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If you don’t have the role of a Development Manager in your organization already, or there is not common understanding of the role, you need to do more than identify the Development Manager and announce the new reporting structure.

1. Identify potential Development Managers. Review the role, the characteristics of the role and try to find people you think will be a good fit.
2. Create an interest in the role of Development Manager with the people identified. The new role is critical to the success of the agile transformation and so you want people to be passionate about it. Many people will see this as a boring, administrative HR role, so there is a degree of “selling the role” involved. In the final analysis you really want people to volunteer for the role. You should not just tell them, that this is their role (“surprise!”)
3. Development Managers need training. They need are in fact the “ultimate servant leader” and this is not something you can do unless you have training. The training needs to be “lean agile leadership” oriented.
4. To establish the new role, significant organizational support will be required. Make sure you have a conversation about how you will support the Development Manager especially during the early part of the transition to agile and the new role.
5. Determine the new organizational structure, the reporting structure.
6. Make sure each of the people effected by the new reporting structure understand how it will work. We need to be clear when people should reach out to the Development Manager versus the Product Manager or Release Train Engineer, for example.
7. You might want to kick things off with an all-hands meeting with your people so that everyone hears the same message about the new role and its a fit with the rest of the changes going on. Side note on this - you cannot over-communicate this change especially in the early days.
8. Setup a cadence of 1 on 1 meetings with each of your people. Initial agenda should not just be “what are your career goals?” but rather aimed at establishing the trust you will need going forward. This will mean doing more listening to current issues of each of the people, and then actually starting to work those issues.
9. Ensure Development Management has access to the ceremonies they need to be successful. For example, if the portfolio of the organization requires the development of new skills in people or new people with skills in a particular area, then the Development Management needs to be directly involved in the relevant portfolio level ceremonies.

FAQ, organization, managers, structure, people, executive, developmentmanager

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