Invitational Event Roadmap for Building Your Organization's Culture

Invite leaders of an organization to attend the Agile Leaders course, where they will learn how best to create an environment of agility.

When the invitation is received, it should be compelling enough to bring forth the leaders interested in helping their organization move forward.

Invite leaders to authorize the Scrum Masters and Coaches to lead the organization in identifying its culture, and to authorize the organization to collaboratively create their organizational cultural values.

Invite the Scrum Masters to participate in the same exercises that the organization will be invited to participate in.

Invite Scrum Masters and/or Coaches to become prepared to lead their organization in the Culture Day event and its corresponding exercises. No one is required to opt in. If people do not opt in, they are not ready and should not be forced.

In an environment of agility, we need beacons of light and understanding to opt in and guide the teams in their journey. Our Scrum Masters and Coaches are these beacons for the teams.

Invite the organization to a Culture Day event. This shouldn't be a mandatory event. Invite everyone, but understand that everyone has a choice to make. The people that opt in are the right people; the people that want to build a culture together.

When the invitation is received, it should be compelling enough to bring forth the people interested in forming an organizational culture.

Don't be concerned that additional outlying cultures might persist. That is true even if everyone opts in.

Once the organization has walked through the exercises to guide them in identifying what is most valuable to them, leaders should be invited to 'Walk the Walls.'

In this process, they are invited to ask clarifying questions to the organization about the wording of a cultural value statement, with the understanding that at the end of the day they will have enabled the teams to create a culture, which is unique and important to them.

Once all statements have been clarified, and there is alignment, the teams should fist to five their agreement to the cultural values and statements. The value statements are then adopted as the organization's culture.

In such an environment, anyone can be called into accountability, even leadership, when they aren't following the cultural values.

When feedback is sought or offered around the cultural values… [Example: "With regards to being "open…."] it is not only more readily received, it is focused and not personal.

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Exercises Roadmap for Culture Day

Set the stage: Create a theme for your event. For our event, we used the Olympics and chose 12 countries.

There were country assignments. We tried to make sure there was at least one positive individual on every team instead of a team full of positive people so we could spread positivity throughout the countries.

We offered a WiiFM (What's in it For Me)

Leadership welcomed the group.

A Project-Wide Team Agreements document (plotter size) was erected on a wall for all to contribute to.

We had an agenda.

Emotional Intelligence Activity

Split the organization into groups that can rotate through the 18 sub-categories of Emotional Intelligence.

Their job is to identify one-two word entries that speak to the spirit of the sub-category. Set a 3-minute timer and instruct them that they may write as many as come to mind.

At the first rotation and throughout all successive rotations, the teams will review what the previous team identified, and they will agree/disagree/cross out/create/modify, etc. At the end, attendees are asked to complete the form, "EQ, Love it, Like it, Need it" for the 18 sub-categories

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The Window of our Organization Activity

The teams rotate through each pane of the window of our organization identifying both healthy and unhealthy responses for each topic within a pane. Each pane needs a giant easel post-it split lengthwise

Pane 1: "I" (my thoughts, feelings)

Pane 2: "We" (me on a team, my relationships, team cohesion)

Pane 3: "It" (my skills, behaviors, talents, and competencies at work)

Pane 4: "Organization" (the processes, the organizational structure, mandates, etc.)

The output is used in the next exercise.

Powerful Words

Fold over the unhealthy side of the Window of our Organization papers. Show only the healthy side.

Ask teams to convert anything that has more than one word into just a single word.

Each participant gets 6 dots for dot voting. They can use their dots however they'd like. But tell them that the organization will choose the 6 most popular words to build their cultural values from.

Teams rotate through the 6 words (1 word at a time) to create a cultural value statement). Rotations refine the sentence.

Walk the Walls

The final teams at the cultural value statements present out in order of popularity of the word. If the words are tied in terms of dots received, present out alphabetically. They are presenting to everyone in the room.

Executives walk the walls and review the statements, making minor changes if they feel so compelled, however, only doing so with group permission.

A Fist to Five on the new cultural values is sought.

Executives should close the ceremonies with an inspiring speech filled with gratitude and pride for their teams.

Print the cultural values.

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