

**Boost the team, improve 80% of
outcomes and impress your
boss.**

Tactical Guide



Problem

Working on a mature software engineering project is often a challenge. There are lots of inter-dependencies, people accustomed to working in certain ways, everything seems to be so difficult, lots of legacy bottlenecks, disenfranchised team members already living the quiet quitting life.

Would you accept the challenge to turn this situation around?

Would you be willing to step up, take the lead and implement changes to drastically improve outcomes for the entire team?

How do you then approach such a situation to improve the outcomes without working everyone to death and drive people insane in the process! Your plan should be embraced by your entire team as well as inspire feelings of confidence from the leadership.



Solution

Let me share with you a practical strategy to :

- enable the team
- improve the value of outcomes
- and impress the leadership

The key to success is to :

- identify top 3 bottlenecks for your team members
- identify outcomes you can deliver that impact revenue generation, risk mitigation and costs savings
- address concerns about the impact to people, process and technology
- apply Pareto principle, focus early on the 20% of the work that delivers 80% of the value



Outcomes

Your mindful approach and focused effort to enable the team to have larger impact will deliver observable results. As a result, your work will create tremendous value to the organization and will be noticed by the leadership.

The entire team should develop an understanding of how their work connects to the identified outcomes. As soon as the team achieves a small win, all team members should celebrate to recognize their effort. As the team learns to move forward together towards a common outcome, the pace of work should accelerate.

This practical strategy works equally well for leaders at all levels and individual contributors.



Level up your team!

Teams effectiveness often defaults to the lowest common denominator. To combat this all team members need to level up in some way.

Find ways to help the team learn and grow, it could be as simple as additional training, Udemy.com courses, internal resources, hosted white boarding sessions, POCs, hackathons, whatever it takes, own it!

The benefits of training cannot be overstated.

Effects of leveling up the team, during the course of a project, are similar to how your investments grow over time due to compound interest. Invest in people and the product will be of higher quality, just a bit easier to maintain, slightly more resilient, engineering iterations just a tad faster, you get the idea.

In addition, the larger organization will also experience a positive ripple effect. Over time, people on your project will gain invaluable expertise. Eventually, they will migrate into other parts of the organization where they will be free to share their newly acquired wisdom.



Enable your team to move faster!

Teams effectiveness often defaults to the lowest common denominator, entropy creeps in and work slows down gradually over time. You can combat this by providing transparency around all the tasks that need to get done. Structure the work so that next set of tasks is identified the week prior, set expectations that they must be done each week, towards the end of the week conduct weekly task status review with all team members participating.

Such work cadence combined with everyone's bias towards action will soon lead to an increased team momentum.

Find ways to enable the team to move faster, it could be as simple as some white board sessions to share knowledge. Look for bottlenecks that slow everything down, ask which activities could be avoided, automated or outsourced and understand root cause of overtime work, pain points and gripes. Apply Pareto principle (80/20 rule) to identify the activities that deliver the most value to the team so that they can be tackled first.

These tactics do not conflict with agile or scrum, but they tend to become the go to methodology in fast paced and highly productive engineering teams.

LEARN

ANALYZE

IMPLEMENT

PARETO
PRINCIPLE

REVENUE GENERATION

RISK MITIGATION

COST SAVINGS

PEOPLE

PROCESS

TECHNOLOGY

Guiding Principles

Identify top 3 bottlenecks for your team

- Engineering team in place
- Products exist
- Existing products issues
- Technical debt growing
- Cross team dependencies
- Disenfranchised team members
- Leadership has doubts
- Reorganization in flight
- Ask everyone for low hanging fruit opportunities, seek out product enhancements, process bottlenecks, common customer complaints, classify them in accordance to which of these categories (revenue generation / risk mitigation / cost savings) do they impact and to what degree
- Identify ideas with most impact (preferably all three classifications are touched), consider how each idea impacts people, process and technology in the organization, each area needs to have risks identified in addition to the benefits, rank the risks and benefits as you see fit
- Consider what components of each of the ideas can be delivered quickly to deliver majority of the benefit, focus on the 20% of the work that delivers 80% of the value
- Map the activities related to the highest impact ideas in accordance of delivery schedule, 30/60/90 should be thought of as immediate/soon/later, consider existing product roadmap



Idea Evaluator

- Take the ideas you are considering and evaluate carefully in accordance to the idea evaluator
- Consider impact to all the people involved, classify groups, upside/downside
- Consider impact to the process, can the process be improved, can the improvement be quantified
- Consider impact on the technology, will it become easier to maintain, will it cost less to operate
- Consider how these ideas considered connect to revenue generation, risk mitigation and/or cost savings, is it possible to connect to all three
- Identify risks applicable to every consideration (people, process, technology, revenue generation, cost savings, risk mitigation)
- Consider risk of inaction
- Identify 20% of the work related to these ideas that will deliver 80% of the value
- Break down the deliverables in terms of a 30/60/90 plan
- First principles is left out of consideration on purpose (subject to another video)

	PEOPLE	PROCESS	TECHNOLOGY
REVENUE GENERATION	<div>First Principles</div> <div>30-60-90 Plan</div> <div>Pareto Principle - 80/20 Rule</div>		
COST SAVINGS			
RISK MITIGATION			

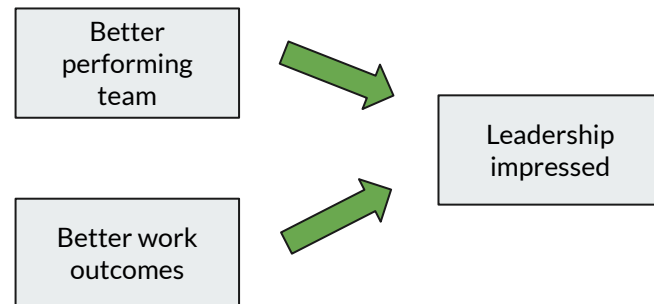


Now we celebrate!

How does this help me?

This approach brings about a WIN-WIN-WIN situation for the product team, management and you.

- The team levels up and is enabled to produce work that rapidly delivers meaningful impact.
- Management can observe beneficial impact of your work across the team and the organization.
- Your strategic approach to identify issues to focus on (priority based on outcomes value), filtered through the lens of the 80/20 rule results in massive value improvement to the outcomes.



Questions?

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