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Agile management to secure competitiveness in times of digital transformation in medium-sized businesses

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Abstract

With the digital transformation, companies will experience a change that focuses on shaping the organization into an agile organizational form. In today's competitive and fast-moving business environment, it is necessary to react quickly to changing market conditions. Agility represents a promising option for overcoming these challenges. The path to an agile organization represents a development process that requires consideration of countless levels of the enterprise. This paper examines the impact of digital transformation on agile working practices and the benefits that can be achieved through technology. To enable a solution for today's so-called VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity und Ambiguity) world, agile ways of working can be applied project management requires adaptation. In the qualitative study, expert interviews were conducted and analyzed using the grounded theory method. As a result, a model can be presented that shows the influencing factors and potentials of agile management in the context of the digital transformation of medium-sized companies.

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1. Introduction

To realize fully integrated and digital supply chains, interoperabilities between different standards, formats and systems must be overcome for end-to-end electronic data exchange. Problems arise especially for SMEs that trade

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with many business partners, as different systems may be applied [1]. Reconfiguring the company in line with the challenges that come with implementing digital transformation is essential to ensure competitiveness and increased efficiency [2]. "Agility and adaptability are identified as the biggest challenge, which is also a prerequisite for Digital Transformation" [3]. Under the aspect of digitalization, speed and flexibility, a fundamental change in the way companies act is taking shape. A fast adaptability and adaptation of the organization to occurring market changes and customer needs is essential to achieve value creation in the future. Even in markets that appear stable, new competitors and disruptive technologies can pose a threat to the company's competitiveness, which is why it is essential to break up entrenched structures and adopt a future-oriented and secure approach. Companies must continuously rethink and adapt their business processes and models [4].

As a result of the advancing digitalization, areas of life and work have changed enormously in recent years. Companies have new offerings and approaches based on digital technologies and are thus creating entirely new rules of competition and the market [5]. Considering the holistic future impact on organizations, people and countries, digital transformation processes form a megatrend that establishes a completely new understanding of forms of work [5]. Today, there is an intelligent and flexibly networked working environment that can change quickly due to internal and external influences. The resulting dynamic movements increase the competitive pressure enormously. In addition to technological progress, permanent collaboration, communication within the team and exchange with experts is essential [6].

If information and communication technologies (ICT) are used intelligently in companies, this results in the ability for participants in a value chain to interact seamlessly and electronically, reducing manual data processing and making it increasingly obsolete. The ability to operate in global and digital value chains means that entirely new markets can be opened, which in turn leads to innovations [1]. The networking of previous boundaries between production stages and companies enables an uninterrupted flow of information and it is essential to benefit from the seamless provision of information [7]. If the intelligent use of technologies succeeds, all measures that are considered lead to a digital transformation, optimization of organizational processes and an improvement in performance [2]. In addition to the transformation of business processes concerning products, supply chains and processes, the introduction of digital technologies brings the structures of the organization and the management concepts to the forefront of the transformation. A transformation of the organization must be controlled and coordinated in a targeted manner to ensure the successful integration of digital concepts. The independent factors of digital transformation led to a complexity that must be coordinated. A structured alignment between previous business strategies and future digital solutions must be achieved [8]. The most successful strategy, which is associated with a high increase in performance, appears to be aligning the business strategy with the IT strategy [9]. Due to the constant optimization of ICT and the global connectivity achieved by means of standard protocols, companies are using digital technologies and adapting business infrastructures to the digital age or restructuring processes to enable cross-functional, global working regardless of time or distance [10].

When introducing a digital transformation strategy, a key point to bear in mind is the use of suitable technologies and the ability to use them correctly to enable value generation. A company can create technological standards itself or access standards to use the technology to optimize business processes [8]. From the perspective of organizational theory, the term "Agility" refers to a form of lean, flexible, and customer-oriented organizational design [11]. It is of central importance that a company determines which prerequisites and foundations are necessary for success regarding the use of agility in production and general organizational structures [12]. To secure the existence of an organization, the highly complex task of continuing to maintain the existing business model ("exploitation") but at the same time applying the concept of ambidexterity, in a practical sense, and, if necessary, trying out and scaling possible new business models, must be mastered. Accordingly, ambidexterity aims to weigh up in which cases the use of agile concepts brings an increase in efficiency and where, when and to what extent agile management principles, organizational forms and methods deliver added value [13].

2. Research Method and Data Collection

2.1. Research Method

Grounded Theory is a general methodology for developing theories based on data that have been systematically collected and analyzed. Theory building occurs during the research, as the collected data is constantly analyzed and expanded through additional continuous data collection, in this thesis through the guided interviews. Thus, a characteristic, of this reciprocal and analytical approach, is the constant comparative analysis of data, which is why the approach is referred to as the "constant comparative method" [14]. By means of using this methodology, theories about the object of study can be generated from the data through ingenuity and creativity [15]. Thus, theory building and (social) research are two parts that are carried out in the same process in this methodology. Distinguishing from other qualitative research methods is the clear focus of theory building. Ultimately, through the interaction of data collection and data analysis, hypotheses are to be generated and a verification of these is to be aimed for. Hypotheses are determined statements about the relationship, between the developed concepts. The approach achieves conceptual density and a meaningful amount of variation for the theory. Conceptual density refers to the richness of concept development based on the data obtained and its verification. Important about the method is that a discovered underlying process must be conceptually developed to give the analysis its richness through variation. Therefore, there is a risk that scientists do not understand the methodology properly and, for example, do not conceptually develop a discovered process, but only apply coding as the main feature of the methodology, disregarding theoretical coding. Substantive codes are considered hypotheses, which are integrated into an emerging theory. Theoretical coding is necessary to conceptualize how the hypotheses relate to each other [14].

2.2. Data Collection

To generate scientific knowledge, qualitative interviews with selected experts were used to generate data. This ensures that, in contrast to a quantitative survey with a large sample, a qualitative, high-quality depth on the topic is achieved through the open course of the conversation in a sample with a small number of experts. A qualitative social research method, which is standardized by applying the methodology of Grounded Theory. There are different forms of qualitative interviewing. To achieve a high degree of standardization and to ensure comparability of the different interview partners, the guided interview is chosen within the question structure. For a qualitative interview there are basic requirements that must be fulfilled before the interview to ensure success. These are the willingness of the interviewee to cooperate, the same language between interviewee and researcher, the communicative competence of the interviewee and the willingness of the interviewee to deal with the case under investigation [15]. In the present research project, the four criteria mentioned above were fulfilled for all respondents. Accordingly, guided expert interviews are a methodologically effective and purposefully elaborated qualitative research method for data generation [16].

In the case selection for this research work, theoretical characteristic criteria were selected in advance to ensure the success of the subject selection. In terms of job titles, these are the search criteria "project manager", "process manager", "project leader", "managing director", "manager", "digital project manager", "consultant" and "advisor". To further narrow down the search in this field to the essential experts who are familiar with the subject area of agile work, additional search criteria were used. These are the criteria "agile", "agility", "agile project management", "business intelligence", "Scrum Master", "Scrum".



Fig. 1. Number of employees in 2020

In addition, the number of employees was selected as a further criterion for the selection of experts exclusively from suitable companies that fall within the scope of the SMEs defined for this research work. Figure 1 shows that five experts are employed in companies with a total workforce of less than 500 employees. Four experts are employed in companies with a total number of employees between 500 and 1000. Another four subjects work in companies with a total number of employees of 1000 - 3500 and further four acquired subjects were able to contribute their expert knowledge from companies with a total of 3500 - 5000 employees.

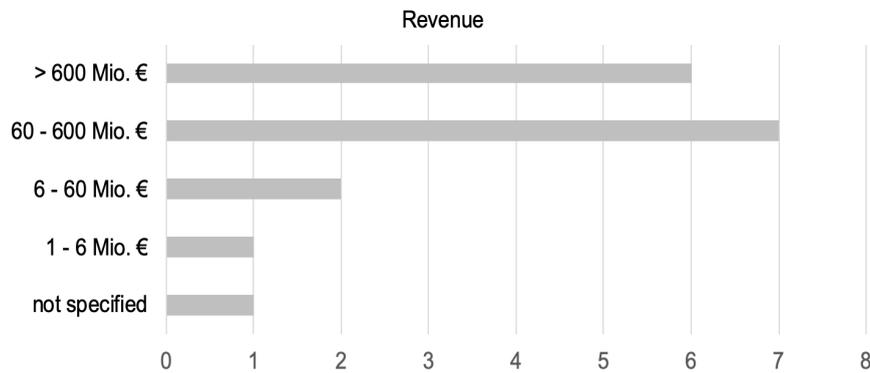


Fig. 2. Revenue in 2020

Regarding the criterion for defining the SME, the following facts emerge for the sales figures for one year. One expert (consultant) cannot provide any information for his turnover figure as a self-employed person and therefore falls into the field "no information". For one respondent, the annual turnover of the company is in the range of 1 - 6 million euros. Within the defined range of 6 - 60 million euros, two subjects need to be counted. Further seven experts are employed in companies with sales of 60 - 600 million euros. Companies generate sales of more than 600 million euros in which six of the 17 experts surveyed are employed (see Figure 2).

Table 1. Job Positions Experts

Nr.	Pseudonym	Job Position
1.	Nora	Manager
2.	Karl	Process Manager
3.	Niklas	Process Manager
4.	Leon	Project Engineer
5.	Adam	Business Intelligence Developer
6.	Joseph	Software Engineer Machine Learning and Data Science

7.	Tim	Project Manager
8.	James	Head of SAP Competence Center
9.	David	Manager in Client Support
10.	Maria	Expert Agile, Agile (IT) Project Management
11.	Simon	Head of Competence Center Agility
12.	Robin	Project Manager
13.	Josefine	Senior Management Consultant Public Sector
14.	Megan	Digital Project Manager/ Product-Owner
15.	Tom	Consultant (Insurance Operations)
16.	Adeline	IT-Project Manager
17.	Anton	Head of Service Global – Authorized signatory

Table 1 shows the exact job titles and positions of the interviewed experts. Due to data security considerations, the experts were given pseudonyms and their names are used in the following chapter of the results to indicate the source of information.

After introducing the interview with general questions about the interviewee, this approach was used to lead up to the general questions about agility with questions about digital transformation. The guideline questionnaire is divided into five sections. The first section contains general questions about the interviewee. The second section continues with questions about digital transformation to lead up to the general questions about agility. The largest cluster is made up of questions on "Agile Approaches". Finally, combined questions on "Digital Transformation and Agility - State of the Art" are asked.

2.3. Data Analysis

The transcription was done immediately after each interview and includes the duration, the interlocutor and was written down in detail related to the respective question [16]. The Corbin and Strauss procedure was used for the coding process. The three basic types of coding in Grounded Theory research are open, axial, and selective coding [17]. The crystallization of the core categories and the description of the main phenomenon is done based on the previously identified categories, which is why there is always a relationship between them. These represent in their form a condition, action strategy, interaction strategy or consequence. A conceptual density is essential to not have gaps in the developed theory. Categories must be verifiable with sufficient properties from the data and explanatory concepts for subcategories to have value. A developed theory becomes more applicable the more abstract its concept is, which is why the generalizability of Grounded Theory is generated in the research process through a process of abstraction [17].

3. Influencing factors of agile management

3.1. Digital Transformation

The networking of all systems involved in the production process and the energy-efficient operation using, for example, just-in-time methods generates extreme volumes of data, which are attributed to the Big Data phenomenon. By networking in the production systems, an enormous transparency of the production process is achieved. Several systems, on the customer side as well as on the supplier side, can be networked and communicate with each other. The data generated by the intelligent communication of objects can be used to develop new business models and concepts. Data can be extracted from contexts that are not primarily connected with the product, from which value creation can be developed.

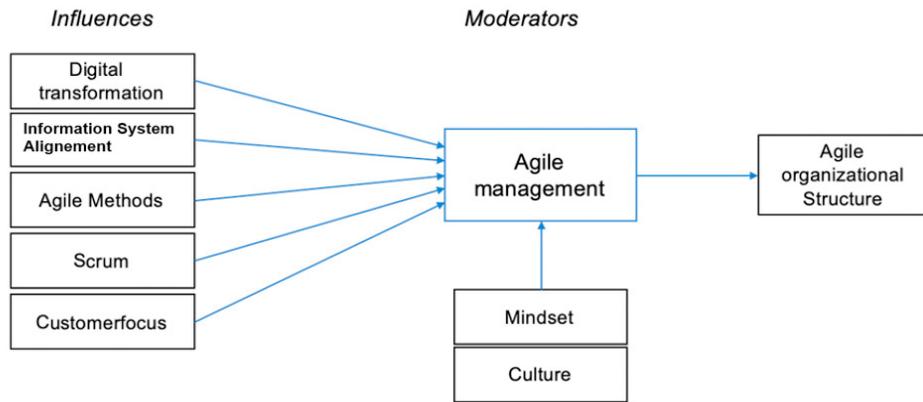


Fig. 2. Agile management model and its influencing factors

There are many opportunities to be exploited in the production and technology environment. Insofar as companies have reached a saturation phase regarding these aspects, it is important to benefit from this networking in the context of the company.

"Depending on which tools are used for which application area, it is very often the automation of previously manually performed processes and the generation of key figures."

It must be ensured that tools used are also understood and used by employees. The goal is to find solutions to the customer's problems, with the focus on the solution. The most important thing in the process is that the restructuring is desired and driven forward by all those involved, with all the consequences that may arise. After this first step has been completed, no uniform standardized procedure applies to companies, because it depends on the maturity level and structure of the company. Digital transformation will take place across the board and bring about upheavals and changes in all departments in companies. Digitization projects will usually take priority one and be driven forward. Interfaces between legacy systems and new add-ons will have to be overcome.

A self-employed expert on agility reports that she doesn't know any company that works in an agile manner but does not digitize and that it is a prerequisite. Considered step-by-step, one factor that exists is that the topic of digitization internally means what work tools can be used to make processes leaner and faster. A convenient process promotes the willingness of those involved to use it in a more qualitative and better way. Accordingly, the tools of digitization are used in the sense of process optimization. The second factor is to be able to offer new products and services for the customer in the sense of digitization. For example, the use of sensor data makes it possible to predict quality and improve the performance of plants through transparency. Accordingly, an internal and an external view of the potential benefits of digitization exist.

"In our company as an enabler. It's not really driving agile project management yet, it's still a bit decoupled. It's more that you're really enabled to do things that you couldn't do before because the process capacity was missing here."

3.2. Information system Alignment

The IT infrastructure and the system landscape must be subject to the mindset in the context of agile working. Designing an agile environment and working on legacy systems, for example, because the replacement of previous systems is associated with high costs, will fail. It is necessary to start transparently from the top and communicate the project. Analyze down to the individual project level and, when implemented, carry out the setting completely. In addition, it must be ensured that sufficient know-how for system conversions is available in the company and that external partners are used if necessary. The integration of add-on solutions must be thought through and integrated in

a sensible way so that the optimal use of employees is achieved. Compatibility with legacy systems and newly introduced systems must be ensured to successfully establish possible add-ons in the IT infrastructure. Otherwise, there is the possibility of completely redesigning the IT infrastructure, but this is a very challenging task with older companies that are very set in their ways of working. In one company, the entire upgrade of the SAP environment is being handled with agile methods within the IT department. Furthermore, acceptance is essential for cloud computing or the use of AI, necessary to be able to carry out projects that are located in interface areas. Especially when going into the area of cloud computing, the topics of data security, data integrity and data authenticity are enormously important. These are elementary points which are subject to testing and must be correct to enable successful implementation.

3.3. Agile Methods

Agile work is supported by various methods such as Scrum, Kanban or Lean-Agile. It depends on the project which method is used, but Scrum is the primary method for many projects due to its wide range of possible applications. Following a strategy designed for years is becoming more and more obsolete due to the volatility of the market environment and the differentiated customer needs, which is why agile projects with quarterly planning sprints are coming to the fore. Specific events in which the progress of projects is assessed, and new goals are set for the following quarter are considered more target oriented. Planning cycles are getting shorter and preparing detailed specifications for project plans is considered an outdated method because the future is almost uncertain. Compared to the classic way of working, agile project management achieves significant advantages. On the one hand, you can react faster to external changes and on the other hand, products can be released faster, which is necessary in today's VUCA world characterized by Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity. By integrating the customer into projects, it is possible to always create the product to be developed with customer consultation and exactly according to customer requirements. Insofar as there is a desire to work according to agile methods, the first objective will be the introduction of agile processes and methods and this objective can be further divided into subobjectives. Another primary goal is to think about company-wide, that e.g., fiscal, and legal requirements are met, but these do not block agile methods in the implementation. Agile working methods make it possible to determine at any time whether the product to be developed is still in demand on the market. Classical project planning foresees the result at the end of the project and no adjustments are allowed in between, which makes it difficult to check the necessity of the product on the market. Mandatory steps, which are necessary in the waterfall method to move forward, become obsolete in agile project management. For the project management, the progress of the project can be determined at any time through the given transparency by applying agile methods such as Scrum. In addition to the processor role, the time window and the urgency of the task can be seen at any time.

Accordingly, if the attitude of the employees and participants to agile working methods fits, agility can be carried out by means of Lean, Kanban or Scrum, for example. These methods represent the toolbox for the execution of agile work. Necessary is the understanding of the Scrum Guide, the agile manifesto, and the awareness of the self-responsibility and -organization of the participants in agile projects.

To work classically according to Scrum means to break down to project parts with an owner or a vision, which are distributed to the project teams. By maintaining backlog lists and sprint planning, scheduling for four weeks is made possible, which is checked daily and adjusted or redistributed if needed.

"Is now used in our entire development. Only really large projects are still planned classically with waterfall but everything that is reasonably clear we do in Scrum or in a mixed model."

For example, in one company, the transformation of financial information has been carried out using agile methods for two years. It is a project with three major topic blocks, which in turn are divided into the respective sprints. There is an order backlog in which all emerging topics are collected and transferred to subsequent sprints. Furthermore, strategy boards, which are used across departments, create a platform for making decisions quickly and easily, since everyone is involved. For example, the IT and business departments are involved, and the managers can give

evaluations of the process and thus contribute to fast and secure success through positive feedback. In addition, there are various certifications for employees for Scrum up to the "expert level" and represent an enormous advantage for companies if they are certified in agile. The theory enables the participants to internalize the Scrum artifacts. In practice, deviations or somewhat modified versions arise since project fit is the focus. Advantages exist, for example, through shorter feedback cycles.

Fundamentally, the goal and the reason for a consistent implementation of agile changes must be clear. It is a long-term process that requires a structure. Isolated agile attempts should be avoided by pursuing a certain strategy from the outset and trying it out in processes and adapting it to departments and projects if successful. Corporate goals regarding agility and digital transformation must be driven by management to be lived by employees, since not everyone can see the added value of new projects and methods at the beginning. It is a framework condition that the entire process is initiated by management. The design of the IT infrastructure and the available capacities also play a decisive role in determining the success of implementation projects. The given self-responsibility and the involvement of all participants in the project process is reflected in the management level, as the transfer of responsibility relieves the manager of previous tasks. The team acts in a more relationship- and team-oriented way and as a manager an authoritarian restraint is necessary so that the team can work creatively. At the management level, restructuring processes regarding the transfer of responsibility to employees will take some time, because it is also important to change the mindset of the managers. Some will be wary of new ways of working and will not be happy to relinquish authority, while others will be more confident and curious about new ways of working. However, it is in everyone's interest to increase efficiencies. The interfaces that arise when agility is to be lived, but management wants hard facts and figures, are to be regarded as critical. This break must be managed, and this is where management commitment counts. The larger the organization, the more complex the task of management will be in an agile organization, because chains of command of classic organizations, due to the matrix-like design, do not work. The relationship between disciplinary and functional managers can become more complicated and must be well aligned.

Goal setting is essential and should be driven by leaders but should also happen in dialogue with employees. Agile leadership involving employees in decision-making processes, even if the management level is ultimately the decisive authority. Basic principles about the approach should be clarified before starting an agile project. It makes sense to start in a team or project and, if this is successful, to roll it out to the company, with those involved in this project serving as "influencers" for all other employees. The goal is to use servant leadership as a management method and to integrate the supervisor as an enabler instead of a manager with an authoritarian management style. The leadership culture should always be based on agile values. Inviting leadership represents another good methodology. Another keyword is digital leadership, which is justified in today's world to answer corporate questions about the extent to which leadership is attuned to digital change, has digital competencies, and can finally exemplify or teach this to employees. Using technology without having employees who have the skills to use and implement it is futile, which is why this is a big building block to overcome. Regardless of the technology perspective, the methodical approach of management is highly important. This would be an example of methodical approach on the part of management. Management and owners need to communicate the achievable value to the organization in such major restructurings. Insofar as the decision to restructure is made, it is essential that management weighs the pros and cons and has an awareness of what this means for the organization. Furthermore, management must be aware that failures can occur. Some previous management levels may be eliminated or replaced to simplify processes.

3.4. *Customer focus*

To stay in close contact with customers', new communication platforms are coming to the fore. For example, companies are using social networks such as LinkedIn to facilitate direct customer contact and to manage information, especially for customer service representatives. Offering and guaranteeing direct customer contact provides the opportunity to win customers, because from the customer's point of view, a customer is more likely to choose a supplier who offers continuous customer contact and is always involved in the project than a supplier with whom there is no contact during the project and it is unclear what the current project status is.

Agile project management offers advantages when new customer requirements arise, for example, when it is discovered during the project that something else would be a better fit than originally planned. Then it is possible to deviate from the old plans in the interest of the customer and according to his wishes.

"Digitization once internally to the department and additionally in the direction of the customer"

The expert's company already works with a remote system in which values can be measured and visualized via applications. There is also a dedicated customer app with a customer portal that digitally offers a wide variety of services for the customer. The customer-centeredness and the inclusion in processes serve the constant exchange and feedback. It is purposeful to share unfinished projects with customers and solicit feedback, rather than just starting digital initiatives from management. One company reports that it has developed a messenger that can capture data sent from assets. This provides a very efficient and effective way to communicate with customers and work out solutions to problems.

In service, agile working also offers direct collaboration and problem solving with the customer. Whereby the strict, classic project management approach is a thing of the past. Due to the self-organization of the stakeholders, the product owner is relieved and can completely take care of the customer's needs. The customer, as a direct stakeholder, could introduce change requests at any time and is fully integrated into the project.

3.5. Mindset

Stakeholders must be involved in change processes at an early stage. Particularly in digitization and automation processes, employees tend to react negatively to a new introduction and ignore the opportunities. For example, when digital task management is integrated, the benefits are not immediately apparent to employees and initially represent an additional effort for them.

"(...) that task management is done digitally, but that is sometimes not yet understood at the administrator level, that people say: I'm doing my task, why do I have to digitally enter and book everything now, that's just an effort."

But this generates significant benefits for the company in project management through a clear structure of task distribution, time allocation and transparency. Which is why the attitude and mindset of employees is a major difficulty and hurdle to overcome when it comes to new forms of work. For employees, the advantages and benefits of restructuring and change need to be made tangible and suggested to achieve an understanding of it. Management must achieve a mindset among employees "those old ways" of doing things are being discarded and new ones are being accepted. It is necessary to create conviction for new procedures without employees missing the outdated ways of working. If this change in the mindset of the employees is achieved, the entire company will benefit. It is critical to note that employees who have been with the company for years are sometimes more difficult to convince of new methods than younger generations who have acquired the know-how of new methods during their studies.

"(...) employees who still work according to these rigid project phases, think very strongly in terms of releases, so certain lines and the mindset is decisive."

An example from an expert interview with a management consultant for technical project management with a project at a company in which half of the employees have already started with agile ways of working and are familiar with them, the other half of the employees work in old structures. Agility must be supported by the majority of the employees and not only by a few, in order to be lived successfully. It is the mental attitude or change of the employees that can be influenced by the culture of the company. The mindset and interest in improving business performance is crucial. Agile methods can be used as a supportive tool. If agile ways of working are strived for from fixed work structures, the employees' stuck mindset must be influenced by clear communication. For employees who are taken out of their fixed work structures, something like this primarily represents an uncertainty factor, which is why clear communication and transparency of the project is essential. On the other hand, a different mindset develops among

employees because of a different way of working. In addition, expectations play a role, because in agile project management, participants have an idea of what the product will look like at the end of the project. However, after an agile project process has been carried out, deviations from this expectation will arise, because during the process, decisions are made that change and usually improve the originally planned product.

3.6. Culture

Compared to the technical aspects, the cultural issues are more challenging.

"Culture is the strategy for breakfast (...) "culture eats strategy for breakfast. I can easily build a strategy and know how to implement certain technical tools, but the big difficulty is to get the culture change to work the same way. (Josefine, item 23)"

When moving from a traditional organizational form to an agile organizational form, it is necessary to check whether the culture fits at all after this change and whether a change can be designed together with employees. The culture does not change automatically through the introduction of agile methods such as Scrum, which is why this level must be driven and organized by management. Another important point in terms of agile working methods is living an open error culture to avoid "finger pointing". This also promotes the willingness and motivation of employees to work in an agile way, because mistakes are partly necessary to enable improvements. Only with trial and error and ambidextrous behavior in terms of "explore" and "exploit" can organizations grow and generate innovation. A tolerance for the occurrence of errors must be achieved in organizations so that employees are motivated to think along and work in a goal-oriented, effective manner. Agility in organizations needs to find a start and then try out what fits the business and adds value to the whole organization.

Values of agility should be integrated into the corporate culture so that values such as "self-organization" are lived as an essential characteristic of agile teams. Mistakes must be seen as learning steps to encourage free creative self-determined work. Agile development can only work if old structures and cultures are changed. Resistance on the part of employees arises from insufficient clarification of the achievable benefits, since for outsiders an effect of missing transparency and chaos can arise. The advantage of agile working methods is that it is actively communicated that mistakes are allowed and to a certain extent desired to learn automatically in the process. Mistakes are used as an opportunity to work iteratively on improvement. In waterfall projects, this situation occurs mostly at the very end in the process review.

4. Conclusion

If there is a sense of agility in the organization, teams can be set up in a completely different way than before. If tasks are distributed according to competencies, employees become managers in teams who are not managers at all by virtue of their actual job title and hierarchical classification in the organization, but who assume a leading role for the project due to their expertise. To the extent that such projects are well organized, companies benefit from improved performance and can act much faster overall. *"An Agile organization is one that is organized in a matrix structure by people and skills rather than by department."*

By moving to agile methods and digitizing processes, a reorganization phase will occur and jobs in the organization will need to undergo transformation. *"If the company doesn't adapt in structures and culture, it won't work."*

It is a lengthy process to change organizational structures and transform to agile structures. An emerging challenge in this process is that when old structures are broken down and roles are redistributed, employees may not initially identify with their new role because, for example, the position of project manager is eliminated. The management structure changes in that managers are responsible for the "tribes" that are formed. Thus, the structures are softened from the classic top-down structures in which the referral is made from department heads to department managers. According to Agile a Scale is an option to completely break down the organization to agile enterprise structure. It is a good approach, but in practice, as envisaged, it is difficult to implement fully depending on the size of the company. Nevertheless, when striving for an agile corporate structure, the classic approaches of department, specialist department, unit, etc. should be reconsidered for the sake of simplicity and speed by regular management.

When working in a customer-centric manner, a fixed corporate strategy does not provide the flexibility needed to respond to customer requirements due to the required adjustments. An agile form of organization does not commit itself to prefabricated strategies. An agile organization represents an organization that uses agile methods sensibly and acts and lives according to agile values. Due to factors such as demographic and societal change, the focus on agile organizational forms is becoming more and more prominent. Changes happen at an enormous speed, which agile organizational forms can better handle due to their steadfastness, stability, and resilience. Agile organizational forms are characterized by an enormously high degree of flexibility and the ability to react quickly to certain requirements and circumstances. Due to fast and direct communication channels in agile organizations and flat hierarchies, it is therefore possible to react much faster to changes. The reaction to unexpected events happens at a higher speed. Cross-functional teams are created, in which work is largely independent using Scrum as the methodological basis.

To conclude, an agile organization is a project organization in which projects are not carried out in a linear way, but the adjustment to events on the markets is given. Thus, in the project happening an alternative of the organization and a differentiated form of cooperation exists. The project organization also favors the process of idea generation and processing. In the best case, an agile form of organization is optimally designed together with the employees, because through this integrative form of change, the culture is codeveloped and lived. This already ensures the acceptance and appreciation of the employees, as they help to shape the organization itself through codetermination rights. This means implementing change management from day one of the restructuring process.

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