PMI Netherlands Agile Local Interest Workgroup

White paper
Part 4 Agile Project Management Leadership

Contents

Introduction

When answering previous questions on when and how to apply Agile as a successful project management method we have asserted that leadership is important in projects that have to be run in a highly dynamic environment. This is not so much about "doing things right", but more about "doing the right things" that add value for stakeholders. Leadership of project managers refers both to internal (team related) relations and external (stakeholder related) relations. Creating a shared vision and getting commitment from important stakeholders has been defined as a critical success factor in projects with high dynamics. In this part 4 of our white paper series on Agile project management we try to find the answer to the question: what personal consequences will Agile project management have for the project manager?

Answering this question we first defined the differences between management and leadership. From the perspective of a project manager this does not mean that he or she should change the personal management style completely; it is more about integrating two important leadership style elements: servant leadership and connective leadership.
Next we defined important domains and competences that are relevant for servant leadership when helping and enabling the Agile development team to do their job. Then we defined important domains and competences that are relevant for connective leadership when connecting with relevant stakeholders and their values, even though these values and related interests seem to conflict. When looking for answers on how to integrate these leadership aspects in one's personal project management style we found D. Goleman's concept of emotional intelligence very helpful.

Finishing this paper on leadership aspects of Agile project management we will give our view on the question what the organizational (- cultural) consequences will be when applying Agile project management methods becomes a routine for the business. Definitely for traditional hierarchical organizations that are confronted with the challenge to become Agile at a business level a profound change is necessary.
Finally we will summarize what makes Agile projects successful seen from the project manager's perspective.

Leadership

Agile management is primary people based, as for instance evidenced by the Agile value of "individuals and interactions over processes and tools". The concept of valuing people over processes goes beyond how we manage the project. This deals more with the way the project manager enables and empowers self-directing teams to do their work, actively involves users in the project and creates commitment from stakeholders based on a shared vision and continuous communication on value delivery. Showing leadership behavior is far more essential for creating project success in dynamic projects than performing a formalized role.

Management has a more "mechanical" focus than leadership. It is concerned with planning and budgeting, organizing and staffing, controlling and problem solving. Leadership has a more "organic" or "transforming" focus. It is concerned with setting direction (doing the right things) , aligning stakeholders, empowering and motivating people. Leadership is about tapping into people's intrinsic motivations.

W. Bennis[1] developed a useful comparison of the differences between management and leadership. These differences are shown in the next table:

Management focus	Leadership focus
Administers	Innovate
Is a copy	Is an original
Maintains	Develops
Focus on procedures and structure	Focus on people
Relies on control	Inspires trust
Has a short - range view	Has a long - range perspective
Ask how and when	Ask why
Has his eye on the bottom line	Has his eye on the horizon
Imitates	Originates
Accepts the status quo	Challenges the status quo
Classic good soldier	His own person
Does things right	Does the right thing

Figure 1 W. Bennis, Management versus leadership

This comparison exercise separates management from leadership in a very clear way. This is useful for project managers wishing to take on more of a leadership role. However showing such a distinct difference should not be interpreted as slightly downplaying the important role of a good manager in project's organizational life. Most managers have to fulfill both roles. It is more about integrating two important leadership aspects in one's project management role: internally focused servant leadership and externally focused connective leadership.

Servant leadership

Agile promotes a servant leadership model that recognizes that it is the team members, not the project manager, who gets the technical work done that creates value for the business.

Servant leadership[2] puts serving others as the number one priority for managers. It emphasizes:
- Service to others.
  Servant-leadership begins when leaders assume the position of servant in their interactions with followers. Authentic, legitimate leadership arises not from the exercise of power or self-interested actions, but from a fundamental desire to first help others.
- Holistic approach to work.
  Servant-leadership holds that "The work exists for the person as much as the person exists for the work". It promotes a view that individuals should be encouraged to be who they are, in their professional as well as personal lives.
- Promoting a sense of community.
  Greenleaf lamented the loss of community in modern society, calling it "the lost knowledge of these times". Community is defined as groups of individuals that are jointly liable for each other both individually and as a unit. Only by establishing this sense of community among individuals and groups, can a (project) organization succeed in its objectives. This sense of community arises from the actions of individual servant-leaders.
- Sharing of power in decision-making.
  Effective servant-leadership is best evidenced by the cultivation of servant-leadership in others. By nurturing participatory, empowering environments, and encouraging the talents of others, the servant-leader creates a more effective, motivated workforce and ultimately a more successful organization.

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[1] W. Bennis, On becoming a leader, Addison Wesley, Reading , MA 1994
[2] Greenleaf, R.K. (1996). On becoming a servant-leader. San Francisco: Josey-Bass Publishers.

Servant leadership is related to important competences like listening, empathy, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, commitment to the growth of people. These competences are related to the outward, manifested characteristics of a servant-leader's leadership behavior. It should be obvious that these competences are based on inner values and beliefs like fairness and integrity. Servant leader's motivation derives from a core, egalitarian belief that they are no better than those whom they lead.

Seven Pillars of Servant Leadership

Community

Customers

Employees

Servant Leader

Person of Character | Puts People First | Skilled Communicator | Compassionate Collaborator | Has Foresight | Systems Thinker | Leads with Moral Authority
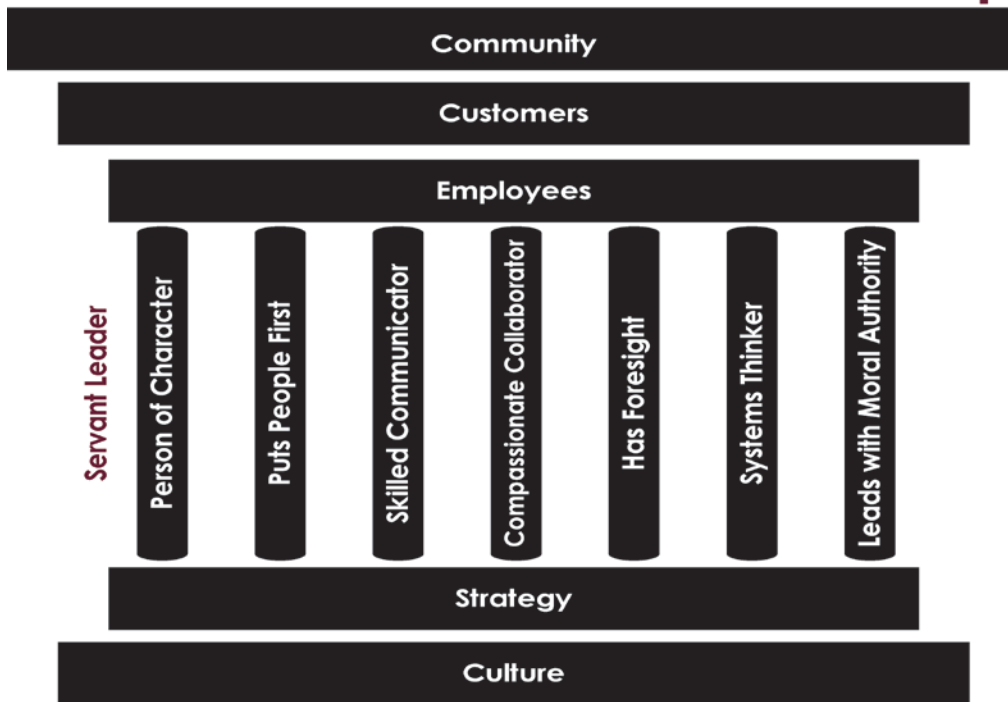
Strategy

Culture

Figure 2 Servant leadership characteristics

When applying these leadership characteristics to Agile team's, it focusses the project manager on providing what the team members need, removing impediments to progress and performing supporting tasks to maximize the team's productivity.

According to Mike Griffith[3] there are four primary core tasks a project manager performs in this role of servant leader.

Task 1: (Re) Communicate project vision. Although it may seem like an odd task to place in the category of servant leadership, communicating helps to keep the vision alive. It is important to create a sense of "community". Only if stakeholders have a clear image of the goals for the completed product and project, can they align their decisions with, and work toward, the common project objective. A common vision helps to keep people all pulling in the same direction. Divergent views commonly develop between well intentioned team members. For instance de developer's ambition to create the most integrated solution could diverge from the user's desire for simplicity. Or a quality assurance specialist's desire for completeness and conformance may diverge from the sponsor's requirements for progress and completion. (Re) Communicating the shared project vision helps stakeholders and the team recognizes these divergences and brings them back in line with the project's vision and objectives. Finding new ways to permanently illustrate and reinforce the vision is essential for sense of community.

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[3] M. Griffith, PMI-ACP exam prep, 2012 RMC publications.

Task 2: Shield the team from interruptions. Servant leaders need to isolate and protect the team members from diversions, interruptions and requests for the work that are not part of the project. When business representatives are closely involved in a project, it can be tempting for them to make side requests for changes or enhancements directly to the developers that would sidetrack the planned development effort. While Agile projects positively encourage these business insights and requests, it was agreed upon that these requests should be made during the iteration planning meeting or submit them to the product owner, who manages the product backlog. Part of being a servant leader involves reminding people on made agreements and codes of conduct. This helps teams to focus on their iteration and establish a reliable velocity.

Another example of shielding the team is time fragmentation, breaking people away from focusing on the project work and moving them back and forth between multi tasks. This saps productivity. Shielding the team from external demands of resources managers enhances productivity. Physically co- locating team members is an effective way to prevent similar interferences. If specialists are still located in their own departments, they can easily be drawn back into non- project work.

Task 3: Remove impediments to progress. Servant leaders need to clear obstacles from the team's path that would cause delay or non-value adding work. In the lean vocabulary, this compliance works refers to efforts that do not directly contribute toward delivering business value. For example this could include non-project meetings, duplicated time recording activities or other administrative activities.

At the daily stand up meeting, where the team reports on its progress, planned work and issues the leader needs to note the issues and work to resolve them, that same day if possible. Removing or easing such impediments will allow the team to work productive and ultimately deliver more value to the business.

Task 4: Provide necessary resources and information. Resources refer to tooling, methods, infra- structure. It could also be information or results from other teams necessary to perform own activities. But there is more. Specialists who are fueled by professionalism and duty alone can't continue to contribute to the best of their ability, iteration after iteration. Leaders need to learn what motivates their team members as individuals and find ways to reward them for good work, starting for instance by making compliments for the work done.

Leaders also need to celebrate successes, the large ones of course, but also the small ones as the project progresses. It is often tempting to save the project celebrations for the end, but if the team members are not receiving some regular recognition, the project may never reach a successful conclusion. Celebration and recognition help build momentum, and leaders need to nourish their teams with such rewards frequently.

Training and other professional development activities are also examples of "resources" the team needs to be productive. The project manager should take an interest in and arrange appropriate training for the individuals on the team. By building the specialists and teamwork skills, the project will not only profit from new knowledge, but such actions also show that we want the team and its individual members to grow and not only extract dedication from them.

Connective leadership

Referring to the essential elements of an Agile project approach, it is obvious that creating common goals and a sense of community for a wide band of stakeholders is important. The kind of leadership that matches this continuous interaction with stakeholders can de best described as "connective" leadership.

This type of leadership is introduced by Jean Lipton Blumen [4]. She notes that there is a growing sense that old forms of leadership are untenable in a globalizing and continuous changing environment. This requires new ways of thinking which confront and deal constructively with two contra dictionary forces in the current "connective era": interdependency and diversity.

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[4] Jean Lipton- Blumen, The age of connective leadership in On leading change ed. F. Hesselbein & R. Johnston , pp 89-101, Jossey- Bass, New York

Interdependency, driven largely by technology, connects everyone and everything, everywhere. It drives us towards collaboration in alliances, networks and coalitions. Interdependency focuses on overlapping visions, mutual problems, and common goals. It seeks out similarities and promotes universalism. Diversity concerns the unique character of individuals, groups and organizations. It stems from a set of complex factors, particularly the human need for identity. Diversity focuses on the special vision of each stakeholder, underscoring differences and highlighting conflicting agendas.

When distilling the most constructive elements of both diversity and interdependency, the most important task of connective leaders is to persuade and integrate conflicting groups of shareholders. This requires capabilities to construct and call upon social networks and multiple shifting coalitions. Inspiring both supporters and opponents to work together, will be an important strategy for bolstering the common good. Reaching out to longstanding enemies will even be necessary in order to accomplish mutual goals. They help others to make good connections and to develop a sense of common purpose across boundaries, thus building commitment across a wide domain. Connective leaders should be able to perceive connections among diverse people, ideas and institutions even when the parties themselves do not.

Based on a multi-dimensional (goal) achieving styles model, Jean Lipton Blumen relates connective leadership to relational and instrumental styles. In modern leadership these two underutilized sets of achieving styles become far more important than the traditional masculine ego ideal of strong, directive leaders.
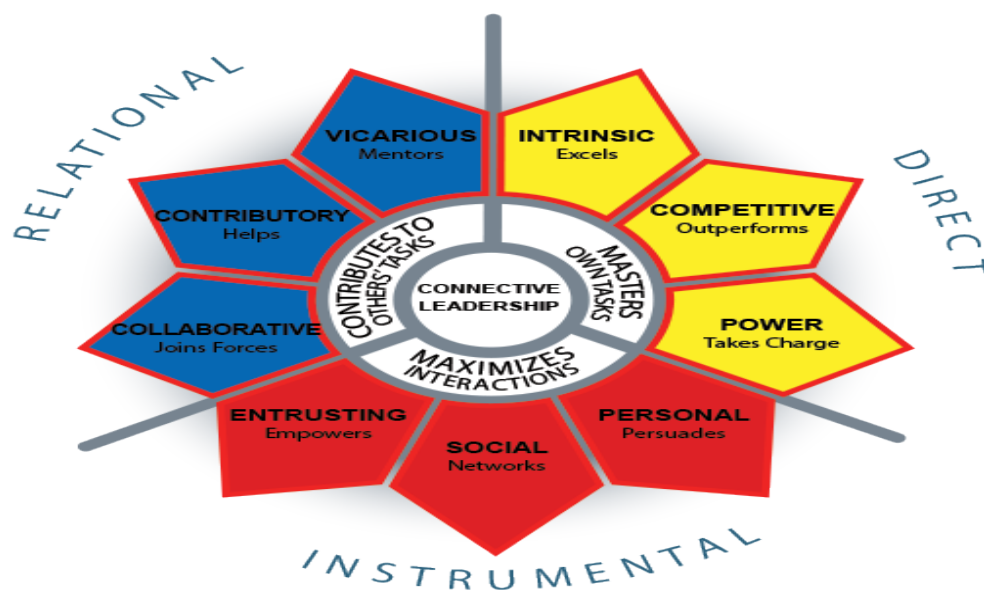

Figure 3 Achieving styles model

Referring to these two sets of achieving styles, six key competences for connective leaders are identified:
1. Combining political know how and skills with strong ethics when using others and themselves in a transparent way to achieve goals.
2. Displaying authenticity and accountability. Authenticity is achieved by allowing behavior that is based on one's own personality and values. Accountability involves two obligations; first to explain one's actions and secondly to be held responsible to a widening jury of stakeholders. Accountability means that a leader knows that every choice will be seriously scrutinized.
3. Engaging in a politics of commonalities. This means searching for commonalities and common ground. Building a context of community in which the most diverse groups

representing the very broadest band of ideas and values can enjoy a sense of belonging and rewarding membership.

4. Thinking long term and acting short term. A long term perspective is necessary to ensure that today's choices do not ban actions that may be required in the future by unanticipated events.

5. Leadership by expectation. Connective leaders encourage the widest set of participants to join in the process of leadership. They spread the burden of leadership and entrust responsibility to others rather than commandeering the troops and micro managing. Recipients of the leader's trust feel enabled and it is usually reciprocated by the recipient through outstanding performance.

6. Per suing a quest for life's meaning. Connective leaders are committed to a lifelong search for a deeper understanding of themselves, their constituents and the organization they lead. By calling supporters to dedicate themselves as well to efforts to change their worlds for the better, they enable constituents to stretch themselves beyond their own expectations.

Personal growth towards emotional intelligence

Integrating servant and connective leadership aspects in your personal management style is essential for personal growth of Agile oriented project managers. This personal growth all starts with self- knowledge. W. Bennis (1994) emphasizes that effective managers must have self-knowledge if they want to be freed up sufficiently to think in new ways. He claims that you make your life your own by understanding it and becoming your own designer, rather than being designed by your own experience.

This self-knowledge plays an important role in D. Goleman's [5] concept of emotional intelligence. This is our ability to identify, assess and influence the emotions of ourselves, other individuals and groups. Effective leaders are characterized by a high level score on emotional intelligence. In our opinion integrating servant and connective leadership aspects are very closely linked to becoming an emotional intelligent person. Goleman identifies four core competences that are characteristic for this emotional intelligence, of which self – awareness is at the heart. If it is not present, the chance of becoming mature in the other three characteristics is much reduced.

Self	Others
Self- awareness	**Social awareness**
Knowing one's internal states, preferences, resources and intuitions.	Awareness of other's feelings, needs and concerns.
- Emotional awareness: recognizing one's emotions and their effects - Accurate self -assessment: knowing one's strengths and limits - Self- confidence: a strong sense of one's self worth and capabilities	- Empathy: sensing other's feelings and perspectives, and taking an active interest in their concerns - Organizational awareness: reading emotional currents and power relationships in and between groups - Service orientation: anticipating, recognizing, meeting customers' needs

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[5] D. Goleman, Working with emotional intelligence, Bloomsbury, London, 1998

Self -management	Social skills
Managing one's internal states, impulses and resources.	Adeptness at inducing desirable responses in others.
- Self- control: keeping disruptive emotions and impulses in check - Trustworthiness: maintaining standards of honesty and integrity - Conscientiousness: taking responsibility for personal performance - Adaptability: flexibility in handling change - Achievement orientation: striving to improve or meeting a standard of excellence - Initiative: readiness to act on opportunities	- Developing others: sensing other's development needs and bolstering their abilities - Leadership: inspiring and guiding individuals and groups - Influence: wielding effective tactics for persuasion - Communication: listening openly and sending convincing messages - Change catalyst: initiating or stimulating change - Conflict management: negotiating and resolving disagreements - Building bonds: nurturing instrumental relationships - Teamwork and collaboration: working with others toward shared goals, creating group synergy in pursuing collective goals

Figure 4 D. Goleman emotional intelligence competences

While everyone has some level of skill in all quadrants, it is usually easiest to start personal growth by improving your "self- awareness". Next you can learn how to regulate yourselves through "self-management", then build "social awareness" and finally hone your "social skills".

So becoming an Agile project manager you first need to recognize your own feelings. Once you understand your emotions, you can begin to control them. So as a start, try to recognize what makes you uncertain, frustrated, or perhaps even angry when you are confronted with stakeholders who don't have consensus on the why and what of changes. You then need to realize you have the power to choose how you feel and respond. You could simply follow the normal pattern of stimulus (continuous change in your projects) leading to a (how to control it) response. However, you could insert a decision between stimulus and response. You have the choice whether or not to allow issues to continuously upset you or to respond to it differently. Instead of rejecting changes you could welcome them and react in a more flexible way, as this the heart of an Agile way to deal with project dynamics. Recognizing you have a choice is a key part of becoming self – aware and moving on to mastering self – management.

Moreover you should also keep in mind that the way you react to managing changes has an impact on those around yourself, particularly because you are in a position of leadership. As D. Goleman explains: "The leaders mood and behaviors drive the moods and behaviors of everyone else, a cranky and ruthless boss creates a toxic organization filled with negative underachievers who ignore opportunities". The well-known theory on the self-fulfilling prophecy of X and Y leadership presented by D. Mc Gregor[6] confirms this statement as well.

So, once you have sorted yourself out in the areas of self- awareness and self – management, you should work on developing social awareness and empathy for others; the stakeholders, the team, the specialists. As an Agile manager you need to be able to identify when team members are stuck, frustrated or upset in order to help them. You also need to understand and moreover respect the different points of view from stakeholders in order to connect their values and interests from a win-win perspective. Then once you are able to recognize why and when others need help, you use your social skills, such as the ability to influence, inspire, lead or develop.

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[6] D.McGregor , The human side of enterprise, McGraw-Hill, Maidenhead, 1960.

Organizational consequences

Definitely, managing projects in an Agile way will have consequences for project managers seen from the leadership perspective. The next question is: will it have consequences for the organization as well?

In our opinion the answer is yes. In a globalizing and dynamic environment, change is daily business for lots of organizations. Successfully managing projects becomes a prerequisite for organizations to survive. Nevertheless, certainly in more traditional organizations a big percentage of their projects ultimately fail. In this case there will be a growing urgency that the way projects are managed should change. Training professional competences of project managers is part of this change, but organizations should also develop their project management policies to select valuable projects and to select adequate project management methods. Agile project management should be one of these methods.
But there is more.
When organizations are confronted with the fact that quite a number of their projects should be managed in an Agile way, this usually indicates that the environment of the organization itself has become complex and dynamic. In this case just training project managers to manage their projects in a more Agile way will not be adequate. It is the organization itself that has to become more Agile. Moreover introducing self-organizing and self-directing team concepts and servant leadership in a management culture that is primary based on planning & control, will force organizations to break away from the classic organizational pyramid. What is needed can be referred to as an "inverted pyramid", with customers and employees and customers at the top, and leader(s) at the bottom.
The need for organizations to become more Agile has already been recognized by A. Toffler in 1985[7]. In his book The Adaptive Corporation he theorized about the question what organizations must do not only to survive, but to prosper in a social-economic environment that is fundamentally different from the industrial era in which they were born.

Manufacturing Model
- Structural capital
- Hierarchies
- Linear processes
- Command and control
- Activity based measures

Services Model
- Social capital
- Networks
- Double loop processes
- Alignment
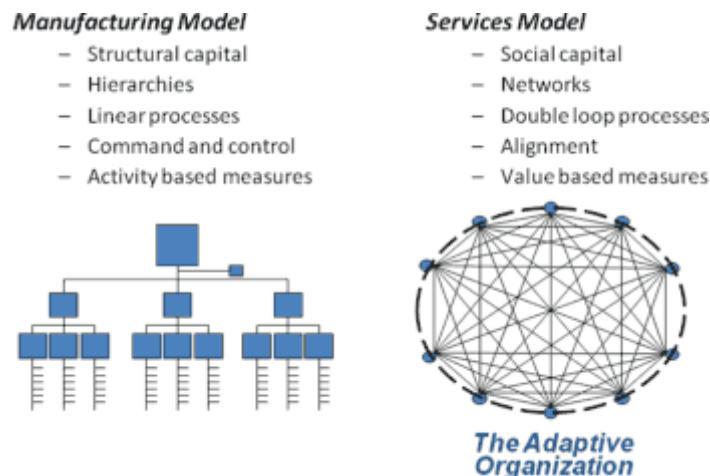- Value based measures

The Adaptive Organization

Figure 5 The adaptive organization

What lessons can be learned from organizations that have proven themselves "adaptive" in the fast-paced environment in which we now live and work?
Adaptive organizations are characterized by:

- The ability for all employees, departments and groups within these organizations to collaborate effectively.
- The ability for all employees at all levels to network with others outside the organization, gaining new sources of useful information and helpful perspectives in their processes. This

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[7] A. Toffler, The adaptive organization, Gower Pub.Co , 1985

includes networking with customers, public government, universities and research centers of excellence or even with competitors or rivals.

- The ability for all employees at all levels to innovate and experiment without fear of "reprisal" or marginalization. Instead, the culture of these organizations stimulates, supports and rewards those who think innovatively, thus enabling the organization to solve the pressing issues the organization faces.

How to become such an adaptive or Agile organization?
Set the stage by creating a sense of urgency. This could be based on actual information on the organization's project management success rate. During the coming organizational change this urgency should be continually reinforced. Next create a powerful coalition of higher level management that should be able to act as role models and strong promoters of the Agile way of working.
Decide what to do by creating a vision on an adaptive and continuous learning organization.
Make it happen by communicating the vision and generating all kind of change initiatives related to the structure, systems (not only project management but HRM systems as well), skills/ competences that enable an Agile way of working. This is referred to as the "hardware" "software" the organization.
Make it stick by ensuring new ways of working. Here we are confronted with the most difficult part of becoming an Agile organization: the cultural and leadership aspects; the "mind ware" of the organization.

E. Schein[8] defines culture as "the pattern of basic assumptions that a given group has invented, discovered or developed in learning to scope with its problems of external adaption and internal integration, and that have worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems". Culture is vitally important for any organization, because of its impact on performance. Schein confirms that the starting point for changing culture should always be the business issues that the organization faces. Additionally he suggests that you don't begin with the idea that the existing culture is somehow totally "bad". It is more like a voyage of discovery, gradually finding out what works better to adapt to a dynamic environment. It is a longer lasting growth process, where role models keep the new ideas of "how we do things around here" alive.
Best practice experience with successfully changing cultural attributes in becoming more Agile indicate three strategies:

1. Create self- directed teams.
   An abundance of structure and rule-setting tends to inhibit creativity and adaptability. This particularly takes place in traditional organizations with a multi-level hierarchical structure. The most effective collaboration is stimulated in flattened organizations based on self-directing and self- organizing principles. Informality and relationships based on respect and trust lead to successful collaboration, as it's hard to collaborate with people with whom you are "commanded" to work. "Guided" teams have a hard time looking at their environment with an open mind—familiar assumptions and conventional approaches come to the fore. Smaller, self-generating groups are freer to challenge the dominant paradigms and arrive at new ways of adapting to emerging challenges and opportunities.
2. Bridge the "stove pipes" through employee engagement.
   The next strategy is to attack the segmentation of departments, divisions, and units within an organization. An organization cannot adapt to new circumstances if vital information is hoarded by any group. Only an unfettered exchange of insights and ideas among all the groups and sub-groups within the organization can build a comprehensive understanding of the environment and generate the right adaptations and solutions.
   Different kinds of actions can help "bridge the stovepipes." One approach is to develop "open standards for teams" to build trust, collaboration, and share ideas across the organization. Common methods of communication, approaches to problem solving, and modes of behavior are necessary to remove restrictions on the effective flow of knowledge

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[8] E. Schein, Organizational culture ad leadership, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 1992

that is so important to truly understanding a rapidly changing environment and adapting to its challenges and opportunities. These methods and standards should encompass all teams within the company and transcend all organizational boundaries.

A shared vision also helps unite and inspire all the parts of an organization to adapt together toward a common purpose. When an organization has a shared vision, different internal stakeholders are less apt to let their "stovepipe" equities be a roadblock to the adaptability of the company as a whole in the face of rapid change.

3. Create venues where employees can practice adaptive thinking.

To be innovative and capable the find solutions for complex problems, leadership must create time and space inside the organization, where employees feel the psychological and practical safety to collaborate and pursue new ideas. A kind of "intellectual safe harbor" in which unfamiliar perspectives and approaches are expected and encouraged in response to, or anticipation of, unfamiliar circumstances. Often the "safe place to innovate" is established within the organization, but outside the normal organizational forms like "tiger teams" or "green fields" can be applied. Just as importantly as creating the space and time, the upper echelons of the organization (as well as supervisors at all levels) have to demonstrate a genuine commitment to listening to the ideas from up, down, and across the organization, reinforcing positive behaviors when people use their safe venues to raise new ideas about how to adapt to what's changing in the environment.

Another well-known author that could be referred to when searching for an answer on how to become a more Agile organization is P. Senge and his learning organization concept[9]. Senge identified five disciplines (organizational competences) that are critical to organizations today if they are to cope with the dynamics of their environment. The fifth discipline, systems thinking, is according to Senge at the heart of an adaptive, learning organization.
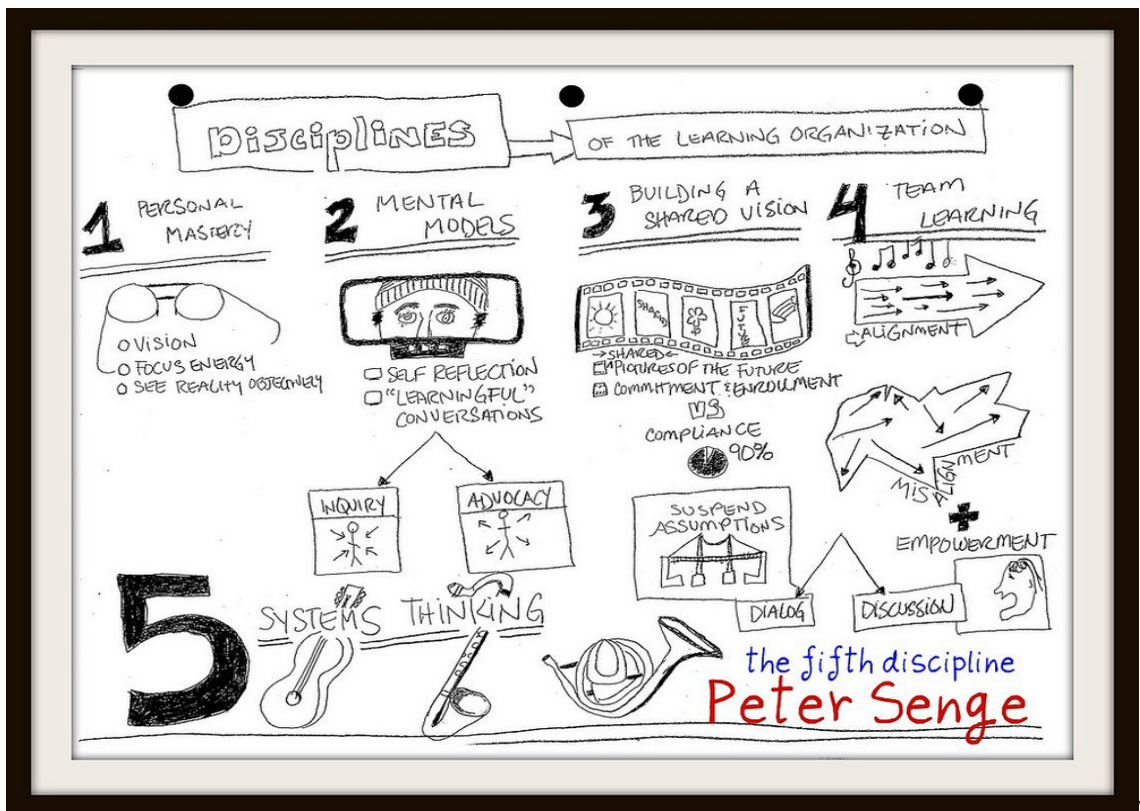

Figure 6 Disciplines of the learning organization

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[9] P. Senge, The fifth discipline, Century business, London, 1993

The first discipline is related to personal mastery. This is centrally to do with 'self-awareness' – how much we know about ourselves and the impact our behavior has on others. Personal mastery is the human side of change. This deals with willingness to have one's own beliefs and values challenged, to discuss sensitivities, to ensure change interactions and behaviors are authentic, congruent and principled. Leaders learn to use tools like *'Perceptual Positions'* and *'Reframing'* to enhance the quality of interaction and relationship in and outside their teams.

The second discipline is related to awareness of mental models. One key to change success is in surfacing deep-seated mental models (beliefs, values, mind-sets and assumptions) that determine the way people think and act. Getting in touch with the thinking going on about change in your workplace, challenging or clarifying assumptions and encouraging people to reframe is essential. Leaders learn to use tools like the *'Ladder of Inference'* and *'Reflective Inquiry'* to practice making their mental models clearer for each other and challenging each other's assumptions in order to build shared understanding.

The third discipline is related to building a shared vision. The key vision question is 'What do we want to create together?'. Taking time early in the change process to have the conversations needed to shape a truly shared vision is crucial to build common understandings and commitments, unleash people's aspirations and hopes and unearth reservations and resistances. Leaders learn to use tools such as *'Positive Visioning'*, *'Concept-shifting'* and *'Values Alignment'* to create a shared vision, forge common meaning/focus and mutually agree what the learning targets, improvement strategies and challenge-goals should be to get there.

The fourth discipline is related to team learning. This happens when teams start 'thinking together' by sharing their experience, insights, knowledge and skills with each other about how to do things better. Teams develop reflection, inquiry and discussion skills to conduct more skillful change conversations with each other which form the basis for creating a shared vision of change and deciding on common commitments to action. It's also about teams developing the discipline to use the action learning cycle rigorously in change-work. Leaders learn to use tools like the *'Action-Learning Cycle'* and *'Dialogue'* to develop critical reflection skills and conduct more robust, skillful discussions with their teams and each other.

The fifth discipline is related to systems thinking. This is a framework for seeing inter-relationships that underlie complex situations and interactions rather than simplistic (and mostly inaccurate) linear cause-effect chains. It enables teams to unravel the often hidden subtleties, influences, leverage points and intended/unintended consequences of change plans and programs and leads to deeper, more complete awareness of the interconnections behind changing any system. Leaders learn to use *'Systems Thinking Maps'* and *'Archetypes'* to map and analyze situations, events, problems and possible causes/courses of action to find better (and often not obvious) change options/solutions.

Making your Agile projects successful

The starting point for project managers to make Agile projects a success is their ability to combine emotional intelligence with personal ethics. People will not follow leaders they know are deceptive. Leaders should pay special attention to transparency and make sure they follow through on what they say they will do.

We finish our white papers on Agile project management by summing up five critical success factors for Agile project management seen from the perspective of project leadership.

1. Generate a vision of the completed project in close cooperation with stakeholders. Connect the why and what of change with stakeholders' values and beliefs. Keep the vision alive. The vision provides direction to achieve higher goals in such a way that those involved want to commit to it. It is a means to bring about passion and meaning for the project. Use the project vision to drive your own behavior.
2. In a dynamic environment opinions and beliefs of stakeholders change. Keep stakeholders committed, fostering a collective ambition to the project realization. In this dynamic process, moral principles and common values are balanced with a pragmatic, solution-

oriented approach to change issues. Continuous (iterations based) and transparent (using visualizations) feedback on the project progress and the creation of value helps.

3. Let users participate from the outset. Especially in complex project environments, it is increasingly important to use the knowledge and insights from users about what is needed to make for the daily functioning of systems and the best "business solution". Users should contribute to the specification of functional requirements; full agreement to the higher goal of the project is not needed per se. User acceptance will be achieved when the project's result benefits the end user.

4. Enable the conditions for self-organization and self-direction of the project team. By trusting the team to take decisions themselves, setting challenging goals and open communication structures, you contribute to the emergence of a high performing team. Serve as the central figure in successful project team development.

5. Planning the project is based on thinking backwards. This means envision the end goal and then work backwards to determine what needed to happen to get there and what problems and risks could occur. When controlling, focus constantly on the higher project goal. This is used to guide new changes initiatives and monitor the success of these changes towards the higher goal.