

The Ten Golden Rules for Successful Agile Projects

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Presentation Structure

- Introduction
- Methodology
- The 10 Golden Rules
- Further information
- Close and questions.



Introductions

- Method/Process Consultant
- Specialising in Agile Approaches to Projects
- Focusing on improving Agile capability within organisations
- Experienced in PRINCE2 and DSDM Atern
- DSDM Membership Director (formerly Technical Director)
- IAF Accredited Facilitator
- Author of 'Agile Project Management' (TSO)
- KRC is a pioneering training and consultancy company.


Methodology

- No survey
- No guru
- Just first hand experience
- Your experiences will be different - this is good
- If you obey the 10 golden rules
 - ... you will increase your chances of success!

No. 1: Define the project objective in less than 10 words

- You must start with the end in mind
- You need to know exactly where you are going
- The business case is your best friend
- This will take you a long time to do
- It will help you to kill a project going nowhere
- The scope of the project will map on to this.

TIP: can you write the project objective on a Post-it note with a flip chart marker?



Short
& Sweet

No. 2: Build a team with those who say ‘can’

- A lot of being agile is about options
- If you get the right people you are half way there
- Choose the right person above the right skill set
- “If you think you can’t, you’re right” - Carol Bartz
- You need collaboration and team spirit.

TIP: ask a team member this question: ‘can I ask a favour?’



No. 3: Go slow early to go fast later

- This is counter intuitive
- How much 'DUF' is enough? Answer EDUF!
- Build from firm foundations
- You must avoid analysis paralysis
- Try and spot early solutioneering.

TIP: ask yourself 'is it safe to move on?'



No. 4: Look backwards to go forwards

- Learn your lessons - both good and bad
- Evolve the process - it has to evolve
- If it doesn't work - do something else!
- Try this! - Review, Plan, Do
- Share your experiences with other teams.

TIP: Ask yourself how many of your projects have ended with a project review.

The answer should be 'all of them'!



No. 5: Change is great!

- You need to anticipate change and embrace it
- This allows a more accurate solution to result
- Do not confuse the breadth of the scope with the depth
- Evolve and converge on the solution with the right kind of change.

TIP: How do you feel when a customer says
“I’ve changed my mind”?

..... because you should be happy!



No. 6: To be understood, seek first to understand.

- Command and control may not work with Agile
- Facilitation is a core competency
- Big ears, big eyes, small mouth
- You have to play with the cards you are dealt
- This will give you ownership.

TIP: Try the 10 second silence when getting a progress update – nothing else can compete with it!



No. 7: Collect Actuals - this is the oxygen for your project

- ‘You cannot control what you cannot measure’ - Tom de Marco
- Meten is weten - to measure is to know
- (als je weet wat je meet!)
- Start now - build a metrics database
- Keep it simple to start with
- Calibrate your estimates.

TIP: Do you know (to the nearest day) how much time was spent on testing during your last project?



No. 8: Use fat communication channels

- Shift the communication traffic to bigger pipes
- The written word is a silent killer
- ‘Never write when you can talk. Never talk when you can nod.

And never put anything in an email’ - Eliot Spitzer

- Go visual
- Use workshops.

TIP: Try turning a document over and take a look at what is on the back



No. 9: Work hard at controlling what you can't control

- Continuously manage external risks
- You may get your team right but what about 3rd parties?
- Are they playing by the same rules as you?
- Get the team involved
- Be 'a bit of a worrier'.

TIP: Actively manage your risk log -
it is not a storage area



No. 10: One more day? NO! We'll catch up? NO!

- Time focus is your greatest weapon
- Force the issue - understand your condition
- Timeboxes not milestones
- If you are going to fail - fail early
- Prioritise with MoSCoW - it should be natural.

TIP: Set a deadline and hit it
– never extend it, not even once!



Further Information

- KRC help organisations with their transition to Agile
- KRC offers a variety of Agile training (DSDM Atern specialists)
 - Classroom based
 - Distance learning (e-Learning)
- Maturity assessment ('health check')
- Facilitation and mentoring
- DSDM Consortium - www.dsdm.org
- The DSDM Group (LinkedIn)
- Agile Project Management: running PRINCE2 projects with DSDM Atern
(available from the DSDM web shop or TSO).

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Any questions?

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