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Get an Agile mindset with NLP
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO LEARN?

- Understand what NLP is and how it can support you in an Agile transition
Resistance is fed by the uncomfortable feeling we get when we try to do things differently.
WHAT HAPPENS IN CASE OF STRESS?
Behavior

Physical
Dangerous
Situation

Fear

Alarm system:
Fight or flight
without
consciousness

Physiology
Fast heartbeat
Fast breathing
Paling/flushing
Sweating
Energy to muscles

Short cut
And what happens when you discover that it is only a picture on the wall....
The long way (NLP communication model)

External event → Thoughts → Internal Representation

FILTERS
- Categorize
- Generalize
- Distort
- Delete

State (Mood)
- Time/space
- Experiences
- Memories
- Values & Beliefs
- Decisions
- Attitudes

Physiology
- Fast heartbeat
- Fast breathing
- Paling/flushing
- Sweating
- Energy to muscles

Behavior

The body speaks before it talks
Exercise 1 – The Power of our Mind

A belief could be empowering or limiting
Only by asking questions and active listening, you will hear other peoples values, beliefs and identity. Only than you will get insight in their reality.
3 kind of reactions during transition to Agile:

- **Early Adaptors** – “Yeah I like new things, I want to be the first one!”
- **Followers** – “When I see others doing it, I will follow” (seeing is believing)
- **Resistance** – “Why should we do things differently?”

Our brain is very good in coming up with reasons why we don’t have to step out of our comfort zone.
EXERCISE 2 – RESISTANCE AGAINST AGILE

- Discuss in your group: What kind of resistance against Agile do you hear?
- Give examples of sentences and write them down (5 min)
- Share the best ones with us
AGILE MINDSET = OPEN MINDSET

If you are not open,
Then you are stuck in your own
way of thinking

How can you learn & adapt?

How can you embrace change?

How can you deal with continuous improvement?
When do people open their mind?

1. When it is their own choice
   - They are open-minded, want to try new things
   - They see the benefits and understand why
   - A (stressful) situation opened their eyes

2. When they have to
   - They are running out of options
   - It is too painful to stay in the same position
   - They are forced to by others

As an Agile coach you can’t force people to open up their mind but you can help them to see more options, more opportunities
HOW CAN NLP HELP?

• **Neuro**: How our brain works, How we react on situations, How we gather and process information through our 5 senses

• **Linguistic**: Language through which our internal representations are coded, ordered and give meaning

• **Programming**: Patterns, programmes and strategies that we run to achieve our specific and desired outcomes

NLP can help you to create new patterns of thinking, which creates new behaviors

NLP Creators: Richard Bandler & John Grinder, USA, 1970
What is NLP?

• A primary mission of NLP is to create tools which help people to widen, enrich and add to their internal maps of reality.

• The richer your map of the world the more possibilities you will have of dealing with whatever challenges arise in reality.

If you do the same things you always did, you will get the same results you always had.
NLP PRINCIPLES

• Everyone has a unique model of the world
• Respect other peoples model of the world
• The map is not the territory
• People are not their behaviour
• All behaviour has a positive intention for that person
• Behaviour can be changed to achieve a specific goal in life
• To do so you have to become aware of the underlying patterns

A man sooner or later discovers that he is the master-gardener of his soul, the director of his life. (James Allen)
NLP techniques you can use as an Agile coach

- Drop your own internal filters and use your senses.
- Become a good communicator, listener, and observer.
- Make good contact with people: Make Rapport.
- Use tools which help people to see more options:
  Reframing, Sleight of Mouth patterns.

And NLP is much more….

Difficult customers, employees, colleagues etc. don’t exist only bad communicators.
Think in problems

- What didn’t work well?
- This will not work because, ....
- We can’t do it, it’s a problem for our management
- Yes it is possible, but .......
- It is hard to ......
- I have to ....

Think in opportunities

- What can we improve?
- How can we make this work?
- What do we need for a start?
- How should we solve this?
- Yes it is possible, and ...
- It is not that easy yet ...
- I want ....

Suppose you are a High Performance team, how should you solve this problem?
If you are the manager, what should you do?
LIMITING BELIEFS ARE IMPEDIMENTS

YES, BUT

….practical it doesn’t work… we tried this before… what’s the price…. I have only 0,65 fte…. It is not realistic… there is no support…. It is Monday… it goes well right now… why are we doing this… that is not part of my role description… that doesn’t fit in our culture… that is too much out of the box… that is too much overhead… maybe later… not now… it doesn’t work with us… we are busy… the server is down… that’s who I am… are we in the right direction… I didn’t ask for this… that is not possible here…. What when everybody tweet about it…. Have you seen my colleagues… we are already doing it… we don’t make it…

Yes, but what when Agile rocks?
NLP technique - Sleight of Mouth

- Use linguistics (words) for the reframing of beliefs to give:
  - another meaning,
  - another perspective
  - another way of looking at the same situation.

- The purpose is to help people to become aware of the filters and mental maps that can block them from seeing more options and other perspectives.

Agility with your mouth: Say the right words at the right time! Don’t be a smart ass! Be respectful!
Sleight of Mouth examples

- Beliefs are expressed in verbal patterns
  - “Complex Equivalences”: A = B, or A means B
  - “Cause-effects”: A makes B, or A leads to B

- Transform this expression through creative responses

Examples:

- Belief: “a small car means it doesn’t go well with your company”
  - Response: “Have you never seen a successful company with small cars?”

- Belief: “Women can’t park cars”
  - Response: “if that is true than it would be messy with all those cars on the middle of the road”

Don’t be a SmartAss! Be respectful!
14 DIFFERENT S.O.M. PATTERNS

1. Intention
   What is the positive purpose or intention of this belief?

2. Redefine
   What is another word for one of the words used but has a more positive implication?

3. Consequence
   What will happen if you continue thinking like this?

4. Chunk Down
   What exactly?

5. Chunk Up
   What is the Meaning?

6. Methaphor
   Find the opposite or analogy

7. Changing frame size
   Make it smaller or bigger

8. Another outcome
   Where is it all about?

9. Model of the world
   Change reference, is it true in models of others?

10. Reality strategy
    How does this person know it is true?

11. Counter Example
    Switch the belief, can you remember A was not B or A = C?

12. Hierarchy of criteria
    What are the higher values?

13. Apply to self
    Use the word In another context

14. Meta frame
    How is it possible that someone can believe this?
14 Different S.O.M. Patterns

You probably say this because you don’t like to leave your desk and stop doing what you like most without thinking about planning & improving as a team.

Be Agile in planning your meetings

If we all think like that we can better work at home and get our work by mail

Overhead is just a word to avoid all kind of meetings

Agile is about the art of maximizing the amount of work not done

Agile meetings means that we are planning our work, that means we are on the right track with our team

Is it possible to have successful projects without meetings?

Okay, so the less meetings the better the communication?

How less meetings should we do before you think it is no overhead?

Overhead means that it doesn’t add value. How to add value is what we discuss in Agile meetings.

How do you know that you walk in the right direction if you never stop to look on your compass?

When this is true, than we will never do inspect & adapt. This means that we don’t learn and improve.

True or not is not important, it is all about communication and continuous improvement. The critical success factors for projects.

There are people who think differently, they are happy with Agile because it is a minimum process

I know you love going on with your work, but isn’t it handy that you know where to start?

How do you know how much time is spend in Agile meetings?
EXERCISE 3 - SLEIGHT OF MOUTH PATTERNS

- Pick one (or two) of the stated beliefs against Agile
- Give some responses conform the S.O.M patterns
- Do this with your group in 10 minutes
- Share the best ones with the entire group
Stay open for other options - Think out of the box
Respect other peoples model of the world
Don’t be afraid to try something new

NLP & Agile: Just do it!

References:
Els.verkaik@capgemini.com
Book: Robert Diltz – Sleight of Mouth
NLP University: http://www.nlpu.com