

Participation Proposal

The Relationship Between Organisational Culture and Becoming Agile

David Bales UTS HDR Student & Agile Coach

The Research

This research investigates the relationship between organisational culture and Agile to understand how this relationship influences our interpretation and manifestations of Agile.

This is an ethnographic study. A form of qualitative research that collects information about how teams do their work and their perspectives on organisational culture and Agile. Findings from the study will be written as an ethnographic account of the people and their culture bringing meaning to what we witness and experience.

Benefits of Participation

Organisations that participate in the research study will enjoy the following benefits:

- **Free Agile Training & Coaching**
 - Reciprocal arrangement equal to the number of hours of participation in the study
- **Access to the summary findings for the organisation**
 - Insights into the culture and its relationship with Agile in the organisation
- **Acknowledgement and recognition letters**
 - For all participants
 - Can be used for internal communications

Participation Commitments

To participate in the research study and receive the benefits described above, participating organisations agree to provide the following access for the researcher to conduct the study:

Participant Observation

Participant observation provides a “window” of information and data about how individuals, groups and communities go about their work. In this context, how they interact with their organisational culture and how this influences becoming Agile. The observations are intended to be transparent and unobtrusive to build a trusting relationship with the participants and collect authentic everyday interactions as good data.

- Access to teams for at least 5 working days
- Online for remote working teams in Agile meetings via Microsoft Teams
- On site for in-person teams as they normally work in their usual place of work
- Observations are recorded as written notes
- 1-2 photos of the working environment to provide context for the observations (de-identified)

Participant Interviews

Interviews of participants will provide a contextual depth to the observations and insights into their perspectives, thoughts and beliefs about organisational culture and becoming Agile.

Interviews are planned to be unstructured to enable candid responses to questions and resonating lines of enquiry within the bounds of the research question. These will be done individually or within small groups of participants who share an everyday working context.

- 1 hour with each participant to conduct the interviews
- 0.5 hours per participant for any follow up and clarification of interview items
- Recording of the interview and transcript in Microsoft Teams for remote working teams, and via video recording for in-person teams
- Unstructured interview questions relating to organisational culture and Agile

Participant Workshop

Workshops and group activities will provide insights into the group and team perspectives, values and beliefs about their team cultures, the organisational culture and becoming Agile. These can be compared and contrasted with individual perceptions collected in the study.

- 1.5 hours per team
- Online for remote working teams using Microsoft Teams and Miro boards to conduct the workshop
- Activity related to the participants’ perspectives of organisational culture and Agile

Governance

The study is conducted subject to:

- The appointment of a sponsor and liaison from the participating organisation to assist in the coordination of the study
- Regular 30 minute weekly meetings with the sponsor to support participants and the study
- UTS Human Research Ethics Committee’s continued oversight and approval¹
- Funded by the Australian Government Research Training Program

Data and Privacy Policy

The study implements the following data policy:

- Non disclosure agreements can be signed by the research team as needed
- All information collected is confidential and de-identified at source
- Data is stored in UTS storage systems for a maximum of 5 years and then destroyed
- The data will not be shared beyond the research team without the prior written consent from the participants
- Participants can withdraw at any time without reason, and their data removed from the study

¹ This study has been approved by the University of Technology, Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about any aspect of your participation in this research which you cannot resolve with the researcher, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officer (ph: +61 2 9514 2478 Research.Ethics@uts.edu.au), and quote the application number ETH21-6016. Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.



Free Agile Workshops

Agile workshops that are available to participating organisations are described below and have the following characteristics:

- With one of Australia's leading Agile coaches with over 15 years' experience working with over 50 teams in various organisations and settings
- No previous experience necessary
- For up to 20 attendees
- Can support either in-person or remote working, but cannot support a mixture of both as these require different formats
- For in-person workshops:
 - Materials will be provided
 - A large room is required to be supplied by the participating organisation with enough space for cafe / pod style seating for the attendees
- For remote working workshops:
 - Miro access with workshop materials will be provided
 - Microsoft Teams breakout rooms will be provided

Agile 101 Workshop

- An immersive Agile beginner workshop
- Experience your first Agile project
- Focused on 4 iterations to complete a fixed cost project using Scrum
- With Lego if in-person, in Miro if remote
- 3.5 hours in duration

Agile 102 Workshop

- An immersive Agile beginner workshop
- Focused on producing a customer centric release plan with a Kanban simulation
- Using physical stationery if in-person, Miro if remote
- 3.5 hours in duration

Specific Agile Practice Based Workshops

- 1-1.5 hours in duration
- Practice based workshops can address any of the following:
 - Scrum Agile framework
 - Kanban Agile framework
 - Backlog creation, story writing and release planning
 - Agile estimation and metrics
 - Prioritisation techniques
 - Human Centred Design techniques
 - eXtreme Programming techniques such as Test Driven Development (TDD), Pair Programming, Continuous Integration, Continuous Delivery techniques
 - Mob Programming
 - Google Design Sprints
 - Prototyping techniques

- Scaling Agile teams
- Systems thinking and Soft System Modelling
- Or a custom Agile topic of your choosing

Advanced Agile Workshop

- Developing an Agile culture instead of a process
- Working as 4 teams on an integrated multi media project
- Up to 16 attendees
- 8 hours in duration
- In-person only

Certification Preparation Workshops

- Covering the Scrum.org learning objectives for
 - Professional Scrum Master 1 (PSM 1)
 - Professional Scrum Product Owner 1 (PSPO 1)
- 16 hours in duration

Free Agile Coaching

Agile coaching that is available to participating organisations has the following characteristics:

- All coaching conversations are confidential
- Supports beginners with new knowledge
- Challenges experienced practitioners to think differently
- Can be structured with a syllabus
- Can be ad-hoc and in the moment to address a specific issue
- Can be in a private room or alongside teams as they work
- For individuals to help with new skills or resolve issues
- For groups and teams to support new working styles or resolve conflict
- For leaders wanting to understand how to support Agile teams effectively

Getting Involved

If you would like to participate in the study and contribute to our understanding of this phenomenon, please get in contact at david.l.bales@student.uts.edu.au or visit dlbales.com for more information.

