

Agile Managers Cheat Sheet

Thoughts and tips to help managers fit into an Agile world.

By William Rowden

► READ

Books on Systems Thinking

- » An Introduction to General Systems Thinking
- » Quality Software Management, Vol. 1: Systems Thinking
- » Quality Software Management, Vol. 3: Congruent Action

Books on Leadership

- » Principle Centered Leadership
- » First Things First
- » The 3rd Alternative: Solving Life's Most Difficult Problems
- » The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change

Books that Increase Your Capability Set

- » StrengthsFinder 2.0 by Tom Rath
- » The 4-Hour Workweek by Timothy Ferriss
- » The Leader's Guide to Radical Management by Stephen Denning
- » Discussing the Undiscussable: A Guide to Overcoming Defensive Routines in the Workplace by William R. Noonan
- » Outliers: The Story of Success by Malcolm Gladwell
- » The Black Swan by Nassim Taleb
- » Thinking, Fast and Slow by Daniel Kahneman

► THINK

In a way that...

- » Capitalizes on individual capacities and capabilities
- » Encourages collaboration
- » Assumes good intent of others
- » Invites a different perspective from your own

About...

- » Human systems and how you can facilitate them
- » How you react to stimuli, because your reactions are a choice
- » How your actions affect on some level how others act
- » Where you fit in the greater paradigm and how you can contribute to the greater good

► COMMUNICATE

Books on Systems Thinking

- » To others your ideas and values but not your judgments
- » To increase cross-pollination of ideas
- » To ensure transparency

Without...

- » Patronizing others
- » Assuming you are the smartest person in the room/world
- » Assuming your interlocutors are idiots

► ALWAYS BE

- » Learning
- » Listening
- » Responding to change
- » Championing innovation
- » Continuously improving
- » Empowering others to do and be their best selves
- » Eager to reach a positive outcome

- » Looking for the silver lining
- » Adding new technique, models, scripts, and tools to your tool kit
- » Delegating work that others can do better (within reason, of course)
- » Building trust with others and with yourself
- » Watching the baton and not the runners

► AVOID

Antipatterns that deteriorate collaboration and empowerment, such as:

- » Hearsay
- » Triangulation (interacting with individuals only through an intermediary)

- » Ad hominem (attacking someone's character)
- » Black-and-white thinking
- » Character assassination (attacking someone's reputation, confusingly)

► EMPLOY

Models:

- » Advocacy v. Inquiry
- » Aggressive v. Assertive v. Passive/Aggressive v. Passive
- » Direct v. Indirect
- » Emotional Bank Account
- » Locus of Control
- » Circles of Concern, Influence, Control
- » Ladder of Inference

Scripts & Tools:

- » Assume Good Intent
- » Perfection Game
- » Evaporating Cloud
- » High Advocacy/High Inquiry
- » Integrative Decision-Making
- » Offer/Request Feedback
- » Open v. Closed Questions
- » Six Thinking Hats
- » Take as information instead of "taking to heart"