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DevOps Module 8.2

The Dangers of Change Approval Processes

In the world of DevOps, there is no doubt that most teams will have to utilize a form of change management when it comes to working on their projects, and that means that they will need approval to make any sort of changes within the process. Within this process, there is room for many issues to arise, and this will try and run through the dangers that come along with it.

One major danger that can occur in the change approval process is efficiency, or a lack of. When approval is inefficient, the results can be shown in the implemented change. This can lead to problem changes being allowed through, among other things. Signs of an inefficient approval process can include overly complicated processes, needing the approval of a board, on which some members may not understand the pending changes, or additions such as wait periods, or multiple approval processes. This only serves to add unneeded layers to the procedures and add more to batches and lead time. Issues can also occur when the processes are not updated, or when changes are treated as though they are equal. Changes should have different approval processes fitting for them, to ensure a fitting and efficient approval.

Another danger to the change approval process is communication. Communication is important in any team effort and is the key to successful outcomes. If communication ends up being poor, especially on a larger scale, it can lead to many problems down the pipeline, and that includes the change approval process. The lack of communication in the approval process can cause the project to be held up, or confusion can happen that allows a poor change to be implemented. Another point is that the development side may have different incentives than the operations side, leading to different focuses that could misalign the process.

There are a variety of dangers that can plague the process of change approval, but when they are known, it is a lot easier for a team to understand what should be avoided to make the change approval process a much smoother and more efficient one.

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