QA to QE: Lessons Learned Leading a Large Organization Agile Transformation

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Background

Fortune 500 IT Org
500+ Developers
150+ Quality Analysts
<15 SDETs
Goal: Transform IT QA to QE
QA vs QE

Definition for the sake of this presentation

- Agile Process
  - Scrum 2-week sprints
  - TDD/BDD
- Move from heavily manual to mostly automated testing
- Inject Quality in every aspect of Software Development
Why... Depends on your Perspective
Who are the Stakeholders

- Customers
- Executives
- Business
- Middle & Line Managers
- Boots on the Ground
What Were/Are the Goals

- **Predictability** - Maintain **less than 20% variance** between Committed vs. Completed Story Points
- **Interrupt Stories** - Maintain **less than 10% of Completed Story Points** are Interruptions Due to Reprioritization of Work
- **Cycle Time** - **Hold steady / reduce** Average Time to Complete Story Work
- **Quality** - Maintain **less than 10%** of Production Changes Resulted in Incidents
- **Unplanned Work** - **Hold Steady / Reduce** Number of Unplanned Work Items (incidents, requests or problems)
How to Get Started?

Do you...

- Do it yourself organically
- Hire a big multi-national consulting firm
- Hire a few seedling FTEs and consultant coaches
What Did We Learn?

What went wrong, right, and where we are on the journey
What Went Wrong

1. Underestimated institutional inertia
2. Underestimated skills variance
3. Failed to provide environment for failure
4. Failed to provide stronger constraints
5. Reluctance to Pivot when required
6. Failed to adequately weigh external dependencies
7. Failed to fully engage the Business
What Went Right

- Executives were supportive of the Initiative
- Willingness to invest in employees
  - Coaches were engaged to assist
  - Learning Plans were robust and redesigned as we learned
  - Flexible Dojo delivery to meet the teams where they were at
12 Months In: 37 Pods Transitioned

• 89.2% are meeting Quality Goals
• 54.1% are achieving Unplanned Work Goal
• 56.8% are achieving Cycle Time targets
• 80% are achieving Interrupt Stories to target level
• 48.6% are achieving Predictability targets
What Would We Do Different

- Focus on Organizational Change
  - Create and align Agile Pods first
  - Make Pods the Focus of Training/Mentoring
- Get the Business Stakeholders more involved
  - Sold them on WIIFM
- Focus on the What and Why first and delay the How
  - Delay tooling decisions
Trust

- Yourself
- Your Co-workers
- Your Leadership
Perspectives Matter
Thank You