Business Agility in the Age of Mobility

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Today’s Presenters

Greg Smith
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GS Solutions Group

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VP Product Development
Worldwide ERC
Today We Will Discuss

- Why Agile is not just for software projects
- What does Business Agility mean?
- Applying an Agile mindset to business as usual work
- Organization Structure and Business Agility
- Ways to Jump Start your move to Business Agility

When You Hear the Word “Agile”

Agility in the Real World
The Story of Quecreek

The Tragedy Begins

Only a Few Days for a Rescue
The Quecreek rescuers adapted to:
- Broken drill bits
- Gas lines blocking their drill path
- The need to reduce the time required to manufacture a fishing device

In business projects we encounter:
- A misunderstanding of a customer need
- A third party or vendor delivering their part of the project later than expected
- A natural disaster or weather related issue

Parallels between Quecreek and Business Projects:
Expect change and be ready to adapt.

Parallels between Quecreek and Business Projects
Clear Priorities
- Quecreek had a major time constraint - 
  Get the miners out before they died
- Most business projects have to be 
delivered by a deadline or their value 
is marginalized
- The analogy: “What is the value of a Sunday newspaper on Monday?”
Parallels between Quecreek and Business Projects:

**Collaboration**

Ideas came from all Quecreek team members
- Idea – Drill a pilot hole first
- Idea – Use positive air pressure to keep the water at bay

In the business world we want:
- Ideas from all team members
- To avoid a contract/adversary relationship with vendors or the customer

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**Early Feedback**

At Quecreek the rescue team thought they knew where the miners were
- A quick pilot hole verified the assumption

In Business Development we:
- Demonstrate frequently to verify we are on target with the customer needs

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**Agile is What We Just Discussed**

1. Expecting and adapting to changing needs
2. Establishing a collaborative environment
3. Minimizing risk through frequent feedback
4. Delivering while the need still exists
5. Emphasizing *value delivery* over following a plan
Keeping it Simple – Business Agility Is:

1. Delivering value to your customers, frequently
2. Being flexible, with the ability to respond to change, and to opportunity, quickly
3. Maintaining a Lean mindset – always reducing waste and optimizing processes, to support #1 and #2.

Let’s Go Deeper on What Business Agility Means

“Agility is the ability of an organization to renew itself, adapt, change quickly, and succeed in a rapidly changing, ambiguous, turbulent environment.”

What About Business As Usual?

- Maintaining and Sustaining
- Financials Management
- Human Resources
- Purchasing
- Contract Management
- Vendor Management
- Sales
- Marketing
Agile Changes to Human Resources

- Employee reviews decoupled from pay
- More frequent feedback, ability to correct behavior, or reinforce behavior, sooner
- Focus on improving manager coaching skills – soft skills – collaboration skills – facilitation skills – situational leadership skills

- More peer feedback
- Upward feedback
- Hire more people who are a better fit for an Agile environment
- More spot bonuses to recognize contributions when they happen, as opposed to waiting for end of year salary adjustment
Organization Structure Enables Business Agility

What If We Considered How We Get Value to Customers?

A Value Stream Cuts Through an Organization
**An Example in an Insurance Company**

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The Value of Value Streams

- Dedicated Teams Lets Us Establish Domain Expertise and Tribal Knowledge
- We do not have to go through forming/storming/norming/performing for each initiative.
- This lowers multi-tasking and improves quality
- Business owners do not fight each other for resources
- Customer satisfaction becomes a team issue, not an issue for the last department in the workflow
- This structure can be virtual. You can still have the same functional boss to coach you on your skill set.

Three Ways to Jump Start Your Move to Business Agility
1) Motivate and Retain Talent

- **Autonomy** - Give me your goals and strategy, let me determine how to get there.

- **Mastery** – Encourage craftsmanship and pride in the trade. Provide opportunities for continuous learning. Assign people to jobs that would probably do for free.

- **Purpose** – Organization vision – what is your greater good?

2) Create a Physical Environment that Supports What You Do

3) Find Out If Your Customers are Happy

Ask your customer how satisfied they are with the product or project, so far, after each sprint. You can keep it simple and use a Net Promoter Score (NPS)

On a Scale of 1 to 10 - How likely are you to recommend us to another customer?

Net Promoter Score: 50
Learn More at the Americas Mobility Conference

Questions?