

Are You Embracing Agile Yet?

By Mike Richardson, Team Agility Practice Leader



Are you embracing Agile yet? This May 2016 HBR (Harvard Business Review) article **Embracing Agile** is joining the our chorus urging you to do so. Indeed, look at the [accumulating list of articles about Agile in HBR](#). Here are some of the headlines from this latest article:

“Agile innovation methods have revolutionized information technology. Over the past 25 to 30 years they have greatly increased success rates in software development, improved quality and speed to market, and boosted the motivation and productivity of IT teams.”



>>> Yes, I have been spreading the word for 15 years, not least of all for 11 years as a Resource Speaker globally in the Vistage Community of 20,000 members in 17 countries. **The Power of Peer Groups.**

“Now agile methodologies—which involve new values, principles, practices, and benefits and are a radical alternative to command-and-control-style management—are spreading across a broad range of industries and functions and even into the C-suite. National Public Radio employs agile methods to create new programming. John Deere uses them to develop new machines, and Saab to produce new fighter jets. Intronis, a leader in cloud backup services, uses them in marketing. C.H. Robinson, a global third-party logistics provider, applies them in human resources. Mission Bell Winery uses them for everything from wine production to warehousing to running its senior leadership group. And GE relies on them to speed a much-publicized transition from 20th-century conglomerate to 21st-century “digital industrial company.”

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<http://www.agilitycode.com/agile-best-practices/embracing-agile/>

>>> Yes, I have started collecting more and more examples here: [Planes, Trains & Automobiles](#)

“By taking people out of their functional silos and putting them in self-managed and customer-focused multidisciplinary teams, the agile approach is not only accelerating profitable growth but also helping to create a new generation of skilled general managers.”

>>> Yes, Agile is a new imperative for HR and Talent Management: [“Agile HR” Oxymoron? Not Anymore!](#)

“The spread of agile raises intriguing possibilities. But a serious impediment exists. Executives unwittingly continue to manage in ways that run counter to agile principles and practices. These executives launch countless initiatives with urgent deadlines rather than assign the highest priority to two or three. They spread themselves and their best people across too many projects. They schedule frequent meetings with members of agile teams, forcing them to skip working sessions or send substitutes. Many of them become overly involved in the work of individual teams. They talk more than listen. They promote marginal ideas that a team has previously considered and back-burnered. They routinely overturn team decisions and add review layers and controls to ensure that mistakes aren’t repeated. With the best of intentions, they erode the benefits that agile innovation can deliver.”

>>> Yes, pivoting to “AGILE is no easy and many executives easily and unconsciously un-pivot back to “Waterfall”: [Waterfall vs Agile/Sprints/Scrum – Pivoting to the future of Agile-Teamwork](#)

“These days most companies operate in highly dynamic environments.”

>>> Yes, we are helping leaders and teams understand the VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity) environment in which we work these days: [The VUCA Report](#)

“From our work advising and studying such companies, we have discerned six crucial practices that leaders should adopt if they want to capitalize on agile’s potential:

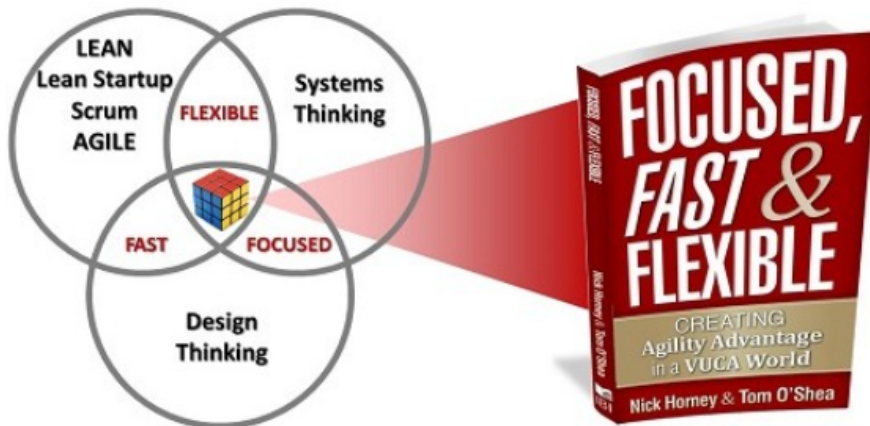
1. Learn How Agile Really Works
2. Understand Where Agile Does or Does Not Work
3. Start Small and Let the Word Spread
4. Allow “Master” Teams to Customize Their Practices
5. Practice Agile at the Top
6. Destroy the Barriers to Agile Behaviors”

>>> Yes, that's what **The Focused, Fast & Flexible Manifesto** is all about.

THE FOCUSED, FAST & FLEXIBLE MANIFESTO

Posted by: Mike Richardson January 17, 2016 in Uncategorized Leave a comment

Beliefs. Behaviors. Results



Leadership Agility. Team Agility. Organizational Agility

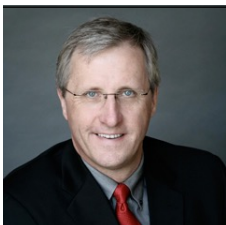


In an increasingly **VUCA World** (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity), an **Agility Advantage** lives at the intersection of 3 domains:

- **LEAN/Lean Startup/Scrum/AGILE** (Agile Software Development & Agile Project Management) – understanding the principles of a more iterative, experimental, learning approach to doing complex things (applied at the level of the enterprise, not just at the level of project management/software development) essential for enterprise-agility.
- **Design Thinking** – understanding the principles of design and integrative-thinking, essential to engage the whole-brain, whole-person, whole-team and whole-organization in the agility challenge
- **Systems Thinking** – understanding the whole-system challenge of all the moving parts essential for enterprise-agility.

Insights at the intersection of these domains allow us to become simultaneously **Focused, Fast & Flexible**

- **Focused:** focused on an operating system designed for success in a VUCA world
- **Fast:** with fast, iterative, agile processes and approaches
- **Flexible:** with in built flexibility of mindsets, skillsets and toolsets



Mike Richardson
Team Agility Practice Leader
mike@agilityconsulting.com

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