Corporate Culture Workshop

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Corporate Culture Workshop

Purpose: deep analysis of your corporate culture to discover how it will interact with your adoption of OpenAgile.

Agenda:
- Exercise: What is Culture?
- Aspects of Culture
- Cultural Artifacts
- Espoused Values
- Underlying Assumptions
- Workshop: Your Corporate Culture

NOTE: this workshop normally takes four hours.

Exercise: What is Culture?

This is an exercise for the whole group:

- Name some "cultures" (examples: Canadian, Punk Rock)

- Discuss together: Why do we call these "cultures"?

- What do you think Culture is?

What is Culture?

What linguists have said (Wikipedia, April 2007):

Generally refers to patterns of human activity and the symbolic structures that give such activity significance.

Anthropologists most commonly use the term "culture" to refer to the universal human capacity to classify, codify and communicate their experiences symbolically.

"It is the way people live in accordance to beliefs, language, history, or the way they dress."

Aspects of Culture

External Survival Issues: "Succeeding"

- Mission, strategy and goals
- Means: structure, systems, processes
- Measurement: error-detection and correction

Internal Integration Issues: "Working Together"

- Common language and concepts
- Group boundaries and identity
- The nature of authority and relationships
- Allocation of rewards and status

"What We Believe:" Expressions of How We View...

- The nature of reality and truth
- The nature of humans and their relationships
- The nature of time and space

Cultural Artifacts

ar·ti·fact or ar·te·fact /ˈɑrtəˌfækt/ , noun

1. any object made by human beings, esp. with a view to subsequent use.

2. a handmade object, as a tool..., characteristic of an earlier time or cultural stage, esp. such an object found at an archaeological excavation.

3. any mass-produced, usually inexpensive object reflecting contemporary society or popular culture: artifacts of the pop rock generation.

Dictionary.com Unabridged (v 1.1). Retrieved April 13, 2007

Cultural Artifacts

'Cultural Artifacts' are the things that we create in going about what we do. Things we see, hear and otherwise perceive in and around our work environment.

- Example #1: Constant meetings, informal dress, no closed doors, noisy, prominently displayed employee-of-the-month awards, mascot animals, company "jargon"

- Example #2: Strongly personalized work spaces, quiet heads-down work, impersonal front-desk security, empty games room, quotes from famous people

Caution: artifacts are a symptom...

Espoused Values

Espoused Values are the accepted, explicit reasons for the way things are done

- Published, publicly announced or oft quoted values

- An organization may have a document that describes the values, principles, ethics and vision
  - E.g. Integrity, Teamwork, Customer Satisfaction, Quality

- We might notice inconsistencies between espoused values and the related cultural artifacts
  - These reveal opportunities to look at the deeper assumptions driving that culture

Underlying Assumptions

Conflicts between espoused values and cultural artifacts expose underlying tacit (unvoiced or unspoken) assumptions.

What really drives organizational culture?

Cultural Artifacts

Espoused Values

Tacit, Shared Assumptions

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Underlying Assumptions

Organizational behavior is often driven by underlying values, beliefs and assumptions of the founders and leaders...

...usually because those assumptions led to success in the past

- Therefore, look to the organization's history to find out what is believed to have made it successful
  - Founder's personality
  - Major crises
  - Major successes
- Also look for behavior that is not in line with espoused values or behavior the changes based on context

Workshop: Your Corporate Culture

You are going to look at the culture of your organisation,
  its Values, Artifacts and Assumptions.
  This exercise is inspired by Edgar H. Schein's "Corporate Culture Survival Guide."

Purpose:

Due to the substantial impact and influence of OpenAgile adoption on
  culture and culture on OpenAgile adoption...

Having looked deeply at OpenAgile...

Now we look deeply at your corporate culture...

So that we can find what helps and what hinders your implementation
  of OpenAgile

This is a sort of Retrospective, so we should review the
  "Retrospective Prime Directive"   www.retrospectives.com

Workshop: Your Corporate Culture

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.

Workshop: Your Corporate Culture

Work in groups of 5 or 6, spend ½ hour on:

Create List 1: "Our corporate cultural artifacts"

- Do a mental walk-through of your space, your day and your year – what do you notice? Be specific!
- Ask the newer people in your group what they noticed when they first arrived.
- Ask the veterans of your organization what they have noticed as recent changes.
- What **isn't** visible?

Now walk around and review all the other groups' lists.

Workshop: Your Corporate Culture

Continue in your groups, spend ½ hour on:

Create List 2: "Our corporate espoused values"
- Look for guidelines, vision statements, rules, handbooks
- Write these things down!!!
- What **isn't** stated?

Now walk around and review all the other groups' lists.

Workshop: Your Corporate Culture

Continue in your groups, spend ½ hour on:

Create List 3: What are the corporate underlying assumptions?

"**At <organization name>, we believe**
_____"

- Compare List 1 and List 2... are there inconsistencies?
- Look for unspoken rules/assumptions that are also part of your culture
- Consider the company's history, founder's beliefs, successes, failures
- Also consider why you stay, or why you are thinking of leaving!

Example:

Workshop: Your Corporate Culture

What we have discussed today is sure to influence your thinking. Let's look forward together for a moment:

Examine the lists so far and decide: how do these artifacts, values and assumptions affect your adoption of OpenAgile?

- Mark what helps with ✔ , what hinders with ✘
- Not all items will be applicable one way or the other

Workshop: Your Corporate Culture

What we have discussed today is sure to influence your thinking. Let's look forward together for a moment:

Which hindering items can you realistically address and change first? Create List 4 "OpenAgile Improvement Backlog" by choosing 2 or 3 items and discuss <u>how</u> you will address these items.

Choose items that are *Important, Possible* and *Interesting*

Workshop: Your Corporate Culture

What to do next?

- Find a common place to display the obstacles and their action items
- Make a commitment to work on them (group, not individual!)
- Those who agree to work on these action items meet again (no more than 4 weeks); run your improvement efforts as a OpenAgile team!