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ENGN 2125
Assignment 10
March 13, 2023

Deciding About Agile at Mighty Jaxx

Writing Prompt 1

The functions within the business that would be most suitable to apply scrum/sprint methodologies are the “Produce 2D rendering of new product ideas” and “Use 3D renderings and drawings as input to producing molds for manufacturing”. Since these two functions need more repetitive improvements and involve more designers that are used to the scrum/sprint methodologies of working in a studio collaborating setting, they might be better adapted and more appreciated for the use of scrum/sprint project management methodologies. When the 2D ideas or the 3D models come up, they could start drawing sketches or building models and conduct meetings with designers and other stakeholders involved to discuss the designs. After the meetings, they could continuously improve the existing ideas or models or, if the designs get approved, they could utilize learnings in future projects as well. In contrast, the Kanban methodology would not be a good fit for these two functions since it is a more linear process and would be bordered by the limitations (WIP or bottlenecks) in each step, which is commonly seen in the design and modeling process. Thus, using Kanban in these two functions would slow down the process and the involved employees might not be able to be willing to follow the management strategy.

Writing Prompt 2

The function within the business that would be most benefited from Kanban methodologies is the Marketing function. Since the marketing function is quite linear from planning to implementation, which does not require regular review and re-do, it would be helpful to implement Kanban methodologies to help track the project progress. Some possible Kanban columns might include “Backlog”, “Partner Searching”, “Partner Budgeting”, “Material Creating”, “Material Completed”, “Launching”, and “Completed”. Since the process is quite linear and needs to be completed efficiently, utilizing the scrum/sprint would not be helpful to build deliverables in a limited period.

Writing Prompt 3

Hi Mr. Aw,

I learned that you are interested in adopting Agile project management in your wonderful business. While the Agile project management method is now widely welcomed by many companies that involved creativity nowadays, I want to warn you of a potential cognitive trick that might trap you in the decision process that leads to an over-valuation of this project management method.

I am not sure if you have heard of Maslow’s hammer. The idea is first pointed out by a famous psychologist, Abraham Maslow, in 1966. The name of Maslow’s hammer originated from a quote from his book, “if all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail”. It illustrates the phenomenon of an over-reliance on familiar or well-known tools. Having this

potential cognitive bias in mind, I want to advise you that even though Agile project management is a wonderful methodology to better involve employees, it might not be the perfect medication for every problem. For example, since there are multiple functions within your company, and your goal is to scale up the production capacity and efficiency, Agile project management might not be able to achieve your goal if it is implemented in all aspects of your business.

What I would suggest you do to avoid falling into such a cognitive bias trap is the following. First, there are many different methodologies within the scope of the Agile project management group. You might need to think of one or two specific methodologies that could be best adapted to your company. Second, you might want to think of the functions and departments that would be most benefited from adapting Agile project management methods. Finally, you might want to sample-test the new project management methodology in one or a few project groups to see if they benefited from Agile project management instead of implementing it from the top down and applying it to the entire company.

I truly hope this advice could help you better decide on the implementation of Agile management and your company.