

IMPROVING AGILITY DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

Zenger Folkman research has found four fundamental behaviors that enable agility. People that are above average on all four behaviors were rated at the 79th percentile on agility effectiveness. Our self-assessment measures your preference for each of the four behaviors.

Based on research from thousands of leaders, we identified the following development suggestions to help you improve each of these behaviors.



Listen and Learn

Ask for and Act on Feedback

- Before asking for feedback, list the reasons you think it will help and verify that you are getting the information from the right person.
- Make feedback a habit by regularly asking for it with certain activities, e.g., team meetings, 1:1 conversations, at the midpoint of a project.
- Communicate to others what new actions you are doing as a result of receiving feedback.

Consideration for Others

- Show empathy by considering the perspective of others.
- Write an email showing appreciation for a coworker's efforts in a project.
- Volunteer to serve, e.g., clean the office coffee pot, make a bagel run, setup the meeting room ahead of time.

Give Honest Feedback

- Choose the appropriate delivery method, e.g., email, face to face.
- Start the conversation by framing the purpose of the feedback
- Acknowledge when emotions are running high and explore if a pause is needed.

Ask Someone to be an Observer

- Ask to participate in a 360-degree feedback experience.
- Invite a mentor or coach to sit in on a team meeting or presentation.
- Invite a team member to observe an upper-management meeting.



Stretch Yourself

Ask Others to Stretch

- Ensure the goal balances the right timing, available resources, and managerial support.
- Invite the team to take an active part in defining a stretch goal.
- Share the broad view with the team to create understanding beyond daily tasks.

Look for Inspiration and Energy

- Reconnect with your company's mission.
- Look for opportunities to learn something new, e.g., training courses offered at your company, attending a conference.
- Celebrate personal wins by creating an incentive structure for yourself when completing certain tasks or achieving difficult goals.

Determination and Grit

- Accomplish the most difficult task in your day first.
- Eliminate distractions and time wasters, e.g., limit times you respond to email, put your phone in a desk drawer.
- Control your stress, e.g., take disciplined breaks, meditate, take a colleague to lunch.

Recognize the Need

- Record a daily reflection on your progress toward one goal.
- Ask a trusted friend or coworker to describe you.
- Take the time to explore differences in your immediate work group and understand yourself and others from a new perspective.



Be Optimistic

Set High Standards and Be Willing to Take on Challenges

- Start small by putting yourself on in one new uncomfortable situation this week, e.g., give a presentation, lead a small team initiative, write an article for LinkedIn.
- Write down the top five reasons why you will succeed at a new challenge.
- Volunteer to work on a project with a different team.

Focus on the Long View

- Get crystal clear on what you naturally gravitate to and gives you energy.
- Learn to delegate by finding activities that may be done by someone else and free your time to focus on connection to the overall mission.
- Become a mentor and share your experience and strategic vision to develop someone else.

Develop Others

- Hold regular 1:1 meetings with team members where the topic is solely career development.
- Practice a coaching model that will elevate your ability to have productive coaching and feedback conversations.
- Share your development goals with others to foster a culture of self-development.

Innovate and Collaborate

- Use collaboration tools such as company chat, online documents, or project management trackers.
- Clarify the most immediate goal that needs to be accomplished.
- Take a team meeting to flip your assumptions and explore how you could do tasks differently.



Self-Honesty

Build more positive relationships with others

- Give honest feedback versus telling people what you think they want to hear.
- Schedule time on your calendar to get to know a coworker better.
- Welcome and respect diversity of backgrounds, ideas, and opinions.

Follow Through

- Identify the roadblocks and ask for support to overcome them.
- At the end of each meeting verbally list the items you committed to do and their deadline.
- Share a public deadline for a project or task that impacts others.

Clear Focus, Direction, and Priorities

- Stay committed by communicating your intentions and actions to others.
- Decide and share which priority is most important right now.
- Ask your manager which task would make the most difference if it was completed early.

Go Above and Beyond

- Anticipate the needs of the team and take initiative to get started.
- Share new ideas in each team meeting.
- Connect behaviors to statistics, e.g., “This is what I will do differently to impact this statistic/metric.”

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