adapt or Die –
an easy to
follow How-To

“I built an Agile
team from scratch”
– Case study

8 Tips for Agile Coaches!

Sneak peek: What's hot at
Agile Australia 2012

Win a
Samsung
Galaxy
tablet!

TECHCONNECT

19.APR.2012 @ Aerial UTS Function Centre, Sydney

It is not every day you get the opportunity to tap into the experiences of Australia's leading tech entrepreneurs – especially those who have grown successful, innovative companies. Come along to TechConnect 2012 to hear from the likes of **Mitchell Harper**, **Rebekah Campbell** and **Matt Barrie**, as they provide their perspectives on the challenges and opportunities for companies as they head out of start-up territory and establish real solid growth. For more information, please visit www.techconnect2012.com.au.



MATT BARRIE
CEO, FREELANCER.COM



MITCHELL HARPER
CO-FOUNDER & CO-CEO, BIGCOMMERCE



REBEKAH CAMPBELL
CEO, POSSE

TechConnect 2012 Details

when Thursday 19th April 2012

time 8.30am - 5.00pm
followed by networking drinks

venue Aerial UTS Function Centre
Level 7, 235 Jones St (Building 10), Ultimo NSW

cost \$250+GST or
\$150+GST (Special rate for entrepreneurs and employees
of public funded research institutions & start-ups)

Contents

- 01** Letter from the editor
- 02** 8 Tips for Agile coaches
Adrian Smith & Craig Smith
- 04** Explaining Disciplined Agile Delivery **Scott W. Ambler**
- 07** 60 seconds with **Roy Singham**
- 08** Building an Agile company from scratch **James Pierce**
- 09** Sneak Peek at this year's Agile Australia conference
- 10** Meet our Agile Australia 2012 stream chairs
- 12** Win a Samsung Galaxy tablet
- 13** Adapt or Die
Phil Abernathy



Letter from the editor



What a ride the last few weeks have been! Here at the Agile TODAY headquarters, we've been powering ahead with creating our best-ever Agile Australia conference.

Agile Australia 2012 will take place on Wednesday 30-Thursday 31 May 2012 in Melbourne, with a full day of pre-conference workshops taking place on Tuesday 29 May, with big thanks to our conference sponsors, ThoughtWorks, IBM, Rally Software and DiUS, and our Coffee Cart sponsor Aconex and Video sponsor Atlassian.

We've featured some sneak peeks of what will be on offer at the conference right here in these pages.

Gain hot tips on being the best Agile coach on page 2, discover the keys to being adaptable on page 13, and be inspired by one company's success at building an Agile company from scratch on page 8.

You'll also get to meet our Agile Australia keynote Roy Singham, CEO and Founder of ThoughtWorks on page 7, hear from Agile thought leader Scott Ambler (page 4), and meet the Agile Australia conference stream chairs on page 10.

And we can't wait to see what you come up with for this edition's caption competition, with a very coveted Samsung Galaxy Tablet up for the prize! All the details are on page 12.

Don't forget, we welcome your feedback and contributions to the AgileTODAY magazine. You can send us your comments and article ideas at agile@slatteryit.com.au.

Best wishes,

Zhien-U Teoh

8 Tips for Agile Coaches

By Adrian Smith & Craig Smith



The Agile coach is a critical role in helping leaders, teams and individuals understand, adopt and improve Agile methods and practice. For new and aspiring coaches, starting a coaching engagement can be daunting. It is easy to become distracted from the original mandate and get embroiled in the issues and politics of the team. The following tips were put together to help Agile coaches stay focused and achieve successful outcomes.

1 Start with the end in mind

Know when to leave and have a clear exit plan

Before beginning an engagement with a team, try to define success in terms of measurable outcomes and a realistic timescale. Share the outcomes with the team and sponsor to ensure there is an understanding of what you are trying to achieve. This will clarify your role within the team and reduce any fears the team may have about the coming changes. Setting an end date will also ensure that both you and the team are clear that they have to own and understand their way of working.

2 Be the change you want to see

Roll up your sleeves and show them how it's done

Showing the team how it is done the first time, then supporting them as they take ownership of the new way of working, is

a great way to bootstrap and build trust in new practices. Role model behaviours you want to see in the team. If there are techniques or technologies you cannot model yourself, you may need to mentor an enthusiastic team member or bring in an expert.

3 Keep your distance

Don't become part of the team

There is always a temptation to get involved and help with the team's delivery work – especially when you see them struggling. While this may offer some short term help and can be useful as a learning exercise, it is unlikely to help in the long term. Becoming part of the team will also make it difficult to have tough conversations with team members, call-out unproductive behaviours and stay focused on your coaching objectives. Try to stand back. Your role is to support the team and let them take credit for their success.



Craig Smith



Adrian Smith

ADRIAN SMITH is the Director of Technology at Ennova, who specialises in Agile and Lean methods. His experience spans the mining, aerospace, public infrastructure, digital media, banking, and insurance sectors.

CRAIG SMITH is a Delivery Coach at Suncorp. He has been an Agile practitioner for the last eight years, is a Certified Scrum Master and a member of both the Scrum Alliance and Agile Alliance, and has been practicing Agile for the last eight years.

Adrian Smith and Craig Smith will be running an Agile Coaching Workshop at Agile Australia 2012.

4 Ask the team

Make the team responsible – you don't have all the answers

The team has probably faced a majority of the issues long before you got involved. If they are to own the solution after you have gone, it is important to have them involved in the decision making process. Remember you are trying to help the team learn to work without your help. Sometimes, this means you have to let them make a decision that goes against your best judgement. Teams need to learn by their mistakes (and sometimes their idea works out which means you can learn something too).

5 Step by step

Don't change everything at once, create a learning environment

People can adapt to change more easily when it happens slowly and they see how it aligns to an overall plan. Additionally, change becomes natural when you are able to create a safe learning environment for the team that encourages experimentation. Try to change the practices that are causing problems by first replacing them with simple alternatives. If you take away all the old practices that a team depended upon they can lose their way and not see the dysfunctions for themselves.

6 Just the facts, ma'am

Separate fact from emotion with insightful questions

Asking questions is a fundamental skill for an Agile coach and can be used to drill down to the root cause of problems. Don't be afraid to ask "why" a few times to get to the facts behind a problem or to introduce the elephant in the room. As a coach you are in the privileged position of being able to raise sensitive issues and to legitimise discussion of them.

7 You make what you measure

Select simple metrics, measure regularly and make visible

Helping the team identify what is important (especially from a customer's perspective), making it visible and updating it regularly will focus a team. Example metrics include: throughput, cycle time, delivered value and many others. The corollary to this suggestion is that you need to be careful what you measure because you can incentivise behaviour that has the potential to be counter-productive.

8 Agile is only a means to an end

Adopting Agile should increase business value and reduce risk

Although the Agile journey is important, Agile perfection is not the end goal. What *does* matter is delivering what your stakeholders want in a sustainable way. For this reason it is important to use Agile maturity assessments and other metrics with care. Helping a team become Agile should focus on instilling Agile values and principles, while selecting and adapting Agile practices to help the team deliver.

SUMMARY

Becoming an Agile coach requires a deep understanding of Agile, the confidence to drive change and a willingness for self-reflection. The role of an Agile coach is a rewarding one that allows you to use a wide range of skills across technical, social, business and communication disciplines.

Explaining Disciplined Agile Delivery:

Taking Agile to the next level

By Scott W. Ambler – Chief Methodologist for IT, IBM Rational

People new to Agile, and even many experienced with Agile, will often ask me these fundamental questions, which are critical to their success. How does architecture fit into Agile delivery? When does it make sense to write requirements specifications? How much detail should you include? When should you enhance your whole team testing efforts with an independent test group? When shouldn't you? How does Agile work from the start of a project until the point of delivery? How does your Agile team successfully work with outside non-Agile teams?



Scott W. Ambler

The Disciplined Agile Delivery (DAD) process framework strives to provide a coherent strategy for how Agile solution delivery works in practice.

The DAD process framework is a people-first, learning-oriented hybrid Agile approach to IT solution delivery. It has a risk-value lifecycle, is goal-driven, is scalable, and is enterprise aware. From this definition, you can see that the DAD process framework has several important characteristics. These characteristics are:

- 1. People first.** DAD fosters cross-functional teams, where members are encouraged to have a cross-functional skill set and perform work related to disciplines other than their specialty.
- 2. Learning oriented.** There are three aspects that a learning environment must address. The first is domain learning – how are you exploring and identifying what your stakeholders need, and how are you helping the team to do so? The second is learning to improve your process at the individual, team, and enterprise levels. The third aspect is technical learning

which focuses on understanding the tools and technologies being used to craft the solution for stakeholders.

- 3. Agile.** The DAD process framework adheres to, and enhances, the values and principles of the Agile Manifesto.
- 4. Hybrid.** DAD is a hybrid in that it adopts and tailors strategies from methods like Scrum, Extreme Programming (XP), Agile Modeling (AM), Unified Process (UP), Kanban, and Agile Data (AD). The upshot is that DAD is a second-generation Agile process framework that leverages what has come before it.
- 5. IT solution focused.** With DAD, your focus is providing real business value to stakeholders within the appropriate economic, cultural, and technical constraints. Yes, software is important, but in addressing the needs of stakeholders we often provide new or upgraded hardware, change the business/operational processes which stakeholders follow, and even help change the organisational structure in which they work.

6. **Delivery focused.** The basic DAD lifecycle, depicted in Figure 1, addresses the project lifecycle from initiation, through construction, to releasing into production (it also shows some pre-initiation portfolio management activities and post-delivery production). This differs from first-generation Agile methods which typically focus on the construction aspects of the lifecycle, leaving the details about how to perform the rest up to you.
7. **Goal-driven.** One challenge of describing a process framework is you must provide sufficient guidance for people to understand the framework, but if you provide too much, it becomes overly prescriptive. To address this, the DAD process framework is goal-driven, as summarised in Figure 2. This approach provides just enough guidance for solution delivery teams while being sufficiently flexible so teams can tailor the process to address their own context.
8. **Enterprise aware.** Agile teams don't work in a vacuum. There are often existing systems currently in production, and hopefully your solution will leverage existing functionality and data. There are often other teams working in parallel to yours, and you may wish to take advantage of what they're doing and vice versa.

9. **Risk and value driven.** The DAD process framework adopts a risk/value lifecycle, effectively a light-weight version of the strategy promoted by the UP. DAD teams strive to address common project risks, such as coming to stakeholder consensus around the vision and proving the architecture early in the lifecycle. DAD also includes explicit checks for continued project viability, whether sufficient functionality has been produced, and if it's production-ready.
10. **Scalable.** The DAD process framework provides a scalable foundation for Agile IT and is an important part of IBM's agility at scale strategy. This strategy makes explicit that there is more to scaling than team size and there are multiple scaling factors. Each team will find itself in a unique situation and will need to tailor their strategy accordingly.

Goal Driven

The one characteristic about the DAD process framework that most agilists will find intriguing is that it is goal driven. The basic strategy is to identify the fundamental goals applicable at a given point in the project (see Figure 2), and then tailor your strategy to meet those goals in a manner that reflects the

situation that you actually face. To do so effectively you need to understand the issues pertinent to each goal, and the tradeoffs that you're making when doing so. This is where the DAD process framework provides guidance.

For example, consider the goal of identifying the initial requirements for your project. There are several issues that you need to consider when tailoring your process to fulfill that goal. First, what level of detail (e.g. detailed specification, light-weight specification, a list of goals, none) are you going to capture? What types of modeling (e.g. usage, domain, process, user interface, and non-functional) will you perform? For each type, how do you intend to explore that issue? For example, usage modeling can be addressed via user stories, use cases, usage scenarios, feature statements, and more. What elicitation strategies (e.g. formal, informal, or interviews) will you employ? What change management strategy (e.g. formal, product backlog, work item list, or work item pool) will you adopt? How will you capture (e.g. via tech stories, acceptance criteria, an explicit list, or not at all) the pertinent non-functional requirements (NFRs)? Although identifying initial requirements is a fairly straightforward goal, fulfilling it in a manner that reflects the actual situation that you face often requires a bit more than simply creating a stack of index cards.

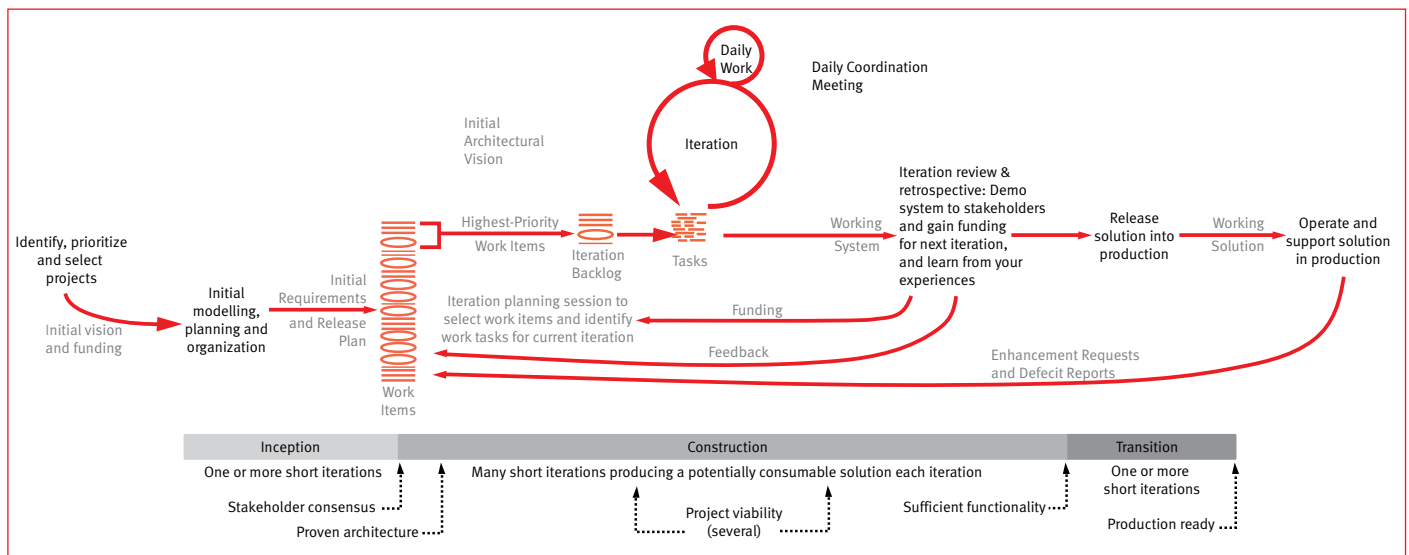


Figure 1: The basic lifecycle for Disciplined Agile Delivery (DAD)

Why DAD?

DAD is a goldilocks approach. RUP was too much, Scrum was too little, and I believe that DAD is just right. One of the challenges with describing a process framework is that you need to provide sufficient guidance to help people understand the framework but if you provide too much guidance then you become overly prescriptive. As I have helped various organisations improve their software processes over the years we've come to the belief that the various process protagonists are coming from one extreme or the other. At one extreme there are very detailed processes descriptions, the IBM Rational Unified Process (RUP) is one such example, and at the other there are very light-weight process descriptions, with Scrum being the exemplar. The challenge with RUP is that many teams didn't have the process knowledge to tailor it down appropriately. On the other hand many Scrum teams had the problem with not having sufficient process knowledge to tailor it up appropriately, resulting in significant effort reinventing or relearning techniques to address the myriad issues which Scrum doesn't cover. Either way, a lot of waste could have been avoided if only there was an option between these two extremes. DAD is that option.

The DAD process framework also provides a foundation for scaling Agile. DAD shows what it takes to successfully deliver an IT solution from project initiation through construction to release into production (or the marketplace). Once you

understand how to do this in reasonably straightforward situations you are then in a position to evolve your approach to address the complexities that you experience at scale. In short, learn to walk before you try to run.

DAD is a hybrid process framework that pulls together common practices and strategies from these methods, and more, to address the full delivery lifecycle. DAD puts people first, recognising that individuals and the way that they work together are the primary determinants of success on IT projects. DAD is enterprise aware, motivating teams to leverage and enhance their existing organisational ecosystem. The DAD lifecycle includes explicit milestones to reduce project risk and increase external visibility of key issues to support appropriate governance activities by senior management.

About the Author: Scott W. Ambler is IBM Rational's Chief Methodologist for IT, working with IBM customers around the world to help them to improve their software processes. He is the founder of the Agile Modeling (AM), Agile Data (AD), Disciplined Agile Delivery (DAD), and Enterprise Unified Process (EUP) methodologies and creator of the Agile Scaling Model (ASM). Scott is the (co-)author of twenty books.

Scott will be speaking on DAD at Agile Australia 2012 in Melbourne, 30-31 May 2012

Figure 2. Goals addressed throughout a DAD project

Goals for the Inception Phase	Goals for Construction Phase Iterations	Goals for the Transition Phase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the vision for the project Bring stakeholders to agreement around the vision Align with enterprise direction Identify initial technical strategy, initial requirements and project plan Set up the work environment Form initial team Secure funding Identify risks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce a potentially consumable solution Address changing stakeholder needs Move closer to deployable release Maintain or improve upon existing levels of quality Prove architecture early 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the solution is production ready Ensure the stakeholders are prepared to receive the solution Deploy the solution into production
Ongoing Goals		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fulfil the project mission Grow team member skills Enhance existing infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve team process and environment Leverage existing infrastructure Address risk 	

60 seconds

with Roy Singham



An influential supporter of emerging technologies, Roy Singham has championed software excellence through his 20 year career. Roy is the Founder and Chairman of ThoughtWorks, a custom software development firm with worldwide operations.

Everybody starts their Agile journey somewhere. What was your ‘a-ha!’ moment?

It was the day developers came running into my office screaming about the green bar passing. Martin Fowler and Ward Cunningham had been helping us with a large rewrite of a complicated, business domain, backend package. In those days green bar meant old-fashioned dot matrix printer paper so I was intrigued. I was manhandled and taken to see a screen with a green bar. That was when I got to see my first instance of unit tests passing. This was before the Agile Manifesto so probably around 1999.

I said tongue-in-cheek to Martin: “You are a genius. You have tricked these developers into wanting to become testers”. The developers quickly said to Martin: “You are a genius. You have tricked Roy into letting us write working modular code rather than pretend to have the perfect object abstraction!” It was that day I knew that Martin and Ward and the XP gang were on to something.

Over the next few weeks, Ward and I and others were steadfastly working on implementing many of Ward’s crazy testing ideas and we worked on things that became FIT. That was well over ten years ago. Shortly after, we ended up having to write Cruise Control, which helped popularise Continuous Integration.

You’ve described ThoughtWorks as “A company wholly devoted to software”. Where does this passion for software come from? Why is software so important to you?

Because it still represents one of the biggest tools we have to innovate for the human race. I am a believer that the human race has to restructure the way we consume and produce. And I believe that since it is both art and engineering, we can take lessons from how we construct software and apply it to many similar domains like DNA research. It is also in its infancy as a discipline and I am convinced we think more deeply about this than many and we can advance our craft to great effect.

You try to bring together “Talented, driven and principled people who are passionate about software”. How do you know if you’ve found one of these people?

Actually, we look for passion in general. It does not have to be strictly for software. From the beginning we have felt we should look for attitude; aptitude and integrity. No one says look for people low on integrity. But integrity to defend humanistic values is something that is more observable and highly important to us.

You need a sense of conviction, passion and ability to give voice to your values. So we look for progressive-minded people; people who get upset when they see discrimination against people with less power.

We have also been putting a lot of emphasis on reaching out to people who are design thinkers and passionate about experience design. The business sector in advanced economies has made the workplace sterile and hostile to emotion. To me this is absurd and actually strips the human race of one of its assets. Talent is multi-faced and one of my challenges is to remind our team that we have to collect passionate people with disparate inventories of capabilities and interests. My original hiring criteria was: would I be morally proud of my children if this candidate raised them? I try to make sure we don’t deviate too much from that.

What was your most important professional decision?

I’m not really sure what accounts for professional versus business and which is the most important. I tell everyone I cannot imagine a more privileged life. I had the chance to live in many countries as a mixed-race child. Before ThoughtWorks, I ran a program that taught indigent children mathematics and science, worked in an auto factory, a steel mill, worked in railyards, was an electrician, was a bookkeeper, ran a non-profit, was an activist and a shop steward in a union (the United Auto Workers). It was then that I learned how not to underestimate others, how to be part of a team and be empathetic, etc. I suppose, from a direct knowledge standpoint, understanding accounting (I did 30 credit hours) made a huge difference. Another decision that was important was deciding to make culture the prime focus of my job for 17 years.

What is your biggest challenge for 2012? How will you overcome it?

All companies oscillate around centralisation and decentralisation and innovation versus efficiency. At around \$200 million in revenue, you have to enable a greater deal of decentralisation. Yet, for us, culture is our long-term differentiator.

I am not a believer in decentralised culture. So, we have a conflict. We also have the challenge of balancing between three pillars: a sustainable business, championing software excellence and promoting social and economic justice. Global IT is still growing despite macro economic uncertainty. We have to train a whole generation of new leaders for ThoughtWorks to scale this admittedly ambitious (critics would say pretentious) plan. It is much easier to train leaders when you have what I would call a simple uni-dimensional focus. Plus we are on a long-term plan to increase our local Global South markets.

The Australian Agile community is a vibrant, energetic, and engaged crowd. What message will you be bringing when you speak to them at the Agile Australia conference in May?

Yes, I agree that Australia seems to have a more sustainable collaboration culture in IT than elsewhere. My talk will be around how do we take the huge intellectual capabilities represented by this community and redirect a portion of this towards the social sector in new and creative ways. There are synergies between the Open Source Software world and the Agile world. Imagine if OpenMRS, a medical record system designed for the most resource-constrained areas of the world (some argue the most successful non-technical domain package) was able to serve 100 million patients not just the current 5 million, because 500 IT professionals in Australia supported this project? I want to discuss how and why this is possible.

What is your favourite thing on your desk right now?

Really a desk? I travel up to 280 days a year. I am a nerd. My partner got me this ultra cool retro old-fashioned red handset for my two cell phones. It is so dorky and me, it is wicked cool. My two early passions were phone phreaking and stereos. This is sad, isn’t it?

Roy Singham will be delivering a keynote address at Agile Australia 2012.

Building an Agile company from scratch

James Pierce – Partner, Luna Tractor



James Pierce

The competitive landscape for health insurance in Australia is dominated by a small number of large incumbents that have been in business for many years. Below that are about 30 smaller players who have as little as <1% market share. Many of the business practices of these players are rusted on through highly proscriptive regulation, legacy systems that are common across players, and old mindsets. New brands pop up now and then, but they are bolt-ons to older players and typically contained by old practices. Even when new products come out, the bulk of an insurer's book remains "old school" on the former products. There has not been a material new entrant since Medibank spun out of the HIC in 1975.

Luna Tractor helped a small team of innovators when they came together in 2011 to break into this oligopoly. Setting themselves a tough deadline to be in the market in 2012, the main business challenge that emerged was to develop an effective operating model – a way for a group of seasoned insurance executives and subject matter experts to collaborate at high speed to reach their goal.

We set the company to work using the principles of Agile and Systems Thinking from the start. Instead of each subject matter expert retreating to their office to write board-level strategy papers to present to VCs and partners, they settled into their future headquarters around large Ikea tables with laptops and built a war-room. They defined themselves by this highly collaborative, communications-heavy set of business practices.

The rhythms of Agile serve them well. Daily conversations about everyone's work-list (from CEO to office support) help avert risk and surprises. Weekly demonstrations of achievements, most of them not software-related at all but about building online distribution, new products and governance, get everyone on the same page, and are platforms for the one-hour retrospectives and planning that follow every Friday.

Everyone has cards on the wall, separated into swim-lanes that reflect the key business objectives such as license approval and product development. The board is constructed using a customised 'Hurricane' model, ranging from 6 months out to today, in ever increasing levels of certainty and detail.

There were initial doubts about the suitability of Agile from some of the seasoned professionals on the team – having only ever worked in command and control businesses at senior levels, some perceived they were being asked to trivialise their work with index cards, scissors and coloured dots. There was a strong desire to see Gantt charts and more traditional sources of comfort. These concerns soon vanished when the blunt accountability of speaking to their peers every morning about their achievements and work for the day became apparent as the main purpose of the system.

Any concerns that the new way of working was 'soft' were dispelled in the many tough discussions about progress at stand-ups. As the team often reflected, it was far better to have many smaller moments of debate, receive timely feedback and correct their course than have a big 'oh no!' moment a month later.

In no time, new boards sprang up around the walls, developing products in a shared way, and to the team's delight their distribution partners, new IT team, Board of Directors and the industry regulators expressed their support for this ultra-transparent and interactive way of working.

With time pressure obvious, everyone focuses on delivering the minimal viable product that can be brought to the table for discussion, or validated with customers and experts. That 'product' might range from an actuarial analysis, to a regulatory document, competitive information, or a set of accounts – a desire to boil the ocean and deliver a gold-plated answer when 80% would enable an informed decision has long gone from the culture.

The whole business is now being built on this foundation, to be customer-focused and fast-moving. The team's ability to collaborate, solve problems and correct their course in short cycles is a major competitive advantage they will never lose – and it is clear they will take these into the operational phase of the business in 2012.

Time to competency at working this way was eight weeks, with one Luna Tractor Partner coaching four mornings a week initially, eventually only dropping by on Fridays for demo, retro and planning sessions.

This article was first published at <http://lunatractor.com/2011/11/15/luna-case-study-a-health-insurance-startup/>





Sneak
Peek!

Agile

AUSTRALIA '12

What's on at this year's Agile Australia conference?

Agile Australia 2012 is going to be packed with case-studies and learnings you can take back to your organisation. Hear real-life war stories from:

Ben Hogan – Iteration Manager, Realestate.com.au

Pushing our Buttons: REA's journey to the cloud

Learn about REA's journey from manually provisioned environments to fully automated provisioning and deployment of end to end environments – their experiences using public and private cloud platforms, challenges they have faced along the way, tools they have used and developed in-house.

Cara Talbot – Senior Project Manager, Vero Insurance NZ Ltd

From shaky beginnings: The evolution of the earthquake reinstatement programme

Vero was put to the test recently with the spate of earthquakes in Christchurch. This case-study will outline the "gotcha's" learned.

Rick Wingfield – Chief Information Officer, AIA Australia

The Yin and Yang of Agile – Adventures in Chinese Agile

Hear about the experience of the Agile journey at AIA Australia and the opposing forces they have encountered, including working with distributed teams in China. Distributed vs Co-located? Project vs BAU? Big bang vs Slow Burn? Suits vs Casual?!

Megan Folsom – Technical Project Manager, eBay.com

In-Roads in Outsourcing: Ebay's (mis)adventures with offshoring

Find out how eBay overcame cultural misunderstandings, sterile company conversions, and naysayers to create an atmosphere of trust, safety and a passionate team.

David Carpenter – Head of Delivery-Direct Insurance, Insurance Australia Group

Using Agile to deliver smarter business outcomes, not projects!

IAG's journey over the last 18 months focused on the delivery of business benefits and positioned IT as a partner in delivering change and success.

Tref Gare – Senior Interaction Designer, Aconex

Agile UX – Marriage made in heaven? or Just staying together for the kids?

How one designer learned to adjust and adapt without becoming defensive and work well with the 'other side' of the room to make great projects together.

James Wolstenholme – Consultant, DiUS and Richard Homburg – Solutions Architect, Jemena

Is User Experience & Agility the future for utilities?

Two utilities operating in a traditionally waterfall environment and constrained by regulatory compliance were able to dramatically shorten the time required to take their consumer portal project from inception to production by using Agile techniques. Hear how they incorporated user experience design into this process to create real value for the consumer.

PLUS

HEAR FROM ...



Patrick Eltridge – Chief Information Officer, Telstra, on *Changing methods is easy – changing culture is hard*



Nish Mahanty – Software Delivery Manager, MYOB on *Building high-performing teams (to deliver awesome business outcomes)*



Michael Bromley – Head of Portals and Online Services, NBN Co on *Hiring for agility: How to build a high performing Agile team*

All this plus loads more at Agile Australia 2012! See you there!

AGILE AUSTRALIA 2012

Adapt, Innovate,
Collaborate, Deliver!

30–31 May 2012,
Melbourne

2 days, 3 streams,
56 speakers,
500+ delegates

www.agileaustralia.com.au

Meet our Agile Australia 2012 stream chairs

Our national Agile conference, Agile Australia 2012, takes place this May in MELBOURNE. We are so privileged to be able to draw on the experience and knowledge of the Conference Advisors, who have introduced themselves here!



PHILIP ABERNATHY
Project Management

I grew grey on the Waterfall method in large corporate organisations. However I have been practicing and preaching Agile for the last 11 years and spend my days helping organisation transform to an Agile way of working.

As Agile spreads across both business and IT projects, the challenge is not just project management but program and portfolio management as well. How does one apply Agile values, principles and practices to the entire project landscape in an organisation and not just to a few projects? As Chair of the Project Management stream, I am looking forward to a conference which addresses the practices and capabilities needed at not just the micro project level but at the macro portfolio level as well in order to deliver the most business value.



NIGEL DALTON
Leadership and Teams (co-chair)

I have over 10 years experience applying Agile principles to IT and product development, and I am really interested in seeing business take Agile and lean thinking beyond software development, to all areas of the organisation.

I'm particularly keen to find out your stories about how your leaders and teams reacted to this new, Agile way of working, what the outcomes were, and enabling others to learn from those experiences.



DANIEL OERTLI
Leadership and Teams (co-chair)

As CIO of REA Group, I'm passionate about leading positive and profitable change in forward-thinking enterprises. My operating philosophy is centred on creating and sustaining high-performance cultures, and I'm inspired by leaders who 'get to the heart' of what really matters to great people doing great work.

The Leadership and Teams stream covers a variety of topics essential to today's leaders in Agile-friendly organisations, including: talent recruitment and development, supporting behaviours and work practices, optimal team structures and roles, organisational change management, and key leadership skills and operating philosophies. But what I'd really like to get out of the conference and hear from the community, is: 'what am I going to change tomorrow that will help my people give their best'.



ADAM BOAS
Design and Build (co-chair)

I have worked as a developer, architect, team lead, and development manager across projects in many industries and environments. I love building software and I am simply interested in seeing the job get done. In general I have found that applying Agile principles makes that more likely to happen. I am driven by a desire to do quality work and build applications that delight. I love teaching and learning from people involved in all aspects of project delivery.

Developing product is at the heart of why most companies move to Agile processes in the first place. I am looking forward to hearing your stories on supporting and speeding the development process.



KEITH DODDS
Design and Build (co-chair)

I am the Director of Client Relations for ThoughtWorks Asia Pacific, and have been in sales and general management for over 30 years, in the US, Europe, Australia and Asia. I've been on the advisory board for the Agile Australia conference for the past four years.

The Agile movement has seen many innovations in design and build techniques over the past 10 years. This stream will explore the latest tips and tricks and how to integrate the design of exceptional user experiences into Agile development teams. We hope to explore the boundaries of galaxies far, far away ...



KATY ROWETT

Adoption and Approaches (co-chair)

I have a particular interest in large-scale organisational transformations and the impact they have on individuals, the dynamics of teams and, the role of a leader. I have worked with companies across the finance, telecommunications, and mining industries to help effectively navigate large scale change.

As co-chair of the Adoption and Approaches stream, I want to hear about what has worked for others – which practices needed to be customised? Did it scale? What was learnt at an organisational, individual and leadership level? I would like to learn about pragmatic Agile in a holistic sense and hear about the good, the bad and the ugly.



MARTIN KEARNS

Adoption and Approaches (co-chair)

My interests lay in training / coaching individuals and organisations to improve their application of Agile and build high-performance teams. I've been a technology professional for over 18 years with a passion for learning new ways of working. Agile provided me with a focus that supported my core values in life and in my workplace.

The Agile Adoption and Approaches stream is dear to my heart as key failings and learnings of the past have been in appreciating the difficulty in organisational transformation. In this stream, I want to see an examination of the complexities associated with the Agile approach from the cultural and technical aspects of change. How can we assist one another to gain a better appreciation for what is required to be successful. Hearing the key 'Aha' moments that can be taken back to a workplace and implemented, coupled with the positive energy from individuals realising future possibilities, should make a great conference.



JOHN SULLIVAN

Product Management

I have spent all of my 20+ years in software systems delivery, using multiple processes from Waterfall to Chaos! Over the last ten years I've focused on using multiple forms of Agile processes as they provide a better business outcome, a more collaborative working environment and continual clear path for project delivery.

I believe that almost all successful projects are a result of a project having clear Goals, Objectives and Requirements. I also believe that most failures are not due to technical failings but as a result of not understanding what needs to be built. Agile helps projects understand their Goals, Objectives and Requirements differently than most other processes. The role or practice that helps provide this clear passage is the function of the Product Manager. As an advisor to this stream I want to help show conference attendees the importance of the Product Manager role, the processes the role uses and provide case studies of its successful use.



Craig Smith

Program Overview

I first experienced Agile about ten years ago, and there was no going back after that. You can't beat the enjoyment of working with a team that is delivering a quality product and having fun along the way. The great thing about Agile Australia is that everybody is open to sharing their experiences, both good and bad. I really enjoy attending talks on areas I don't normally work in – I always come away with a number of great new learnings!



Aconex is the most widely-used online collaboration platform in the world for construction, infrastructure, energy and resources sectors, with thousands of clients and users in over 70 countries. We embraced Agile several years ago, and have not looked back, which is why you'll see us at great conferences like Agile Australia (we hope you will enjoy the free coffee, by the way!)

We are expanding and looking for talented and enthusiastic people to join our team in Melbourne CBD.

Like to meet? Visit www.aconex.com/about/careers to start the conversation.



Win a Samsung Galaxy tablet!

Would you like to be the owner of a sexy Samsung Galaxy tablet? AgileTODAY is giving away this hot tablet to one lucky reader.

For your chance to win, send us your most creative caption for this photo. The winner will be announced on the Agile Australia blog (agileaustraliablog.com).

To enter:

1. Come up with a creative, quirky, colourful, or comic caption for the photo
2. Email it to agile@slatteryit.com.au with CAPTION in the subject line
3. Be sure to include your name, job title, company, email address and phone number
4. We will notify the winner by email, and publish the winning caption on the Agile Australia blog!

Competition closes Friday 30 March 2012.



CONGRATULATIONS! Last edition's winner was Jacob Moonen, Integrated Research, who won a 16GB Asus Eee Pad Tablet with this caption: "Research has shown some people tend to overreact when confronted with the benefits of Agile."



Adapt or Die

By Phil Abernathy



Phil Abernathy

Adapt or die – an old cliché that often rings true. No one wants to die, or fail for that matter. No one wants to preside over the demise of an organisation or department. So why do so few adapt? Why is it so hard to adapt?

The three key questions I hear asked all the time are: Where do I start? What should I adapt? And how will I know I'm doing the right thing?

How will I know that change is improvement? It could be a step backwards!

No one can give you definite proof that the change you make will help you succeed. No two situations are the same. Every organisation, even in similar sectors, is different. While one can watch and learn from what others do, success case stories are no guarantee for success. That's why numerous companies who have visited Toyota and spent millions with the aim of emulating their success, have failed to implement successfully. Forget guarantees.

The only way to be sure that change equals improvement is to make small changes and measure the outcomes every step of the way. Small continuous improvement, or 'Kaizen' as the Japanese call it.

What should I adapt?

Remember, every organisation is different. While there are templates and recipes, principles and practices that have been proven to succeed, there's no guarantee they will work in your organisation.

The only ones who know what needs to change in your organisation are the people in your organisation – not consultants or management gurus, not even the leaders in the organisation.

Rely on the wisdom of the crowd and ask the employees. If the focus is 'How can I improve?' the answers will flow fast and furious.



Phil Abernathy will be presenting on a 'safe to fail' environment at the Agile Australia 2012 conference.



“Work with people and make hard decisions together. Results take perseverance and focus.”

WHERE DO I START? –

With an honest detailed understanding of the problem, its root cause and its impact

WHAT SHOULD I ADAPT? –

Ask the people in the organisation as they understand the problem

How will I know I'm doing the right thing? –

Make small continuous changes and measure progress all the way

This will raise another challenge for leaders: Deciding what is most important and staying focused for the whole journey. Work with the people and make hard decisions together. Results take perseverance and focus. Change in a large organisation is like turning a large ship, and sometimes one has to hope that we don't do a 'Costa Concordia' and leave it too late.

Where do I start?

The first question we have to ask ourselves is 'What's the problem?' It's amazing how few leaders really know what the problem is and what the root causes are. Most have a hypothesis but not many can back this up with real numbers and figures. Know your business and its problems inside out. Study the problems and understand the root causes and their impact.

This will not only confirm if you need to change, but also establish the impact of not changing. It will be your mandate for change. I've noticed some organisations are reluctant to examine root causes as this may be perceived as blame. "Let's not beat ourselves up too hard", I hear. Or, "Let's look at the positives we have achieved".

While it is essential to celebrate success, it does not negate the need to examine failure. We fly safe today because air crash investigations do such a thorough job of looking into root causes – even if this does result in blame being laid at someone's door.

The biggest mistake is not learning from mistakes.

Once all the values, principles, practices and process have been stripped away, this is the heart of both Agile and Lean, it's in this simplicity that organisations adapt and succeed.

SAVE THE DATE

**Tuesday 23 October 2012
Sydney
www.tech23.com.au**

Tech23
Celebrating innovation in 2012

Tech23 2011 winners:



Safe to

FAIL

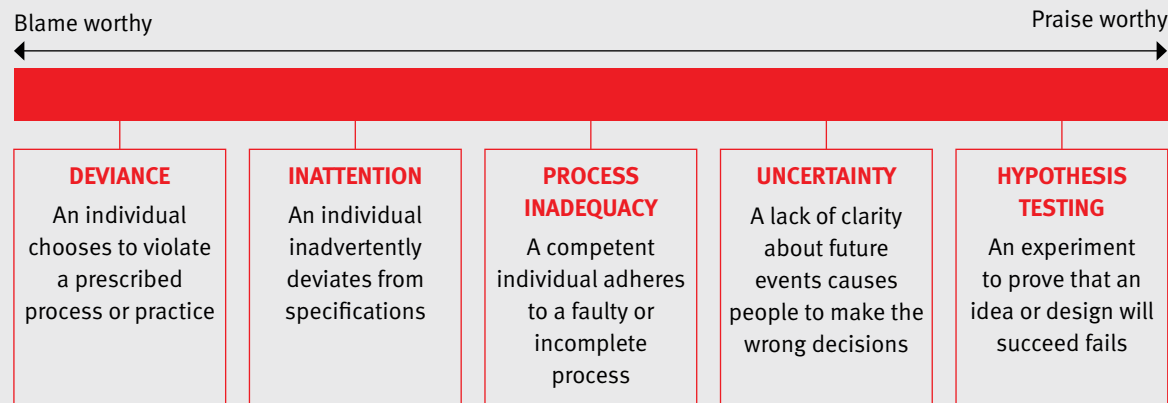
Blame worthy or Praise worthy?

In the April 2011 issue of the *Harvard Business Review*, Amy Edmondson, Professor of Leadership and Management at the Harvard Business School, has a great article on strategies for learning from failure.

It made me think of how the Agile way of working looks at failure and how we learn from it. In Agile the 'safe to fail' mantra is often talked about but just as often abused in more ways than one. Sometimes teams and people are blamed for failure and hence don't feel safe, sometime teams use the 'safe to fail' umbrella to not follow any procedure or agreed rules and just do what they want.

A 'safe' environment is essential for improvement and innovation, creativity and morale, the key ingredient to creating this safe environment is clarity of what types of failures are 'safe'.

THE FAILURE SPECTRUM



Leaders need to recognise and make clear that failures occur on a spectrum from blame worthy to praise worthy.

If there is a belief, or ingrained attitude, that all failures are bad then organisations will not learn from them. Failure is the greatest teacher. If an organisation is to ultimately succeed and improve then employees must feel safe admitting and reporting failures. Clarity is the key to creating this environment. Employees would actually expect people to be held accountable for blame worthy behaviour, providing the spectrum was clearly understood. This would also encourage creativity and innovation at the praise worthy end of the spectrum.

The ideal goal is to detect failure early, analyse the root cause and then learn from it so that the organisation continuously improves.

— Phil Abernathy

A close-up photograph of John Sullivan, a man with short dark hair, wearing a blue and white striped shirt. He is speaking into a microphone, with his hands raised in a gesturing motion. The background is dark. In the foreground, a white nameplate is partially visible.

“Don’t be frightened
of hiring people
smarter than you”

John Sullivan, Head of Technology,
New Business, Jetstar

Sullivan

Agile
AUSTRALIA '12

Agile AUSTRALIA '12

30-31 May 2012 | Hilton on the Park, Melbourne

keynotes



Inspiration

Fiona Wood

2005 Australian of the Year, Fiona Wood is a Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeon, Director of the WA Burns Service and a consultant at Princess Margaret Hospital and Royal Perth Hospital. In October 2002, her leadership, innovation and vision were brought into the world's spotlight as she treated survivors of the Bali bombing with her ground breaking research on tissue-guided regeneration.



Innovation

Roy Singham

Founder and Chairman, ThoughtWorks

Throughout his 20-year career, Roy Singham has inspired the industry as an influential supporter of emerging technologies, open source programming languages, and Agile methods of software development. At Agile Australia 2012, hear Roy's perspectives on the revolutionary power of technology.



Leadership

Mark (Bomber) Thompson

Mark "Bomber" Thompson played 202 games for Essendon, captaining the side from 1992 until 1995. He then became assistant coach at Essendon. Becoming senior coach at Geelong from 2000 onwards, he ended the Cats 44 year premiership drought when they won the 2007 premiership. In 2009 Geelong won a second flag under his leadership. As a captain and coach of premiership teams, Mark brings a unique perspective on leadership and teamwork.

TITLE SPONSOR

ThoughtWorks®

PLATINUM SPONSORS



GOLD SPONSOR



registration form



You may register via fax 1300 651 486 or

online at www.agileaustralia.com.au, or post to

Level 1, 43-51 Brisbane Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010

DETAILS

First Name _____

Last Name _____

Job Title _____

Company _____

Phone _____

Email _____

COST \$700 by Friday 23 March 2012 \$900

PAYMENT METHOD

Cheque Credit Card Amount \$ _____

Card No

Expires /

MasterCard Visa Diners Amex ID No _____

Cardholders Name _____

Signature _____

• Upon completion of registration, attendees will have their names on the door at the event. We do not issue physical tickets • All prices shown include GST and include access to all conference sessions, associated materials and refreshments • A full refund will be provided where written notification (by email or fax) is received by SlatteryIT at least 30 days prior to the event. Refunds are not provided for any cancellation received after this time or for non-attendance on the day. Delegate substitutions may be made at any time • Should for any reason the event be cancelled, a credit will be issued to be redeemed at a future event • Entry may be denied if payment has not been received prior to the event.

www.agileaustralia.com.au

ADAPT.

INNOVATE.

COLLABORATE.

DELIVER.

TITLE SPONSOR

ThoughtWorks®

PLATINUM SPONSORS

IBM

RALLY
SOFTWARE

GOLD SPONSOR


DiUS

AgileAUSTRALIA '12

30-31 May 2012 | Hilton on the Park, Melbourne