

JIM BROSSEAU



Software Teamwork

Taking Ownership
for Success





Individuals

3. The Right Stuff

- Individuals are singled out for successes and failures
- Senior management is not engaged in the issues of the team
- Emotions are suppressed in the workplace

- Team members show strong enthusiasm
- People step up as required to get the job done

- Does our reward system value heroic behavior?
- Does everyone on the team participate enthusiastically?
- Are we open to external feedback?

- Cultivate enthusiasm in your team
- Respect and appreciate the emotions of the team
- Apply strong leadership characteristics regardless of your role

4. A Quality Focus

- Quality is assigned to a specific group
- Best practices are perceived as unnecessary
- Too much time is spent on rework

- There is visible pride in a job well done
- Tasks are done appropriately, even when under pressure
- Products have a quantified definition of quality

- How do we define quality?
- Do we all see quality in the same terms?

- Take responsibility for the quality of your work
- Manage values and attitudes of quality when outsourcing
- Focus on the quality of people, process, and product
- Use retrospectives to learn from experience

5. Facing Challenges

- A code and fix mentality exists
- There are different views of what “done” means
- Individuals are blamed for mistakes
- Evidence of issues is ignored
- Costs are slashed to weather economic storms

- Team members acknowledge ownership of issues
- Tasks are done without procrastination
- “Impossible” is a 4-letter word

- What can we improve from this bad experience?
- Do rationales for issues hold water?
- Are we oversimplifying issues?

- Translate pain into opportunities for change
- Express issues in the context of the receiver
- Capture all outstanding work in one system
- Focus on important rather than urgent tasks
- Maintain a consistent vision

6. Proactive Effectiveness

- Fudge-factors are used in negotiations
- Important items cannot be found
- People are juggling too many tasks

- Performance is measured
- Relationships are based on mutual respect
- Tough decisions are not deferred
- Reasonable follow-through is second nature

- Do we understand our risks?
- Am I in control of my time?
- Do I understand what “done” means for my tasks?

- Collect a few simple measures
- Design an effective workspace
- Seek different perspectives for difficult problems
- Break down challenges into simpler steps

7. Sustainability

- Pressure tends to cause problems
- Brute force is used to solve problems
- Excessive work hours are logged
- External circumstances are blamed for failure

- The work environment supports your needs
- External factors are known and managed
- There is reasonable focus on quality

- Am I equipped to perform my tasks?
- Am I able to take a break without falling behind?

- Apply only enough pressure to motivate
- Understand what motivates each person
- Take reasonable breaks to recharge
- Carefully plan for holidays
- Focus on quality as the primary driver



Trouble Signs



Success Indicators



Questions to Ask



Tools for Support

Software Teamwork: Taking Ownership for Success

Table of Contents

Contents

Preface

Acknowledgments

About the Author

PART ONE: The Problem Space

ONE: Why Are We So Challenged?

Difficultware

Shortsighted Solutions

The Frailty of the Human Condition

The Truth About Best Practices

Summary

TWO: Do the Right Thing

Table of Contents

Doing Things Right vs. Doing the Right Thing

The Way Things Are Done

We Need to Take Ownership for Success

A Solution Framework

Summary

PART TWO: Individuals

THREE: The Right Stuff

Cowboys and Unsung Heroes

Being Reasonably Self-Critical

Emotions

Stepping Up

Were All Leaders

Summary

FOUR: A Quality Focus

Quality Is Your Job

Outsourcing Quality

People, Process, Productin That Order

Summary

Table of Contents

FIVE: Facing Challenges

Feeling the Pain

Dealing with the Pain

Denial

Neglect

In Support of Perseverance

Mental Models

Summary

SIX: Proactive Effectiveness

Know Thyself

Gamblers and Risk Takers

Designing Our Environment

Not Nearly Juggling

Decisions

Follow-Through

Summary

SEVEN: Sustainability

Whats Important?

Table of Contents

Recharging the Batteries
Stepping Back to Smell the Roses
Navel Gazing as Business Strategy
Quality of Life
Summary

PART THREE: Groups

EIGHT: Communication

Making Your Point
Comfortable Communication
Full Disclosure
Trust
Client Satisfaction
Clarity and Common Understanding
The Dark Side of Communication
Summary

NINE: Motives and Expectations

Motives Drive Our Behaviors
Choice as a Motivator

Table of Contents

Exposing Our Motives

Rethinking the Achilles Heel

Expectations

Managing Our Expectations

No News Is Actually Bad News

Summary

TEN: Playing Well Together

Technical Ransom

Games People Play

Job Security

Rumor and Innuendo

Minimizing Disruption

Quality Circle Genealogy

Make Yourself at Home

Summary

PART FOUR: Teams

ELEVEN: Alignment

Unifying a Great Team

Table of Contents

Growing the Team

Walking the Team Walk

Making the Rules

The Conscious Team Contract

It Takes All Kinds

Scaling Up and Scaling Down

Summary

TWELVE: Organization

Everything in Its Place

Defined Approach or Work of Fantasy?

Process Architecture

Reading the Fine Print for Packaged Methodologies

Is This a Process Project?

Optimizing for Speed

Making Training Work

When Things Go Wrong

But We Arent That Big!

Structured Debate

Table of Contents

Summary

THIRTEEN: Coordination

Clearing Roadblocks, or Blocking Clear Roads?

Managing with an Open Book

Merely an Employee?

Checking Out, Checking In

Attitudes Around Documentation

We Cant Easily Outsource Everything

Balance with a Human Touch

Retaining the Context

Summary

FOURTEEN: Guidance

Carrots and Sticks

Directed Versatility

Laziness or Focused Creativity?

Shortcuts

Process Ergonomics

Size Doesnt Matter

Table of Contents

Persistent Consistency

Summary

PART FIVE: Stakeholders

FIFTEEN: Customers

Whos Our Customer?

The End Users Advocate

Getting It Straight from the Horses Mouth

Driving the Expectations Bus

Summary

SIXTEEN: Setting Goals

Goals and Mandates

Defining Success

Aligning Priorities to Strengths

Are You Sure You Want Quality?

The Slippery Slope

The Big Picture

Summary

SEVENTEEN: Specification

Table of Contents

Accidental Specification

The Cone of Specification

Keeping One Step Ahead

How Much Is Enough?

Summary

EIGHTEEN: Prioritization

Getting Started with the Right Foot Forward

Strategize Before Prioritizing

Juggling Priorities

Leveling and Prioritizing Scope

The Cost of Delaying Cleanup

Summary

NINETEEN: Change

Volatility Demands Versatility

Off the Happy Path

What Were We Thinking? CM as a Memory Jogger

Just One More

Summary

Table of Contents

TWENTY: Progress

Three Key Roles

A Disciplined Approach

Tackling Hard Problems

Risky Business

Critical with a Capital C

What Does Document Signoff Mean?

Knowing When to Quit

Done

Summary

PART SIX: Putting It All Together

TWENTY-ONE: Pick Your Battles

Appropriate Procedures

Rules

Decoupling Projects

Its Never Too Late

Summary

TWENTY-TWO: Flexibility and Rigor

Table of Contents

Guidance over Prescription

Checklists and Signatures

Real Design Issues: Diversification and Convergence

Documentation and Common Knowledge

Avoiding Evolutionary Complexity

Post It!

Summary

TWENTY-THREE: Progress Revisited

Measuring as a Necessary Evil

Tactical and Strategic Metrics

Inconspicuous Consumption

Not Too Big, Not Too Small

Summary

TWENTY-FOUR: Change Revisited

Realistic Planning: Planning for Change

Out with the Old

Categorizing the Future

Opportunity Knocks

Table of Contents

Take Small, Measured Steps

Raising Awareness

Summary

TWENTY-FIVE: Constant Vigilance

Blinkers

Where Does It Hurt?

Backsliding

Summary

PART SEVEN: Appendix

APPENDIX: Core Tools

Consciously Designed Workspaces

Mind Maps

Vision Statements

Conflict Management

Guidance for Special Situations

Index