Rachel (Thu) Le

CSS 566: Software Management

Café Reflection Week 10

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**3 things I learned from James’ presentation about the book Agile Project Management with Scrum:**

1. Scrum doesn't always work due to many challenges with adoption happening in reality

2. Some of those challenges happen between team members or team and other roles such as Scrum Master, Product Owner and middle/upper management.

Team members: peer pressure from reporting each person's progress

Scrum Master: not have enough technical knowledge as well as knowledge about tech company's culture and politics, not being trusted by the team, being a policing role more than supporting one

Product Owner: a bridge between customer and developers but usually don't know how to say no to customers, on customer's side and make developers do whatever it takes to satisfy customer requirements

This leads to decreased in productivity of team and overall dissatisfaction and unhappiness of employees at the workplace

3. Scrum does not create problem but also is not a solution to problems.

Other questions/miscellaneous: From my perspective, it seems like James had a very bad experience with Scrum due to the improper implementation by the people that wanted it to be implemented. When talking about Scrum or agile methodologies in general, people usually think of agile tools and processes such as Sprint, Retrospective, the use of agile software management tools, etc. but not everyone talks about the values and the requirement of shifting our mind from "tell me what to do" and "do what you are told" to self-organizing team. The management and other leadership roles in his experience did not shift their mode from command-and-control to giving freedom to the team and supporting the team by removing impediments. In fact, they added more difficulty and challenges. So doing Agile is not the same as being Agile. Successful agile adoption requires a change in the mindset of everyone involved, not just implementing tools and following a prescribe set of processes/standards.

I think if I were the presenter, I would quit too as it's hard to change from the bottom up. (Usually this change requires buy-in from management, starting from top down). But I do think it's unfair to deem agile methodologies a failure in when there is a lack of management support. It would be interesting to know the presenter's update if the he works for another company where agile adoption is successful.

**3 things I learned from David's presentation about the book Management 3.0: Leading Agile Developers, Developing Agile Leaders**

1. The book starts with presenting challenges and reasons for failure of agile adoption in software development such as: change resistance, organizational culture, managerial support, team education and external pressure. The goal is to increase the likelihood of successful agile adoption through make sure that managers want to be agile and agile developers want to learn about management.

2. In the big picture, the book tackles this problem two ways: from improving team and people involved in the software development process (human aspect) and their competence (technical knowledge)

3. To improve people, the book suggests management to energize and empower people and within team, to improve communication, trust and respect. To improve technical competence, the book recommends measuring business performance on multiple dimensions and holding development responsibilities. This improvement needs to be continuous.

Other questions: I really like this book as it is related to my final paper's topic: challenges and success factors of agile adoption. It would be great to relate what this book discusses to what we have experienced in class from doing Scrum and building the Gacha game together. I can see how empowering team, energizing people and communication improvement play a big role in agile success.