

MEET OUR CHANGE EXPERTS... AGILE IN ACTION WITH STEVE CALDER



This month, we interviewed Project One Consulting Director, Steve Calder, where he shared his experience in delivering Digital Transformations and top tips in Agile ways of working.

STEVE, WHEN DID YOU JOIN PROJECT ONE?

I joined Project One, in 2018, following 25 years as a Programme Director, working in 'big five' consulting as a Partner, delivering as a consultant with systems integrators and shaping the future as a Transformation Director. My focus is on leading the delivery of complex, IT enabled business change that has digital information at its heart.

WHAT ATTRACTED YOU TO PROJECT ONE?

The Project One values focus on making a real difference, doing the right thing and using the power of the team. This is exactly how I like to work and how I deliver the most value. Project One has created an environment where both the customer and our team can achieve the greatest mutual success, as the whole Project One team are highly experienced individuals who work collaboratively to deliver brilliant outcomes for our customers.

HOW DO YOU EMBED AN AGILE MINDSET WITH CUSTOMERS?

The Agile mindset is all about the customer and iterative development. It is really important to get the delivery team working closely with the business. Set out clear goals and agreed joint priorities that drive productivity and ultimately deliver a better product. Team morale and trust improves as efficiency goes up and the focus is on delivering only what is really needed and most important to deliver at that moment in time.

It is a learning curve and given the fast-pace and fluid nature, being good at Agile, is definitely challenging at times as people get used to thinking with an Agile mindset. What is great is how teams support each other on the journey and build a culture of trust and collaboration which helps embed a great mindset.

WHAT OUR CUSTOMERS SAY

"Project One has taught us the right way to do this, giving us future tools, facilitating and diffusing tension." CIO

MEET OUR CHANGE EXPERTS... AGILE IN ACTION WITH STEVE CALDER

WHAT WERE THE BENEFITS OF AGILE DELIVERY FOR YOUR CUSTOMERS' ORGANISATIONS?

Speed to market was a key benefit as we were able to turn around digital products and adapt to end-user feedback quickly, improving and enhancing through multiple rapid turnaround iterations. By breaking down a product or a service to the Minimum Viable Product (or MVP), we could realise multiple releases and learn fast what worked and what didn't. This also made us more connected to our customer and responsive to what they actually needed, rather than what we assumed which was often quite different. That said, you still need governance and to commit to deliver to timelines, as once the business sees you hitting the deadlines their confidence and support increases.

WHAT LASTING CAPABILITY DID YOU LEAVE?

A great team that places the customer at the core of delivery and has confidence to drive rapid and focused product development, delivering into the marketplace at pace. Trust across the team and the business has been enduring, really improving collaboration and development of great digital products.

WHAT ARE YOUR TOP TIPS FOR SETTING UP SUCCESSFUL AGILE DELIVERY?

- Making sure you remember that delivering the here and now always trumps the future
- That experimentation is a key part of an Agile approach, embrace uncertainty for continuous improvement
- Build confidence in your teams' ability to make rapid changes to scope and product, as it is one of the key benefits of Agile
- Create a culture of collaboration and trust to significantly improve delivery efficiency and product quality.

DO YOU RECOMMEND ANY SPECIFIC AGILE METHODOLOGIES?

When you put your customer at the heart of everything you do, and keep perspective on the value your digital service or product will add to them, you are on a sure footing. There are many Agile delivery methodologies, however the real key to success is building a team with the right 'can do' mindset. Feedback and challenge are good things and when teams listen and adapt, they will deliver great products and services, whilst have fun doing it.

WHAT OUR CUSTOMERS SAY

"If you hire a Programme Manager, you get a Programme Manager. If you work with Project One, you get senior professionals who are unique as they can deliver and advise based on their experience. As the scope changed their consultant was instrumental in leading the programme, he never gave up." CIO