Audience: director-tier

Goal: offer 1 new habit for Dir-tier attendees, 1 new habit for SVP-tier, 1 new habit for enterprise
- Create summary slide for each section
    - Major take-away of section
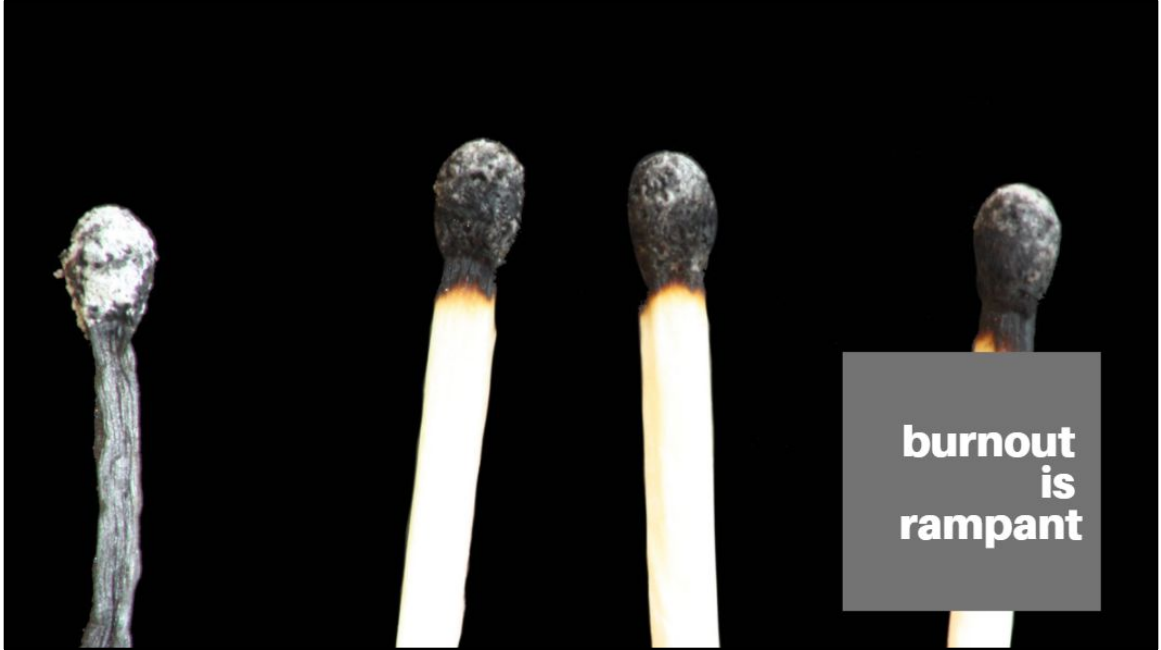   - Invitation to each group to adopt habit

burnout
is
rampant

it is lonely at the top

Download & share video files

MetLife
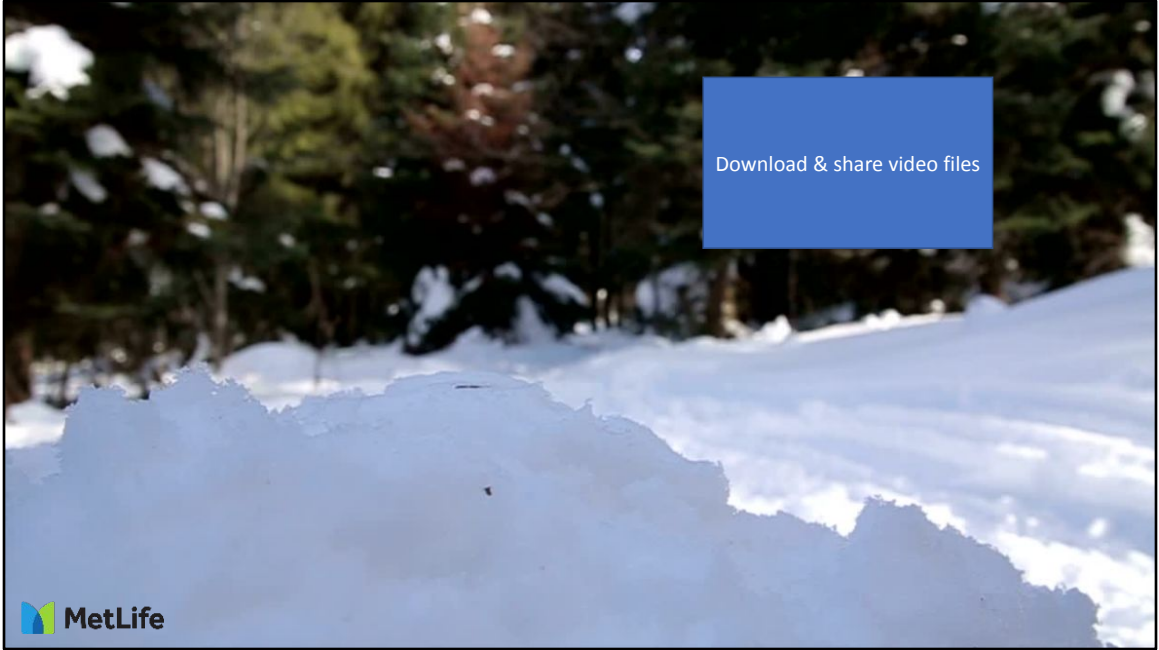
create
interdependence

COMPETING AGENDA ITEMS
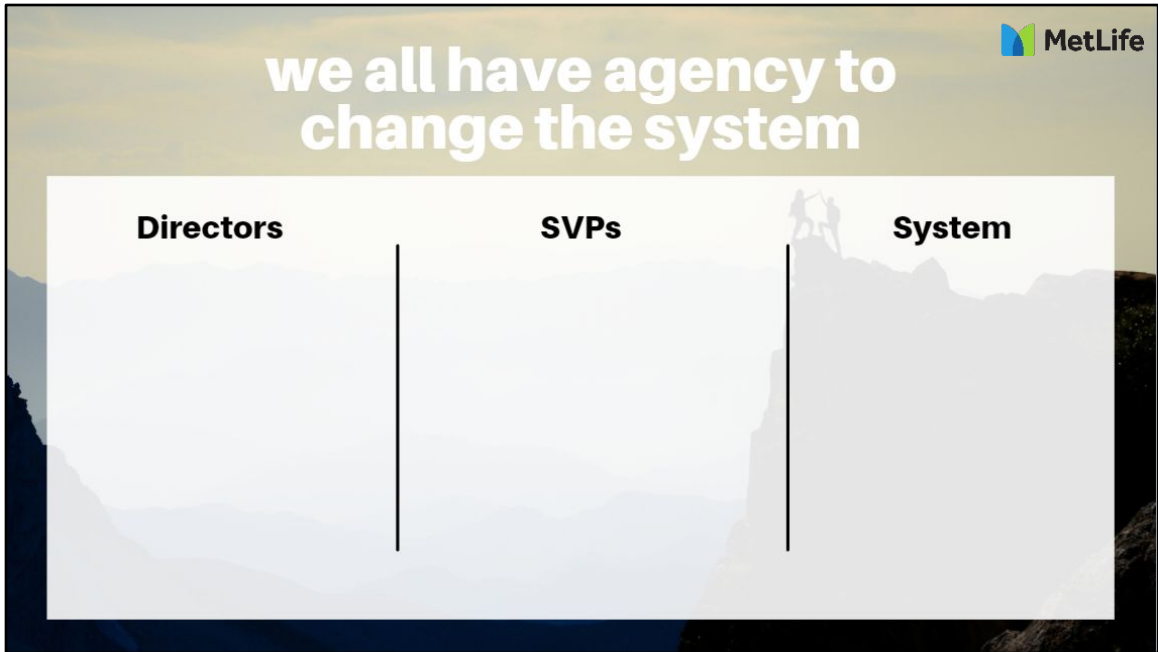
The 1% rule
- Story: cycling team ☐ bringing care & precision to everything you do
- Met Example: missed connection of 2 senior leaders
  - Invest in success of people
  - Focus on people over form

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SHARP - we have data--unpublicized, even internally--from one company's employee engagement survey. Indicates SVPs are the most miserable tier of the hierarchy

POV

SVPs are the most miserable tier. Though we "call them out" for anti-agile behavior and tendency to revert to form, Agile does not "call them in" with clear ways to learn and participate. We proponents of agile+devops are missing an opportunity to enlist the most influential tier of the org and thereby effect more fundamental cultural change.

GAS/Benefit

Take the empathetic stance to SVPs - see the very real systemic impediments in their way of practicing--and leading--agility. Let's work together to break those impediments down.

By offering "belonging" to the most influential tier in the enterprise we all win - enterprise Agility becomes possible.

The opportunity, what we want to help you begin to do over the next 25 minutes, is to take an empathetic stance to those senior leaders. See the very real systemic impediments to practicing agility that are in their way.

Looking at the dozens of companies we've worked in and with, we find a concerning pattern. We further researched through interviews with >10 companies. Our experience and interviews reveal a tier of senior leaders who are burned out, stressed, perhaps trying to be change leaders but instead keeping the current system in place.

We can also find examples where that was never true, or--more inspiring and instructive--where the situation was changed through concerted effort.

We believe that we can all adopt new practices and habits that break these impediments down, and free the most influential tier not only to participate in, but even to lead the cultural shift that makes enterprise Agility possible.

In this talk, we will discuss three themes that surfaced in our interviews … and we will offer practices or habits we believe can counter these challenges. We invite each of you to invest time in these new habits - small 1% changes will amplify over time.

Silverman
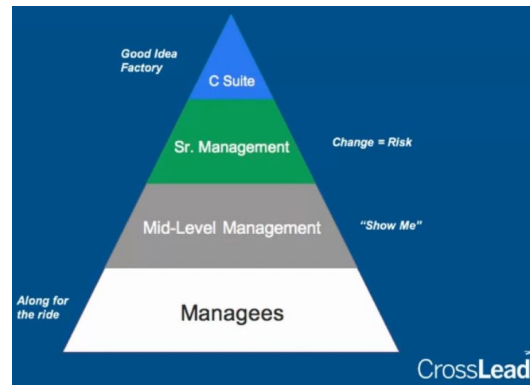
For this talk, we were inspired by two previous DOES talks. Mark Silverman's 20xx talk on [title] and Dr Christina Maslach 2019 talk on [title]. Together these talks offer insights on the conditions that make the role of SVP in large, adapting enterprises so difficult.

Mark Silverman, co-author with General McCrystal of Team of Teams, observed that senior leaders might be caught in the middle, because change often = risk for this group that has grown up and advanced in more traditional directive and waterfall contexts. This group is grappling with many challenges, including disruption of incumbent businesses, accelerating change and changing talent expectations.

SVPs play a very difficult role in the enterprise - they personally connect strategy (C-suite) to execution (the rest of the organization). Unlike the C-Suite that gets to generate org-changing ideas, and middle managers (VPs, directors) who can take a wait and see approach to such changes while doing their jobs, SVPs are charged with implementing change. They must convey the ideas of the C-suite into action at scale. [useful model based on what we've seen]

As we'll explore, their unique position might make senior leaders even more prone to

the … [click]

Burnout Worse for SVPs?

Belongingness	Feeling part of a team
Competence	Seeing results from time spent doing what you do best
Autonomy	Directing your own work (and enabling others to do so)
Positive Emotions	Experiencing success, flow, connection
Psychological Safety	Feeling safe to learn (publicly!) and to not know
Fairness	Experiencing just treatment without favoritism or discrimination

BURNOUT that Dr. Christina Maslach described at the 2019 DOES. Her research indicated that a lack of these six elements contribute to people feeling burned out. Our interviews show again and again that SVPs can lack the circumstances to experience the things listed on the left. As part of this talk, we will share stories that demonstrate why.

[This is probably not the story you tell yourself about how SVPs experience their work - this is what we are going to talk about] / maybe bring this slide back up at the end of the talk]

People who are burned out can't bring their most creative, generative selves. They become even more risk-averse (risk is exhausting) and protective.

[I put this section - here down - on slide 24] Looking back at the dozens of companies we've worked in and with, we find all too many examples where the senior leader tier might well be the most burned out, the most risk-averse, the most miserable. Examples where we witnessed, or where our interviews revealed, a tier of senior leaders who are burned out, stressed, perhaps trying to be change leaders but instead keeping the current system in place.

We can also find examples where that was never true, or--more inspiring and instructive--where the situation was changed through concerted effort. In this talk, we want to help you understand...and help you, SVPs, and everyone see how to begin to change…
[invite you [SVPs, everyone] to invest time in new habits to change - small 1% changes will be

amplified over time]
~*~*~*~*~*~

add to talk track??: Gallup research about how "getting to do what I do best every day" is one of their 12 factors of employee engagement. More summary of Maslach?

not sure we need this anymore…

That said, we have seen SVPs inspired by possibility, we've seen them freed by superiors who changed the system and by subordinates and peers who made space and modeled new habits. We've helped SVPs practice new habits and thus change the system themselves.

Let us share what we've seen, learned….

we've all heard this saying. Surprisingly, Agility as it is commonly implemented might make this even more true.

The Power of Team

I believe that much of the magic of agile comes from the emphasis on teams. We make teams cross-functional so they can own real value rather than bits. We spend time and energy helping teams become cohesive and high-performing. Collective accountability generates shared success, which can contribute to belongingness, positive emotions. The best teams cultivate psychological safety and fairness.

All too often, SVPs do not get to be ON a team like this. They might lead one, which is great. But they don't get to experience all the benefits of being on one.

Stories + Illustrations

- Competition. Peers rejecting offer of help. One because suspected an ulterior motive. The other because he feared being judged 'less than'. "No, I got it." In the latter case, the leader went so far as to throw the other leader's people under the bus.
- Collection of individuals. The CEO who had 17 directs and ran that "team" as 17 one-on-one relationships.
- Strategic initiatives fragmented into workstreams owned by individual senior leaders - execute their piece in isolation
- They advanced before Agile, and never got to be on an Agile team

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All too often, SVPs do not get to be ON a team like this. They might lead one, which is great. But they don't get to experience all the benefits of being on one. The result is not only a lack of belonging, but a disconnect from the agile experience others are getting. Lencioni: First team is the team you're on, not the team you lead

[insert the stories here]

[then, bring in one of these Lencioni quotes]

Not sure which of these I want to use….

"The departmental distraction is the tendency of team members to place a higher priority on the team they lead than they place on the team they are a member of. I

call this the 'Team #1 Dilemma.'" - Lencioni, Overcoming the Five Dysfunctions of a Team

"When members of a team fail to make that team more important than their own teams, they create something I like to call the 'United Nations Syndrome.' … Rather than coming together to make the best possible decision for the entire organization, they become lobbyers for their own constituents. In essence, whenever push comes to shove, they compete with their teammates rather than collaborate with them." - Lencioni, Overcoming the Five Dysfunctions of a Team

"Team Number One: The only way for a leader to establish this collective mentality on a team is by ensuring that all members place a higher priority on the team they're a member of than the team they lead…." - Lencioni, The Advantage.

Item 6 in Lencioni's "Checklist for Discipline 1: Build a Cohesive Leadership Team" from The Advantage:
"Members of the leadership team are focused on team number one. They put the collective priorities and needs of the larger organization ahead of their own departments."

Invitations

I think we need to connect individual changes to system changes (maybe just in talk track)

Directors
Invite your SVPs in by appreciating colleagues publicly; tell stories about collaboration

SVPs
Insert an action with peers, not subordinates

[talk track - Cheryl's story from 360]

All
Practice appreciations--tell stories that honor colleagues for collaborative contribution

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As a director or individual contributor, you can't put your senior leader--who might be two levels above you--on a team. But you can help that person see how collective goals are helping you be more successful. You can model giving credit, and tell stories about how collaboration across org boundaries is making all the difference.

[360 - ice water on the face when clear results that above and below "loved" my work, my peers had no idea what I was doing - I made many assumptions, enlist your peers … you need to ask questions that invite learning language … what could we try that could help us learn if that's a good approach

[I want you to see how I cross boundaries to get work done and see how I share praise and appreciation - model antidote to my peer is throwing my people under the bus - I can model really appreciating the people I work with - the real magic is the storytelling, customer, collaborator or culture - anyone in the organization can start doing this and have a ripple effect]

SVPs can't necessarily make their boss focus on creating a First Team. … [i still want a thing they do with peers, not just subordinates] - I do think SVPs can build horizontal

relationships. Eric pushed me and my peers @ MetLife to self organize as a team 1.
Change personal frame from "zero-sum" to "win-win"? I've seen SVPs regularly give
20 min of their quarterly town hall to an invited peer SVP to talk about what they do
and how they collaborate. That was powerful.]

[I'm starting to wonder if appreciations is the magic practice that breaks down
barriers…] - I think appreciations move mountains - the habit offered here is verbal.
It can also be written short email or whatever kudos platform you have. I'd say be
generous and inclusive. I love seeing sunshine on a good thank you.

[I wrote a note to myself here that I'm not sure what to do with: SVPs are often connected.
But do they see helpers and allies? Or rivals and blockers?] - I think they often see each
other as co-opetition. Cooperation happens, but any shred of fear that "seats" are limited
… or stack ranking means people's eyes might be more on outshining that outcomes.

Appreciations

Appreciate an individual, telling a story about how your colleague demonstrated our values, the culture we want.

Look at him/her and say:

- their name
- "I appreciate you for…"
- what you appreciate them for

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=lnt&tbs=sur:fc&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjusfTbtcHiAhWQrFkKHXcMDq0QpwUIIA&biw=1
315&bih=723&dpr=2

Feel distance from "real work"...and the FUN work of leadership?

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FLOW here. Or in previous??

Imagine an SVP you know and think about their daily schedule. The day-to-day reality of executive calendars is exhausting and overwhelming - not something that supports positive emotions, feelings of competency or psychological safety. Most SVPs struggle with high WIP, fragmentation of their time and fire fighting (negative news doesn't make it to them until it is really on fire). All these conditions are familiar to us - and as Agilists, we have worked hard to address them in other tiers of the organization through Agile practices like a single backlog, kanban, capacity matching and cadence.

In our interviews, we heard that one of the things that can be most exciting to senior leaders about Agile is the ability to see and try real work products, rather than santiized status reports and overly perfect powerpoint. As the connection point of strategy and execution, SVPs expect to have "command" and clear knowledge of a wide span … but the size of the span, and the complexity of interdependencies of fragmented work (eek … must be a better way to say this) means they must rely on others.

High WIP. firefighting and escalations take an inordinate amount of time. It's easy to imagine SVPs have tremendous control and authority. In this fast changing world, to succeed they need empowerment.

Invitations

Directors
offer opportunities
for real interaction
with work products
through demo

SVPs
invest time in gemba

All
no powerpoint

Make experiments visible?
Co-create experiments

Tendency to revert to old ways of working

Stories + Illustrations

- SVP seem attached to old ways – go back to command and control when things get hot. Our research shows really this could be burnout rather than resistance. Their day-to-day is bent against new ways of working (maybe describe a day) leads to burnout. When burned out people are not receptive to or adept at change
- Let's take the burnout out of the system (or at least reduce it) – top culprit is WIP
-

Lencioni: First team is the team you're on, not the team you lead

day to day. Empathy map image, or calendar view

Invitations

Directors
make all the work visible, work with peers to recommend what to not do

SVPs
prioritize
focus (saying no or not yet
calendar-clearing exercise

All
understand and respect capacity – stop wishful thinking and heroics

calendar exercise — we've helped teams and larger groups at all levels go through a calendar-clearing exercise in which we seek to:
1. replace many ad hoc meetings with a few cadence meetings
2. shorten and combine meetings. Often by moving information sharing offline while focusing meeting time on decisions, actions. Also by implementing Lean Coffee meetings
3. revisit the attendee list for meetings. This can be done by sharing information from meetings more easily, so that the folks who attend just "to know" or "keep up" use a different mechanism.

POV

SVPs are the most miserable tier. Though we "call them out" for adverse culture and tendency to revert to form, Agile does not "call them in" with clear ways to learn and participate. We (agile+devops actionists) are missing an opportunity to enlist the most influential tier of the org.

SAS/Benefit

We often make up that the hardest part of change is others. In fact, it is ourselves. Each of us must bring candor, courage and authenticity in our roles.

No one person can change a system overnight. By building new habits - personal and organizational - we all have agency to change the system.

Kali suggested having a summary for DIrectors, SV
invitations for new habits restated. She is mockir
you like it :)

Look for ways to call leaders in

"Courage is contagious." Brene Brown (maybe that quote is our closing sharp?)

SHARP

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