

Applying Project Management Principles to Software Development Leadership™

Leading SoftwAre MaNiACs™

Fixing a Dysfunctional Project
Team

KEN WHITAKER

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Fixing a Dysfunctional Project Team

- How's this for a welcome?



“You have 90 days to turn this organization around!”


Fixing a Dysfunctional Project Team

Let's take some simple steps

1. Define the plan
2. State your department's mission
3. Stop the bleeding
4. Build "killer" leadership team
5. Continuously improve your department:
 - Refine, mentor, and execute

Fixing a Dysfunctional Project Team

Best Practice

- To lead a successful fix-up, you must prepare, prepare, and prepare
 - Don't forget to get buy-in every step of the way
 - Listen, listen, communicate, and listen (and not just to your staff!)
 - Never openly dismiss prior management EVER
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Fixing a Dysfunctional Project Team

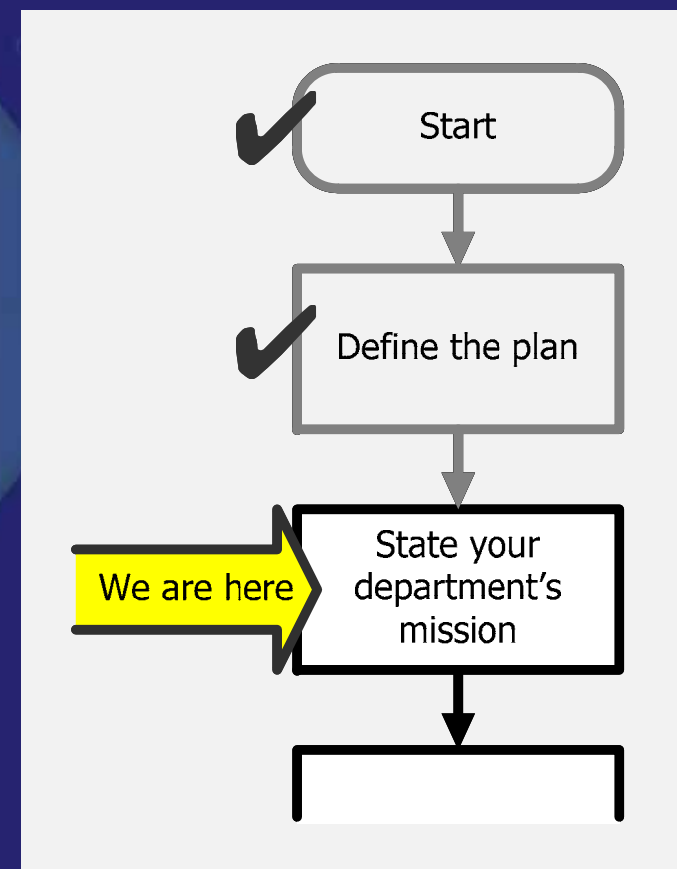
Define the Plan

- First step is to lay out a correction plan
- Must be reasonable and attainable ...
- ... but what the department, company, and customer [market] needs
- If you make it too complicated or detailed, it will become just another "salvage attempt"
- In other words, keep it SIMPLE!

Fixing a Dysfunctional Project Team

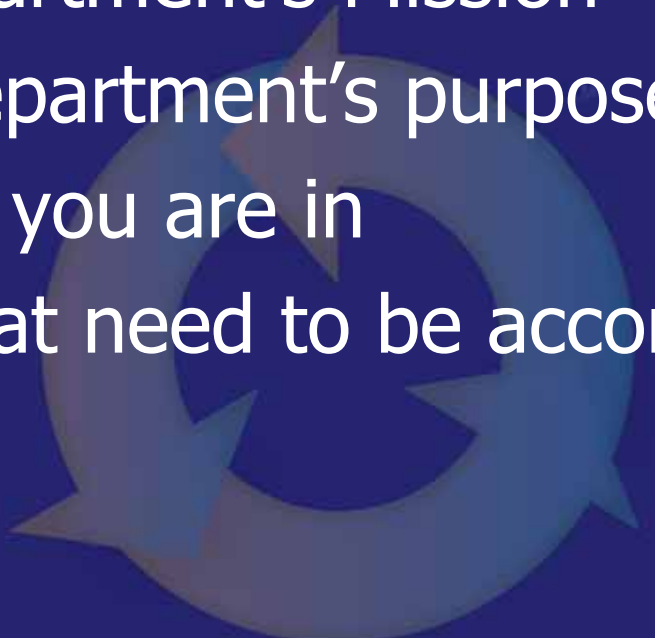
Define the Plan

- Communicate progress
- Reinforce success



Fixing a Dysfunctional Project Team

State Your Department's Mission

- Define the department's purpose
 - The business you are in
 - Objectives that need to be accomplished
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Fixing a Dysfunctional Project Team

State Your Department's Mission

- For a turnaround, how's this mission?
"Development's mission is to keep on the leading edge of technology in order to produce software products that our customers want."

Fixing a Dysfunctional Project Team

State Your Department's Mission

- Does it pass the acid test?

Mission should be	Yes or no?
Easy to recite	✓
Agreed upon by key stakeholders	✓
Long-lasting	✓
Gives the customer a sense of comfort	
Motivator	

Fixing a Dysfunctional Project Team

State Your Department's Mission

- Keep it simple



“Development’s mission is to deliver on-time, quality enterprise-wide software that provides a sustainable benefit to the healthcare industry.”

Fixing a Dysfunctional Project Team

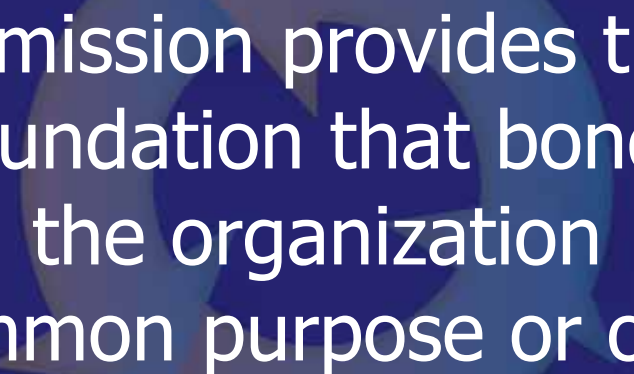
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Fixing a Dysfunctional Project Team

Best Practice



A mission provides the foundation that bonds the organization to a common purpose or objective

Fixing a Dysfunctional Project Team

Best Practice

Your team's roles may change to suit the mission



Fixing a Dysfunctional Project Team

Stop the Bleeding

- Get the organization into a different train of thought
- Must haves vs Nice to haves
- Establish a culture of listening
- Get communicating ... frequently
- Reorganize if required with a temporary leadership team

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Best Practice

According to Jonathan Spira of BaseX, Inc:

- Interrupts consume about 28% of a knowledge worker's day
- Staff can only spend about 11 minutes on any task before being interrupted
- >55% respond immediately to an e-mail

Fixing a Dysfunctional Project Team

Best Practice



Create a sense of urgency!

Fixing a Dysfunctional Project Team

Build a “Killer” Leadership Team

- First, let’s brainstorm why a change in your leadership team is needed
- Identify characteristics you want for each lead (and which characteristics are must haves)
- Interview, assign responsibility, guide, and empower

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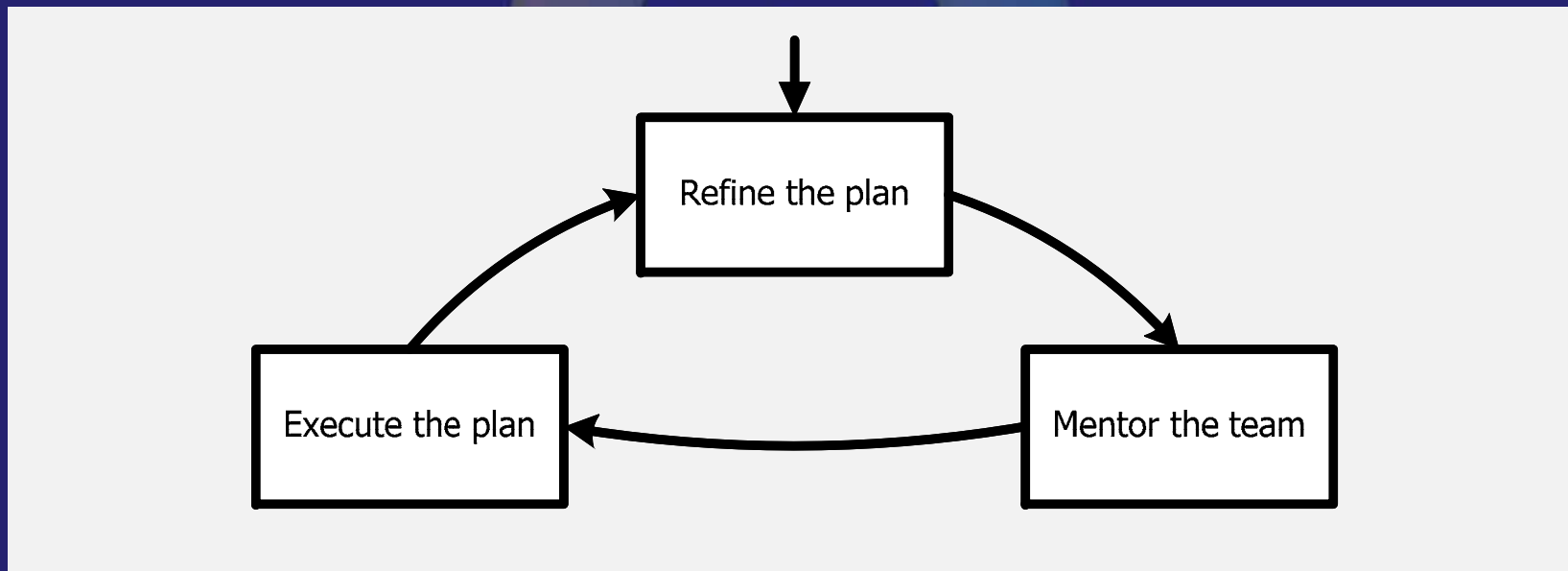
Build a “Killer” Leadership Team

- Leadership approach can be simple
 1. Keep it simple
 2. Make yourself visible
 3. Delegate and follow with everything you said you'd do ...
 - ... your team may be waiting for you to fail
- Reminder yourself the above every day

Set up a Blueprint for Continuous Improvement

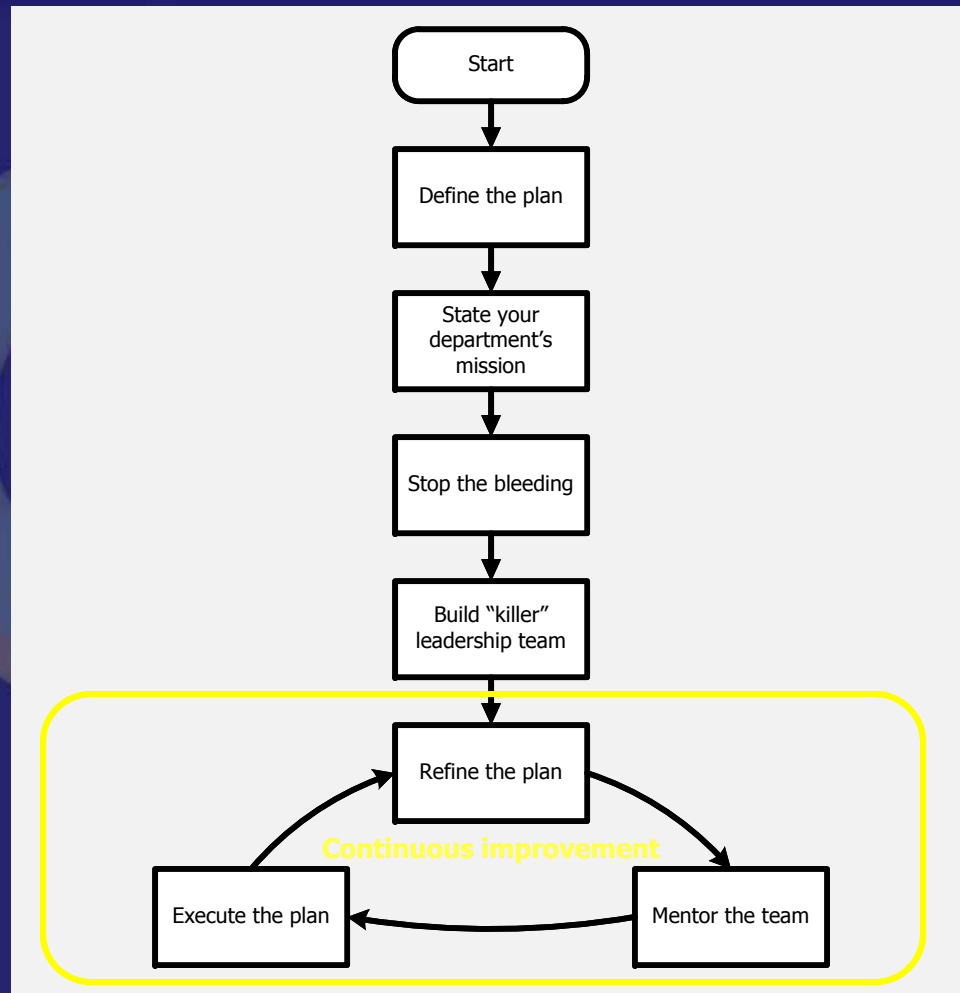
Continuously Improve Your Organization

- Be as flexible as you can while adjusting ...
Hint: this is the “agile way”



Fixing a Dysfunctional Project Team

- In Summary

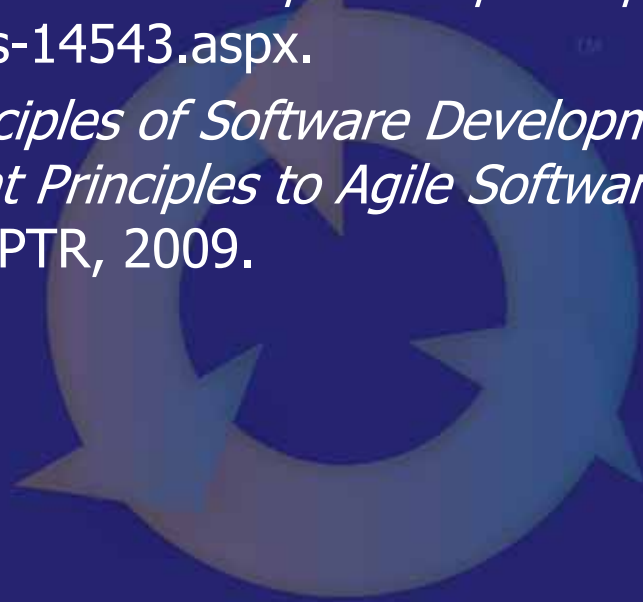


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