Agile by Choice: How to examine workplace trust

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How to examine workplace trust within your team with a practical exercise.

Agile builds on trust. And trust is the fastest management concept. When there is trust, you can delegate decisions to people at the cli- ent front and short-cut lengthy approval processes throughout the ranks of hierarchy. To increase speed in your organization, you need to examine trust. This is why trust creates more value than any other management concept. Delegation depends on people-centric man- agers who trust their employees to get the job done.

PEOPLE

- When leaders are good, employees trust them. When leaders are excellent, employees trust themselves.
- Trust is a normal thing when dealing with people: as trust is a risk, it is part of performance.
- When people talk about trust, it’s always when it’s missing. Its appearance is its non-existence.
- Trust does not work without trusting yourself – and this requires courage. Reducing control requires trust.

LEADERSHIP

- Eighty per cent of your attention and time will be taken up by the members of your team whom you don’t trust.
- To achieve speed, leaders need to let go, trust and reduce control. Mistrust starts a demotivation spiral. It always starts

with the leader and with low expectations, ignorance of • competence, mistrust of accountability, the feeling that we know better than others and the tendency to over-control.
- Mistrust does not require justification. Trust requires justification

RELATIONSHIPS

- Giving trust creates the duty to return it (reciprocal). It tends towards equilibrium. This means that trust has a price. More trust means less traditional control.
- People come to institutions but leave leaders. This says a lot about trust and relationships.

SYSTEMS

- The boundaries of trust are where the system collapses – this is where the organization is at risk.
- Trust increases speed, reduces transaction costs and builds commitment.
- With trust, there is no need to tweak systems to get things done. This reduces the time required to act.
- Trust as a control has low transaction costs. It works without the need for formal contractual agreements.
- Every commercial transaction requires trust.
- Trust is the only resource needed for survival in an economy of speed.
- It is not control that undermines trust. Trust needs control. Control is a prerequisite for trust. It is important to get that balance right.

See *Agile by Choice*, pages 126-131, with templates on pages 234-236

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