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Hendrik Esser - Is There a Best Practice For Agile Transformation

Premise

Companies and organizations are complex, adaptive systems. In this talk you will learn what this actually means and how you can use this to practically deal with your way through your (agile) transition.

You will learn why there are no best and no good practices, that you can just copy and everything is fine – and what the nature of an agile transition really is. You will learn about an example of a successful agile transition and what factors made it successful.

And you will learn to use a tool I have developed, to find and analyze approaches to see whether they might be promising for you to try out. We use (and evolve) this tool at my company, Ericsson (24,000 people in R&D), since 1 ½ years and have found it very helpful.

The talk will introduce and make use of Systems Thinking and Complex Adaptive Systems theory. Many people struggle with applying these concepts practically in their daily working life. You will learn how to bring these great and promising theories “down on earth” and make them practically usable.

So, if you are on an agile transformation, no matter whether you are just getting started or whether you have progressed already: this talk will give you new insights and a very solid foundation - based on state-of-the-art leadership- and problem solving approaches – to make your journey more successful.

Learning Outcomes: The essence and practical implications of Complex Adaptive Systems theory. What it practically means, that an agile transformation is an emergent result. The role of good practices in an agile transformation (and evolution). A tool that helps to identify and distinguish potentially successful approaches/good practices from potentially unsuccessful ones.

Summary

- Content rating (0-no new ideas, 5 - a new ideas/approach, 9-new ideas): 7
- Style rating (0-average presentation, 5 - my level, 9-I learned something about presenting): 5

Action / Learning

- Look closer at the model / tool

Presentation

[isthereabestpracticeforanagiletransformation_hendrikesser.pdf](#)

Notes

Do transformation in good times

Complexity Complicated to architect org, but complex when people are involved

How do we approach complexity

Cynefin.

Roll of leadership in transformation is to keep in complex domain

Agile transformation is emergent change of your organizational (human) system.

Do we wait for emergence? Do we foster emergence?

Learn how to run system change experiments How do influence the human system

Constraints Societies have shared rules and constraints They are set or emerge

We create constraints

Maybe the level

What constraints? People behavior and people capabilities Process Structures

Main things management can address And the are interdependent

Defect with sla 1 a 12hours 2 at 24hours Leads to argument about whether it's a 1 or 2 - not what we want from customer specific

Informal network are built because of difficiency in structure

See chart Start with behavior - what process, structure, capabilities

Learning cycle Continuous integration of a human system

Uncertainty management Instead of giving a precisely wrong estimate, given a range (5 to 10 sprints)

What is role of good practice Use tool to see if it can be applied to others

Testing Be clear about why Start with wanted behaviors Think about what - behaviors, capabilities , etc
Think a

So you have a good plan Now need to connect to the people, vision, and purpose

Way to results Want high speed of change - what enables speed? Autonomy - what's a prerequisite for autonomy? Alignment - what's a prerequisite for alignment? Interaction

Need to make agreement Get to consent (not consensus) Need a safe environment

How strict are you about measuring is experiment Everything is experiment

Recommend Explain and discuss and purpose in dedicated workshop Provide feedback (to improve vision and purpose)

Avoided politics by telling everyone that everyone was going to have to apply for a job in the new organization starting day X.

[Transformation](#), [Conference](#), [Scaling](#)

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