

Deciding About Agile at Mighty Jaxx

Background

Mighty Jaxx operations can be broken into these primary functions, roughly in this order:

1. Produce 2D renderings of new product ideas.
2. Use 3D renderings and drawings as input to producing molds for manufacturing.
3. Production
4. Distribution
5. Marketing

Writing Prompt 1

Which of these Mighty Jaxx business functions do you think could benefit the most from implementing scrum/sprint methodologies? Explain specifically how scrum/sprint could operate for this function. Comment briefly on why kanban is not the best fit for this function. (You don't have to agree with the decisions described in the case.)

Based on the primary functions of Mighty Jaxx, I believe that the Production function could benefit the most from implementing scrum/sprint methodologies. Scrum is an Agile framework that emphasizes collaboration, continuous improvement, and iterative development. It is a great fit for the production process as it involves frequent feedback loops, constant communication, and continuous improvement.

For Mighty Jaxx, the production team would have a backlog of work that needs to be completed. This backlog could include tasks such as preparing materials, molding, assembling, and quality control checks. During the sprint planning, the team would prioritize the tasks to be completed in the upcoming sprint, estimate the time required for each task, and assign them to team members. The team would then work on completing the tasks during the sprint, with regular check-ins and adjustments to the plan as needed.

While Kanban is also an Agile framework that Mighty Jaxx could use, it may not be the most suitable fit for the production process, which involves discrete tasks like molding and assembly. Kanban is more suited to continuous workflows where work items flow continuously from one stage to another. On the other hand, Scrum allows for more frequent feedback loops and continuous improvement, which is essential in ensuring the quality of the products is maintained at a high level.

Writing Prompt 2

Which of these Mighty Jaxx business functions do you think could benefit the most from implementing kanban methodologies? Explain specifically how kanban could operate for this function with a list of the possible columns in the kanban board. Comment briefly on why scrum/sprint is not the best fit for this particular function. (You don't have to agree with the decisions described in the case.)

Based on the primary functions of Mighty Jaxx, the Marketing function could benefit from using kanban methodologies. Kanban is an Agile framework that aims to visualize work, limit work in progress, and optimize flow. In the case of Mighty Jaxx's Marketing team, using a kanban board could help them manage their campaigns, promotions, and events.

The kanban board would consist of columns that represent different stages of the marketing process, such as ideation, planning, execution, and evaluation. Each column would have a set number of cards that represent the work items. The team would limit the number of cards in each column to control the flow of work and prevent overburdening the team. When a card is moved to the next column, it signals that the work item is ready for the next stage in the process.

By implementing kanban, Mighty Jaxx's Marketing team could visualize their workload, ensure that they do not take on too much work at once, and optimize their marketing process for maximum efficiency. This would allow them to meet their marketing objectives, improve their campaigns, and ultimately increase revenue.

Although Scrum/Sprint is a popular methodology for project management, it may not be the most appropriate approach for Mighty Jaxx's marketing activities. The continuous nature of marketing work does not always work with discrete sprints and deadlines of Scrum/Sprint. Kanban is a more suitable method for marketing because it allows for a constant flow of work, without the need for strict deadlines.

Writing Prompt 3

Mighty Jaxx CEO Jackson Aw has hired you as a consultant to advise him on his decision making about a move to agile in his organization. One of the specializations in your consultancy is the impact that cognitive biases can have on effective business decisions. Based on your knowledge of the many types of cognitive biases, select one that you think could be a problematic trap for Jackson's thinking. In 1–2 short paragraphs that you could email to him,

- *Define in general terms the bias that you want to caution him about. (He may not have heard of it before.)*
- *Describe a possible substantive error/problem that could occur in this particular decision if no attention is paid to this type of bias.*
- *Suggest a step or action he could take to avoid falling into the trap of this bias.*

Dear Jackson,

As you evaluate the possibility of implementing agile methodologies at Mighty Jaxx, I wanted to bring to your attention the potential impact of confirmation bias on your decision-making process. Confirmation bias is a cognitive tendency to seek out and prioritize information that supports our pre-existing beliefs, while disregarding information that challenges them.

In the context of adopting agile methodologies, confirmation bias could result in selectively focusing on information and opinions that support the change, while overlooking information that raises concerns or presents alternative approaches. This could lead to an incomplete evaluation of the potential risks and benefits, and an ill-informed decision.

To avoid falling into the trap of confirmation bias, I recommend proactively seeking out and considering information and opinions that challenge your assumptions and preconceptions about the move to agile. Encourage your team to provide alternative perspectives and engage in critical thinking by objectively evaluating evidence and considering all sides of the issue. This way, you can arrive at a more informed decision that is based on a comprehensive and unbiased assessment of the situation.

Best regards,

Nishant Bakhru