

“Fall down.
Get up.
Keep going.”



Success factors in agile transformation

1 Evolutionary or revolutionary approach

Companies achieve their goals in agile transformation by adopting evolutionary, disruptive or green-field approaches. Various questions have to be answered: Can old structures be retained and is it expedient to do so? How far does willingness to change go, and how stable is the market situation? Which approach best fits our corporate culture?

2 Hybrid makes the difference

Hybrid approaches can combine the best of agile and traditional development. The traditional product development process continues to supply a sound framework while agile development methods enable efficient and flexible procedures for certain project types. During project initialisation the extent to which deploying agility is expedient is defined. The project environment and its framework conditions are definitive in this respect. In the case of unclear requirements and technological uncertainties agile procedures

after R. Stacey are appropriate. When dealing with purely industrialisation projects with stable requirements, using traditional procedures is well justified.

3 Agile managers set an example

Agility thrives on the self-determination of cross-functional teams. Managers must be prepared to delegate responsibility and act as “servant leaders”. Agile leadership roles such as “product owner” with clear competences must be defined. Networks replace traditional hierarchical structures, thus promoting openness, trust and communication across all levels. Top management support is crucial to the success of agile transformation. It is essential that managers set an agile example, calling upon and motivating their teams to follow suit.

The next Expert Forum will be held on March 16, 2018 in Linz, Austria

The focus:
Product and business model innovation within networks

4 Marching in step

Products today are usually developed in various teams and sites. They need to be synchronised to achieve successful agile transformation across several projects and beyond. Agile scaling methods like SAFe support the synchronisation of team rhythms and specify action steps.

Supportive IT tools like Jira or Confluence must be used generally by teams and sites. Addressing cultural differences in the case of global sites continues to be important. A high degree of communication work is indispensable.

5 You'll never walk alone

Agile transformation is not usually successful if you go it alone. External partners help to ensure

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successful implementation. Aside from the customer this also includes the supplier network and outside advisors. The roll-out of agile methods results in similar problems in most companies. So, swapping experiences with other companies in an agile community is expedient and increases the chances of agile transformation being successful.

6 Giving up is not an option

Fall down. Get up. Keep going. Agile methods let us deal with increasing product complexity, unforeseeable framework conditions and digital challenges. It is vital to involve customers and establish fast escalation levels. Iterative procedures, which are an important part of agile product development, must also be deployed by companies during transformation. Regular “stand-ups” help reflect on “impediments” and derive insights that can be put into action. The continuous gathering of experiences, occasional failures and ongoing learning leads to success at the end of the day.