Selling Agile to Senior Management

written by Manoj Khanna | January 9, 2017



The best way to promote Agile to senior management is to explain its numerous benefits and cost and waste reduction methods. Once key players in the organization are made aware of Agile's benefits, it essentially sells itself. And, the best way to sell a methodology is to demonstrate its value by delivering quantifiable and visible business benefits, but to even get there, you first need to find a project that you can implement using Agile, and this is a challenge in itself.

The process of selling usually starts with a presentation to the key decision makers, which should at least cover the following areas:

- Changes required in this particular department (team, tools, meetings)
- Overview of Agile process (two to three slides)
- Overview of user stories and how they relate to the requirements
- Overview of tools required
- Overview of general Agile benefits with a focus on how this particular company/department/project will benefit from Agile (reduced documentation overhead, better progress tracking, improved code quality, faster delivery, more efficient analysis of scope changes,

customer satisfaction, short feedback loops, etc.)

Another very important step at this stage is to determine general expectations for Agile from senior management and to make sure they understand that Agile is not a magic solution. Some non-biased measures, as well as the success criteria for implementing Agile within a specific project, have to be defined.

Let's return to the benefits outlined previously and see how they can be measured since some of them are very tricky (for example, it's not always easy to measure customer satisfaction or the ability to react to changes in the requirements) here are a few general recommendations:

- Reduce documentation overhead
- Code quality
- Better progress tracking
- Faster delivery

Once you've obtained a general approval to test Agile you need to find a project that will demonstrate all the good things you promised in your presentation. Finding the right candidate is extremely critical and not an easy job to any extent.

This is an excerpt from the forthcoming book, The Art of Being Agile.

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