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# What Your Manager Should Be Doing for Your Agile Team (.....but may not be)

Exploring the Competencies of the Agile Manager Role

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# About The Presenter

## Michael K. Spayd

- Specializes in Enterprise-level Change & Agile Adoption
- Leadership Advisor, Organizational Change Artist, Agile Coach & Educator
- Trained or Coached: 40+ Agile teams, 20+ management teams
- Studied scores of teams, managers, coaches and executives experiment, struggle with and adopt Agile
- President of Collective Edge Consulting, leading Enterprise-level Agile transformations

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## User Story: *Select a Great Agile Manager*

- As a Team Member, I want to select a great Agile Manager for my team based on their personal attributes, their skills, and job responsibilities
- As an Executive, I want an Agile Manager who can effectively and efficiently manage Agile teams while driving the creation of business value across the organization

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# Test-First Learning

At the end of the presentation, you will be able to 'pass' the following tests:

- ❑ We have useful criteria to evaluate the skills and experience of an Agile Manager
- ❑ I recognize what a good Agile Manager has to do and how they can make a difference
- ❑ We have selected an Agile Manager for our team and organization

What if.... ?



# THE MANAGER POOL

Patterns for Radical Leadership



**DON SHERWOOD OLSON**  
**CAROL L. STIMMEL**

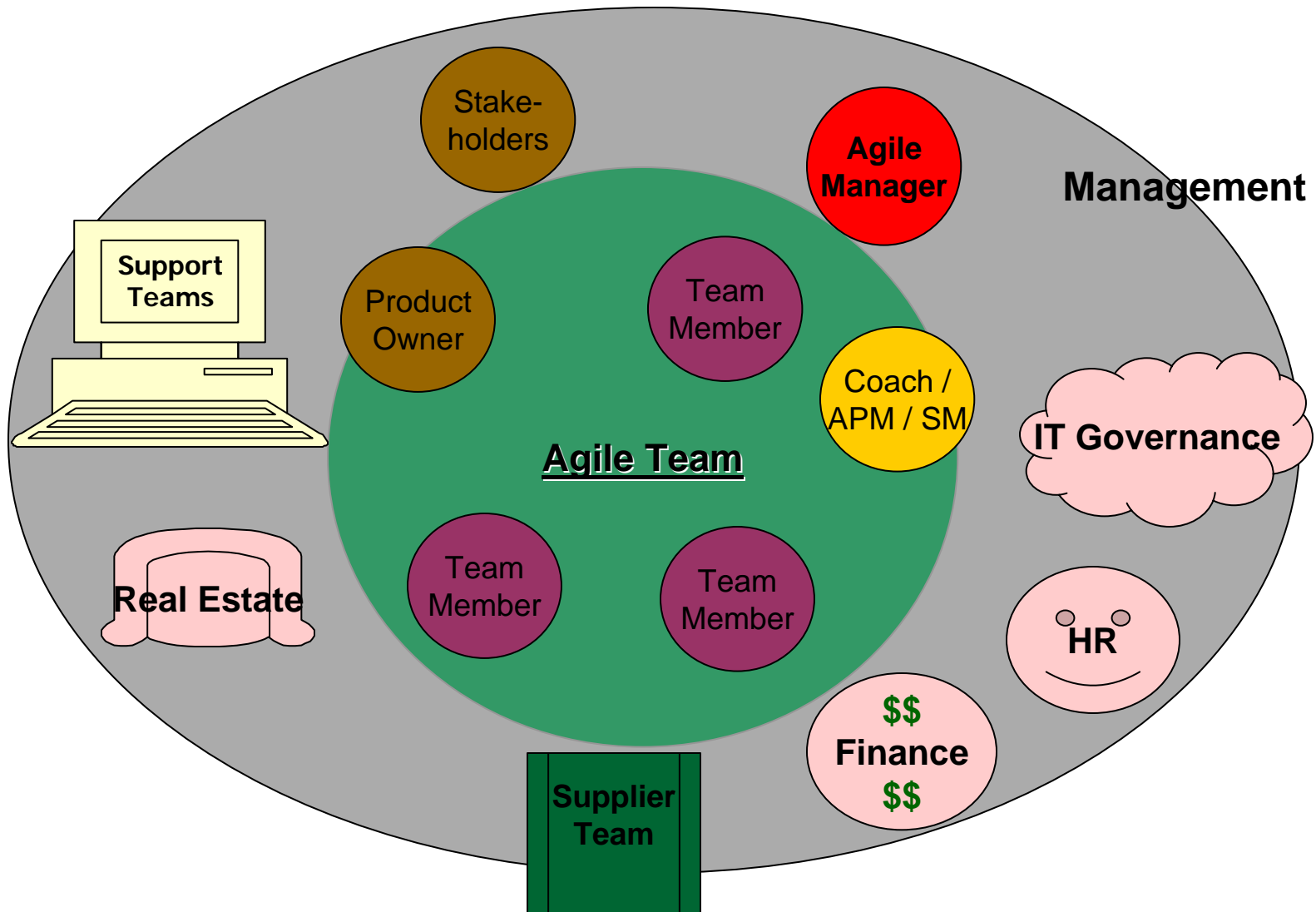
SOFTWARE PATTERNS SERIES

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# In the Agile Context...

- What do Agile teams need from their managers?
- What does senior management need from a manager?
- Can someone actually lead a self-organized team?
- Do we even need managers in this new world?

# An Ecosystem View



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# Competency Model

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What Competencies does an Agile Manager Need?



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# Competency Areas

- #1 Organizational Change Management
- #2 Self-Organized Team Management
- #3 Resource (People, Teams) Management
- #4 Performance Management
- #5 Agile Metrics & Reporting
- #6 Portfolio Mgmt & Governance
- #7 Internal Partner Management
- #8 Agile Supplier Management

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First Who...

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Getting the Right Managers on the Bus

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# Behavioral 'Personality' Attributes

Which do you choose?

- Conservative
- Innovative
- Technical
- Self
- Strategic
- Persuasive
- Outgoing
- Excitement
- Restraint
- Structuring
- Tactical
- Communication
- Delegation
- Control
- Feedback
- Management focus
- Dominant
- Production
- Cooperation
- Consensual
- Authority
- Empathy

Leadership Behaviors adapted from Mgmt Research Group's LEA (Leadership Effectiveness Analysis)

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# Selected Agile Leader Attributes

- **Delegation** – enlist others, giving autonomy, freedom to fail
- **Innovative** – comfortable with change, taking risks, new & untested approaches
- **Communication** – explicit expectations, clear expression, keeps everyone informed
- **Consensual** – takes advice, asks for & values input
- **Tactical** – emphasizes immediate results, in center of action, pragmatic
- **Empathy** – active concern for others, projects warmth & acceptance
- **Excitement** – lively, dynamic, displays emotion easily expression, creates enthusiasm
- **Strategic** – plans ahead, objective analysis, thinks through implications of decisions

Adapted from David Spann, *Agile Manager Behaviors: What to Look for and Develop*, Cutter Agile Project Management Advisory Service Executive Report, Vol. 7, No. 9 2006

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# LEADERSHIP Styles

Analyst  
Amiable  
Authoritative  
Catalyst  
Challenger of others  
Close partner w/Customers  
Coach  
Commitment Builder  
Conceptual visionary  
Conflict manager  
Conservative  
Cultivator  
Definitive

Driver firm & assertive  
Expressive  
Idealist  
Integrator  
People  
Pragmatist  
Push for consensus  
Realist  
Spurs competition  
Steward  
Stretcher of people  
Team Builder  
Tough taskmaster

Adapted from Schneider, *The Reengineering Alternative*, 1996

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# Organization Change & Corporate Culture

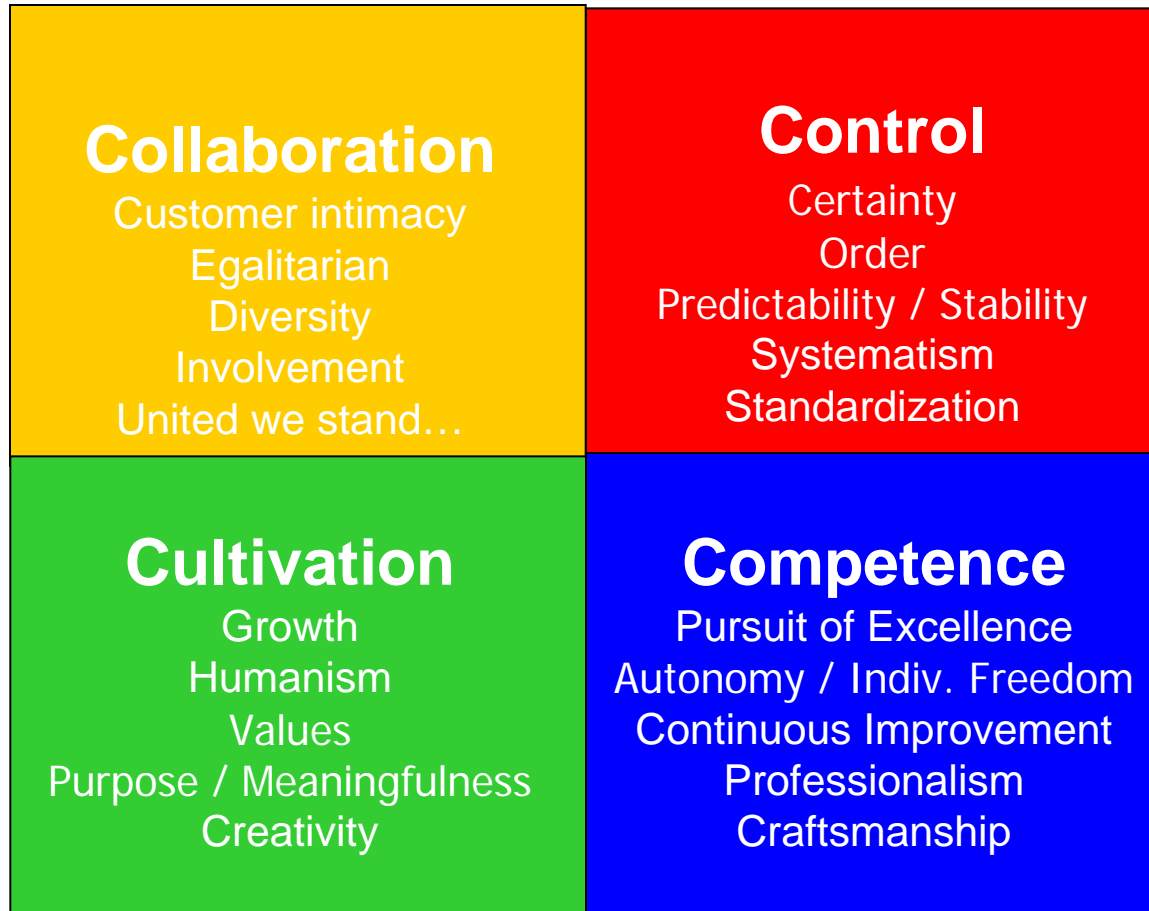
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# Key Issues

- How does change happen in your organization?
- What would it mean for a Manager to be a change leader? Can they survive if they do lead change?
- What is our corporate culture? Can we change it? Should we?

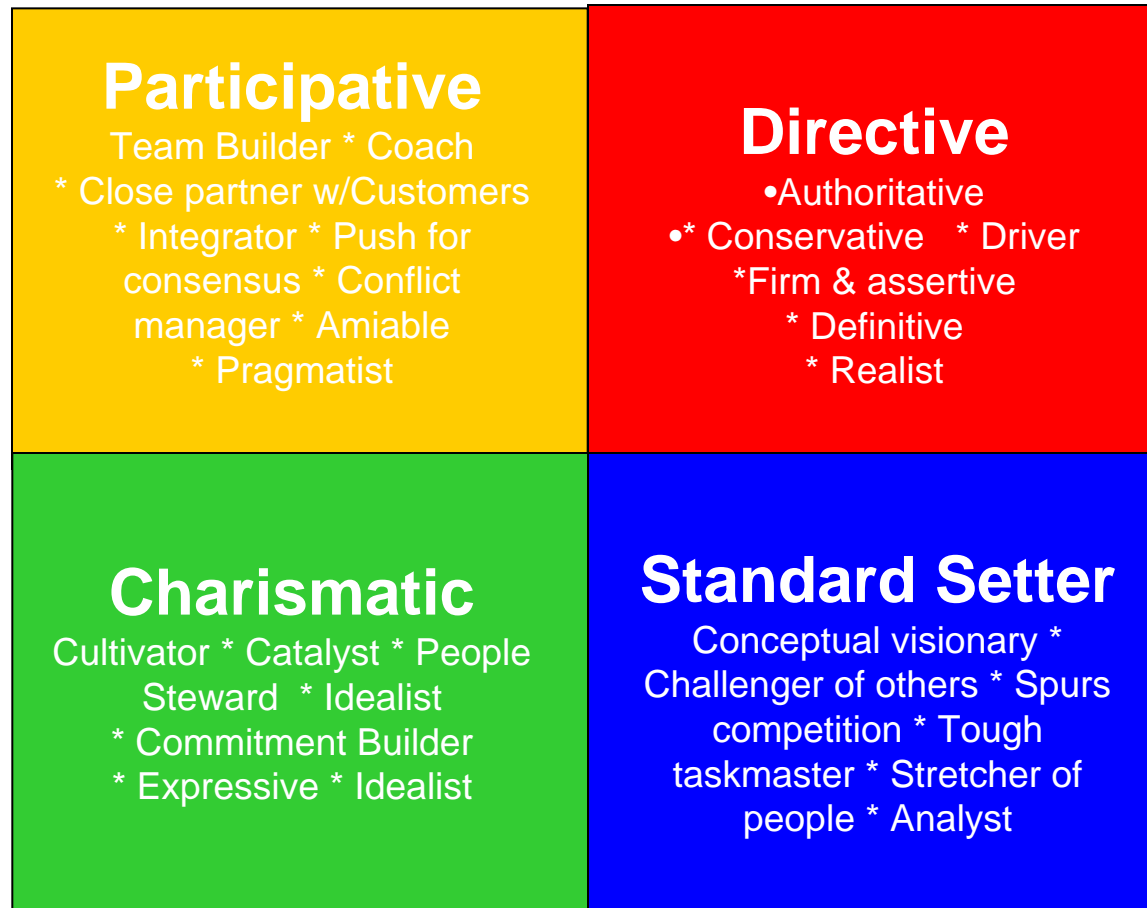
# Four Core CULTURES



Adapted from Schneider, *The Reengineering Alternative*, 1996



# Four LEADERSHIP Styles



Adapted from Schneider, *The Reengineering Alternative*, 1996

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# Some Interview Suggestions

1. What is the candidate's leadership style?
2. If not Participative or Charismatic, are they able to respect those team values?
3. What is their experience with driving change?
4. What was the result of the change and how long were they responsible?

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# Manager as Coach

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# Key Issues

- When do you want coaching?
- When does the 'other guy' need it?
- What sort of direction is helpful for an Agile team?
- Can a manager let the team fail in the interests of learning?
- What organizational impediments is within the manager's influence sphere to remove?

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# Some Interview Suggestions

1. Are they aligned with a Servant Leadership model?
2. Can they think (and act) across the value stream?
3. Can they be happy being a team advocate?
4. Do they have any training or experience in coaching?
5. How have they created trust and collaboration in their organizations?

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# Performance Reviews

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What gets measured gets gamed

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# Key Issues

- Who should measure performance?
- What role is appropriate to the Agile Manager?
- What should be measured?
- Do performance reviews support or harm morale?
- How do you incent team performance without compromising individual integrity?

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# Some Interview Suggestions

1. What do they think of measuring team performance?
2. Do they see a need to balance individual performance with team measures?
3. Have they successfully used motivators other than money?
4. How do they see performance reviews benefiting individuals? The organization?



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# Resource Management

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# Key Issues

- How can we maximize resource utilization?
- How does the organization develop functional expertise?
- What is the role of functionalist vs. specialist vs. generalist in your organization?
- What is the best way to organize teams over time?
- What are the dynamics of teams within your organization?

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# Some Interview Suggestions

1. Does the candidate understand team dynamics and how to work with them?
2. Do they believe 'star' individuals are smarter than Teams?
3. Have they worked in or created a team-based organization?
4. How do they respond to research on the need for 'flow' and continual focus on one task

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# Metrics, Reporting & Portfolio Mgmt

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**“Where’s your TPS Report cover sheet?”**

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# Key Issues

- What are the institutionalized beliefs about managing to the Iron Triangle?
- Do we measure value and value attainment?
- Does Agile necessitate changes in thinking about the portfolio and governance?
- How should Agile projects be communicated to senior management?

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# Some Interview Suggestions

1. What is more important to them: Business value or meeting cost / schedule / scope?
2. What do they think are the benefits and drawbacks of formal individual and team measurement?
3. Do they believe teams are accountable to their own goals?
4. What is their belief about sunk costs in portfolio management?

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# Suppliers

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**Should our Suppliers work like we do?**

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# Key Issues

- Who runs 'sourcing' in our organization?
- How rigid are contracting templates?
- Are our suppliers Agile? Do they need to be?
- Are we willing to 'grow' them through training or consulting?



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# Some Interview Suggestions

1. Has the candidate created non-traditional Supplier incentives?
2. Can they see Suppliers as part of an extended organization rather than as adversaries to be 'watched'?
3. Have they managed across time zones and culture zones?

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# Support Functions

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**Velocity-negative? Do we need to reconsider the word “support”?**

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# Key Issues

- What measurement are support groups optimized around?
- Who is the common manager above a given support function and a given Agile team?
- What is the relationship between the relevant middle managers?

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# Some Interview Suggestions

1. What has the candidate done to create cross-organizational collaboration?
2. Have they managed support functions before?
3. Are they schooled in Lean management thinking?
4. Do they take a direct approach in interfacing with key suppliers of their teams?

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# Green Bar Management

Which of the following tests now **'pass'**?

- We have useful criteria to evaluate the skills and experience of an Agile Manager
- I recognize the responsibilities of a good Agile Manager and how they can make a difference
- We have selected an Agile Manager for our team and organization

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# Summary of Points

- Organizational culture has a large affect on Agile implementations
- Managers need to take a lead role in facilitating organizational change
- Managers can benefit teams using individual and team coaching
- The performance review process can enhance or thwart team morale
- Managers play a fundamental role in removing organizational obstacles
- Metrics and reporting can help or hinder teams
- IT suppliers can be managed consistently with an Agile perspective
- Support functions should enable, rather than thwart, Agile team velocity

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Le Fin

Merci!

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