This presentation will explore the skills needed to support Agile teams and succeed in an Agile environment. You’ll learn a bevy of new skills, as well as how to evaluate your level of command and control-ism, and how to use servant leadership effectively with self-organizing teams.
WHAT IS AN AGILE PROJECT LEADER?
Which of these exists?

Agile Project Manager
WHAT ARE THE SKILLS THAT AN AGILE PROJECT LEADER WOULD NEED?
AGILE PROJECT LEADERS NEED ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:

- Self-Leadership
- Emotional Intelligence
- Active Listening Skills
- Servant Leadership
- Support Teams to Self-Organize
- Ability to *Motivate* Teams
- Facilitate Participatory Decision-making

- Negotiation Skills
- Conflict resolution Tools
- Coaching & Mentoring Skills
- Use of Brainstorming Techniques
- Collaboration Techniques
- Stakeholder Expectation Management
WHICH TOPICS SHOULD WE FOCUS ON TODAY?

- Self-Leadership
- Emotional Intelligence
- Active Listening Skills
- Servant Leadership
- Support Teams to Self-Organize
- Ability to *Motivate* Teams
- Facilitate Participatory Decision-making
WAIT, WHICH SKILL DID WE JUST DEMONSTRATE?
WHICH TOPICS SHOULD WE FOCUS ON TODAY?

Poll Everywhere Voting

- **Self-Leadership**
- **Emotional Intelligence**
- **Active Listening Skills**
- **Servant Leadership**
- **Support Teams to Self-Organize**
- **Ability to *Motivate* Teams**
- **Facilitate Participatory Decision-Making**
SELF LEADERSHIP

Agile leaders must **lead themselves first**:

- Cannot lead others without first being grounded
- Avoid ‘leaking’ emotions or projecting on others
- We need to lead by example – do what we say
- We need to be clear about **what we want – and go for it**
WE ARE ALL LEADING, ALL THE TIME…
THE QUESTION IS
WHAT ARE WE LEADING TOWARD?
QUESTION: WHAT ARE YOU LEADING TOWARD?
“Emotional Intelligence is the ability to monitor one’s own and others feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and actions.”

-Peter Salovey and John Mayer

AN EQ FRAMEWORK FOR PROJECT LEADERS

1. Self-Awareness
   • Emotional Self-Awareness
   • Accurate Self-Assessment
   • Self-Confidence

2. Self-Management
   • Self-Control

3. Social Awareness
   • Empathy
   • Organizational Awareness
   • Seeing Others
   • Emotional Boundaries

4. Relationship Management
   • Stakeholder Relationships
   • Developing Others
   • Telling the Truth

5. Team Leadership
   • Communications
   • Conflict Management
   • Inspirational Leadership

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

SELF-AWARENESS

- Emotional Self-Awareness
- Accurate Self-Assessment
- Self Confidence
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

SELF-CONTROL

[Diagram illustrating the concept of emotional resilience with stimulus, response, and reaction]

RETURN TO MENU
*LISTENING SKILLS

“No go ahead, I’m listening…”
LISTENING SKILLS

According to Attachment Theory...

All People Want/Crave/Need:

• To be Perceived Accurately
• In the Here and Now
• With Positive Regard
• Consistently
• Unconditionally
TIPS FOR BETTER LISTENING

• Quiet your own internal voices
• Let others speak
• Maintain eye contact
• Give your full attention
• Playback and summarize
• Orient to emotions
• Show empathy and compassion; suspend judgment
EXERCISE:
PAIR UP AND PRACTICE LISTENING
"[Servant Leadership] begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve *first*. Then to aspire to lead.

The Test for Effective Servant Leadership:

“Do those served **grow** as persons? Do they, **while being served**, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?”

-- Robert K. Greenleaf
SERVANT LEADERSHIP

Servant Leadership is about Serving the Team

- Removing Impediments
- Sheltering the Team
- Putting the needs of the team above your own needs.
SERVANT LEADERSHIP

Servant Leadership doesn’t mean:

- Doing things your team can and should do for themselves
- Making yourself an indispensable part of the team

DISCUSS:

- Are team members growing under your leadership? Are they healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous?
- What change could you make to improve in this area?
Teams need to make their own decisions, but:

- They are accustomed to taking direction from *project managers, line managers & others*
- They might not even see where they have choices!
SUPPORT TEAMS TO SELF-ORGANIZE

• Help teams to see where they are making their own decisions and where others are making them for them.
• Push teams to take on more ownership
• Wait for teams to ask you for feedback or input
• Refuse to make decisions for the team
• Use observation and questions, don’t dictate
• Call the process…”It looks like the team is having a hard time deciding on this”

Source: Lyssa Adkins: Coaching Agile Teams
ULTIMATE SELF-ORGANIZATION

“Here are the backlogs we need to have worked on...now form teams...”
Question: What motivates people?
IF DAN PINK IS CORRECT, HOW DO WE MOTIVATE TEAMS?
A MOTIVATION EXPERIMENT…

HOW DO WE MOTIVATE 7 AGILE TEAMS TO MAKE TRAINING A PRIORITY?
#1 - Video Trainings

#2 – Agile Memes

WANT HIGHER VELOCITY?

MAKE YOUR STORY ESTIMATES BIGGER

#3 - Agile Game

RETURN TO MENU
PARTICIPATORY DECISION-MAKING

Techniques:

- Fist of Five
- Round Robin
- Brain-writing
- Planning Poker
- Dot Voting
- Decider Protocol
PARTICIPATORY DECISION-MAKING

YOU TRY IT: Decider protocol – Should we keep going with this topic?
*WHAT IS THE ONE SKILL THAT AGILE PROJECT LEADERS DO NOT NEED?*

Command & Control-ism
COMMAND AND CONTROL-ISM

Litmus Test

1. Do you distrust people, and feel that you need to monitor them so that they don’t slack off?

2. Do you believe that you generally know what is best, and willingly offer solutions and advice to the team?

3. Do you tend to interject yourself into problem solving, even when you are not invited to get involved?

4. Do you try to make the team results conform to your preconceived ideas of what the results should be?

5. Do you try to directly or indirectly control things? Do you feel uncomfortable when others are in control, and you are not?

6. Do you feel threatened by the idea that the team may operate fine without you?

7. Do you feel solely and personally responsible for the success and failure of the teams you lead?
OVERCOMING
“COMMAND AND CONTROL-ISM”

- Chill Out! Quiet your own internal voices/fears.
- Don’t offer unsolicited advice
- Let go of specific outcomes
- Be willing to let teams fail
- Focus on understanding others
- Do the job that you are supposed to be doing!
- Learn and adopt servant leadership
Based on everything you have heard today…

1. What is your greatest area of strength in terms of soft skills we discussed?

2. Where do you need the most improvement?
Based on everything you have heard today…

Do you think Agile project Leaders need Different Skills than Traditional Project Leaders?
ADDITIONAL READINGS

- Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us by Daniel H. Pink
- Coaching Agile Teams by Lyssa Adkins
- Collaboration Explained: Facilitation Skills for Software Project Leaders by Jean Tabaka
- The Servant as Leader by Robert K. Greenleaf
- Emotional Intelligence Project Managers by Anthony Mariano, PMI, PMP, ACP
- One More Time: How Do You Motivate Employees by [Author's Name]
ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Anthony Mersino
Agile Transformation Coach | Teaming Specialist | Author

- Passionate about helping individuals and teams improve
- 27+ years as IT PM & Program Manager, PMO Lead, and Troubled Project Recovery Expert
- 6 years teaching Agile and supporting adoption; Trained hundreds of individuals and coached dozens of teams
- MBA; PMP, CSM and PMI-ACP Certifications
- Author of “Agile for Project Managers” and “Emotional Intelligence for Project Managers; the People Skills You Need to Succeed”