

## **“The Agile Mindset: what does it take to make this stuff work?”**

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### ***Introduction***

Traditionally in software development, soft-skills and people factors have been the responsibility of the departmental manager, team leader or business analyst, if they are considered at all. Agile development changes this with the strong emphasis on working together, cooperation and self-organising teams. Technologists have a reputation for not being the best “people-people” so what needs to happen at the coalface for Agile approaches to be successful – how do we convince temperamental loners that pair programming really is worthwhile, and actually talking to real end users is not a scary or life-threatening experience?

This paper presents a number of perspectives on this issue, looking at various aspects of the interpersonal relationships and communications skills that are needed in Agile teams, and addresses some of the challenges team leaders and managers must overcome in order to pave the way for successful software development. Many of these factors are applicable beyond just the Agile world – people are the most important factor in all software projects, irrespective of the approach or methodology used.

This paper looks at the following aspects and provides advice on ensuring the most effective application of skills and areas for focus to increase a team’s likelihood of success in the “cooperative game” of software development:

- Expertise
- The Communications Game
- Leadership styles
- People In Teams
- Emotional Intelligence
- Innovation & Tom Peters’ Innovation Cycle
- The Chaordic Organisation

## **Expertise**

According to Faraj & Sproull (2000): “The most critical resource for knowledge teams is expertise, or specialized skills and knowledge, but the mere presence of expertise on a team is insufficient to produce high-quality work”.

To effectively apply expertise teams need to be able to coordinate the interdependencies between the skill and knowledge of the individual team members. This requires understanding what skills & knowledge the team members have and being able to bring this expertise to bear on the problem in a timely manner.

There is absolutely no question that expertise is a very important factor in productivity and achievement in delivering quality software, and studies as far back as 1987 have identified that expertise in programming can result in an order of magnitude difference in productivity and throughput (Brooks 1987).

Clever managers try hard to attract people to their teams that have the highest level of expertise possible; unfortunately the mere presence of expertise is not enough to ensure that the team achieves the desired results. This expertise has to be coordinated and applied effectively to enable the team to achieve optimum performance.

### **How do you coordinate expertise?**

Expertise coordination can be defined as “the management of knowledge and skill dependencies” (Faraj & Sproull 2000) to enable the team to recognize where expertise is located (who knows about this and where are they), when & where it is needed (who needs this answer and where are they) and how it is accessed (how do I get hold of this person). Team performance is far more than simply having the expertise on the team – it requires putting the right people together at the right time.

Effective teams need the ability to recognise and acknowledge individual knowledge and skills. This requires that the team know each other well enough to be aware of these skills and are able to work together to leverage the various skills and capabilities – being able to ask for and receive assistance without fear of any adverse impact and with the confidence that the needed assistance will be available. Often technologists are afraid to appear ignorant and will bluff/assume/guess rather than ask for assistance, the team culture and attitude must be one of allowing and accepting questions without denigrating or belittling the questioner.

The team leader is largely responsible for ensuring that the team culture is one of support and assistance rather than threat and demeaning behaviour. One important duty of the team leader is to ensure the team members are aware of the spread of expertise within the team, who is knowledgeable in what areas, and to encourage the sharing of knowledge both formally and informally.

Studies have shown that one very powerful tool to achieve this knowledge and expertise sharing environment is to train the team together (Liang et al. 1995, Moreland et al. 1996, 1998 quoted in Faraj & Sproull 2000), resulting in a “a transactive memory system, which in turn led to higher performance”.

Merely knowing where expertise lies is not enough – there needs to be formal or informal processes in place to access the expertise. In Agile projects it is likely that the emphasis will be on the more informal end of the spectrum, and the team leader is responsible for ensuring that all the team members are able to access the relevant expertise in a timely and effective manner.

A final point from Faraj & Sproull is especially relevant: “Teams that develop the ability to work together smoothly face less need for planning, greater cooperation, fewer misunderstandings, and lower confusion (Liang et al. 1995). Thus, teams need to rely on an emergent process of informal interactions and joint problem solving to bring expertise to bear.” This sounds like a recipe for an Agile team!

## ***The Communications Game***

Alistair Cockburn (2002) has stated that “Software development is a goal based game of invention and communication”. Every project (game) has two goals – to win the current game (deliver a working system that solves the business problem) and to set up for the next game (leave enough behind that the next team can win their game).

The spotlight here is on the communications environment within the team. Open, honest communication is vital to winning the game.

So, what do we mean by “open, honest communication”? It requires an atmosphere of trust, especially around delivering bad news – shooting the messenger results in bad news not being relayed until it is way too late to recover. On the other hand, if the team are able to discuss status and activities without feeling threatened then they are far more likely to bring problems or issues to the fore early enough that they can be resolved.

There are a number of techniques which can be used to encourage and assist with this open communication, including:

- Information Radiators – prominent status indicators (feature backlog, tests passed etc)
- Co-location – the team works TOGETHER
- Intermediate work products are “markers and props” – reminders of discussions held and decisions made
- Daily “stand-ups” – frequent feedback
- “One Team” concept – developers, analysts, managers, users all working together on a daily basis to achieve common, well understood goals

An information radiator is something that interested parties can use to find out about the state of the project without needing to interrupt or bother the team members. An example could be a graph of stories that have been identified vs customer tests that have passed over time. Ideally these radiators should be physical reports printed and displayed in a prominent place in the project work space. With distributed teams & stakeholders it is possible to achieve similar results with electronic distribution, for example a Web page on the intranet for the project.

Cockburn cites studies that show an order of magnitude increase in cost and decrease in effectiveness with each step that the team is placed apart from each other. For example if the team are all in the same room it is possible to get an answer to a query within seconds, but if the questioner has to get up and walk to another office the cost and time involved is at least 10 times greater. Extending this concept, as the questioner and answerer get further apart, the cost and time involved in getting an answer increases exponentially.

He provides the following calculation of the real cost of distance in communication:

Programmer cost = \$ 2.10 / minute

*reference point: Pair programming situation:*

100 questions/week @ 1 minute/question = \$210/week

... for 12 people on a project = \$ 2,500

... for 6 month project = \$ 50,000

Every minute's delay in getting questions answered costs the 6-month project \$ 50,000 !!

Just walking down the hall costs \$100,000 penalty

plus *Lost Opportunity Costs* for questions not asked

(Source: "Harnessing Convection Currents of Information", Presented at OOPSLA 2001, Alistair Cockburn, used with permission)

"Markers and props": Any intermediate artifact need only be complete enough to remind the team members of the conversation, discussions and conclusions that preceded it. These intermediate artifacts are always temporary, and the needs they represent will change over time, so spending excessive time making them better than they need to be is a waste of money, brains & time (what Don Mills calls a WOMBAT). Any intermediate work product need only be **sufficient** for its intended purpose.

The final truth of any system lies in the code, and it is here that the team must concentrate their efforts on ensuring it is complete and comprehensive. Standards and a very disciplined approach to writing the code must be rigidly enforced to ensure this truth is correct and usable.

## **Leadership Styles**

Numerous studies have shown consistently that teams take their attitude from the leader. (See Goleman, 2003, for examples). This culture infestation applies at every level of an organisation. The attitude and approach of the CEO will be clearly evident in the attitude and approach of the executive team who work with the CEO on a daily basis, and so on throughout the organisational hierarchy.

Goleman (2003, p9) states that “emotions are contagious, particularly when exhibited by those at the top, and extremely successful leaders display a high level of positive energy that spreads throughout the organization. The more positive the style of a leader, the more positive, helpful, and cooperative are those in the group”.

Aside from being influenced by the attitude of those above us in the hierarchy, each level of management adds their own prejudices, biases, and attitudes to the weight on those below them.

This direct and indirect influence can be either a good or bad thing in determining the team’s likelihood of success.

Agile teams focus on the capabilities and competencies of the individuals above adherence to some predefined process rule book. The emphasis is on skills and knowledge transfer through working together side by side to solve the problem. The “leadership” role will change as the team constantly reorganises itself to meet the various challenges that will arise through the project lifetime.

Cockburn & Highsmith (2001) state that “Agility requires that teams have a common focus, mutual trust, and respect; a collaborative but speedy, decision-making process; and the ability to deal with ambiguity” (P132).

Trust is fundamental to the success of any team, and of vital importance to the Agile team:

- Team members need to trust the leader
- Team members need to trust each other
- The leader must trust the team

Trust is not given – it is earned, and if trust is damaged it is very difficult to rebuild it.

Agile teams work together closely and collaboratively – more than merely sending and receiving information, collaborative teams actively work together to deliver a product or make a decision.

Pair activities enforce closer relationships than people may be used to – it is incumbent on the team leader to ensure the team members are given the support they need to become

comfortable with the new approach. This could involve a phased implementation of the new practices, with regular feedback as to how it is working for the individuals.

Daniel Goleman (2003) identifies a number of possible leadership styles, associated competencies and effects on the team morale and productivity:

Leadership Style						
	Coercive	Authoritative	Affiliative	Democratic	Pacesetting	Coach
<b>When Appropriate</b>	In a crisis, to kick-start a turnaround, or with problem employees	When change requires a new vision, or when a clear direction is needed	To heal rifts in a team or to motivate during stressful times.	To build buy-in or consensus, or to get valuable input from employees.	To get quick results from a highly motivated and competent team.	To help an employee improve performance or develop long-term strengths.
<b>Objective</b>	Immediate compliance	Mobilize others to follow a vision.	Create harmony.	Build commitment through participation.	Perform tasks to a high standard.	Build strengths for the future.
<b>Impact on Climate</b>	Strongly negative.	Most strongly positive.	Highly positive.	Highly positive.	Highly negative.	Highly positive.
<b>EI Competencies</b>	Drive to achieve; initiative; emotional self-control.	Self-confidence; empathy; change catalyst.	Empathy, building bonds; conflict management.	Collaboration; team leadership; communication.	Conscientiousness; drive to achieve; initiative.	Developing others; empathy; emotional self-awareness

(Source: The Emotionally Intelligent Workplace, Chapter 3 - An EI-Based Theory of Performance, Goleman 2003)

Leaders in Agile teams should focus on developing Affiliative, Democratic and Coaching styles of management as their most common approaches, with a sensible smattering of Authoritative (aka Visionary) leadership when necessary, but leadership mode can and should change depending on the immediate team situation. Goleman (2003) cites studies that indicate that leaders who exhibit four of these leadership styles, switching between them as appropriate, are the most effective by many measures of success.

Coercive and Pacesetting leadership styles often result in negative impact on team morale and performance – the Coercive leader relies not on his/her personal capabilities but on the authority vested in the role they occupy, and the Pacesetter places high (often unreasonable) demands on themselves and their team and is likely to be critical and micromanaging when these demands are not met.

Leaders in Agile teams need the conscious ability to recognise and allow “self-organisation” to emerge from the team’s interpersonal dynamics. The team needs to freedom to reorganise depending on the demands and needs of the moment. (Cockburn

& Highsmith, 2001). This requires that the team leader be confident in and trusting of the team members, and vice-versa.

## ***Personality Perspectives***

People come in a myriad of different packages – each person is the unique manifestation of their skills, capability, background and experiences.

People on teams “pull in different directions” (Cockburn 2002, p99). Each person’s direction is set according to their personal goals, personal knowledge, stubbornness, experiences and other factors. To be an effective team, each member should be pulling in approximately the same direction as the other team members, or at the very least not on a divergent path.

People in Agile teams need to be consciously aware of their own drivers, and sensitive to the motivating and driving factors of other team members. This requires a level of honesty and trust that is above the norm in traditional development projects. The “lone-wolf” programmer is not likely to be successful in an Agile team.

Agile teams need a conscious awareness of the skills and capabilities of each team member, and the ability to cope with frequent changes – the team reorganises themselves on a regular basis to ensure the most effective combination of skills are applied to the area of the problem currently at hand. This reorganisation is emergent behaviour, resulting from team dynamics rather than imposed by external instructions. The team leader will be guiding the reorganisation, but not imposing or demanding it.

This requires building trust bonds between all the team members & the leader. Trust is not merely given, it has to be earned by exhibiting trustworthy behaviour.

People in teams are influenced by the presence of other team members – Social Facilitation (Callen et al, 1991), the way we behave is actively and passively guided and our perception of how we think others around us will react. This can result in what appears to be totally illogical behaviour – for example a study was done that put people into a potentially life threatening situation in a group – sitting in a room and the fire alarm went off – and none was prepared to be the first to move, resulting in simulated death of all concerned, but as soon as one person made a move the whole group followed.

## ***Emotional Intelligence***

Daniel Goleman has written a number of books on the “new” field of Emotional Intelligence (EI). In actuality much of the basis of these theories and approaches can be traced back to psychology studies from as far back as the 1940’s (see Cherniss, 2000 for examples). What is to a certain extent new is the recognition of the importance of emotional or soft-skill factors as contributors to success in the workplace, in addition to cognitive intelligence (IQ).

One of the myths that have sprung up about EI is that EI promotes emotional capabilities instead of or over cognitive intelligence. The fact is that for many areas of business today, cognitive intelligence can be considered an entry criteria or “table stakes” – it is unlikely that a person will be able to enter (for example) the programming profession without a reasonably high intelligence level and some formal training. Given that many practitioners in various fields will exhibit high cognitive intelligence, success may then depend on additional capabilities that the person must have or acquire.

Cherniss (2000) provides a very good background to the research and foundations of the field of EI, and offers the following definition:

“a form of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one’s own and other’s feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and action” (Quoting Salovey & Mayer, 1990)

Goleman (1998) has extended the concept of Emotional Intelligence beyond the innate capability into what he calls Emotional Competencies. Emotional Competencies refer to the personal and social skills that lead to high performance in the workplace. Emotional Competencies are dependant of having the underlying Emotional Intelligence, but must be actively nurtured and built. An example given by Cherniss: the ability to recognise accurately what another person is feeling enables one to develop a specific competency such as Influence. It is these Competencies that need to be identified and measured to predict performance.

The Consortium for Research on Emotional Intelligence in Organisations (<http://www.eiconsortium.org>) is an umbrella body that co-ordinates research and development, with a focus on measurement tools. It is not the intention of this paper to identify or examine tools for measurement, rather to discuss the competencies in general.



In Goleman (2003) he provides a matrix clustering the various competencies into four broad areas: Self-Awareness, Social Awareness, Self-Management and Relationship Management. These clusters list competencies that combine to exhibit success in these areas.

	<b>Self Personal Competence</b>	<b>Other Social competence</b>
<b>Recognition</b>	<b>Self-Awareness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Emotional self-awareness</li> <li>- Accurate self-assessment</li> <li>- Self-confidence</li> </ul>	<b>Social Awareness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Empathy</li> <li>- Service orientation</li> <li>- Organizational awareness</li> </ul>
<b>Regulation</b>	<b>Self-Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Self-control</li> <li>- Trustworthiness</li> <li>- Conscientiousness</li> <li>- Adaptability</li> <li>- Achievement drive</li> <li>- Initiative</li> </ul>	<b>Relationship Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Developing others</li> <li>- Influence</li> <li>- Communication</li> <li>- Conflict management</li> <li>- Leadership</li> <li>- Change catalyst</li> <li>- Building bonds</li> <li>- Teamwork &amp; collaboration</li> </ul>

(Source: The Emotionally Intelligent Workplace, Chapter 3 - An EI-Based Theory of Performance, Goleman, 2003)

Traditionally, technologists are not noted for having many of the Relationship Management and Social Awareness competencies. On Agile teams this needs to change! All team members need to focus on their inter-personal competencies and actively try to increase their awareness of and ability in these areas.

In his paper, Goleman cites studies that have examined the impact of each competency cluster and specific competencies on success in a variety of business areas. The characteristics of the specific competencies are detailed below, based on the material provided in Goleman (2003):

<b>Competency</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>The Self-Awareness Cluster: Understanding Feelings and Accurate Self-Assessment</b>	
Emotional Self-Awareness	Recognising one's own feelings and how they affect one's performance
Accurate Self-	Being aware of one's own abilities and limitations, seeking

Assessment	feedback and learning from mistakes, knowing where one needs to improve and when to work with others who have complementary strengths.
Self-Confidence	Having confidence in one's abilities and skills, a feeling of competence.
<b>The Self-Management Cluster: Managing Internal States, Impulses, and Resources</b>	
Emotional Self-Control	The absence of distress and disruptive feelings, being unfazed in stressful situations, dealing with hostility without lashing out in return.
Trustworthiness	Letting other know one's values and principles, intentions and feelings and acting in ways that are consistent with them.
Conscientiousness	Being careful, self-disciplined and scrupulous in attending to responsibilities.
Adaptability	Being open to new information, able to let go of old assumptions and adapt how one operates. Emotional resilience to remain comfortable with the anxiety that often accompanies uncertainty and to think "out of the box", displaying on-the-job creativity and applying new ideas to achieve results.
Achievement Drive	An optimistic striving to continually improve performance.
Initiative	Able to act before being forced to do so. Taking anticipatory action to avoid problems before they happen, taking advantage of opportunities before they are visible to anyone else.
<b>The Social Awareness Cluster: Reading People and Groups Accurately</b>	
Empathy	Having an astute awareness of other's emotions, concerns and needs. Being able to read emotional currents, picking up on nonverbal cues.
Service Orientation	The ability to identify a client's or customer's (often unstated) needs and concerns and then match them to products or services.
Organisational Awareness	The ability to read currents of emotions and political realities in groups. Social Awareness on an organisational level.
<b>The Relationship Management Cluster: Inducing Desirable Responses in Others</b>	
Developing Others	Sensing peoples developmental needs and bolstering their abilities.
Influence	Handle and manage emotions effectively in other people, persuasive, sensing others' reactions and fine-tune your own responses to move interaction in the best direction.
Communication	Being effective in the give-and-take of emotional information, able to deal with difficult issues straightforwardly, listen well and encourage the sharing of information fully, foster open communication and staying receptive to bad news as well as good.
Conflict Management	Being able to spot trouble as it is brewing and taking steps to calm those involved. Using listening and empathising to be able to handle difficult people and situations with diplomacy, encouraging debate and open discussion and orchestrating win-win situations.
Visionary Leadership	Able to draw on a range of personal skills to inspire others to work together toward common goals. Able to articulate and arouse

	enthusiasm for a shared vision and mission, to step forward as needed, to guide the performance of others while holding them accountable, and to lead by example.
Change Catalyst	The ability to recognise the need for change, remove barriers, challenge the status quo, and enlist others in pursuit of new initiatives.
Building Bonds	Creating networks and building teams with expertise and cooperation; cultivating relationships based on trust and goodwill for mutual benefit.
Teamwork & Collaboration	The ability to work effectively in teams to achieve common goals , building on and guiding the competencies of the whole team.

“If there is any single competence our present times call for it is *adaptability*” (Goleman, 2003).

These competencies can and should be encouraged and developed by training, mentoring and individual effort. It is possible for individuals to build them in themselves and in their peers.

Leaders and team members in Agile teams need to be aware of and focused on the various competencies, and when selecting team members it is important to select for compatible and complementary competencies. All team members need skills in the Self Awareness and Self Management clusters, and team leaders need to also have strengths in the Social Awareness and Relationship Management clusters.

## ***Innovation***

Tom Peters' book *The Circle of Innovation* (1997) provides a view of organisational and management activities based around the need for flexibility and rapid response to changing environments, and encourage innovation as the primary success factor for organisations in the current business age. Peters' philosophy and approach encourages people in organisations to passionately and actively embrace agility, focusing on 15 key principles. He goes so far as to state that organisations where people do not have these attitudes and approaches are likely to fail in the modern competitive environment.

He quotes Lew Platt, former Chairman and CEO of Hewlett Packard: "Whatever made you successful in the past won't in the future".

Peters' principles and approaches are practically an advertisement for Agile techniques. The attitudes and behaviours he champions are in alignment with the principles and values of the Agile manifesto (<http://www.agilealliance.org>)

Agile teams will do well to consider their contribution in terms of these principles and ensure that they are adding real value to their organisation. Modern management approaches are driving the move towards agility in all areas of the business, and information technology is simply one of the areas that must embrace change, or be outsourced.

The principles that Peters proposes for success are:

- **Distance is dead**  
Today's telecommunication and transport systems are so efficient, and becoming ever more so, that the physical location of skills, resources, capability and people no longer matter; successful organisations can and do draw on the most effective set of resources for a specific activity irrespective of where they are located. The trend towards offshore manufacturing and outsourcing is but one example of this concept in action.
- **Destruction is Cool**  
Successful businesses innovate continuously – it is often (almost always) easier to destroy and replace/rebuild an organisation than to force a lumbering behemoth to change direction. Any organisation can be considered a lumbering behemoth, no matter how large or small it may be. Rob Tomsett (2003) states that the period of stability in a modern organisation is likely to be three months or less, so continuous reinvention is necessary for corporate survival in a hyper-competitive world.
- **You can't live without an eraser**  
Forgetting what was done before is vital – yesterday's solution won't work tomorrow. Forget what you knew to allow space for new ideas to emerge.

- We are all Michelangelo's  
Convert every jobholder into a proactive business person – every role is important to the success of the organisation and every jobholder is a professional in their area. Acknowledge this and treat people with trust and respect. The management role becomes that of “relentless architect of the possibilities of human beings” – actively working to bring the best out in our people and encouraging rather than stifling innovation.
- Personal Brand Equity  
Individuals are responsible for their own performance and the value they deliver to the organisation. If you can't say specifically why you make the organisation a better place then you are probably on the way out.
- All Value comes from Professional Services  
Each organisational unit must become a vital centre of intellectual capital accumulation. Projects are undertaken with the intent of delivering awesome client service – no matter who your clients are. Every department/division/section must be focused on delivering amazingly great service to their customers, otherwise they're likely to be replaced by an outsourcer who does.
- The Intermediary Is Doomed  
Technology & systems today allow for the creation of truly virtual organisation – almost every activity can be done more effectively (faster, higher quality, more imaginatively) by a specialist who is wholly focused on a narrow business area.
- The System is the Solution  
Systems are the glue that enables the virtual/networked organisation to exist. Beyond mere re-organisation this is reinvention!
- Create Waves of Lust for your Product/Service  
Quality is no longer a competitive advantage. Doing things “right” is still pretty ordinary; conformance to requirements is the price of entry into a marketplace for any product/service, advantage needs the Wow factor – something that makes it stand out from the crowd.
- The Age of the Brand  
Creating brand awareness is more important today than it ever has been before. Product quality is easily imitated; brand/image is the advantage.
- Become a Connoisseur of Talent  
Hire “crazies” – look for different viewpoints, attitudes and capabilities. Look for bold, vigorous and continual renewal of/by people.

- It's a Woman's World  
Women are responsible for more than 50% of GDP. Make sure you find or create a brand and product/service(s) for this marketplace.
- Little Things are the Only Things  
Design is often the only differentiator – obsess on design.
- Incredible Service creates Incredible Loyalty  
Incredible service can create sustainable advantage and fanatical customer loyalty.
- Live Life Out Loud  
Eschew the “hands-off” approach – be focused, be real, be there, live on the “lunatic fringe” of creativity.

When discussing systems, Peters emphasises that technology is merely an enabler – its 5% technology and 95% psychology & attitude.

These approaches and philosophies could have been written by the authors of the Agile Manifesto, so well do they align with the principles and values of the Agile Alliance.

## ***The Chaordic Organisation & Chaordic Leadership***

“Healthy adaptive systems will always exhibit a kind of dynamic tension between chaos and order”

Dee Hock – VISA International.

Fast Company Magazine: October/November 1996; “The Trillion-Dollar Vision of Dee Hock”

Hock defines a Chaordic as “a self-organising, self-governing, adaptive, nonlinear, complex organism, organisation, community or system, whether physical, biological or social, the behaviour of which harmoniously blends characteristics of both chaos and order” (Hock 2000).

In the business context he discusses the blending of elements of competition and cooperation. He emphasises that leadership in a chaordic organisation is far more than imposed power or authority. Leadership implies active participation of the followers – choosing out of their own free will to be led, to follow in the path of the leader with the clear understanding that there is no imperative or coercion involved.

Chaordic leadership requires consensual following. Alignment with the moral, ethical and constructive approach of the leader is the primary motivator for followers to get on board and accept the leader’s viewpoint and approach. It is incumbent on the leader to ensure they lead in the direction and manner that is in alignment with the team’s goals and values.

He suggests the following breakdown of a leader’s time and focus:

- Focus on managing oneself – 50%. Manage on one’s own integrity, character, ethics, knowledge, wisdom, temperament, words and acts.
- Focus on managing the relationship with superiors – 25%. Those who have authority and influence over you to attain their consent and support.
- Focus on managing the relationship with peers – 20% . Those with whom one interacts and has no authority over; associates, competitors, suppliers, customers.
- Focus on managing subordinates – 5%. Select decent people, ensure they are recognised, supported and rewarded and stay out of the way. Remember that your subordinates will be spending 25% of their time managing their relationship with you.

Chaordic, emergent leadership allows & encourages emergent effective behaviour throughout the management structure of the organisation.

Again, these concepts from a leading management thinker are firmly in alignment with the principles and values of the Agile movement. A light touch and ethical leadership result in effective behaviour in teams of every type – Agile development is just one of the

areas where this has been evidenced in successful delivery of amazing software systems that meet real customer needs.

## ***Conclusion***

This paper has looked at a number of factors that influence how people work and act in their daily lives, and how these factors impact their performance in teams. Agile development is totally dependant on the skills and communications ability of the team members and it is important to ensure that the project environment allows the emergent team capabilities to manifest themselves in an atmosphere of mutual trust and support.

Remember:

- Expertise is Merely a Starting Point
- Agile Projects need Agile Leaders
- Agile Projects need Agile People
- Agile People need Soft Skills
- Soft Skills are Hard to Learn
- Soft Skills CAN be learnt
- Leadership Style Moulds Team Performance
- Innovation is a State of Mind
- Agile Projects are FUN!

Delivering customer delight through exceptional systems is the goal, focus and intent of the Agile approach to software development.



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