PASSING THE ‘STINK’ TEST
Making digital transformation more palatable to engineers

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DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION + LEADERSHIP
WHAT IS DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION?

Digital transformation is the integration of digital technology into all areas of a business, *fundamentally changing how you operate and deliver value to customers*. It’s also a cultural change that requires organizations to continually challenge the status quo, experiment, and get comfortable with failure.
FROM THE INCUMBENT’S POSITION

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU RECOGNIZE DISRUPTION TOO LATE?

- Faint signals with lots of noise
- Emergence of a validated model
- Critical mass of adoption achieved
- At scale and mature

Decisive impact

New model

Negligible impact


DIGITAL LEADERS ARE HIGH PERFORMERS

I.T. THROUGHPUT MEANS MOVING QUICKLY TO ANSWER DEMAND

High-performing organizations deploy code

46x

more frequently than low-performing ones

## Take a DevOps Approach

**Big benefits, small steps**

### Traditional vs. DevOps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Traditional</th>
<th>DevOps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Culture of Innovation</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>Yes, Infectiously</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agility</td>
<td>Probably not</td>
<td>Definitely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speed to Value</td>
<td>Slow</td>
<td>Fast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dev Life Cycle</td>
<td>Months to years</td>
<td>1-3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People Needed</td>
<td>Bureaucracy</td>
<td>Small Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure Cost</td>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk</td>
<td>Danger</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LET’S DEVOPS ALL THE THINGS!!1!
THE ‘STINK’ TEST
I <3 ENGINEERS
SO WHAT DO WE DO, ALLISON??
HOW TO PASS THE ‘STINK’ TEST

1. **Have empathy** because change fatigue is real
2. **Be pragmatic** because engineers take things literally
3. **Build trust** because we’re all on the same team
1. CHANGE FATIGUE IS REAL: HAVE EMPATHY
AGILE MANIFESTO

Individuals and interactions over Processes and tools

Working software over Comprehensive documentation

Customer collaboration over Contract negotiation

Responding to change over Following a plan

https://agilemanifesto.org/
CHANGE FATIGUE
CHANGE FATIGUE
THE PUFFERFISH EFFECT
HAVE

EMPATHY
2. ENGINEERS TAKE THINGS LITERALLY: BE PRAGMATIC
HOW TO TALK TO ENGINEERS
AKA HOW TO AVOID PUFFING THE PUFFERFISH

● Be transparent about what you know – and what you don’t
● Avoid absolutes
● Only claim “open” if you’re actually being open
● Make sure people know they have been heard
● Group related changes together whenever possible
● Assume people will take you literally
AUTHENTIC AGILE + DEVOPS TRANSFORMATION

- Talk with and observe real users who interact with your product (Frequently!)
- Build automation and quality into the process — not siloed
- Ensure people are empowered to make change
- Introduce new tools only when required — not desired
- Change what’s not working
3. PRIORITIZE THE SAME THINGS: BUILD TRUST
SHARED VISION + GOALS
TO THE LEFT, TO THE LEFT?

- Individuals and interactions over Processes and tools
- Working software over Comprehensive documentation
- Customer collaboration over Contract negotiation
- Responding to change over Following a plan

https://agilemanifesto.org/
LET’S GO!
HOW TO PASS THE ‘STINK’ TEST

1. Have empathy – try not to puff the pufferfish!
2. Be pragmatic – talk about transformation in literal ways
3. Build trust – make sure everyone agrees on priorities
HEAR A REAL-LIFE EXAMPLE

Tomorrow @ 11:30 AM - 12:15 PM
Jen Krieger + Brendan Conoboy
Just-in-time transformation

Just-in-time transformation: How Red Hat modernized Red Hat Enterprise Linux 8
beta design, process, and culture

Day/Time: Wednesday, May 8, 11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.
Speaker(s): Brendan Conoboy, Red Hat, Inc; Jen Krieger
Session type: Breakout
Abstract: In the spring of 2015, the Red Hat Enterprise Linux team started the journey towards the next release. With over 1,200 people working on the operating system and over 2 years since the last major release, the Red Hat Enterprise Linux 8 leadership team realized that they could no longer rely on methods of the past. They launched a 3-year effort to completely revamp and revitalize the way the division delivers its software—all while recognizing our main release themes weren’t even technically possible in the beginning.
Please rate this talk in the Red Hat Events app!