Dr. Stefanie Puckett
The Psychology of the Agile Manifesto
- Psychological Research to Support Agile Working
Never stop making work better!

Fill in the blanks.

THINK BIG
THINK DIFFERENT
USE YOUR INTUITION
All agile, all better?

For the company?

Studies show, greater agility is associated with greater business outcome:

• Increase in market share
• Increase in revenue growth
• More profitability
• Higher customer satisfaction
All agile, all better?

For the people?

Increasing empowerment and control for individuals and teams is – studies show – associated with:

- Higher effect of intrinsic motivation
- Higher job satisfaction
- Less stress and better health
- Increased creativity and innovation
- Increased performance
Change? Pick your fight!

- Unqualified position holders
- Narcissistic bosses
- Bullshit agile
- Toxic culture
- Too much workload
- Lack of commitment at the top
- No vision
- Autocratic leadership
- Unqualified position holders

Do not wash
Do not bleach
Do not tumble dry
Do not iron
Do not dry clean
...or your angle

Let's look at the way we work from a psychological perspective...
An Organizational Psychologist`s view

Principles 1-6

Our highest priority is to satisfy the customer through early and continuous delivery of valuable software.

Welcome changing requirements, even late in development. Agile processes harness change for the customer’s competitive advantage.

Deliver working software frequently, from a couple of weeks to a couple of months, with a preference to the shorter timescale.

Business people and developers must work together daily throughout the project.

Build projects around motivated individuals. Give them the environment and support they need, and trust them to get the job done.

The most efficient and effective method of conveying information to and within a development team is face-to-face conversation.
Working software is the primary measure of progress.

Agile processes promote sustainable development.
The sponsors, developers, and users should be able to maintain a constant pace indefinitely.

Continuous attention to technical excellence and good design enhances agility.

Simplicity—the art of maximizing the amount of work not done—is essential.

The best architectures, requirements, and designs emerge from self-organizing teams.

At regular intervals, the team reflects on how to become more effective, then tunes and adjusts its behavior accordingly.
Personality – What???
Agile elements and characteristics mean different things to different people!
Describing and measuring personality: OCEAN
...keeps me engaged. Love it! Just wish the daily standup would last longer.

I don't need a boss. I already got 2 people breathing down my neck!

Psychological safety? Oh - don't through the cotton balls too hard.

Iterating is laziness at scale.

...How about reducing interdependencies within the team?

All get intensely lovingly engaged.

Focus more on the people? Can't the people just focus on the work?

You call managing your our time and giving estimates empowerment?!

The more items in the backlog, the heavier feels the load on my shoulder.

(Daily) Why do you want to know? Just trust me! And honestly, rather work than hear yours.
16 basic motives (Reiss, 2004)

- Acceptance
- Beauty
- Curiosity
- Eating
- Family
- Honour
- Idealism
- Independence
- Order
- Physical Activity
- Power
- Saving
- Social Contact
- Status
- Tranquility
- Vengeance
Maslow's Pyramide of Needs

Quelle: Maslow, Abraham, H. (1977)
# Hygiene factors versus motivators

The diagram illustrates the comparison between hygiene factors and motivators in terms of frequency and duration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Motivators</th>
<th>Hygiene factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short</td>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>Company policy &amp; administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long</td>
<td>Recognition</td>
<td>Technical supervision</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>Work itself</td>
<td>Salary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Interpersonal relationship with supervisor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Herzberg, F.; Mausner, B. & Snyderman, B. J. (1959). The motivation to work. N.Y., London*
Motivators versus hygiene factors

Frequency

Hygiene factors

Motivators

Company policy & administration

Technical supervision

Salary

Interpersonal relationship with supervisor

Work conditions

Achievement

Recognition

Work itself

Responsibility

Advancement

Company policy & administration

Technical supervision

Salary

Interpersonal relationship with supervisor

Work conditions

Short duration of emotion more often than long duration

More long lasting emotions than short lasting emotions

How satisfied are you at work?
Good leadership allows for growth
Instrinsic versus extrinsic motivation
The perfect fit as a warrant for high motivation?
Job-Characteristics Model (JCM), Hackman & Oldham, 1975

Core job characteristics
- Skill variety
- Task identity
- Task significance
- Autonomy
- Feedback

Critical psychological state
- Meaningfulness of the work
- Responsibility for the outcomes
- Knowledge of the results

Outcomes
- Intrinsic work motivation
- Quality of the work
- Work satisfaction
- Turnover & absenteeism

Motivating Potential Score (MPS) = \[
\frac{\text{Skill variety} + \text{Task identity} + \text{Task significance}}{3} \times \text{Autonomy} \times \text{Feedback}
\]
Adding meaningfulness…

- Higher job satisfaction
- Higher motivation
- Higher willingness to go the extra mile
- Higher commitment to work
- More inspiration
- Better work performance
- Higher life satisfaction
- Better physical health
How agile helps with meaningfulness

Seing end-to-end: wholistic work (task identity)
How agile helps with meaningfulness
How agile helps with meaningfulness
Enhancing meaning also means reducing waste!
Enhancing meaning requires transparency!
Behind meaningfulness

The Agile Culture Code

Source: T E C Model (Puckett, 2020)
“Without information you cannot take responsibility.

With information you cannot avoid responsibility.”

Jan Carlzon, former CEO of SAS Airlines
Adding autonomy...

- Increased well-being
- Less emotional exhaustion
- Less emotional stress
- Positive effect on mental health (e.g. depression)
- Positive effect on physical health (e.g. cardiovascular)
Behind autonomy

The Agile Culture Code

PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT

- Meaning
- Competence
- Self-determination
- Impact

Source: T E C Model (Puckett, 2020)
When autonomy becomes a trap

- Interdependence
- Connection or access to the stakeholders.
- Task uncertainty.
- Psychological empowerment.
Too much freedom?
Wiring for agile work

a) Human nature

b) Individual drivers & preferences
Wiring the organization

The Agile Culture Code

Source: T E C Model (Puckett, 2020)
Agile specific “psychological pitfalls”

GROUP AUTONOMY (ONLY)

PO AS SOLE DECISION MAKER)

“SURVEILLANCE” BY TRANSPARENCY

DEADLINES

FACE2FACE BY DEFAULT

SCRUM MASTERS REMOVING IMPEDIMENTS

RECOGNIZING (ONLY) TEAM PERFORMANCE

TRANSPARENCY VERSUS DISCRETION

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Set your team up for success

Not for failure.

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We could do/be so much better if only _______!
A helpful blueprint: The Agile Culture Code

The T E C Model

At the heart of agility is organizational culture.

Organizational culture is you.

Make a difference!
Fill in the blanks
Thank you!
What`s next?

Challenge yourself!

Measure your working style/ leadership style or company culture against the Agile Culture Code with a free survey:

- https://shorturl.at/bjmAJ
- Or with ComparativeAgility.com (T E C Survey – The Agile Culture Code)

Deepen your knowledge!

- Read
  - “The Agile Culture Code”
  - “Agile Leadership – Leadership Competencies for the Agile Transformation”
- Contact me for training and education (f2f and online/ eLearning)
Hacking Culture

Get access to data/information to improve your decisions.
Share your data and information with someone who benefits.

Tell the whole story – always!
Explore and ask the right questions to uncover new options.

Measure/ observe your work’s impact - inspect.
Provide feedback.

“Play” at work! Push the boundaries.
One week – one rule down.

Set yourself up for success.
If it doesn’t hurt, allow it!

Start an initiative.
Empower others.

One week – one improvement.
Talk about your failures and learnings.

Find a way to utilize one more talent.
Don’t do your job – add value!

One week – on colleague.
Share your knowledge.

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THE AGILE CULTURE CODE – T E C: ENABLING AGILITY

Is there regular exchange between our people?
Is there cross-country collaboration on ideas?
Are our people well networked outside the organization?
Do we openly talk about failure and focus on learning from it?

Do our people have access to all the information they need to take data-driven decision and come up with ideas?
Is there enough insight into the customer’s situation to come up with ideas?
Does everyone know about current trends, developments at the market, with competitors, with technology?
Are the strategic plans and priorities clear?
Can our people take decisions?

Do we empower our people to self-manage?
Do our people have freedom to adapt and improve?
Can our people take initiative?
Can our people take decisions?

**Take Action!**
Define the most important aspects to improve on and what action to take.

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AGILE CULTURE CODE

TRADITIONAL...

ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE IS THE BIGGEST HURDLE AND THE BIGGEST LEVER

AGILE CULTURE CODE

OUR NATURAL WAY OF WORKING

ALL 3 PARTS ARE NECESSARY

EXCHANGE

INFORMATION

INTENTION

EFFECT

FREEDOM

COLLABORATION

TRANSPARENCY

EMPOWERMENT

AGILE

...
And stay connected!

- Keynotes
- Leadership development & coaching
- Customized trainings, workshops
- Assessment & selection
- eLearning & Training on Psychology for agile coaches

PSYCHOLOGY4AGILITY

- Highest ethical and professional standards
- Psychological expertise
- Science-based approaches
- Broad and in depth experience

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