

Checklists

From the book: Management 3.0: Leading Agile Developers, Developing Agile Leaders

Book by Jurgen Appelo

Review a problem on your list of things-to-solve.

Try to imagine the cause of the problem.

- Are you sure that is the sole reason? How do you know?
- Have you discussed the problem with all stakeholders? Do they all agree about the single cause?
- Do not oversimplify the complexity of the problems.
- Make sure to not address the wrong cause.

If people in your organization use a root-cause analysis technique

- Engage in a discussion with them about the bias these techniques have for simplistic cause-and-effect relationships.
- Organize it.

The seven dimensions of software projects

- Review the dimensions.
- Do your software projects take all these into account?
- Are your teams Agile in every dimension? If not, what do you plan to do about it?

Think about the managers in your organization.

- Which ones might form an obstacle to the adoption of Agile software development?
- Is there something you can do about it?
- What do you need from them to make your Agile management approach a success?

- Is it clear for everyone who is a line manager of who and who is not? Are there uncertainties or disagreements about line managers versus project managers? If there are, what will you do about it?
- Develop your Agile management skills by subscribing to blogs and groups about Agile teams and organizations.

The five cogs of innovation

- Gather colleagues to review them.
- Is your organization actively addressing all of these?
- Is every wheel in the information-innovation system running smoothly? If not, what do you plan to do about it?

Discuss the identifiable results of innovation in your organization.

- Can you name any results? If not, why not?
- If all the prerequisites are in place, why are no innovations implemented?
- Are there any actionable items missing?

Beginner's Mind

- Discuss the term with your team.
- What are you doing to develop and support this kind of mindset?

Consider the creative environment in your organization.

- Are you actively addressing safety, play, variation, visibility, and edge?

Discuss various creative techniques with your team.

- Which ones are used right now?
- Do people need to learn more about them?

Identify forms of extrinsic motivation in your organization

- come up with a plan to eliminate them.

Review the list of ten intrinsic desires.

- Are you trying to address the motivation of team members by relating your efforts to these basic desires?
- Learn about personalities and diversity in your team
- take the four steps toward a team personality assessment.
- Use the Do-It-Yourself Team Values list to generate a small list of values
- Guide your team in their daily decision making.

Consider thinking about your values.

- Are they in line with what you expect from your team? Are they different?
Can you lead by example?
- Move your desk to the same area where your team is. If this is not possible, move only your chair

The Emergent Properties

- Which properties of the team exist only at the team level and do not relate to any specific individual?
- Would you say that your team is merely a group of individuals with no emergent properties? Why is that?
- Imagine a list of decisions that your team is allowed to make without you.
- Imagine a list of decisions that you make without your team.
 - Which list is bigger? And why?

Empowerment

- Estimate the time you spend per week with your team.
 - Do you measure it in minutes, hours, or days? Is it too much or too little?
 - Are they sufficiently empowered or not?
- Evaluate any managers reporting to you.
 - Would you rate them as politicians or wizards?
- Imagine that you could delegate all your responsibilities to your team.
 - Does that thought make you feel uncomfortable because there is nothing left for to you do? Or do you find the idea appealing because you will then have time for more interesting work?
- Evaluate every person in your team.
 - How would you rate their empowerment maturity levels? Low, moderate, or high?
 - What can you do to increase it?
- Think back to a disagreement or decision problem you had with your team.
 - What was the proper authorization level for that decision? Did people know? Did they respect it?
- Think about the people on your team.

- Are there some who are perfectly able to handle the work you've delegated to them? If so, can they handle more? Are there any who are not doing well (yet)? If so, how long have you been investing in them, and when do you expect a return on that?
- Think about top management and other departments in your organization.
 - Are they all supportive of your approach to empowerment? If not, what do you need to do about it?
- Consider the four types of trust.
 - Are all the trust arrows between people in place? Or are there some who don't fully trust each other? What can you do about that?
- Ask your team the following questions now and then:
 - What should I stop doing? What should I start doing? What should I continue doing?

Self-Organized

- Imagine that your team is completely self-directed, with no interference or directions from you.
 - Which outcomes would you fear?
 - What boundaries would you want to keep in place to prevent bad things from happening?
- Think about your management capabilities.
 - What are you good at? Leading or ruling? Do you want to emphasize one or the other? How?
- Think about yourself, as a person.
 - What is your purpose in your job? How is this purpose different from other people?

Goals

- Define an extrinsic goal for your team that transcends the goals of all individuals, including your own.
- Make sure everyone understands the goal. Check regularly with team members to see if they use the goal in their everyday decision making.
- Ask your team what its autonomous goal is. If the team doesn't have one, don't tell it to define one. Just let the team wonder about your question.

- ❑ Compare your extrinsic goal with the autonomous goal of the team. Can the two goals lead to conflicts? Discuss with the team how any conflicts will be resolved.
- ❑ Create a boundary list of authority. Make it clear not only who can make which decisions, but also which authority level is applied in which case.
- ❑ Make it your own goal to understand how people on your team feel—about their position and each other.
- ❑ Think about the shared resources in your organization. Which ones are there? Are they all properly managed? What can you do to prevent that they are exploited by multiple teams?
- ❑ Discuss how to constrain the quality levels that the products of your self-organizing team should adhere to. What is needed to make that work?
- ❑ Consider a social contract with your team. There are things you expect from the team. But what can it expect from you? Are you prepared to put that in writing?

Discipline and Rules

- ❑ Draw a Discipline-Skill Grid for your team.
- ❑ Do you know where to place each person on the scales of discipline and skill? If not, why don't you know? If you do, is the result like you want it to be? If not, what will you do about it?
- ❑ Create a list of the important rules (or better: constraints) in your organization.
- ❑ Make sure people know them and that the list doesn't grow larger than 10. When an 11th rule or constraint is added, another should be removed. People aren't good at remembering dozens of things that are important, so keep the number small.
- ❑ Appoint one of your projects as a "Shared Space Project," where there are no predefined rules, which increases risk perception and decreases false security. There are only a shared space and a boundary. Allow all rules to emerge from the team, and evaluate the effects.

- Consider the approach to Agile software development in your organization. Does it have a recognizable name?
- Is the collection of practices easy to copy from one mind to another under one umbrella term? Or is it a fragmented approach that is hard to learn by new team members?
- Make a list of the small problems that bother you. How are you addressing them? Do you spend time o

The Seven Dimensions of Software Projects

- Review the dimensions.
- For each dimension try to come up with at least one metric that would be important for your organization. Implement these metrics.
- Consider your approach to discipline. Are you leading people by example? Will they understand what it means to be disciplined just by watching you work?
- Address the need for coaches in your organization. Do the people who need to develop their competence have a coach? If not, why not?
- Address the option to have people certified. Which do people need to learn a coherent foundation of knowledge that can catalyze the other approaches to competency development?
- Consider team formation in your organization. Is there a team identity that people can relate to so that the positive aspects of social pressure can do their work?
- Discuss the tools with your team. Are the primary tools needed for software projects all adaptable enough?
- Consider the need for supervision. Is competence in teams at a high enough level to do away with supervision? Or is there value in someone sampling and checking the results of teams?
- Organize one-on-one with people. Schedule them as a recurring item in your calendar, with a reminder, so you won't forget.
- Organize 360-degree meetings a few times per year. Allow team members themselves to document the results, but put your signature on it.

- Review the standards in your organization. Make sure that everyone knows them and uses them. Or else simply do away with them (the standards, not the people).

Communication

- Discuss the nine capabilities of communicators with your team.
- Try to find out together who is capable of doing what.
- Are any capabilities over-or underrepresented? Is there something you can do about that?
- Discuss teamwork with your people.
- Are people cooperating?
- Are they doing this because they feel altruistic or because they believe it is in their self-interest?

Structure

- Consider the people in your team.
- Are they generalizing specialists (or specializing generalists)? If not, what will you do about that?
- Review the official job titles in your organization.
- Are they wide enough to cover different roles? If not, come up with a plan to change them and make them wider.
- Consider leadership in your team.
- Are there informal leaders among the team members?
- Are these leadership roles dynamic enough so that they can change easily when needed?
- Review how teams are constructed in your organization.
- Are the teams small enough so that people can feel they are part of a team?
- Does team membership last long enough for rules and leadership to emerge? Are the teams cross-functional?
- Review the quadrant of organizational styles.
- Which style are you using now in your organization? If it's not the fourth style, do you have a plan for getting there?
- Discuss value with your team.
- Does the team see itself as a value-delivering unit? Do they feel that other teams also consider themselves as value units? If not, can you do something about that?

- Review the management positions in your organization.
- Are all of them adding real value? If not, can you address or influence this issue?
- Draw the organizational structure of your business.
- Does it look like a hierarchy or as a value network?
- Check your social skills. Are you connecting with people regularly? If not, how will you change that?

Improvement

- Review your improvement process.
- Are you applying each of the three improvement approaches (adapting, exploring, and anticipating)?
- Review your team and process.
- Are there many interdependencies between them (people or processes only working well in combination with others)?
- Can you break some interdependencies so that it is easier to change things and improve?
- Create a backlog and workflow for improvements.
- Use the SLIP model, or another improvement model, to define and track the phases for each improvement.
- Discuss necessary changes with your team.
- Are the changes made desirable enough? Is stagnation made painful enough?
- Review problems that your team cannot seem to get rid of, despite all the solutions they've tried. Try to find ways of changing the environment instead of the team so that the attractor in which they are stuck dissolves.
- Make it a habit of discussing errors with your team. Discuss what valuable things you've learned from those errors.
- Try experimenting with change just because you can. Without pressure from the environment, and without knowing if the direction is the right one. Discuss what you've learned.
- Try mixing the software development approaches from different teams. Can you make a great new process out of two good ones?
- Discuss with the team how it picks up interesting practices from other sources. Make sure there is a continuous input (and output) of ideas.
- Make sure that every team regularly performs retrospectives.

- ❑ Set up a transition team with the task of supporting change in your organization.
- ❑ Suggest people set up improvement communities around topics that concern multiple teams.

About Flexiana

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