



goto conference

Alex Grêt, 11.04.2013

HASLERRail

Agenda

How did I get here?

Agenda

**If a tree falls in a forest but nobody hears it –
did it still make a sound?**

A team is Agile and no one knows – is there still a clash of cultures?

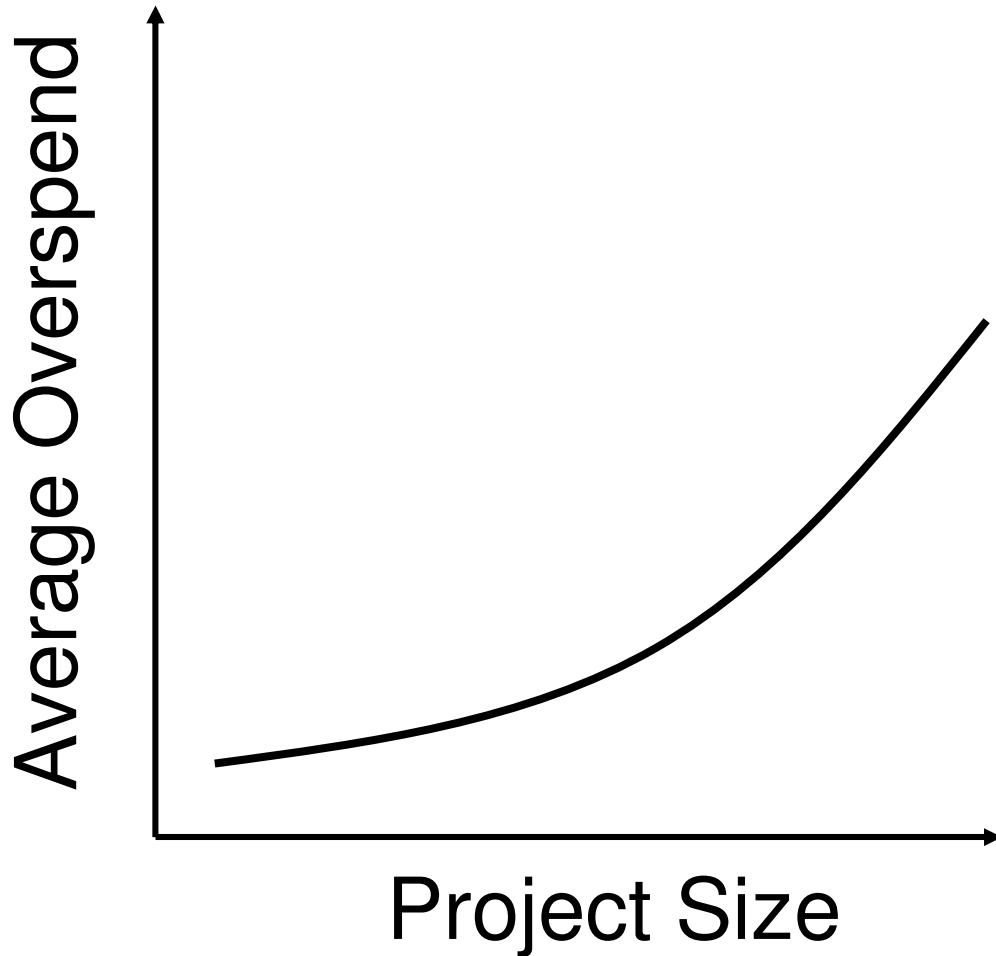
What does Agile mean for me?

...being able to change direction quickly, at every level of a corporation.

- **Group Ability**
- **The best we can do to cope with a complex unpredictable future**
- **Does NOT require changing direction**

Corporate Level

Large projects fail larger than small ones – non linearly!



Asymmetry

Complexity

Corporate Level

Asymmetry

An estimated 6 months project can take 18 but not minus 6 months.

Corporate Level

Complexity

Driving to Bern takes me 90 minutes.

Add 1000 cars per hour.

Driving to Bern takes me 94 minutes.

Add 1000 more cars per hour.

Driving to Bern takes me 100 minutes.

Add 1000 more cars per hour.

Driving to Bern takes me 300 minutes.

Corporate Level

If an organization has a series of small projects – it is agile!

Corporate Level

Fail often small

Bump into a wall with your car at 1 km/h 100 times.

Or

Crash into a wall with your car once with 100 km/h.

R&D

R&D is one of the closest things you can do to shape the future.

Very bad at predicting

Yet we spend huge amounts of energy doing so

R&D

Whatever happens – be well prepared to deal with the future situation.

Agility is one

Broadly skilled people and specialists working together

Solution oriented culture

Transparency

...

First conclusion

First conclusion:

In my opinion ...

Agility is a necessary ability to succeed in today's complex and rapidly changing world.

It is NOT an option in the long run.

A team is Agile and no one knows – is there still a clash of cultures?

Clash of cultures

CEO's should be broadly skilled leaders that can connect and bring together more specialized people – one without the other is useless.

Hierarchy is most often not needed.

Clash of cultures

Unfortunately that is not how it usually works.

Managers have a DNA:

- **Marketing**
- **Sales**
- **R&D**
- **Operations**

When the heat is on – they fall back into their patterns

Clash of cultures

Senior Managers are – in most cases – incapable to judge HOW a team of developers should behave in order to be effective – they NEED security.

They even prefer MORE FALSE security over LESS TRUE security.

Clash of cultures

Precision versus accuracy

A Huge GANNT Chart is gives more feeling of control than a one page project vision.

Clash of cultures

Travel:

You know exactly where you are

You know exactly where you want to be

All roads and possible routes are known and up to date

GPS – calculate – boom – one BEST route

If you only know approximately where you want to go

Road information is scarce and out of date

A rough map is your better choice

Clash of cultures

Control has different meanings:

**Checking – verifying – measuring – financial
controlling**

**Being in control of the situation, steering,
influencing the outcome**

Clash of cultures

The age gap

What worked 20 years ago does not necessary work today

Everyone has learned their winning formula – and it was learned from the past

Hence we develop a causal narrative for success – it worked in the past – so if we do it over and over again we will succeed again

Clash of cultures

False causal narrative

Failed Start-up – they done something wrong

**Successful Start-up – they do it again, it will
succeed again**

Clash of cultures

Steve Jobs the Leadership guru

He did this, he did that...

He is dead – they still brought out another one, didn't they?

Second conclusion

Second conclusion:

The cultural gap to senior managers and top down decision makers

Need for security

Age gap

False causal narratives

A team is Agile and no one knows – is there still a clash of cultures?

The hierarchy dilemma

**We believe that agility is key to face today's
innovation challenges**

**We often have managers and top down decision
structures that conflict with agile cultures**

The hierarchy dilemma

Solutions:

We change job

**So be it – sit it out – they will eventually get it and
ALLOW us to be agile**

**We try to convince them – so that they ALLOW us
to be agile quicker**

**We bring highly overpaid consultants that will lead
the change**

*they don't believe us – maybe they believe an external –
the higher the salary, the more convincing the argument*

Small digression on responsibility

Whisky distillery 42 y old single malt

**Malting – Grinding – Brewing – Fermentation –
Distillation – Aging – Bottling**

**There nothing in the rule books of modern
economic behavior prevents this!**

Small digression on responsibility

In my opinion:

The lack of personal responsibility is the most fundamental reason of the financial crisis of 2008 and the political depth crisis we are in today – core disease has not been addressed, and we will see more similar forms of the current situation again and again.

Small digression on

responsibility
What does this have to do with agility and R&D teams?

It means we have more responsibility than our job description

We are responsible to do the right thing

If we don't produce new, successful products for the company, regardless of the management structure – we put the jobs of the next generation at risk

Don't believe for a second that the CEO will keep the R&D budget high if sales go down the drain!

The hierarchy dilemma

**We believe that agility is key to face today's
innovation challenges**

**We often have managers and top down decision
structures that conflict with agile cultures**

JUST DO IT!

The hierarchy dilemma

Seems a little guerilla – doesn't have to be

When our thinking about software architecture, or implementation style evolve, we don't ask the CEO weather or not he approves – it's our responsibility that comes with the job to apply the best techniques currently available to produce the best products in the most efficient way

Yet when it comes to process and culture – we suddenly bow to hierarchy – why?

Third conclusion: Third conclusion

What to do in the hierarchy dilemma

Agility is the responsibility of the team

Not being agile is not an option

Find a way bottom up

“rethink leadership”

Just do it

Take some personal risk by leading your team to more agility

Be in control

Tell everyone what they need to hear

Show success – (if now success, you are toast)

Start over

Just do it – some suggestions

Put a GANNT chart wrapper around your agile Development process

Scrum Master, Scrum Schmaster, Scrum Desaster – just don't!

It's like the Burger in a pub example

Fourth conclusion

Nicely wrap the process for easy senior management digestion

Take personal risk

Don't ever use religious jargon

Overcommunicate success

Slowly remove the senior management wrapper

A example

Situation at Hasler Rail beginning of 2012

R&D structure is old school

Silos between departments

Board members are mainly owners of company

big project failures in the past

previous CEO and CTO gone

mistrust between Board and R&D

A example

Old fashioned industrial style

Very detail oriented – financial controlling freaks

Very little visionary thinking

Needed to invest a large sum into a new SW project – SW product had a solid vision but very foggy path to get there – non effective SW development team

A example

Create Options

Agility

Commit to time and cost – take personal risk

Over-communicate

Always be in control – make fast quick decision cycles

Demonstrate Success

Give a glimpse of the magic behind

Slowly change the whole organization

A example

Nassim Nicholas Taleb – the black swan & antifragile

Ken Robinson – out of our minds

Clayton Christensen – “How will you measure your life?”