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What Kinds of Problems Do you Typically See As The Organization Transforms to Agile / Lean?

Or “What kinds of anti-patterns do you see in a transformation to Agile / Lean?”

Or, more colloquially “What kinds of smells do you see in a transformation?”

“An anti-pattern is a common response to a recurring problem that is usually ineffective and risks being highly counterproductive.” – [Wikipedia](#)

While every transformation is different depending on context of the transformation (work, process, people, business, etc) as we go through a transformation from an traditional organization to one focused on a [lean / agile set of values and principles](#) we often see similar problems reoccur.

Warning

The idea of this section is to capture some of these problems / anti-patterns / smells so that people can become aware of them. The first step to solving a problem is to ensure we identify it, so the simple act of “awareness” is a good start to working the issue. Having said that we also need to talk about and understand the impact of various problems as well as work on potential approaches we can take to work the issue.

That said, perhaps documenting these as “anti-patterns” is a little over the top. In reality I've never actually used this documentation in this way directly. These ideas have been used as an adjunct to helping people who are interested in the working environment (the culture) become aware, perhaps mid-management, perhaps executives. For example, if you want to facilitate a session that increases awareness of these anti-patterns you could try a workshop session based on [How Do I Raise Awareness of Transformation Problems?](#) Alternatively, some of the ideas could be incorporated in “scenarios” when training a specific role. Personally I like the structure of these anti-patterns but also wonder, given that there is no successful “book” of agile transformation anti-patterns, whether there is much value in capturing in this way.

Root Cause of Anti-patterns

An Agile Anti-Pattern can manifest itself due to several reasons. Here is a list of possible reasons:

- Misinterpretation of Agile values, principles, and practices
- Misinterpretation of a specific Agile framework's (e.g. Scrum, Kanban, SAFe) values, principles, and

practices

- Personal resistance to working in a way
- Management insisting that old practices be embedded within the new practices

Smells / Anti-Patterns

Leadership Anti-Patterns

- If We Are Doing Agile at Scale We Must Adopt SAFe (Anti-pattern)
- Epics and Features Become the New Way to Specify Fixed Scope (Anti-pattern)
- Leadership Delegates the Transformation to Others (Anti-pattern)
- Middle Management Struggling With The Change (Anti-pattern)
- If You are Not Seeing Any Problems or Impediments, That is a Problem (Anti-pattern)

Organization

- People Not Asking for Help When Trying a New Agile Practice (Anti-pattern)
- I Need to Start Now as Funding Has Been Approved (Anti-pattern)
- Management Will Assess Me Badly if I Bring Bad News (Anti-pattern)
- I am Going to Wait For the Training (Anti-pattern)
- Focus More on the Detailing and Executing the Plan than on Planning and Alignment (Anti-pattern)

All Anti-Patterns

Filter:

Page	Tags
• Epics and Features Become the New Way to Specify Fixed Scope (Anti-pattern)	antipatterns, smells, organization
• Focus More on the Detailing and Executing the Plan than on Planning and Alignment (Anti-pattern)	antipatterns, smells, organization
• How Do I Raise Awareness of Transformation Problems?	smells, faq, antipatterns, facilitation, workshop
• I am Going to Wait For the Training (Anti-pattern)	antipatterns, smells, organization
• I Need to Start Now as Funding Has Been Approved (Anti-pattern)	antipatterns, smells, organization
• If We Are Doing Agile at Scale We Must Adopt SAFe (Anti-pattern)	antipatterns, smells

- If You Are Not Seeing Any Problems or Impediments, That is a Problem antipatterns, smells, leadership
- Leadership Delegates the Transformation to Others (Anti-pattern) antipatterns, smells, leadership
- Management Will Assess Me Badly if I Bring Bad News (Anti-pattern) antipatterns, smells, organization
- Middle Management Struggle with Change (Anti-Pattern) antipatterns, smells, leadership
- People Not Asking for Help When Trying a New Agile Practice (Anti-pattern) antipatterns, smells, organization
- What Anti-patterns Do You See with the System Demo? faq, safe, systemdemo, consultant, tools, antipatterns, smells, program
- What Do We Not Want to See in a Product Owner? faq, diy, agile, coaching, leadership, smells, antipatterns, productowner, structure
- What Kinds of Problems Do you Typically See As The Organization Transforms to Agile / Lean? faq, antipatterns, smells, problems, transformation, mindset, culture
- What We Don't Want to See in a Scrum Master? faq, diy, agile, coaching, leadership, smells, antipatterns, scrummaster, structure

Want to Know More?

- Template for new Anti-Patterns or Smells [template](#)
- [How Do I Raise Awareness of Transformation Problems?](#)
- [Common Challenges Product Owners Face](#)
- [What Kinds of Problems Do People See When They Go Agile?](#)
- [What Are The Changes in Culture That Need To Happen with Agile?](#)
- [What Are The Changes in Management Approach That Need To Happen with Agile?](#)

[FAQ](#), [AntiPatterns](#), [Smells](#), [Problems](#), [Transformation](#), [Mindset](#), [Culture](#)

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