Organizational Design and Culture - Lecture

Agile Culture

- Successful Agile adoption depends significantly on the organization culture
- What is Culture ?
- Culture refers to the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society
- Culture is not the characteristic of one individual but of the team/organization as a whole.
- An Agile organizational culture needs to embrace change: transparency, inspection, and adaptation as part of the everyday routine
- The Agile Manifesto lies at the heart of every Agile organization
- Ultimately, embedding cultural shift involves patience, support from the management (top-down), and understanding from the whole organization (bottom-up)
- Organizations must examine their existing practices, try new ways of doing things, and create new opportunities to bring about a culture shift.
- You will know your culture is more Agile when your organization demonstrate values like Trust, Respect, Courage, Openness and Commitment.

The Importance Of Agile/Scrum Language

- Scrum uses very precise and transparent language for an important reason
- Words are very powerful and can influence the culture of the company in the right direction
- Organizational pressure can lead to misusing Scrum terms and reducing transparency
- Small corrections should be made early and often to continue benefiting from the Agile approach
- Here are some common mistakes using misleading Agile language:
    - Confusing the term "Sprint Goal" with other goals or tasks
        - Remember the Sprint Goal helps teams focus on what's valuable to the user, other goals may not

- Referring to a Sprint Review as a "Show and Tell" or "Demo"
    - The Sprint Review is more than a demo, it allows communication with the stakeholders
- Confusing Acceptance Criteria with the Definition of Done
    - The Definition of Done tells us when an Increment is done. It affects the backlog items but does not refer to them explicitly
- Referring to people working in silos as a "team"
    - The idea of the Scrum Team means Developer, Product Owner and Scrum Master work in harmony
- Referring to Developers as a separate team
    - The Developers are part of the Scrum Team explicitly to foster collaboration
- Treating bugs or defects as separate from other work
    - In Scrum, even bugs are Product Backlog items which gives transparency and simplicity
- Thinking we are doing Agile because we are using an Agile tool like Jira
    - It is important to know that the tool does not bring the same value as carrying out a framework
- Remember that the correct language will foster the correct Agile mindset and culture!

Comfort in Sharing Views and Concerns

- In Scrum teams it is important to be open and transparent so we can inspect and adapt
- The whole team should always feel that no one will be punished for speaking their ideas, questions, concerns or mistakes.
- As well as fostering Trust in the team, everyone should be comfortable speaking their mind and be given the benefit of open ears based on their actions.
- This is essential for innovation, risk-taking, and group decision-making.
- To build this comfort in sharing views, leaders should frame the work as a learning problem, acknowledge their own fallibility, model curiosity and ask questions