



**Wiltshire Branch**

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**Agile and Governance**  
**Building effective relationships**

**By Barbara Roberts  
& Andrew Craddock**

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**Agenda**

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- Introductions
- Agile Governance and Compliance
- Making agile governance effective
- Q & A

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## Why me?

- Helped create DSDM (the first Agile approach) in 1994 and ran one of the 6 DSDM Early Adopter projects in 1995
- Have been leading Agile transformations in UK and beyond ever since
  - In all sectors : insurance, finance, military, public sector, telecoms, transport, manufacturing
- Creation of AgilePM was my original idea
  - (AgilePM is based on DSDM)
- Previously a Director for Agile Business Consortium for 20+ years
  - (previously called DSDM Consortium)
- Signatory of the Agnostic Agile Oath
- Still love all things agile 😊






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## Or me?


- Agile to the core
  - On board with DSDM by 1997
    - Leading IT-wide rollout of DSDM – improving efficiency and satisfaction
  - Certified Scrum Master since 2001
    - Part of the first group trained by Scrum co-creator Ken Schwaber
  - Signatory of the Agnostic Agile Oath
- Principal Consultant at nlighten
  - Helping organisations achieve business advantage through Agility
    - Cross-sector experience including insurance, finance, medical, engineering and more
- Chair of the Agile Business Consortium
  - Leading the organisation on its mission of *Advancing Business Agility World-wide*
  - Previously having oversight of all method products for 15+ years



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## Governance and Compliance

- What is Governance?
  - “The establishment of policies, and the continuous monitoring of their proper implementation, by the members of a governing body” \*.
  - “It includes the mechanisms required to balance the powers of the members of the governing body, and their **primary duty of enhancing the prosperity and viability of the organization**” \*.


\* The Business Dictionary

- What is Compliance?
  - Demonstrable adherence to an agreed set of rules, standards and monitoring regimes
    - May be internal or externally driven
    - For externally driven, typically ‘regulators’ set expectation of required standards and ‘regulated’ organisations determine both how they will meet the standards and how they will demonstrate this to regulators
- Is there a conflict between these two?
  - Especially as regards enhancing the prosperity and viability of the organisation?

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## Agile Manifesto

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We are uncovering better ways of developing software by doing it and helping others do it. Through this work we have come to value:

**Individuals and interactions** over processes and tools  
**Working software** over comprehensive documentation  
**Customer collaboration** over contract negotiation  
**Responding to change** over following a plan

That is, while we value the items on the right, we value the items on the left more.

**Manifesto for Agile Software Development**


We are uncovering better ways of developing software by doing it and helping others do it. Through this work we have come to value:

**Individuals and interactions** over processes and tools  
**Working software** over comprehensive documentation  
**Customer collaboration** over contract negotiation  
**Responding to change** over following a plan

That is, while there is value in the items on the right, we value the items on the left more.

Kent Beck	James Grenning	Robert C. Martin
Mike Beedle	Jim Highsmith	Steve Mellor
Arie van Bennekum	Andrew Hunt	Ken Schwaber
Alistair Cockburn	Ron Jeffries	Jeff Sutherland
Ward Cunningham	Jon Kern	Dave Thomas
Martin Fowler	Brian Marick	

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## Governance alignment with Manifesto

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We are uncovering better ways of developing *solutions to business problems and opportunities* by doing it and helping others do it. Through this work we have come to value:

**Individuals and interactions** over processes and tools  
**Working *solutions*** over comprehensive documentation  
**Customer collaboration** over contract negotiation  
**Responding to change** over following a plan


That is, while we value the items on the right, we value the items on the left more.



Who are “we”?

- Board of Directors?
- Executive Management?
- PMO?
- Regulatory Compliance Team / Officers?


Or is just the IT team?



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## Some wisdom on Agile Delivery Governance

- National Audit Office:
  - Governance should mirror the philosophy of Agile methods
  - Agile delivery teams should decide on the empirical performance metrics they will use and self-monitor
  - Senior management, external assessors, business users and the ICT team should be partners in quality
  - External assessment or reviews of Agile delivery should focus on the teams' behaviours
- Disciplined Agile:
  - Collaboration with delivery teams is more effective than trying to force them to conform
  - Enabling teams to do the "right thing" is more effective than trying to "inspect it in"
  - Continuous monitoring provides more timely insight than quality gate reviews
  - Transparency into teams is provides better insight than status reports
- Government Digital Services (GDS):
  - Don't slow down delivery
  - Decisions when needed, at the right level
  - Do it with the right people
  - Go see for yourself
  - Only do it if it adds value
  - Trust and verify

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## Agile Governance – broader than just delivery

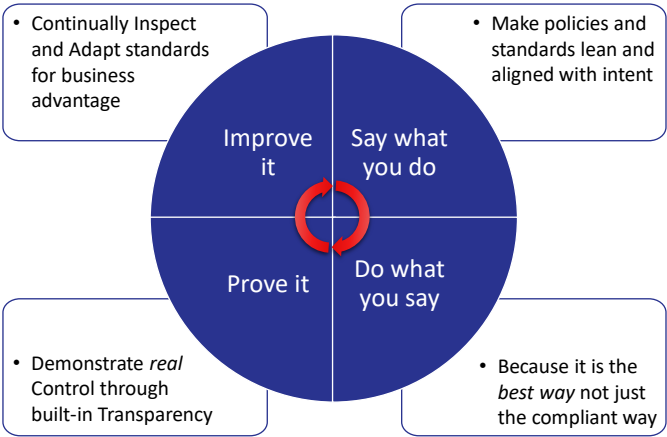
- Governance and compliance are *part of the development approach*, not separate to it
  - Align governance with the development approach, not an abstract standard
  - Integrate compliance needs and compliance testing throughout the lifecycle (explicitly not implicitly)
- The best decisions are made by competent people closest to the scene of the action
  - Focus on building professional capability and problem ownership throughout the wider team
  - Reject the 'process and checklist' mentality – value *individuals and interactions*
- Effective decisions are based on facts related directly to the endeavour and it's business context
  - 'Gut feel' and experience play their part but be sure to look for supporting and opposing evidence
  - Always consider the wider consequences of candidate decisions before committing
- True compliance is evidenced through transparency of action
  - Make decisions and their consequences visible and auditable
  - Any documentation required must be contemporary and factual to avoid 'spin' or 'misinterpretation'
- Processes and Standards must be continually reviewed for intent, efficiency and effectiveness
  - Inspect and adapt – If there is a better way, seek to change the policy, don't work around it
  - In order to avoid waste and misdirection, process quality assurance must be 'built-in' not 'bolted-on'

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 ... Put simply



- Continually Inspect and Adapt standards for business advantage
- Make policies and standards lean and aligned with intent
- Demonstrate *real* Control through built-in Transparency
- Because it is the *best way* not just the compliant way


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 Governance alignment with Manifesto

We are uncovering better ways of developing *solutions to business problems and opportunities* by doing it and helping others do it.  
Through this work we have come to value:

- Individuals and interactions** over processes and tools
- Working *solutions*** over comprehensive documentation
- Customer collaboration** over contract negotiation
- Responding to change** over following a plan

If we value the items on the left over the items on the right  
We **can** and we **must** anchor governance and compliance in the same values  
If we don't, we cannot reap the benefits of Agility



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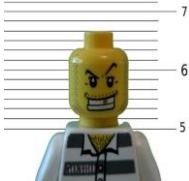
 Building the right relationship


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 This governance style is less than ideal


X

 Explain yourself!

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6  
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 A facilitative and collaborative partnership style is preferable


- helps ensure optimum effectiveness
- promotes an environment of confidence and trust so that people can be open and honest

 How can we help?


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 Building the right relationship


- Start from a positive assumption of success and commitment
- Initiatives need help to break down barriers
- Governance objectives
  - To enable (rather than impede)
  - To provide appropriate controls to ensure effective delivery
    - Always working within Agile’s culture of empowered teams and delegated authority
- Create clarity from start
  - What is being governed
  - When intervention would be necessary
  - When intervention is not necessary



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 Building the right relationship

- A two-sided relationship is built through conversation
- PMO - Decide with the initiatives, don’t manage them
- How this works in practice
  - Set the direction, then let the professionals work the detail
  - Trust their knowledge and experience, and support their decisions
  - Create an environment that allows team to focus on delivering against their goals
  - Only get actively involved if help is needed to facilitate removal of blockers




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 Agreeing the rules





- PMO agrees basic rules (expectations) with each initiative
  - Rules should be objective, not subjective
- Predominantly the same rules apply across each level
  - Project
  - Programme
  - Portfolio
- However some ground rules may differ – e.g.
  - Project stand-ups should be daily – change is constant here
  - Portfolio stand-ups more likely to be weekly – level of volatility is lower than for projects
- % Levels to be applied may differ between initiatives – e.g.
  - What level of project risk, or % of Must Haves is acceptable ?
  - What level of tolerance will be applied ?




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 Agreeing the rules

- A real project example...
  1. Agreement – Project will apply “normal” MoSCoW rules
    - Must Haves will be no more than 60% effort (Project, Increment & Timebox)
  2. Rule – If one Timebox does not achieve delivery of Must Haves = minimum Amber
    - This is a warning sign for Increment and Project
    - Investigate why as part of retrospective and address cause
  3. Rule - If two consecutive Timeboxes fail to deliver Must Haves = Red
    - Status Red is non-negotiable
    - Something is wrong, this is not a “one-off” scenario
    - Need to understand impact on plans and commitments and deal with this
    - Avoids subjective interference / external pressure
    - It also avoids risk of Water-melon reporting !!



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## Agile Reporting – A Different Focus

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- Traditional / linear projects may have long periods where no proof is available
  - Subjective “% complete” style reporting is the only option available
  - This is often presented from an optimistic perspective
- Agile projects have iterative development and incremental delivery
  - Enables regular show and tells (demos)
  - Allows for on-going business acceptance of requirements
  - Ensures progress is based on fact
    - “Show us what you have working at this point” “Yes, that element works”
- Agile projects are transparent
  - This ensures reporting is objective and accurate – no hiding place



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## Objective reporting


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- The Agile concept of “Done”
  - “Done” means a requirement has been tested and is accepted by the business
    - i.e. it can be “banked”, ready for next release
- “Done” is binary – there is no such thing as “half done”!
  - Only requirements that are potentially ready to go (“done”) have any actual value

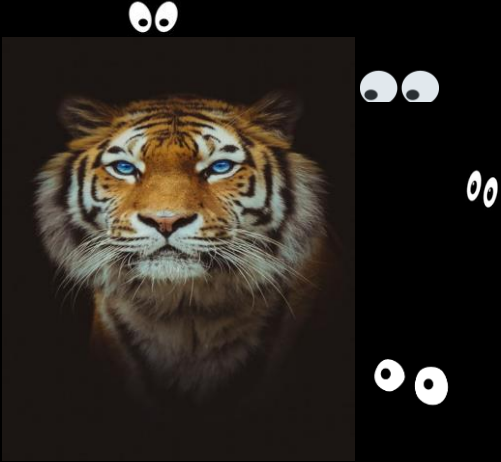

  


- Agile teams will be getting requirements “Done” incrementally
- Team level reporting should be based on how much is “Done”

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 And finally.... The effect of agile transparency

- You are in a dark room
- It is full of tigers
- I put the lights on
- Don't blame me (or Agile) for the tigers!



 Thank You





## Get in touch

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