

# agile

TODAY

PERSPECTIVES FOR THE  
ENTERPRISE INNOVATOR  
Volume #20 . December 2018

## The Book Edition

Jez Humble  
**Accelerate:  
The Value of  
Adopting DevOps**

**Reads to get you  
ready for 2019**

**Creating and Sustaining a  
Great Workplace Book Club**  
with *Book Club @ AGL*

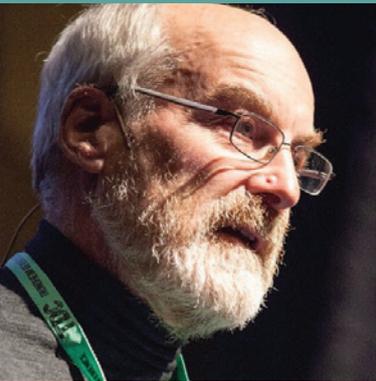


THE AGILEAUS HOLIDAY READING GUIDE

# THE DEEP DIVE

26-27 MARCH 2019 – THE PRINCE HOTEL, ST KILDA

## TALK STRATEGY BY THE SEA WITH



### DAVE SNOWDEN

*Learn how Dave's Cynefin™ framework helps you anticipate change, manage ambiguity and understand your landscape.*



### SIMON WARDLEY

*Integrate Simon's unique approach to mapping into your strategy to predict and prepare for uncertainties and market change.*

**To lead the way in uncharted waters, you can't rely on riding someone else's wave. Dive deeper than the surface, armed with a strategy that keeps you moving forward even in volatile and uncertain conditions.**

The Deep Dive is a two-day leadership experience, inviting attendees to rethink strategy in the 21st century. With Chatham House rules and no fixed agenda, it's a forum for ideas that run against the current. Now in its third year, The Deep Dive discusses how to create organisational strategies for resilience and success.



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# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

ANNA CREWS



“Today a reader, tomorrow a leader”, goes the quote widely attributed to 19th century American critic Margaret Fuller.

The benefits of reading – particularly reading broadly across genres – are drilled into us at an early age. Growing up as an only child whose parents owned a bookshop, books became some of my greatest friends! Yet it’s tempting to cast books aside as our lives get busier. Admittedly, at the end of a long day, kicking back in front of the TV often seems a far more appealing concept than pouring my head into a complex read.

As we gear up for **AgileAus19** – where speakers will interrogate the ‘Agile Mindset’ – we thought it high time to re-capture this childlike energy and reignite our passion for reading! The past year has seen many important texts published in the Agile community, including Gene Kim, Jez Humble and Nicole Forsgren’s *Accelerate*. Check out an excerpt on page 20 and catch Jez at the Conference in Sydney on **25-26 June 2019**. He’ll also be leading workshops on DevOps and continuous delivery in Sydney (24 June), Melbourne (28 June) and Auckland (1 July).

Continuing our celebration of texts published by AgileAus community members, Melinda Harrington reviews Better Worlds speaker Ellen Broad’s *Made by Humans: The AI Condition* on page 18.

Getting involved in a book club is a great way to ensure you’re reading regularly and deeply. This edition, *AgileTODAY* was welcomed into Book Club @ AGL to discuss *The Mind of Leader*. Head to page 4 to see what we thought of the book and for tips on starting a book club in your own organisation.

At the heart of this issue is **The AgileAus Holiday Reading Guide** (pages 8–17). Find reads to get you ready for 2019, plus discover the books that’ve changed the way Australian Agilists think. We’re thrilled that several authors featured in the Guide – like Mark Dodgson, Ali Walker and Sharda Nandram – will be joining us at AgileAus19!

Feel free to drop me a line at the email below to let me know what books you’re enjoying this summer. As always, happy reading!

**ANNA CREWS** Editor, *AgileTODAY*  
[editor@agiletoday.com.au](mailto:editor@agiletoday.com.au)

*Love the magazine? Want something different covered? Please let us know!*

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COVER IMAGE

# Reading *The Mind of the Leader* at Book Club @ AGL

In November, *AgileTODAY* was warmly welcomed into *Book Club @ AGL* – a fortnightly reading group held in AGL’s Melbourne offices. Over the two sessions documented below, the book club discussed *The Mind of the Leader: How to Lead Yourself, Your People and Your Organization for Extraordinary Results* by Rasmus Hougaard and Jacqueline Carter (Harvard Business Review Press, 2018).

Opening with a startling statistic – 65% of employees would pass up on a payrise to see their leader fired – *The Mind of the Leader* outlines the key causes of what its authors see as a current leadership crisis. Ultimately, the book proposes that the greatest failure of contemporary organisations is not putting people at their centre of their strategy. The book provides practical tips on how to incorporate mindfulness, selflessness and compassion into your leadership style – doubling as a personal development and strategic leadership text.

Below, we recount just some of the topics of discussion the book ignited at *Book Club @ AGL*. Spy like a fly on the wall and see what they had to say!

## OVERCOME YOUR ACTION ADDICTION

The average adult spends up to 8 hours a day desiring things they do not have in that moment, a University of Chicago study<sup>1</sup> cited in *The Mind of the Leader* reveals. The distractions of technology often mean we’re living everywhere but the present.

*The Mind of the Leader* refers to our fractured attention span as action addiction. As the authors explain:

“Action addiction is characterised by an uncontrollable urge to be doing something and a discomfort with being still. It includes behaviors like constantly checking emails, texts, news feeds, or social media. Action addiction keeps us busy and may help us complete many ‘tasks’, but activity is not the same as productivity.” (57-58)

While reports of a pricey wooden box being sold at a stationery retailer – simply to be used to lock your phone inside – stirred laughter at *Book Club @ AGL*, we agreed the product was reflective of this widespread action addiction. Further cementing our belief, Hougaard and Carter cite research<sup>2</sup> proving the mere presence of a phone during a conversation, even if left untouched, creates distance between people.

In the book club, we acknowledged that simply ‘switching off’ your phone and email isn’t always feasible in our increasingly connected society. More reasonable tips for living in the present moment were raised in the club – like having separate phones for work and social purposes so you aren’t distracted by information irrelevant to your immediate situation.

1 “What People Desire, Feel Conflicted About and Try to Resist in Everyday Life.” W. Hoffmann, K.D. Vohs and R.F. Baumeister, *Psychological Science* (Vol 23, No. 6, 2012).

2 *Alone Together: Why We Expect More From Technology and Less from Each Other*. Sherry Turkle (Basic Books, 2011).

**“To maintain a strong focus throughout the day, it’s useful to know what impacts it... Consider how your focus is impacted by the time of the day, when you eat, what you eat, your mental state, and how many hours you slept.”**

**– *The Mind of the Leader* (54)**

As EA Sports General Manager Roy Harvey recounts in *The Mind of the Leader*, he “has been amazed to discover how many problems solve themselves or become obsolete if we leave them alone for a while.” (135) This gave us comfort and confidence in the idea of not checking our email for a couple of hours to hone in on the task at hand. The world won’t end if we are ‘unplugged’ for a brief period of time! The distractions of technology – which have us “jumping from task to task, reading emails [and] messaging in a flurry of activity” (135) – are proven by the book to be highly detrimental to productivity.

Making a concerted effort to carve out dedicated ‘focus time’ in our professional and personal lives was a key takeaway action item from this reading. We recognised the importance of “refraining from action and to instead pause, clear the mind, and to take only the most important actions.” (135) As Hougaard and Carter put it: “It’s more effective to move one big rock every day than a thousand pieces of gravel.” (135)

### **THE MAGIC OF MINDFULNESS**

There’s no shortage of ‘productivity hacks’ claiming to remedy what *The Mind of the Leader* dubs action addiction, but one that comes highly recommended by *Book Club @ AGL* members is mindfulness.

Mindfulness is explained by Hougaard and Carter as mental training that “expand[s] our focus of what’s happening in our mind from moment-to-moment” by encouraging us to “pause in the moment, so we can take more conscious choices and take more deliberation actions.” (33) The book contains numerous step-by-step exercises that induce a state of mindful reflection.

*The Mind of the Leader* positions mindfulness as “the starting point for self-awareness” (31), as it forces us to concentrate solely on present conditions. This translates into corporate contexts, drawing us away from the negative effects of multitasking.<sup>3</sup> Cultivating greater focus through mindfulness appears crucial, as surveys conducted by Hougaard and Carter indicate 96% of leaders seek an enhanced focus (46).

Book club members praised *The Mind of the Leader* for lending credibility to leadership theories by backing up statements with solid research. The book’s facts-based case for mindfulness is perhaps the strongest example of this. Its use of anecdotal evidence is equally compelling, with CEOs of companies like Heineken and Marriott attesting to the benefits of mindfulness.

As leaders, mindfulness can give us the self-awareness needed to avoid having an inflated ego. The text explains

<sup>3</sup> *The Mind of the Leader* cites research which shows multitasking lowers job satisfaction, damages personal relationships, adversely impacts memory, and negatively affects health. The research comes from “The Dark Side of Information: Overload, Anxiety and Other Paradoxes and Pathologies.” D. Bawden and L. Robinson, *Journal of Information Science* (Vol 23, No. 2, 2009).



**“Research has found that we’re distracted from what we do 47% of the time.”**

**– *The Mind of the Leader* (46)**

The Mindfulness Room at  
AGL’s Melbourne Office

the downsides of a big ego: “it makes you vulnerable to criticism; it makes you susceptible to manipulation; it narrows your field of vision; and it corrupts your behaviour and causes you to act against your values” (66).

Mindfulness is well known among *Book Club @ AGL* members; many of whom already engage in the practice and have observed marked improvements in their thinking patterns and productivity levels. The mindset is further encouraged by the Mindfulness Room, a feature of AGL’s new corporate office in Melbourne. It’s a work-free zone with no technology or phones, existing just as a quiet space to take time out for wellbeing.

### **FROM “I” TO “WE”**

Having learned to “mindfully lead” (45) ourselves, the discussion shifted to how we may apply this sense of self-awareness in our leadership of others.

*The Mind of the Leader* promotes selfless leadership, where leaders use mindfulness to gain “the wisdom to develop and grow your people so they can shine and thrive” (127). The book club members expanded upon this definition of selfless leadership — adding that an effective leader brings everyone along for the ride, gives team members autonomy, and creates a sort of ‘collective ego’ among the team.

These sentiments were supported by research in the text, where a University of Texas study showed “people with higher leadership positions use significantly more first-person plural pronouns like *we*, as well as second-person pronouns like *you* and *yours*” (65). The book club agreed that leaders who spoke of *team goals* rather than

their own *goals* were far more motivating figures.

However, book club members noted that the text did not account for scenarios where the use of personal pronouns is essential to leadership. When making an apology or in the case of a PR incident, a leader assuming personal responsibility through the pointed use of personal pronouns may restore trust in their leadership, while the use of ‘we’ or ‘you’ could very well be seen as a shirking of blame.

A purely selfless leader is, of course, a somewhat idealistic vision. The book club recognised that today’s corporate culture, which often is based on a ‘dog-eat-dog’ mentality, doesn’t always support this type of functioning in a leader.

In any case, we agreed that a greater self-awareness, as promoted in *The Mind of the Leader*, can only be beneficial to a leader. We capped off our conversations by determining that organisations must recognise they are a *part* of our life, not *all* of our life. A great leader understands that the delivery of a project shouldn’t compromise employees’ work/life balance.

The strategies laid out in *The Mind of the Leader* give readers the awareness to prioritise what’s important to them, helping to trigger broader organisational movements that prioritise employees’ wellbeing. As the book club concluded, gaining perspective and engaging in mindful leadership must be a joint effort between ourselves and our organisations, as change cannot occur without attitudinal shifts on all levels of the leadership hierarchy.

# Take the conversation further than the book club

To ensure that their learnings from the book club result in tangible organisational change, members of *Book Club @ AGL* have established a system for turning sentences into action. At each session, four pieces of butchers paper are laid out, each sporting a different theme: Inspirational Stories & Quotes, Take Action, Personal Hacks, and Other Stuff.

In preparation for the book club, attendees write interesting quotes or observations from the book onto post-it notes – sticking them up on one of the four boards during discussions. This not only keeps attendees accountable for carrying out actions they've said they want to implement in their own lives, but also serves as documentation of concepts they want to share with the wider AGL community.



## HOW DO YOU CREATE (AND SUSTAIN!) A GREAT BOOK CLUB WITHIN YOUR ORGANISATION?



**Stephen Callaghan:**

“You need to pick quality and engaging books but more importantly you need a core of dedicated, passionate, quality and engaging people to drive it forward!”



**Kim Linton:**

“I agree with both Stephen and Christiane. I would also add it shows the culture of the organisation in the first place to even offer one. This could influence innovative, continuous learning types to join your business and contribute to it.”



**Christiane Anderson:**

“To start a book club and maintain its momentum, you need be consistent at offering the book club, create a community and never stop it, even if at times the numbers are low. Choose quality engaging books and use the insights in the books to take action in your company. It's helpful for leaders to sponsor books for attendees: even if you don't read the whole book, you can just distillate the key points that apply to you. Invite authors to speak at your company and promote continuous learning and curiosity as the foundation for a high performing quality culture.”



**Annett Reitmann:**

“I agree with the others and would add that to grow a book club, I think leaders need to actively encourage their people to make use of it, e.g. acknowledge that a book club is a great tool to aid your personal and career development.”



**Hamdam Bishop:**

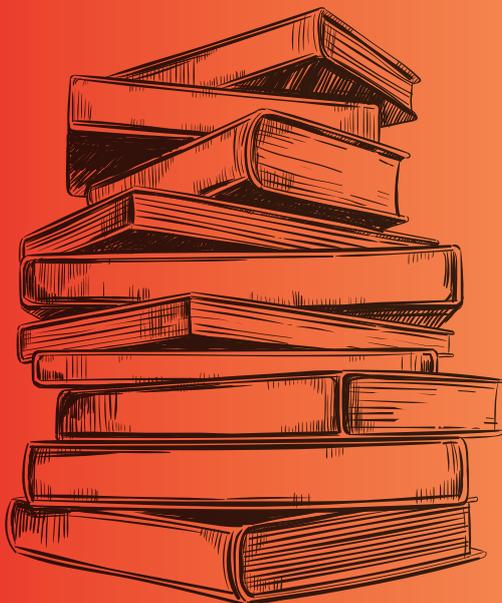
“Choosing diverse books that appeal to and engage different people and ensuring that the conversations at book club drive value for the individuals participating; what can they do, change, drive or learn?”

Other regular *Book Club @ AGL* attendees not interviewed above include Adele Pisano, Michelle Prosser-Roberts and John Siccita.



# The AgileAus Holiday Reading Guide

There's no better time than the holiday break to kick back and relax with a book! Whether you're looking for relaxing poolside reads, inspiring stories, or books to help you step into 2019 with your best foot forward – we have you covered! Plus, check out some recommended reads from members of the AgileAus community.



## *Collective Consciousness and Gender*

Ali Walker  
(Palgrave Macmillan, 2018)

In this study of collective consciousness in international law, Dr Ali Walker explores the widespread implications of unconscious, gendered role-playing. Ali contends that simply affording women the same legal rights as men has not created gender balance. The book explores how the feminine traits that exist in all individuals should be maximised, and used to critique the masculine structures within international law.

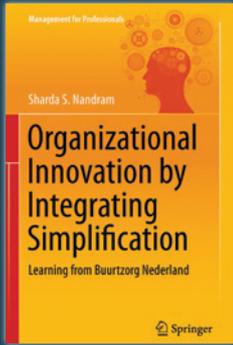
*Ali Walker will speak and host workshops at AgileAus19, teaching attendees to read and lead the room.*



## *The Poetry of Pop*

Adam Bradley  
(Yale University Press, 2017)

Can pop lyrics be considered poetry? Adam Bradley takes a deep look at the poetic artistry of pop music, moving his often-autobiographical analysis across early 20th Century Broadway show tunes, mid century rock and roll, and today's chart-toppers. The book proves that the most powerful poetry is often found where we least expect it.

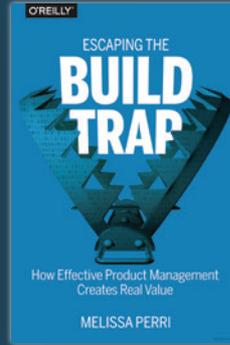


## **Organizational Innovation by Integrating Simplification**

Sharda Nandram  
(Springer International Publishing, 2014)

Based on a study of Buurtzorg Nederland, a Dutch-based homecare organisation that gives full autonomy to its nurses, Sharda Nandram dives deep into the theories underpinning this radical type of leadership. The book contains a discussion of how Buurtzorg's flat-structured hierarchy and self-functioning teams can be recreated in different industries.

*Sharda Nandram will share more on how she's created an organisational culture that makes employees feel at 'Home @ Work' at AgileAus19.*



## **Escaping the Build Trap: How Effective Product Management Creates Real Value**

Melissa Perri  
(John Wiley & Sons, 2018)

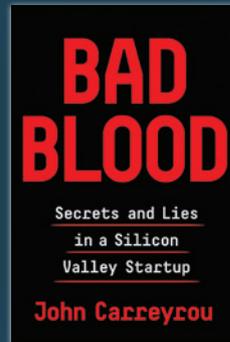
To remain innovative in today's market, companies have to adopt a culture of learning and customer-centric practices that are focused on outcomes rather than outputs. Melissa Perri provides a practical toolkit designed for companies big and small, giving product managers strategies for using communication and collaboration to overcome product development roadblocks. In fact, Melissa was working on this book when she came to present at AgileAus17!



## **Barrel-Aged Stout and Selling Out: Goose Island, Anheuser-Busch, and How Craft Beer Became Big Business**

Josh Noel  
(Chicago Review Press, 2018)

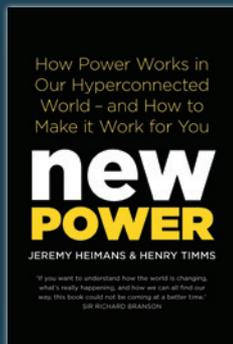
All it takes is one move to shake up a whole industry. This is what happened when Chicago's beloved, family-owned craft brewery, Goose Island, was sold off to the world's biggest beer company. The 2011 purchase by the maker of Budweiser pushed craft beer out of its niche into an unanticipated mainstream hit. Josh Noel gives a fascinating account of how an artisanal industry found its feet in the big leagues. (Can be enjoyed with a beverage of your choice!)



## **Bad Blood: Secrets and Lies in a Silicon Valley Startup**

John Carreyrou  
(Knopf, 2018)

The founder of Theranos, Elizabeth Holmes, committed one of Silicon Valley's all-time biggest scams. The blood-testing startup was a US\$9 billion Silicon Valley unicorn, until it was exposed that their groundbreaking medical device didn't even work. John Carreyrou's up-close account of the saga proves truth is stranger than fiction.



### **New Power**

Jeremy Heimans and Henry Timms  
(Macmillan, 2018)

The Guardian has called its authors “the baby-faced wunderkinds of digital activism.” In *New Power*, Australian Jeremy Heimans and Brit Henry Timms take a look at the great power forces of our connected age; assessing why some ideas take off and others simply flop. Covering phenomena such as the rise of the mega-platform (think: Facebook and Uber), the unexpected election of Trump and social movements like #BlackLivesMatter, the book helps us understand the new forces of power shaping our lives.

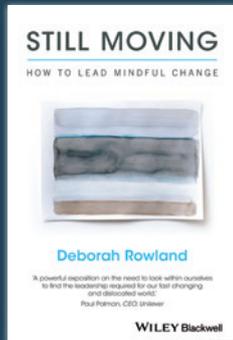


### **Yellow & Black: A Season with Richmond**

Konrad Marshall  
(The Slattery Media Group, 2017)

Fairfax Media writer Konrad Marshall documents the highs and lows of the Richmond Football Club through the 2017 season. The book looks into all areas of the club, including a detailed description of Emma Murray’s work with players to implement her mindfulness and meditation approach.

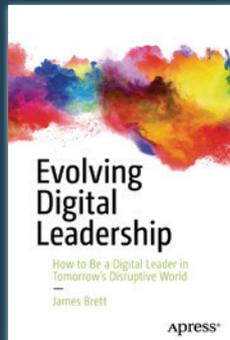
*Emma Murray will be joining us as a speaker at AgileAus19, giving us a truly unique insight into the concept of mindset.*



### **Still Moving: How to Lead Mindful Change**

Deborah Rowland  
(Wiley Blackwell, 2017)

In a climate where entire systems and organisations are experiencing disruptive change, Deborah Rowland’s *Still Moving* aims to give leaders the ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ skills necessary for survival. Focusing first on the ‘inner’, the book encourages leaders to commence their own mindfulness practice, then apply this mindful stance to create organisational change that remains sustainable even in time of turmoil. The book spans diverse subjects such as making disturbance your friend, the benefits of giving up control, and how online leadership development programs may be more effective than their offline counterparts. With autobiographical touches from Rowland’s personal and professional life and poetic references scattered throughout, the text is a refreshing look at contemporary leadership.

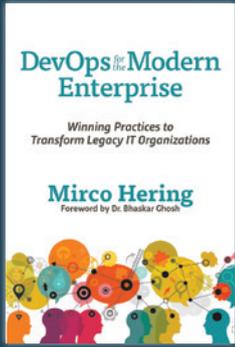


### **Evolving Digital Leadership: How to Be a Digital Leader in Tomorrow's Disruptive World**

James Brett  
(Apress, 2018)

To be an effective digital leader, you need to constantly evolve to achieve sustained success. This isn’t a generic leadership book; it’s one designed specifically for the “complicated, complex and chaotic” conditions under which technologists work.

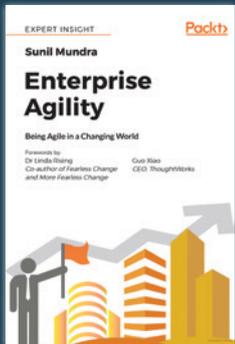
In *Evolving Digital Leadership*, James Brett shows how digital leaders must position themselves at the forefront of new waves of change: creating new markets and transforming traditional ones. The book contains a four-step process to help you move through adversity, drive disruption, and unlock your leadership potential, combined with plenty of practical strategies and tools.



## **DevOps For The Modern Enterprise: Winning Practices to Transform Legacy IT Organizations**

Mirco Hering  
(IT Revolution Press, 2018)

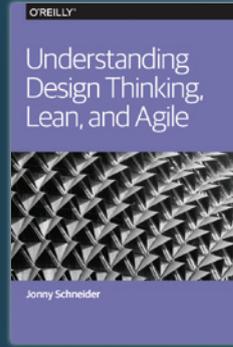
“One of the most rewarding things in my career has been the search to find the most efficient way to deliver meaningful projects and to get as many people as possible to do the same... I don't have lofty goals of changing the world, but I think everyone deserves to enjoy his or her work. And when workers enjoy what they do, good outcomes are inevitable.” Mirco Hering provides a comprehensive roadmap for transformation in the IT industry, supported by Agile, DevOps and Lean principles.



## **Enterprise Agility: Being Agile in a Changing World**

Sunil Mundra  
(Packt Publishing, 2018)

ThoughtWorks Principal Consultant Sunil Mundra lays out practical advice for using Enterprise Agility to respond and adapt in our rapidly changing business environment. Mundra draws parallels between the principles of Enterprise Agility and the key characteristics of living systems which enable them to deal with change. Like in a living organism, the most important things to focus on in an organisation are the overall health of its body (culture, mindset, and leadership) and the health of its various organs (people, process, governance, structure, technology, and customers). Mundra offers actionable guidelines for creating organisations that not only survive but thrive on change.



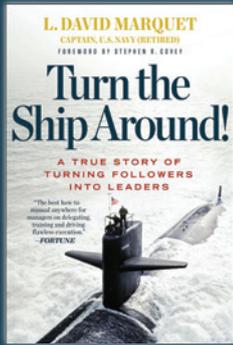
## **Understanding Design Thinking, Lean, and Agile**

Jonny Schneider  
(O'Reilly, 2017)

In this free e-book, Jonny Schneider helps makes sense of the many, and often bewildering, array of processes, tools, and methods that come hand-in-hand with implementing Agile, Lean and Design Thinking into your organisation. Find out what the best approach is for you and your organisation, and learn what techniques you should implement to get the outcomes you desire.

*Jonny Schneider will lead a half-day afternoon workshop in Sydney on 24 June 2019 as part of AgileAus19. The workshop focuses on rapid experimentation for product managers, helping you embrace a learning mindset and discover how to use experiments to test assumptions.*

**Reading literary fiction deepens our decision making skills by reducing our likelihood of making rash judgments, increasing our short-term empathy, and making us feel more comfortable with conditions of uncertainty. Studies at the University of Toronto suggest you may only need to read 10 pages in one sitting to reap the rewards.**



## Turn the Ship Around! A True Story of Turning Followers into Leaders

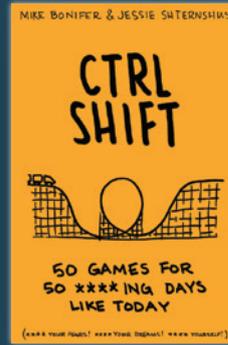
David Marquet  
(Penguin, 2012)

Retired U.S. Navy Captain David Marquet draws on his leadership experiences in a high-stress environment to inform this book on leadership strategy. When he stepped into the captainship role of nuclear submarine USS *Santa Fe*, Marquet went about his job like he always had: giving out strict orders, and cutting down the margin of error so his team of sailors remained safe. Everybody was following orders, but there was one problem. The ship had the worst retention and morale in the fleet.

To test his crew, Marquet gave them a clearly impossible order, which the team attempted to follow anyway. Their response when he asked why everyone adhered to the ridiculous order – “because you told me to” – made Marquet aware of how detrimental and potentially dangerous the Navy’s rigid ‘leader-follower’ dichotomy really was. This is a story of how Marquet “turned the ship around” to become the most successful in the fleet; all through affording his crew greater autonomy and making them assume responsibility for their actions.

For practical strategies, be sure to check out Marquet’s subsequent book, *Turn Your Ship Around! A Workbook for Implementing Intent-Based Leadership in Your Organization* (Penguin, 2015).

**Reading was shown to increase vocabulary, general knowledge and verbal skills in a 1993 study at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.**



## CTRL SHIFT: 50 Games for 50 \*\*\*\*ing Days Like Today

Mike Bonifer and Jessie Shternshus  
(BDI Publishers, 2015)

“\*\*\*\* your fears! \*\*\*\* your dreams! \*\*\* yourself!”, the cover of *CTRL SHIFT* provocatively reads. Those who attended AgileAus18 will no doubt be familiar with keynote speaker Jessie Shternshus’ philosophy, which promotes a child-like embrace of play to ‘unlearn’ and break out of established habits that may be holding us back.

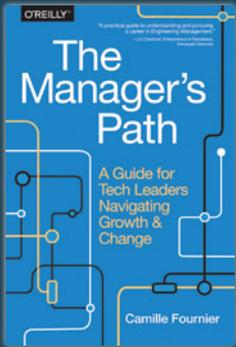
In *CTRL SHIFT*, Shternshus and Bonifer make this process of play a whole lot easier, providing 50 experiential games tailored to the type of day you’re having. Find fun exercises to help you make it through “The Day You’re Stuck”, “The Day You Launch”, “The Day the Competition Makes a Move”, “The Day You Don’t Give a Damn”, “The Day You Say Goodbye”, and more. Game on!



## Good Strategy/Bad Strategy: The Difference and Why It Matters

Richard Rumelt  
(Dekle Edge, 2011)

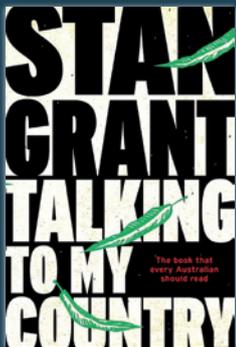
Here, Richard Rumelt defines the distinction between “good strategy” and “bad strategy”. Too often, he argues, meaningless slogans, buzzwords and financial goals muddle together to distract organisations from identifying their true strategic aims. A “good strategy” is one that specifically addresses the obstacles that are getting in the way of an organisation’s progress and outlines a plan for overcoming these. For Rumelt, a successful strategy ultimately comes from insight. He looks at examples from corporates, non-profits and the military, providing readers with a broad range of tips to expand their concept of strategic insight.



## **The Manager's Path: A Guide for Tech Leaders Navigating Growth and Change**

Camille Fournier  
(O'Reilly, 2017)

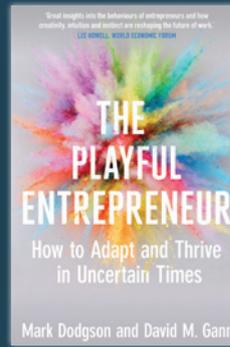
Broken into four parts, *The Manager's Path* calls on Camille Fournier's experience in tech leadership to explain how we have to change our leadership styles to adapt to this new wave. While the first part of the text covers *how* to be managed and what to expect from a manager, the book then goes on to explain how things like people management, team management, mentoring and senior leadership ought to be adjusted to suit the specific needs of a tech company. Fournier offers a practical playbook for tech leaders, guiding them on how to respond to the specific challenges this role presents.



## **Talking To My Country**

Stan Grant  
(HarperCollins, 2016)

"These are the things I want to say to you... things I have held inside or even worse run from", Stan Grant's book begins. Spurred by the boeing of Adam Goodes during 2015's AFL season, Grant reflects on his own identity as an Indigenous Australian. Drawing on his unique perspectives gathered from working in Asia, the Middle East, Europe and Africa, the esteemed journalist writes powerfully about the intersection of race and education. Stan Grant delivered a rousing address at the AgileAus18 Tenth Anniversary Dinner.



## **The Playful Entrepreneur: How to Adapt and Thrive in Uncertain Times**

Mark Dodgson and David Gann  
(Yale University Press, 2018)

*"There are two children playing... How different their behaviour is from what is expected of her at work. They are so uninhibited and in touch with their essential humanity. They are restlessly curious and energetic, chasing each other, falling down, picking themselves up, dusting themselves off... How have things come to this? She was so excited to get this job."*

Dodgson and Gann believe that, for many of us, the above story will hit too close to home. In *The Playful Entrepreneur*, they present readers with an alternative: a work life that's energising, fulfilling and fun.

Throughout the text, Dodgson and Gann trace the historical relationship between work, knowledge and technological advancement. They look to David Hume's 1742 *History of England*, where a progressive society is defined as one in which "industry, knowledge and humanity are linked together by an indissoluble chain." Hume refers to this ideal as a "luxurious society", where knowledge flows easily between science and the arts.

However, as Dodgson and Gann contend, this ideal seems to have been abandoned long ago. Moving from the wariness of technology cultivated during the industrial age to the Japanese phenomenon of *karōshi* (death by overwork), the authors locate the origins of contemporary workplace dissatisfaction. From there, they make the case for re-centring play in our lives, exploring behaviours that can encourage and guide play in the workplace. Play is, as Dodgson and Gann find, a quality essential to success in today's conditions of uncertainty.

*Keen to learn more about how play can take you further? Mark Dodgson will share his insights at AgileAus19.*

# Books that change the way you think



In preparation for AgileAus19, which pivots on the theme of seeking the Agile Mindset, we began to wonder what books could really alter one's mindset. Below, AgileAus community members share books from across all genres that have changed the way they think.

## Abigail Thomas

General Manager, SBS On Demand

– Abigail spoke at the inaugural AgileAus Better Worlds Conference, sharing her experiences at SBS and at non-profit organisation OneStep.

When it comes to books that have changed the way I think, I'd probably nominate *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* by Carol Dweck. It was a key book I read a few years ago which really made me think differently and embrace the growth mindset. Carol sets out the research really clearly and compellingly. I've used it with my teams, with my kids and on myself too!

## Herry Wiputra

Chief Product and Technology Officer, hipages

– Herry will share his insights as a guest speaker at AgileAus19.

Here are four books that have really shaped my thinking:

- *Turn Your Ship Around! A Workbook for Implementing Intent-Based Leadership in Your Organization* by David Marquet.
- *The Toyota Way* by Jeffrey Liker.
- *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us* by Dan Pink.
- *The Goal* by Eliyahu Goldratt.

## Nish Mahanty

Head of Development, irexchange.com

Below is a leadership book list that I've put together for the team.

- *Leadership and Self Deception: Getting Out of The Box* by The Arbinger Institute.
- *The Secrets of Consulting: A Guide to Giving and Getting Advice Successfully* by Gerald Weinberg.
- *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable* by Patrick Lencioni.
- *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High* by Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, Ron McMillan and Al Switzle.
- *Turn the Ship Around! A True Story of Turning Followers into Leaders* by David Marquet.
- *The Responsibility Process: Unlocking Your Natural Ability to Live and Lead with Power* by Christopher Avery.

All these books have helped further my career. However, of this list, *Leadership and Self Deception* has had the biggest personal impact on my life and relationships.

**Erica Smith**  
CTO, StarRez

- Erica will be speaking at AgileAus19.

An oldie but a goodie is *Freakonomics* by Steven Levitt. Not so much for the quirky stories, but for the fact that it makes you really look at a situation and consider all the factors which have gone into it. It's an incredibly powerful technique when applied to teams and businesses and technology. You have recurring performance problems in your software? Step back from the code. What are your people motivated by? What are their driving forces? What do you reward, and what do you penalize? What things do your culture expressly value, and how do the people in your team in turn express those values?

Leaders aren't there to fix code with a performance problem, they're there to understand *why* the performance problem came into existence, and adjust the business in such a way that it is less likely to happen again in future. Understanding the intersection between economics and human psychology has provided me with some of the very best tools I have to do this, and *Freakonomics* is a very accessible way to ease yourself into this mode of thinking.

In a slightly more mainstream, business sense, I have a love/hate relationship with *Hooked* by Nir Eyal. It definitely changed the way I think, and it gave me a huge boost in my ability to work well with product managers and product specialists. It's brilliant when it comes to building products which contribute to that ever-aspirational 'engagement' metric. The 'hate' part of the love/hate relationship comes from the fact that it is alarmingly like being given a loaded weapon. The potential to do harm based on the content of the book is pretty substantial, and it has absolutely already been used to do harm by unscrupulous folks.

If we're not looking at books specifically targeted at IT businesses, I'd also add *The Life You Can Save* by Peter Singer. While I don't always agree with his arguments, it does challenge a lot of our fluffy, feel-good assertions about how to do good in the world, and the difficult balance we are constantly making between self-interest and morality.

**Sherif Mansour**  
Distinguished Product Manager, Atlassian

There are quite a few books that have changed my thinking! However, here are the two main texts I ask all Product Managers to read:

- *User Story Mapping: Discover the Whole Story, Build the Right Product* by Jeff Patton. This book makes everyone who works in software rethink traditional 'requirements' and documents. It encourages us get back to the core problem - building a shared understanding of the customer within your team.
- *The Hard Thing About Hard Things: Building a Business When There Are No Easy Answers* by Ben Horowitz. Horowitz's book contains all the difficult things technology teams need to consider when building a business or product. There are plenty of experiences to learn from in this book!

**Jody Weir**  
Head of Agility, THE ICONIC

Over the past year, the book that has most significantly changed the way I work and the impact I have on the people I work with is Sandy Mamoli and David Mole's *Creating Great Teams: How Self-Selection Lets People Excel*. We have run Squad Self-Selection for the past two quarters in THE ICONIC Tech and it has been wildly successful.

Another book I would recommend, even though it's not new, is *Love Works: Seven Timeless Principles for Effective Leaders* by Joel Manby. In this book, Joel talks about aligning your personal values to your work values and leadership style. It made me realise how important it was to be true to my values in both my personal and work life, and that those values didn't need to be different. You can be an effective leader and still be compassionate and caring.

I'm sure others have recommended this, but *Reinventing Organizations* by Frederic Laloux was a game changer for me. It is one of the reasons I chose to work at THE ICONIC, as they are striving to be a Teal Organisation (they wouldn't describe it in this way yet, though!).

# Reading for just six minutes can reduce your overall stress levels by up to 68%, research from the University of Sussex claims.

## Lani Beer

### Innovator, King & Wood Mallesons

Whilst there are plenty of books that have changed the way I think, here are my current favourites:

- *The Advantage: Why Organisational Health Trumps Everything in Business* by Patrick Lencioni helped me to consider how to align an entire organisation, enabling them to adapt and work in an Agile way. I've used this book to help me co-design new ways of working with executives.
- *Turn Your Ship Around!* by David Marquet, whose book and videos prompted me to frame the true role of a leader as being a servant leader to many other leaders.
- *The Lean Startup* by Eric Ries is a great read when working for a startup. It encourages reflection and helps you avoid making similar mistakes in your own workplace.
- *Pivot: The Only Move That Matters Is Your Next One* by Jenny Blake is a book I refer to when I am stuck – it's great if you're having a career crisis moment.
- *Deep Work* by Cal Newport taught me the importance of focus and how to stay on course in the world of 'always on'!
- *Smarter, Faster, Better* by Charles Duhigg caught my eye, as who doesn't want all three of these things! This book is all about how to think differently, which can then transform what you do.
- *The Power Paradox* by Dacher Keltner is useful when trying to influence the leadership of an organisation. It helps you consider how you might influence with impact and not evil!

## Leandro Pinter

### Head of Software Engineering, Tyro Payments

It's hard to pick just one book that has changed my thinking, but a title that stands out is *Reinventing Organizations: A Guide to Creating Organizations Inspired by the Next Stage of Human Consciousness* by Frederic Laloux.

## Sam Bowtell

### Agile Practice Lead, Commonwealth Bank

I'd recommend *Solution-Focussed Coaching: A Manager's Guide to Getting the Best from People* by Jane Greene and Anthony Grant. It changed my leadership style, and now I teach others the same principles.

## Martha O'Sullivan

### Head of IT – Trading and Supply Chain, Target

Given it's all about the mindset, I have been heavily focused on books that discuss how change impacts humans. These include:

- *Lean Enterprise* by Barry O'Reilly, Jez Humble, and Joanne Molesky.
- *Creating Magic: 10 Common Sense Leadership Strategies from a Life at Disney* by Lee Cockerell
- *The Fourth Transformation: How Augmented Reality & Artificial Intelligence Will Change Everything* by Robert Scoble and Shel Israel.
- *Leading Change* by John Kotter

And, more recently, I've enjoyed Amantha Imber's *The Creativity Formula*. She provides some very interesting mechanisms to help us unlock a creative mindset and solve problems differently.

**James Wright**  
*Delivery Manager, SEEK*

I'd recommended *Attached: The New Science of Adult Attachment and How It Can Help You Find – and Keep – Love* by Amir Levine and Rachel Heller.

An Attachment Style is something we all have, but few people understand, and fewer know their own styles or those of their colleagues and partners. Our Attachment Style governs patterns of how we bond in adult relationships. Ostensibly, this book is about the most important adult relationship: your romantic partner. However, Attachment Styles bear out in modern high performing teams. These insights into yourself and others can be a gift if you're looking to understand how to ensure teams bond, or why your team isn't bonding. And, even if this doesn't work for you, this book will be a fascinating insight into your own feelings and the behaviours of those closest to you.

Just as the concept of 'Growth vs Fixed' mindset came from bodies of psychology and paedology research which were applied to Agile and the world of work (as popularised by Carol Dweck), I believe we may see in the future a similar application of Attachment Styles to high performance teams.

Ideally, I would be recommending a book that focused exclusively on applying this research to non-romantic attachments, and thus, teams. But, in the absence of that, this text provides the reader with the concepts and framework for further learning and future application.

Some academic literature on the subject that gives weight to the assertion that Attachment Styles can be applied to workspaces includes:

- "Secure, Anxious, and Avoidant Attachment Styles at Work" by Hal Shorey, *Psychology Today*. [<https://www.psychologytoday.com/au/blog/the-freedom-change/201807/secure-anxious-and-avoidant-attachment-styles-work>]
- "Team Roles and Attachment Style in Team Work" by Klara Seitlova and Petra Dvořáčková, presented at *The Knowledge for Market Use Conference 2016*. [[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/312934836\\_Team\\_Roles\\_and\\_Attachment\\_Style\\_in\\_Team\\_Work](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/312934836_Team_Roles_and_Attachment_Style_in_Team_Work)]
- "Adult Attachment Styles in the Workplace" by Peter Harms, *Management Department Faculty Publications*. [<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1084&context=managementfacpub>]



*Turn the Ship Around!*  
author David Marquet  
presents at AgileAus15

**"Not all readers  
are leaders,  
but all leaders  
are readers."**

**– Harry S. Truman**



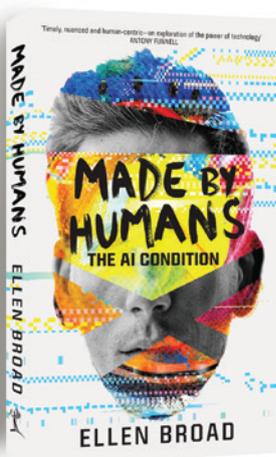


# Agile Lessons from AI

MELINDA HARRINGTON

Melinda Harrington reviews *Made by Humans: The AI Condition* by Ellen Broad (Melbourne University Press, 2018). Melinda is a Lead Consultant at Elabor8. She is an Agile coach, a speaker, a writer, a blogger, and a passionate believer that we can always improve the way we work.

Those of us who strive to be Agile are likely to find relevance in Ellen Broad's *Made by Humans: The AI Condition*. Primarily, it's because many of us work in technology and may use Artificial Intelligence now or in the future. Secondly, because whether we are thinking about AI or not, many themes in Broad's book are those we are already grappling with in the Agile domain. These



Ellen Broad's book  
*Made by Humans: The AI Condition*

challenges are extensions of those to which we are accustomed. As 'Agilists', we are uniquely prepared to understand the human side of technology. We have a responsibility to consider the impact of our choices and actions.

When thinking of humanity, a good place to start is with ourselves. Broad opens this book with her own story. Her journey is not superfluous; it is integral. Although AI is another level of computer power, it continues to be "made by humans". It's important to understand who those humans are and how they select and interpret data.

The obvious way to frame the likelihood of data being incorrect is to query the data that is held about us. Motivated by this book, I downloaded the data that Facebook holds about me. I find it humorous that AI Smith Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram Inc. in Bowling Green, Ohio uploaded a contact list with my

information to Facebook. It's funny because the likelihood of me buying a car from them is zero.

It becomes less humorous when incorrect information is being used to draw conclusions about me. Given the number of car dealerships weirdly associated with my profile, it may be erroneously assumed that I am a rev-head. What happens if banks issuing mortgages decide that rev-heads aren't a good risk? What if I was denied a loan based on this inaccurate information? This is a theoretical assumption but similar real-life examples abound.

Machine learning is trained on data. Where that data comes from, what (or who) is included and excluded is selected by human beings. Broad's observation: "*What worries me isn't so much that my data is 'out there', but that the industry being built off this kind of information has absolutely no idea how to use it properly.*" (49)

I am wary of AI. It seems to be the latest buzz word, it is potentially quite dangerous and sometimes it is just too hard to comprehend. Reading this book has given me a better understanding. When AI seems too futuristic, I am reminded of the technology we now take for granted. The idea of AI might make me queasy in the abstract but speech recognition and spam filtering don't worry me at all. What is difficult to comprehend now will soon become normal. Nevertheless, designing complex systems can be dangerous for the end user. *"If you don't understand how a system works, how can you be sure you've built the system safely?"* (86) Broad asks.

Explaining complex concepts in a way that non-technical people can understand is a skill that is practiced in the Agile community. With our emphasis on customer collaboration and the adoption of user stories, we have become accustomed to describing our work to non-technical people. As challenging as that is with traditional programming, it might actually be too difficult for the people designing machine learning systems. *"There is a difference between what can be explained, and what can be explained in a way so as to be understood."* (85)

Broad cautions: *"Intelligibility of AI cannot just be left to organisations and practitioners designing AI. Mechanisms for improving intelligibility should envisage the growth of a range of intermediaries to help people understand the impact of automated systems as*

*well."* (85) In this domain, accuracy and intelligibility both need to be considered. For example, if the conclusions reached through machine learning had not been questioned by an individual in Broad's example of the data-set Chest X-Ray (10), people could have been incorrectly diagnosed.

With transparency as a Kanban value and openness as a Scrum value, the concept is one we are familiar with. Broad adds nuance to these words that was new to me. In this context, 'transparency' is about making information available. 'Openness' adds the opportunity for those you share information with to have input into changing it. (103)

It is vital that we don't hide behind the machines and lose sight of the impact of our work on people. In the Agile world, individuals and interactions are in the forefront. As we step further into the world of AI, we need to keep that focus. Sadly, there are many examples of experiments where Artificial Intelligence has had a detrimental effect on the lives of other human beings.

Empathy is a recurring theme in *Made by Humans*. There is no doubt this is a human-centered book with an emphasis on under-represented, vulnerable groups. Some may assume that computers are objective. However, they are as subjective as the people who program them. If we are not careful, computers may be more likely to amplify the subjective. As Broad explains, *"The machine might end*

*up reproducing bias more frequently than human decision makers would."* (31)

Many themes in *Made by Humans* have clear links to commonly discussed Agile concepts. However, Broad devotes a large section of her book to the importance of government regulation. This is a relevant lesson for all of us that we may not spend as much time considering as we should. Do we see regulation as an annoyance or something to embrace? Regulations do not just constrain us, they protect us. We should ensure that our governments understand and regulate the technologies that they utilise. What happens if people can't challenge decisions that are made about them with information that is not true? *"Should system designers be held accountable for statements about the accuracy of their decision-making systems that aren't true?"* (146). These questions haven't been answered.

Mistakes made in this arena have real world consequences that are amplified by the sheer volume of data and people involved. Artificial Intelligence has great promise. However, as Broad makes clear: *"Science needs breakthroughs and science needs caution."* (79) Let's ensure we have both. People need to continue to be our priority while we explore the new possibilities that this technology brings. 🚫

# Accelerate

**NICOLE FORSGREN, JEZ HUMBLE AND GENE KIM**

The following text is an extract from *Accelerate: Building and Scaling High Performing Technology Organizations* by Nicole Forsgren, Jez Humble and Gene Kim (IT Revolution, 2018).

After speaking on continuous delivery at AgileAus17, we're thrilled to have *Accelerate* co-author Jez Humble returning to the Conference in 2019. Be sure to catch him at AgileAus19 in Sydney on 25-26 June 2019. Jez will also be leading workshops on the foundations of DevOps and continuous delivery in Sydney (24 June 2019), Melbourne (28 June 2019), and Auckland (1 July 2019).

'Business as usual' is no longer enough to remain competitive. Organisations in all industries, from finance and banking to retail, telecommunications, and even government, are turning away from delivering new products and services using big projects with long lead times. Instead, they are using small teams that work in short cycles and measure feedback from users to build products and services that delight their customers and rapidly deliver value to their organisations. These high performers are working incessantly to get better at what they do, letting no obstacles stand in their path, even in the face of high levels of risk and uncertainty about how they may achieve their goals.

To remain competitive and excel in the market, organisations must accelerate:

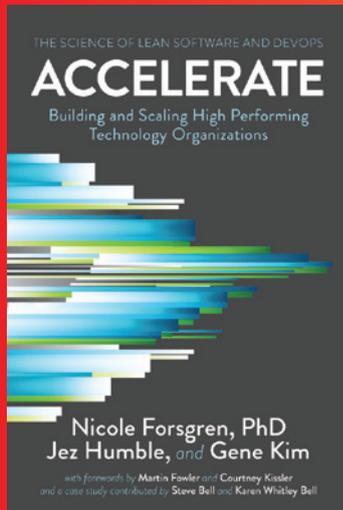
- delivery of goods and services to delight their customers;
- engagement with the market to detect and understand customer demand;
- anticipation of compliance and regulatory changes that impact their systems; and
- response to potential risks such as security threats or changes in the economy.

At the heart of this acceleration is software. This is true of organisations in any industry vertical. Banks no longer deliver value by holding gold bars in vaults but by trading faster and more securely, and by discovering new channels and products to engage customers. Retailers win and retain customers by offering them superior selection and service, with service coming in the form

of a fast check-out experience, recommended goods at check-out, or a seamless online/offline shopping experience—all of which are enabled by technology. Government organisations cite the ability to harness technology as the key to serving the public more effectively and efficiently while being parsimonious with taxpayer dollars.

Software and technology are key differentiators for organisations to deliver value to customers and stakeholders. We've found it in our own research outlined in *Accelerate*—and others have found it, too. For example, a recent study by James Bessen of Boston University found that the strategic use of technology explains revenue and productivity gains more than mergers and acquisitions and entrepreneurship (2017). Andrew McAfee and Erik Brynjolfsson have also found a link between technology and profitability (2008).

Software is transforming and accelerating organisations of all kinds. The practices and capabilities we talk about in *Accelerate* have emerged from what is now known as the DevOps movement, and they are transforming industries everywhere. DevOps emerged from a small number of organisations facing a wicked problem: how to build secure, resilient, rapidly evolving distributed systems at scale. In order to remain competitive, organisations must learn how to solve these problems. We see that large enterprises with long histories and decades-old technologies also gain significant benefits, such as accelerated delivery and lower costs, through adopting the capabilities we outline in *Accelerate*.



**Technology leaders need to deliver software quickly and reliably to win in the market. For many companies, this requires significant changes to the way we deliver software. The key to successful change is measuring and understanding the right things with a focus on capabilities – not on maturity.**

Although many organisations have achieved great success with their technology transformations (notable examples include webscale tech giants such as Netflix, Amazon, Google, and Facebook, as well as more traditional large organisations including Capital One, Target, and the US Federal Government’s Technology Transformation Service and US Digital Service), there is still a lot of work to be done—both in the broader industry and within individual organisations. A recent Forrester (Stroud et al. 2017) report found that 31% of the industry is not using practices and principles that are widely considered to be necessary for accelerating technology transformations, such as continuous integration and continuous delivery, Lean practices, and a collaborative culture (i.e., capabilities championed by the DevOps movement). However, we also know that technology and software transformations are imperative in organisations today. A recent Gartner study found that 47% of CEOs face pressure from their board to digitally transform (Panetta 2017).

Within organisations, technology transformation journeys are at different stages, and reports suggest there is more work to be done than many of us currently believe. Another Forrester report states that DevOps is accelerating technology, but that organisations often overestimate their progress (Klavens et al. 2017). Furthermore, the report points out that executives are especially prone to overestimating their progress when compared to those who are actually doing the work.

These findings about the disconnect between executive and practitioner estimates of DevOps maturity highlight

two considerations that are often missed by leaders. First, if we assume the estimates of DevOps maturity or capabilities from practitioners are more accurate—because they are closer to the work—the potential for value delivery and growth within organisations is much greater than executives currently realise. Second, the disconnect makes clear the need to measure DevOps capabilities accurately and to communicate these measurement results to leaders, who can use them to make decisions and inform strategy about their organisation’s technology posture.

### **FOCUS ON CAPABILITIES, NOT MATURITY**

Technology leaders need to deliver software quickly and reliably to win in the market. For many companies, this requires significant changes to the way we deliver software. The key to successful change is measuring and understanding the right things with a focus on capabilities—not on maturity.

While maturity models are very popular in the industry, we cannot stress enough that maturity models are not the appropriate tool to use or mindset to have. Instead, shifting to a capabilities model of measurement is essential for organisations wanting to accelerate software delivery. This is due to four factors.

First, maturity models focus on helping an organisation ‘arrive’ at a mature state and then declare themselves done with their journey, whereas technology transformations should follow a continuous improvement paradigm. Alternatively, capability models focus on helping an organisation continually improve

**By focusing on a capabilities paradigm, organisations can continuously drive improvement. And by focusing on the right capabilities, organisations can drive improvements in their outcomes, allowing them to develop and deliver software with improved speed and stability.**

and progress, realising that the technological and business landscape is ever changing. The most innovative companies and highest-performing organisations are always striving to be better and never consider themselves ‘mature’ or ‘done’ with their improvement or transformation journey—and we see this in our research.

Second, maturity models are quite often a ‘lock-step’ or linear formula, prescribing a similar set of technologies, tooling, or capabilities for every set of teams and organisations to progress through. Maturity models assume that ‘Level 1’ and ‘Level 2’ look the same across all teams and organisations, but those of us who work in technology know this is not the case. In contrast, capability models are multidimensional and dynamic, allowing different parts of the organisation to take a customised approach to improvement, and focus on capabilities that will give them the most benefit based on their current context and their short and long-term goals. Teams have their own context, their own systems, their own goals, and their own constraints, and what we should focus on next to accelerate our transformation depends on those things.

Third, capability models focus on key outcomes and how the capabilities, or levers, drive improvement in those outcomes—that is, they are outcome based. This provides technical leadership with clear direction and strategy on high-level goals (with a focus on capabilities

to improve key outcomes). It also enables team leaders and individual contributors to set improvement goals related to the capabilities their team is focusing on for the current time period. Most maturity models simply measure the technical proficiency or tooling install base in an organisation without tying it to outcomes. These end up being vanity metrics: while they can be relatively easy to measure, they don’t tell us anything about the impact they have on the business.

Fourth, maturity models define a static level of technological, process, and organisational abilities to achieve. They do not take into account the ever-changing nature of the technology and business landscape. Our own research and data have confirmed that the industry is changing: what is good enough and even ‘high performing’ today is no longer good enough in the next year. In contrast, capability models allow for dynamically changing environments and allow teams and organisations to focus on developing the skills and capabilities needed to remain competitive.

By focusing on a capabilities paradigm, organisations can continuously drive improvement. And by focusing on the right capabilities, organisations can drive improvements in their outcomes, allowing them to develop and deliver software with improved speed and stability. In fact, we see that the highest performers do exactly this, continually reaching for gains year over year and never settling for yesterday’s accomplishments.

### **EVIDENCE-BASED TRANSFORMATIONS FOCUS ON KEY CAPABILITIES**

Within both capability and maturity model frameworks, there are disagreements about which capabilities to focus on. Product vendors often favor capabilities that align with their product offerings. Consultants favour capabilities that align with their background, their offering, and their homegrown assessment tool. We have seen organisations try to design their own assessment models, choose solutions that align with the skill sets of internal champions, or succumb to analysis paralysis because of the sheer number of areas that need improvement in their organisation.

A more guided, evidence-based solution is needed, and the approach discussed in *Accelerate* describes such a solution.

Our research has yielded insights into what enables both software delivery performance and organisational performance as seen in profitability, productivity, and market share. In fact, our research shows that none of the following often-cited factors predicted performance:

- age and technology used for the application (for example, mainframe “systems of record” vs. greenfield “systems of engagement”)
- whether operations teams or development teams performed deployments
- whether a change approval board (CAB) is implemented

The things that do make a difference in the success of software delivery and organisational performance are those that the highest performers and most innovative companies use to get ahead. Our research in *Accelerate* has identified 24 key capabilities that drive improvement in software delivery performance and, in turn, organisational performance. These capabilities are easy to define, measure, and improve. *Accelerate* gets you started on defining and measuring these capabilities, and points you to some fantastic resources for improving them, so you can accelerate your own technology transformation journey.

## THE VALUE OF ADOPTING DEVOPS

You may be asking yourself: how do we know that these capabilities are drivers of technology and organisational performance, and why can we say it with such confidence?

The findings from our research program show clearly that the value of adopting DevOps is even larger than we had initially thought, and the gap between high and low performers continues to grow. To summarise, in 2017 we found that, when compared to low performers, the high performers have:

- 46 times more frequent code deployments
- 440 times faster lead time from commit to deploy
- 170 times faster mean time to recover from

downtime

- 5 times lower change failure rate (1/5 as likely for a change to fail)

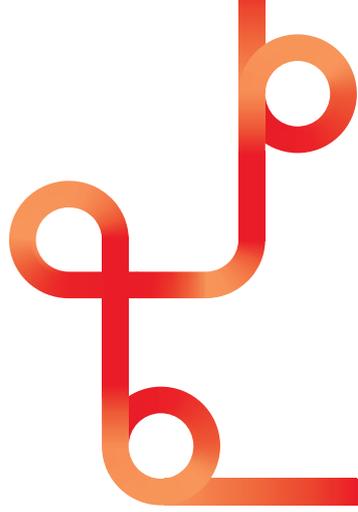
When compared to the 2016 results, the gap between high performers and low performers narrowed for tempo (deployment frequency and change lead time) and widened for stability (mean time to recover and change failure rate). We speculate that this is due to low-performing teams working to increase tempo but not investing enough in building quality into the process. The result is larger deployment failures that take more time to restore service. High performers understand that they don't have to trade speed for stability or vice versa, because by building quality in they get both.

You may be wondering: How do high-performing teams achieve such amazing software delivery performance? They do this by turning the right levers—that is, by improving the right capabilities.

Over our four year research program, we have been able to identify the capabilities that drive performance in software delivery and impact organisational performance, and we have found that they work for all types of organisations. Our research investigated organisations of all sizes, in all industries, using legacy and greenfield technology stacks around the world—so the findings in *Accelerate* will apply to the teams in your organisation too.

Learn more about the research findings mentioned in this article by checking out the full copy of *Accelerate*!

The book comes highly recommended by the AgileAus community, with Bryn Goodey (Head of Data Analytics, NAB) saying: *“If you are in a position where you can influence the culture and performance of technology and data teams, this book gives sharp focus to the key areas that make a real difference.”*

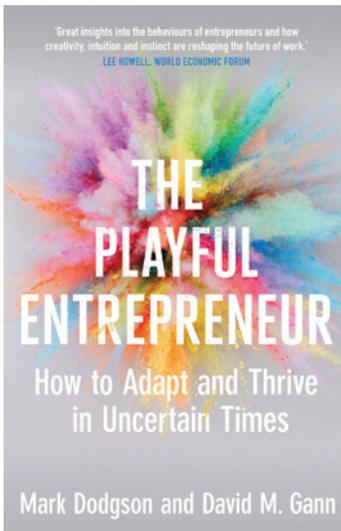
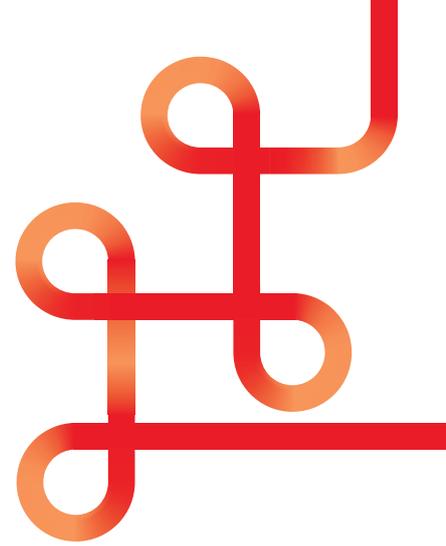


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“There is a group of people who don’t sit by and powerlessly observe the world change around them: they mould opportunities to their advantage. These people – innovators and entrepreneurs, leaders of change – show determination and resilience in the face of the most extreme uncertainty... They succeed because of what we call *play*.”

– *The Playful Entrepreneur* (Yale University Press, 2018)



**Jez Humble**

*How can DevOps and continuous delivery create future-proof organisations?*



**Ali Walker**

*What do you need to know in order to read and lead the room?*



**Sharda Nandram**

*Ever wondered what an organisation would look like without bureaucracy?*

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