

On Agile Leadership and Project Sustainability

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„Agile Insights Lab“



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Motivation

– and Questions



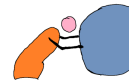
- Doing research around modern (agile) leadership since 2016
- Closing the gap between practical experience and scientific evidence



- What does sustainability mean for projects/ organizations?
 - How „sustainable“ is modern (agile) leadership?

Background

– Agile Leadership



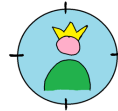
Commitment of Top Management



Vision & Goals



Right Characteristics of Leaders



Customers & Delivery



Framework & Conditions



Self-Organized Teams



Continuous Improvement

Background – Sustainability



Background

– Agile PM

	Agil	Klassisch
Management / Führung	Durch das Team. Selbstorganisation & Gleichberechtigung Aufgaben PULL-Ansatz	Durch die Projektleitung. Delegieren & Kontrollieren Aufgaben PUSH-Ansatz
Gesamtprojekt Schätzen & Priorisieren	Durch den agilen Projektleiter & den Scrum Master, zum Projektstart und nach jeder Iteration.	Durch die Projektleitung zum Projektstart.
Arbeitspakete Schätzen & Priorisieren	Durch den Product Owner & das Team, in jeder Iteration.	Durch Fachexperten zum Start einer Phase.
KnowHow Transfer	Daily Standup, Review, Planning und Retro.	Projektmeeting

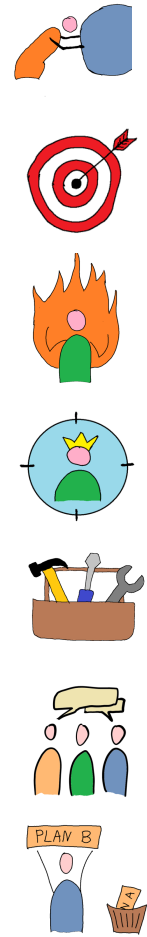
Background

– GPM/ P5 Standard

PROJECT										
Product Impacts					Process (Project Management) Impacts					
Lifespan of Product		Servicing of Product			Effectiveness of Project Processes		Efficiency of Project Processes		Fairness of Project Processes	
People (Social) Impacts				Planet (Environmental) Impacts				Prosperity (Economic) Impacts		
Labor Practices and Decent Work	Society and Customers	Human Rights	Ethical Behavior	Transport	Energy	Land, Air, and Water	Consumption	Business Case Analysis	Business Agility	Economic Stimulation
Employment and Staffing	Community Support	Non-discrimination	Procurement Practices	Local Procurement	Energy Consumption	Biological Diversity	Recycling and Reuse	Modeling and Simulation	Flexibility/Optionality	Local Economic Impact
Labor/Management Relations	Public Policy/Compliance	Age-Appropriate Labor	Anti-Corruption	Digital Communication	CO2 Emissions	Water and Air Quality	Disposal	Present Value	Business Flexibility	Indirect Benefits
Project Health and Safety	Protection for Indigenous & Tribal Peoples	Voluntary Labor	Fair Competition	Traveling and Commuting	Clean Energy Return	Water Consumption	Contamination and Pollution	Direct Financial Benefits		
Training and Education	Customer Health and Safety			Logistics	Renewable Energy	Sanitary Water Displacement	Waste Generation	Return on Investment		
Organizational Learning	Product and Service Labeling							Benefit-Cost Ratio		
Diversity and Equal Opportunity	Mkt. Comm. and Advertising							Internal Rate of Return		
Local Competence Development	Customer Privacy									

Mapping

– Matrix Structure



Sustainability Pillars (TBL) \ Leadership Categories	People/Social	Profit/Economic	Planet/Environmental
Commitment of Top Management			
Vision & Goals			
Right Characteristics of Leaders			
Customers & Delivery			
Framework & Conditions			
Self-Organized Teams			
Continuous Improvement			

Mapping

– Core Statements



Way of Working

This area describes the most distinct relation of sustainability and agile leadership. The examples for impacts and practices in these fields show that sustainability in projects can be achieved implicitly by (or as a side effect of) working in an agile way, emphasizing the similarity of both concepts.



Decision Making

This area displays a less specific link between sustainability and agile leadership and focuses more on an “optional” perspective. Sustainability would here be an explicit consequence of strategic decision making and goal setting towards SDGs.



General Mindset

This area does not entail any clear or obvious connection between sustainability and agile leadership.

Sustainability Pillars (STEL)	People/Social	Profit/Economic	Planet/Environmental
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Mapping – Examples



Way of Working



People/Social - Right Characteristics of Leaders

Sustainability impacts achieved here refer for example to “Labor & Management Relations”, “Diversity & Equal Opportunity”, “Training & Education” and “Organizational Learning”. They manifest through agile leaders who meet others at eye level, are great communicators and understand the importance of psychological safety. They bring together a diverse range of people with different skills/strengths (cross functional) that complement each other, enabling them to grow both individually and as a team. Further, they make responsible decisions in the face of uncertainty while accepting and learning from mistakes.

Profit/Economic - Right Characteristics of Leaders

Potential sustainability impacts in this field can be “Benefit-Cost Ratio” and “Business Flexibility”. Leaders with an agile mindset therefore focus on experiments or MVPs and prefer to fail fast, instead of wasting resources by aiming for a perfect outcome first try (no big design up front). They foster the ability to react and adapt to changes in order to navigate complex environments.

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Summary

- The high relevance of sustainability in project management and projects is mentioned by several studies and highlights the importance to address this topic.
- This studies came to the same conclusion as our paper, there must be a scope shift from management to manage impacts related to the three sustainability pillars.
- This shift leads to additional complexity in project management and requires a new management approach and shift in the mind further need to enable flexible work, create new opportunities and a change of the project manager role.
- Here, our study added agile leadership as improvement to classic management. As **agile leadership** is strongly **related** to **sustainability** according to our results
- The biggest impact can be achieved explicitly through “Decision Making“ by the Top-Mangement and implicitly through the „Way of Working“.

Thank You!



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