Course Syllabus
Leading and Coaching Agile Teams

I.   DESCRIPTION

As Agile methods and tools continue to grow in popularity, people are interested in how to leverage Agile to improve the way their technical and business teams work together. Organizations are interested in business agility which gives them the opportunity to respond to opportunities and threats in the marketplace and to be more competitive.

To be effective in moving to Agile, organizations need people to understand Agile methods and practices, and have the skills to coach and lead individuals, agile teams and leaders. Agile teams are the basic building block of agility so the main focus will be on supporting Agile teams. This requires the understanding of Agile frameworks, coaching skills, and overall leadership skills.

This course starts with a brief overview of Agile methods including Agile Values and Principles as well as some of the most popular Agile methods. Key Agile Leadership and Coaching concepts are provided and reinforced with videos, in-class exercises and homework. Participants are encouraged to consider their own leadership style as well as the effectiveness of the teams and leadership in their own organizations. Finally, participants learn what it means to coach Agile teams and gauge their abilities in this area.

This course will be helpful to individuals who are responsible directly or indirectly for leading, supporting, or coaching Agile teams. This includes Scrum Masters, functional and line managers, project managers and senior leaders as well.

This course qualifies as education contact hours for the Project Management Institute's Agile Certified Practitioner (PMI-ACP®) exam. Note that in order to qualify to sit for the PMI-ACP® exam, students must meet additional requirements set forth by PMI that can be found on the Project Management Institute website.

II.   COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon Completion of this Course, Attendees will be able to:
1. Define what agile means and describe the benefits of adopting agile ways of working
2. Understand and be able to promote business agility within their organization
3. Describe the four key responsibilities for agile leaders at all levels of the organization
4. Establish effective Agile teams and support them
5. Determine specific actions agile leaders can take to create an environment for agile teams to succeed
6. Assess their tendency to control others and take steps to move to a coaching stance

III.   COURSE OUTLINE

Northwestern University
School of Professional Studies
Wieboldt Hall, Sixth Floor
339 East Chicago Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60611-3008

Phone   312-503-6950
Fax   312-503-4942
sps.northwestern.edu

Note: Participants will be given access to an electronic version of the course materials.

Unit 1: Agile Introduction and the Leader's Role
- What can cause Agile to Fail? How do we protect against failure?
- What is the Agile Leaders Role
- 4 Agile Values
- 12 Agile Principles
- Exercise: 12 Agile Principles
- Overview of Scrum and Kanban
- What is the Agile Leader's Role?

Unit 2: Promote Business Agility
- Drivers for Agile Ways of Working
- Define Business Agility
- VUCA as a driver for agility
- Measuring Employee Engagement
- Motivating Employees
- Employee Participation

Unit 3: Establish and Support Agile Teams
- Create Effective Teams
- Eliminate Handoffs
- Encourage Team Focus
- Plan by Teams not by Individuals
- Team Decision Making
- Facilitation Skills
- Protecting Teams

Unit 4: Shape the Environment
- Understanding Organizational Impediments
- How work gets done
- Agile Metrics and Reporting
- General Principles for Metrics & Reporting
- Move from Activity Measures to Impacts
- HR and Staffing Policies

Unit 5: Adopt a Coaching Stance
- Moving from Commanding to Coaching
- Coach Teams to Solve Their Own Problems

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- Skills and Tools for Coaches
- Powerful Questions
- Listening Skills

IV.   PRE-WORK AND HOMEWORK

Students will be asked to introduce themselves via a discussion question before the start of class.

Students will be assigned homework following each of the 4 synchronous sessions. Please see Canvas for details.

V.   IN CLASS EXERCISES and DISCUSSION TOPICS

Note: Exercises will be tailored, added, or omitted based on participant learning goals.

- Exercise: Agile Principles
- Exercise: Create a Team Definition of Business Agility
- Discussion: How do you motivate employees?
- Discussion: Chuck Blakeman – Participation Age
- Discussion: The Spotify Engineering Culture
- Exercise: Assess Current Teams
- Discussion: Organizational Impediments
- Discussion: HR & Staffing
- Exercise: Moving from Commanding to Coaching
- Exercise: Powerful Questions
- Exercise: Coaching Conversations
- Exercise: What Metrics Should Managers Use?

VI.   GRADING POLICY

Participation is the key to learning in this class Participation is the key to learning in this class. The bulk of the learning time is based on lectures and interactions via Zoom. It is required that students attend all four of the mandatory class evening sessions from 6:30 to 8:30pm (a student may miss up to 30 minutes in any one session for unforeseen circumstances). If you cannot attend a session, please let the instructor know in advance and make arrangements to complete the work.

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Grading is based on attendance for the 4 synchronous learning sessions as well as individual assignments, individual discussion topics and group exercises. Participants will be placed in teams for assignment purposes to complete those group exercises.

The default grading in this course is pass/fail (satisfactory or unsatisfactory). Instructions are included in Canvas for those who need letter grades. Where required, letter grades will be awarded based on the following:

Letter Grade	%
A	92% and above
B	80 to 91%
C	60 to 79%
F	Below 59%

Grades will be available to students within one week from the end of class.

VII.   RESOURCES – Printed Materials & Websites

- Adkins, *Coaching Agile Teams:* https://www.amazon.com/Coaching-Agile-Teams-ScrumMasters-Addison-Wesley/dp/0321637704/
- Bungay Stanier, Michael, *The Coaching Habit:* https://www.amazon.com/Coaching-Habit-Less-Change-Forever/dp/0978440749/
- Derby & Larsen, *Agile Retrospectives: Making Good Teams Great*: https://www.amazon.com/Agile-Retrospectives-Making-Teams-Great/dp/0977616649/
- Digital.ai, *The Annual State of Agile Report:* https://digital.ai/resource-center/analyst-reports/state-of-agile-report
- Gallup, https://www.gallup.com/workplace/313313/historic-drop-employee-engagement-follows-record-rise.aspx
- Hamel, *Innovation Democracy at Gore*, https://www.managementexchange.com/story/innovation-democracy-wl-gores-original-management-model
- Vogt, Eric, *The Art and Architecture of Powerful Questions,* https://www.amazon.com/Art-Powerful-Questions-Catalyzing-Innovation/dp/0972471618

VIII.   RESOURCES - Videos

- The 6 Enablers of Business Agility (Harbott) - https://youtu.be/ZSLPjjr1Ipo
- Drive/Motivation (Pink) - https://youtu.be/y1SDV8nxypE

- Managers in the Participation Age (Blakeman) - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ewA2BqbWhUQ
- Transforming the Pyramid (Janlen) - https://youtu.be/-tTAfrpjKvQ
- Spotify Engineering Culture (Kniberg) – Part 1 - https://youtu.be/Yvfz4HGtoPc , Part 2: https://youtu.be/vOt4BbWLWQw
- ***It's Not About the Nail,*** *https://youtu.be/-4EDhdAHrOg*
- ***Brene Brown, Empathy,*** *https://youtu.be/vzvYm2DNzS0*
  Are you ready to give up power to get results? (Kelly) - https://youtu.be/Vc-5NytHDWQ
- Turn this Ship Around (Marquet), https://youtu.be/Bm4mCn5x5iM