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Assignment 8.2

The Dangers of Change Approval Processes in DevOps

In the world of Information Technology, there are such things as change approval processes. These processes help manage the life cycle of any changes within those organizations. They consist of any changes that are approved to ensure safety and compliance within the companies. But as the IT world is advancing and more companies are adopting DevOps practices which accelerate operational efficiency, they are going against the traditional change approval processes. This paper explores the dangers of rigid change approval processes within DevOps environments, including their impact on deployment speed, accountability, and overall system reliability.

One of the main exposures to change approval processes in DevOps is the huge delay they create. In a study created in 2018 State of DevOps Report by Dora, IT teams were found to deploy codes more often than other teams but having lower lead times compared to their counterparts that were low-performing teams. The low-performing teams relied more on Change Advisory Boards which could stall innovation and not promote team agility. The traditional methods relied more on manual reviews, scheduled meetings, and documentation which in turn created those delays.

Another danger of Change Approval Processes in DevOps is that there is no real security that change approval processes can provide. The idea of reviewing changes prior to release does not actually mean higher success rates. DevOps promotes the ideas of smaller changes that are more frequent and easier to test and monitor. In comparison, CABs typically approve large batches. The large batches are more likely to have errors and security vulnerabilities due to the size. With Devops, the automated testing and the deployment pipelines make it a more reliable source for catching any issues prior to release.

Lastly, another major concern to change approval processes is that it undermines team authority and reduces their efficiency. In a workflow that is more centralized with their decision making, there is no implementing and maintaining a system. Instead, there is a focus on placing blame instead of working to find a solution. There is a culture of a lack of ownership. Teams are less efficient because of the scrutiny and there is no innovation between the developers. In DevOps, the developers are instead held accountable and they are encouraged to have their continuous improvement.

In the fast-paced world of DevOps, traditional change approval processes are becoming more and more viewed as obsolete and counterproductive. While designed with risk mitigation in mind, they often introduce delays, foster a false sense of security, and reduce team autonomy. To stay competitive, organizations must shift toward automated, decentralized, and data-driven approaches to change management. Embracing continuous delivery pipelines,

robust testing frameworks, and real-time monitoring offers a safer and more efficient alternative to bureaucratic approval systems.

References

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