Testers and QA as Agile Leaders

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General Agile Picture

Ideas

The team produces shippable product on a regular basis

Ranked Backlog

Cross-Functional Team

Responsible Person

Demo

Retrospective
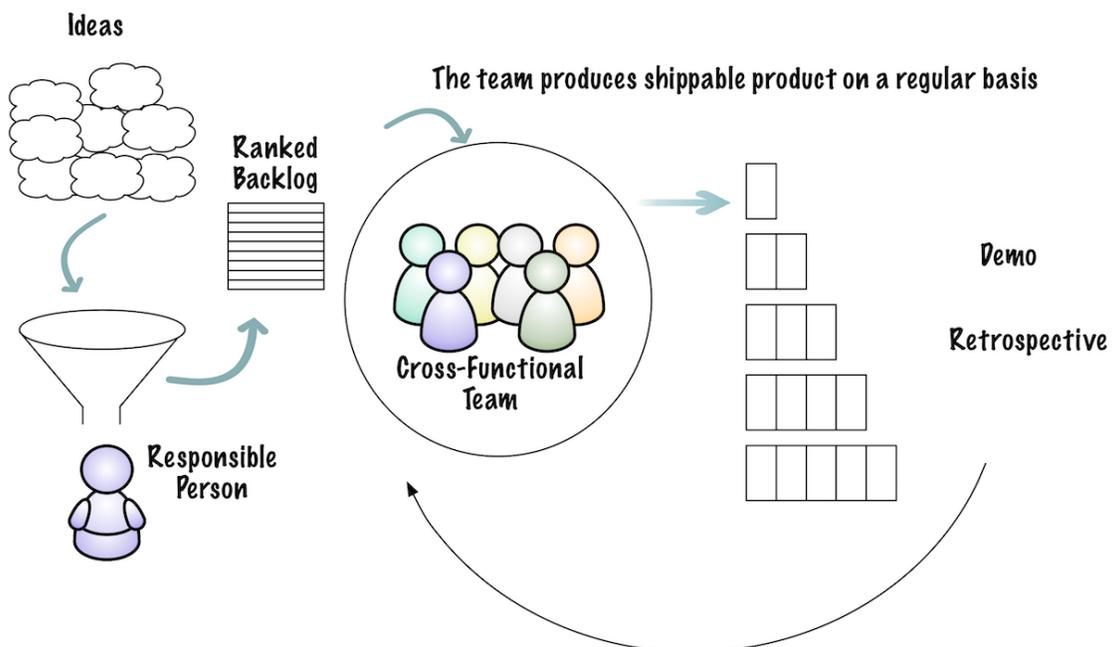
Why Agile Approaches?

- We couldn't ship anything at any time

  - Some organizations couldn't ship anything

- We had many many many defects in the code

- "Process" wasn't helping

- Couldn't capitalize software development (instead of expensing it)

What is Leadership?

- Change something about the status quo

- Collaborate with others

- Create effective change when the situation changes

- Adaptability

What Leadership is Not

- Heroic

- Something you do alone

- All action

Some Stories of Inadvertent Leadership
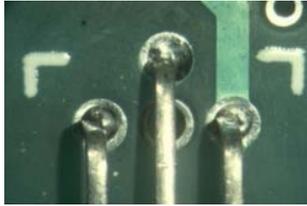
Testers Are Ideal for Nudging Change

- Testers see features

- Testers see what users see

- Testers are the first users

- Testers might advocate for the users

- Testers might be the first people to advocate for release criteria or other definitions of done

# Adaptable leaders create effective change when the situation changes.

Leadership Requires Courage

- Courage to:

  - Take a step for yourself

  - Ally with others

  - Suggest change with and for others

Courage is not Fearlessness

- "What's the worst thing that can happen?"

- Manage risks in many ways:

  - Socializing ideas

 - Trying them yourself

  - Developing several options
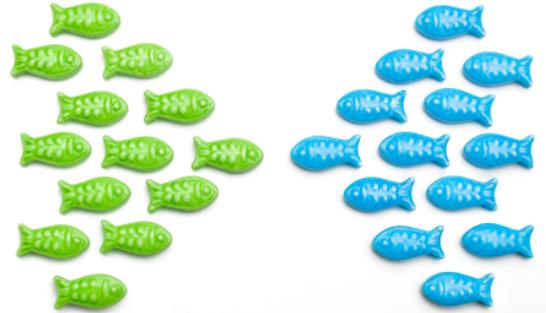
Start With Your Mindset

Fixed Mindset	Growth Mindset
You are born with fixed skills or talents.	Skills arise from hard work. You can improve.
Avoid challenges. In the face of challenge, give up easily.	Challenges are an opportunity. Persist until you get it right.
Coast by, don't bother with effort.	Effort is essential to mastery.
Get defensive with feedback.	Learn from feedback.
With setbacks, blame others. Get discouraged.	Setbacks are something you use to try harder the next time.
Feel threatened by others' success.	Find inspiration in others' success.

Carol Dweck,
Mindset

Expectations Shape Our Reality

- Expectations shape us

- Everyone on your team has potential—of some sort

- It's all about mindset
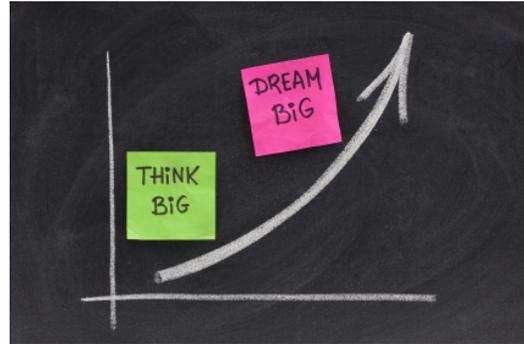
You live up (or down) to your own expectations.

Changing Mindset is Challenging

- We often confuse our roles or titles with our identities
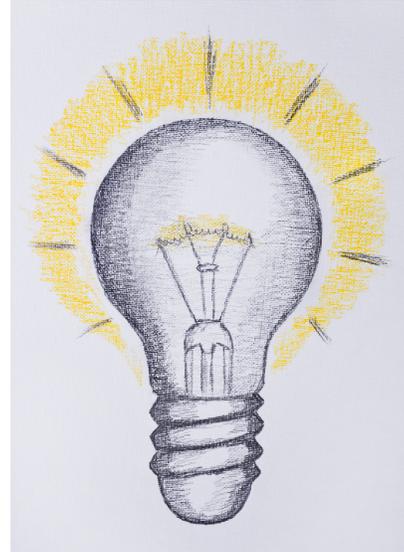
# Change is good.
You first.

Have the Courage to Become…

- A T-shaped person

- Someone who questions the way things are

- Collaborative

- Change artist

Testers Can Try

- BDD (Behavior Driven Development) with Cucumber

  - English-language tests you can automate

- ATDD (Acceptance Test Driven Development)

  - Entire team discusses acceptance criteria for a story with examples

  - Can automate these

Teams Can Try

- Working together as a team (pairing, swarming, mobbing)

  - Developing tests together

  - Developing automation hooks together

 - Developing test automation together (refactoring to get to what you want

Consider Experimentation

- Learn early

  - Create an hypothesis

  - Decide what to measure

  - Run the experiment

  - Compare results
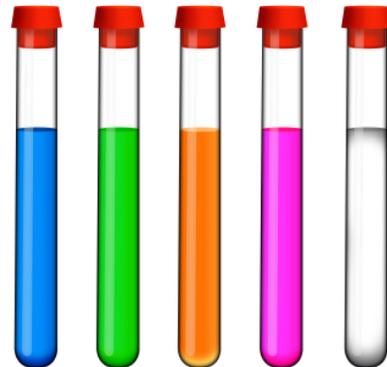
Satir Change Model

Old Status Quo · Foreign Element · Chaos · Transforming Idea · Practice & Integration · New Status Quo
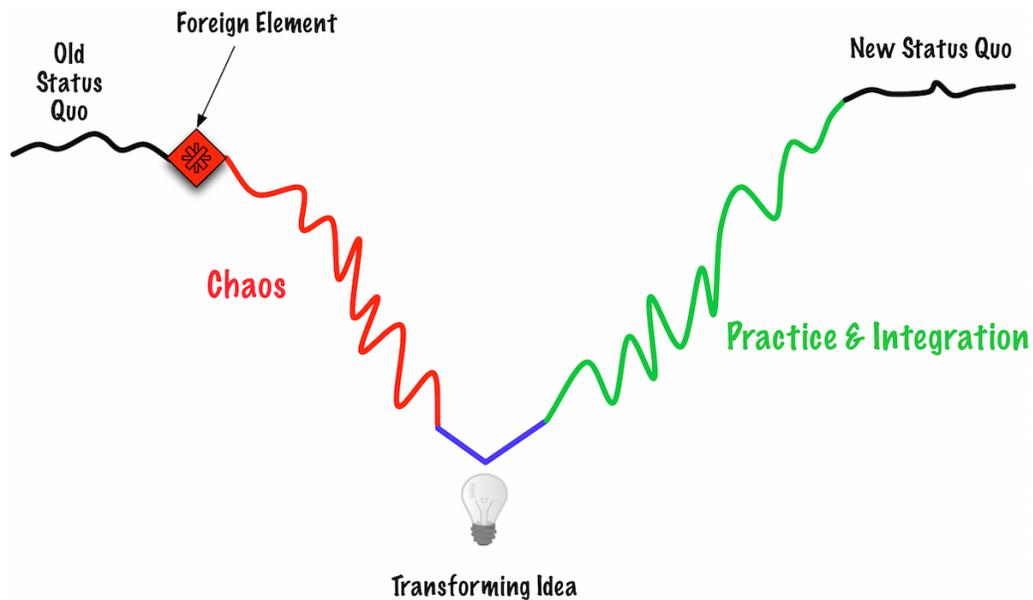
Ways You Persevere

- Explain the value of the change

- Decide how the change manifests your values

- Celebrate incremental progress

Agile is Change

- Cultural change

- Project change

- Process change

- Teams might change

- Each person can become a leader in a self-organizing team
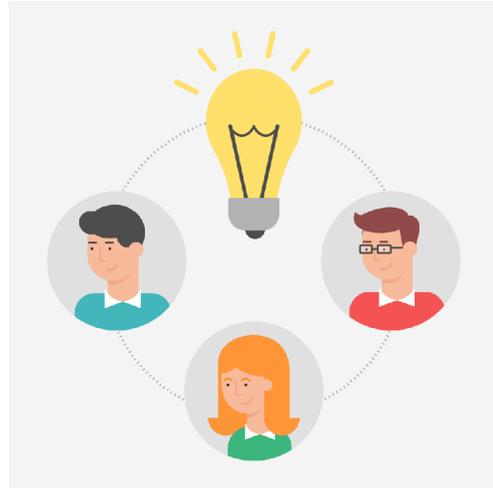
Become a Change Artist

- Invite people to change

- Experiment

- Listen to everyone

- Don't label people

- Start with the smallest possible change

Lead from Anywhere

- Your title is irrelevant

- Your actions count

- Adapt: change to fit your reality
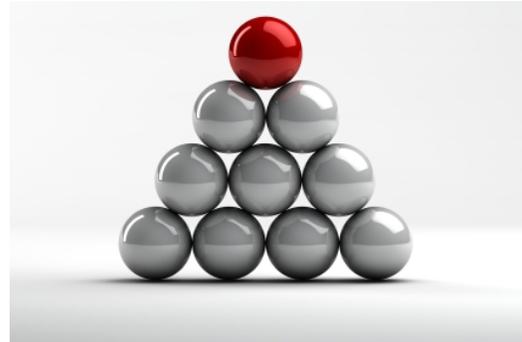
Become an agile leader:

What can you take from here today to consider for your leadership tomorrow?

References and Resources

- My questions on createadaptablelife.com

- Pragmatic Manager and other articles on jrothman.com

- Explore more with us at the InfluentialAgileLeader.com

Let's Stay in Touch

- Pragmatic Manager:

  - www.jrothman.com/pragmaticmanager

- Please link with me on LinkedIn