Rachel (Thu) Le

CSS 566: Software Management

Book Café Presentation – Group Activity

1. Close to deployment, the current executive officer (XO) would be transferred to see his ill father and replaced by another XO and an engineer would also be transferred off in Okinawa to tend to his wife who was pregnant and would likely have their baby in a couple weeks. Captain Marquet and the team drafted the message to ask for permission for transfer of their 2 crew members because they have another team member who can be acting engineer with two other top-notch navigation supervisors to help. Thanks to the ship’s demonstration of superior skills and leader-leader structure, they had developed an extensive pool of talents with various skill sets. Therefore, in the event that team members have to be absent, the ship can still function effectively. The plan got approved!

Answer: Cross-functionality

2. USS Santa Fe Guiding Principles

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Continuous improvement is how we get better. We continually seek ways to learn from processes and improve them and ourselves. The chain of command has the obligation to develop and institute mechanism (such as debriefs) to achieve continuous improvement.

Answer: Continuous Improvement

3. A junior sailor looked nervous because he's worried he might not make it home to mainland for Christmas with his family because his vacation request wasn't back yet despite the fact he submitted it weeks earlier. Turned out it needs to go through 7 layers in chain of command (COM) before decision for approval/disapproval can be made. => Captain Marquet immediately signed it for the junior sailor + change the decision maker to be the direct above COM (took himself and many other roles out of the decision making of vacation request approval). Requests are approved faster and more efficiently. Less people in higher chain of command are involved; time was saved; handoff and delay were eliminated.

Answer: Lean Thinking, System Thinking, More with LeSS

4. At the beginning, everyone on the ship seems to forgot the connection between their day-to-day activities to the bigger goal: to run the submarine, fight enemy during combat and protect US border, freedom and constitutions. In order for the mission to be successful, everyone needs to share this same view so that every decision they make, it is in the interest of the bigger goal and they never lose sight of it. Every single person in the organization has to have clarity about the mission, vision and the goal of the company.

Answer: Whole-product focus

5. Thinking out loud: A new way of thinking. Instead of short, direct, formal communication like how the Navy teaches, Santa Fe’s crew members use informal communication. "I think...". "I'm assuming", "It is likely....". It doesn't just give just info about their action but also context, the why for their decision and their thought process. It’s a language to communicate uncertainty and encourage it because lack of certainty is strength and certainty is arrogance.

Result: Instead of a quiet control room, they have a constant buzz of discussion among people. The crew members knew how well the ship was running and everyone was sharing information

Answer: Transparency

6. USS Santa Fe’s Guiding Principles: OPENNESS – We exercise participative openness: freedom to speak one’s mind. Additionally, we exercise reflective openness, which leads to looking inward. We challenge our own thinking. We avoid the trap of listening to refute.

Answer: Manager provides safe environment to voice opinions and new ideas. (Let the audience be creative about their answer)

7. A junior watchdog quit because he didn't sleep and eat and have proper rest (8 hours on 4 hours off) while his supervisor got to not have to do the work. Marquet was thinking "Hey I give you decision making power not for you to abuse it." The captain really resisted the urge to give order and ensure compliance. A new change is introduced. To make sure the management team doesn't take care of themselves first and neglect the team members, message of leader-leader structure and responsibility that comes with it is repeated and embedded in every aspect on Santa Fe until it becomes a new way of thinking.

Answer: Manager provides safe environment for every employee (especially in lower level) and remove burdens/impediments. (Let the audience be creative about their answer)

8. People make mistakes! Sometimes, Captain Marquet forgets and does things against the leader-leader structure. So he invites people to be his referee. Every time he gives an order, they can give him a yellow card. Even though asking people to give him yellows card is a form of giving order, it reminds him and help him reflect his own behaviors and orders. => Invite feedback

Answer: Manager provides safe environment for their people to give feedback and constructive criticism (Let the audiences be creative with their answer)