

Overcoming

Cultural Resistance to Agile In Gov't

Agile/Lean CoP

"Mindset"

{noun}

a set of beliefs or a way of thinking that determines one's behavior, outlook and mental attitude.



INNOVATIVE PRACTICES FOR
MANAGING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

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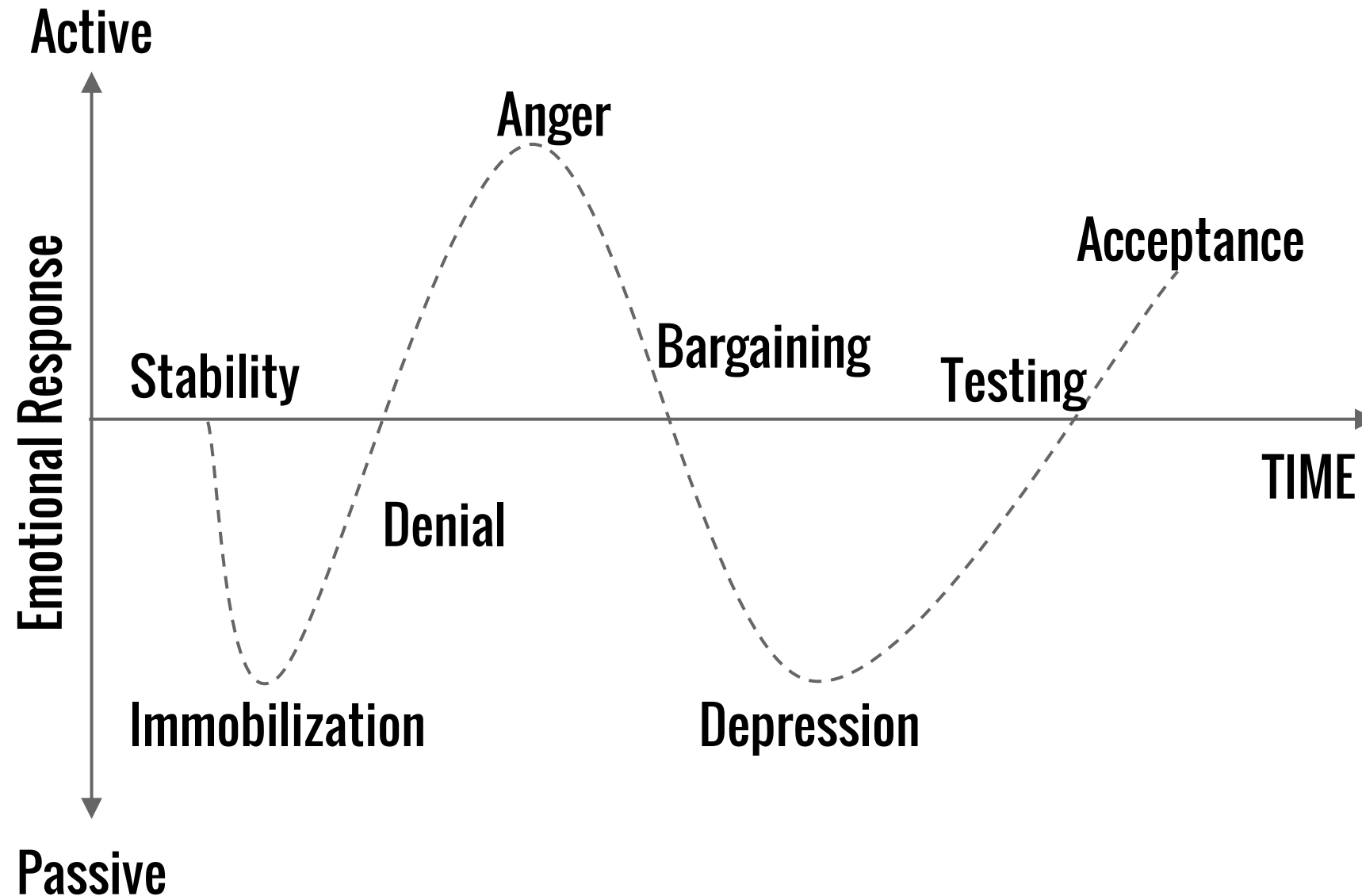


From a
Plan-Driven
Mindset



To a
Feedback-Driven
Mindset

Stages of Resistance to Change



The Perfectionist Mindset

Perspective (Active)

- Like the clarity that waterfall simulates: list of requirements, clear path (to wherever)
- Acts like *The Customer* rather than the voice of the customer.

Quotes

- “Everything you need to know is in the plan and we spent a lot of time considering all possibilities. This plan is the best way forward.”
- “No one wants a minimally viable plane.”

Getting to “yes”

- “Done is better than perfect.”
- “Don't let perfect be the enemy of good.”





The Controller Mindset

Perspective (Active/Passive)

- Afraid of losing control/going off the rails.
- Organizationally entrenched before/between/after set stages of the waterfall process.

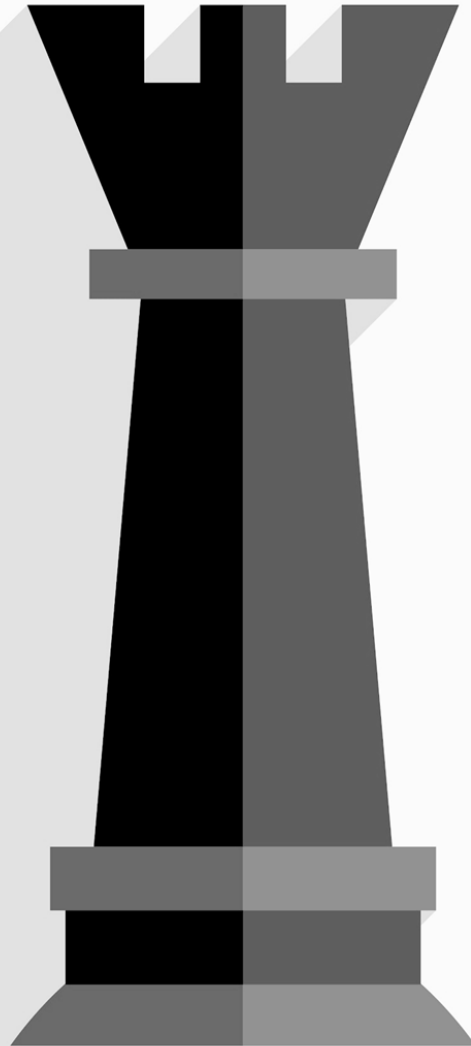
Quotes

- “We have a plan and you have my list of requirements. Now, stop bugging me. Execute the plan!”
- “If you fail to plan, you’re planning to fail.”

Getting to “yes”

- Agile gives more control because of transparency/constant input
- Waterfall gives an illusion of control (the requirements list \neq accurate representation of needs)

The Old Guard Mindset



Perspective (Passive/Active)

Equates the language “experiment” to frivolousness and “fail fast” to higher risk.

Quote

“We can’t waste the time and money just playing around. We need to be sure first.”

Getting to “yes”

How agile actually reduces risk:

- Risk = deviation from plan... waterfall is a huge plan, high potential for deviation.
- **Option:** Bring a good ‘bomb squad’ – insulated from disinterested parties’ performance plans and able to prove the methods work.

The Last in Line Mindset



Perspective (Passive)

- Unfamiliar with technological / operational problems
- Not convinced that agile is needed/valuable.
- Equates the quality of the food by the length of the line outside the restaurant.

Quotes

“Who else is doing this? Why should we be first? Let someone else prove it works.”

Getting to “yes”

Have someone of the same or higher rank/position within the same or from another agency (who they respect and identify with) advocate to them for it

The Positive Persona - The Growth Mindset

FIXED MINDSET		GROWTH MINDSET
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SOMETHING YOU'RE BORN WITH• FIXED	SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• COME FROM HARD WORK.• CAN ALWAYS IMPROVE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SOMETHING TO AVOID• COULD REVEAL LACK OF SKILL• TEND TO GIVE UP EASILY	CHALLENGES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SHOULD BE EMBRACED• AN OPPORTUNITY TO GROW.• MORE PERSISTANT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• UNNECESSARY• SOMETHING YOU DO WHEN YOU ARE NOT GOOD ENOUGH	EFFORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ESSENTIAL• A PATH TO MASTERY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• GET DEFENSIVE• TAKE IT PERSONAL	FEEDBACK	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• USEFUL• SOMETHING TO LEARN FROM• IDENTIFY AREAS TO IMPROVE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• BLAME OTHERS• GET DISCOURAGED	SETBACKS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• USE AS A WAKE-UP CALL TO WORK HARDER NEXT TIME.

7 KEY TAKEAWAYS

WAYS TO CATALYZE CHANGE

I. Understand the Mindsets

Mindsets determine how we perceive the world. Change the mindset and you can change perceptions.

II. Be Aware of “Loss Aversion”

Realize that people fear loss more than they value gains.

III. Be Aware of the Implications

People don't like to be told they are wrong – even if it's implied. I.e., “It worked before – have I been doing it wrong all this time?”

IV. Eat your own dogfood.

Agile is not the panacea. Run a pilot. Try a Hybrid approach/make it your own. Do what it takes to deliver more frequently to real customers and get their feedback incorporated.

V. Beware Agile Myths

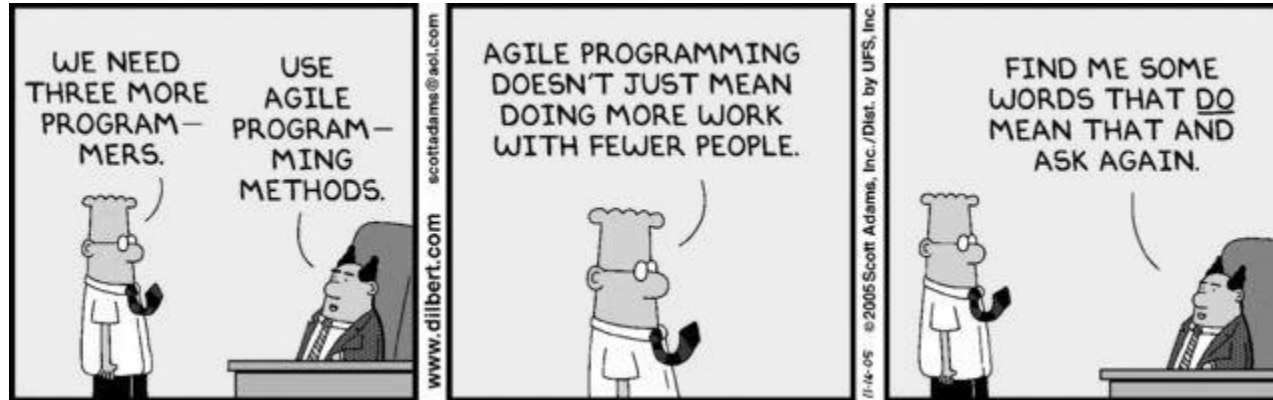
1. No Documentation
2. No Risk

VI. Agile is about Learning

The growth mindset.

VII. Beware “Agile Theater”

The key is getting feedback from real customers, early and often. All the ceremony (e.g., standups, burndowns, retrospectives, etc.) is subordinate to and in service of that. Don't fall into “Agile Orthodoxy” or the fixed mindset.



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