

General Management Imperatives

Business Basis for The Business Agility Manifesto

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Foreword: “Business Agility” by its very name, would suggest implications far beyond the normal dimensions of an “Agile” discussion about software development or organization schemes. “Business Agility” envisions an ability to modify dynamically the concepts and structures of the business itself for maintaining relevance in the context of a dramatically changing, complex and uncertain operational environment. This ability necessarily must include dynamic reconfiguration of implementations, adolescent and mature, manual and automated, new and existing, to continue business operations as business changes are formalized. The following General Management Imperatives are paramount for consideration and deliberate application in creating such an agile, dynamic operating business.

- I. **Facilitate Business Change** – Changes to the business in minimum time, with minimum cost, minimum disruption, and minimum risk of failure. (“Change” includes market change, regulatory change, technology change, labor market change, strategy change, etc.)
 - A. Business design for flexibility to support on-going business change based on separation of independent variables (i.e. ability to change a single, unitary business component without unintended consequences or impacts on other related components)
 - B. Rapid implementations based on components purposely designed for reuse in diverse implementations thereby minimizing development costs and time required for implementation and reducing re-work caused by deficiencies and defects
 - C. Access to and analysis of a Business Knowledge-Base for predicting and mitigating impacts of proposed changes

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II. **Create Value** – Value for Customers, Shareholders, Community, Posterity, etc.

- A. Strategy development employing business ecosystem analysis (including competitive analysis) for creating value especially for customers but also considering shareholders, community, staff, posterity, etc.
- B. Employment of an assemble-to-order production capability for rapidly creating customized products/services in response to market demand
- C. Access to and analysis of a Business Knowledge-Base for research and innovation in business policies, inventories, processes, distribution networks, responsibilities, and timing cycles, always keeping in mind stakeholders in the business ecosystem as well as within the business itself

III. **Implement Business Strategies** – Ensure Business Operations Implement the Business' Strategic Intentions

- A. Business strategy decisions and policies explicitly recorded and interpreted to ensure accurate transformation and realization of strategic intentions in practice
- B. All business changes recorded in the Business Knowledge-Base and aligned with business strategies to ascertain impact and develop appropriate adaptations
- C. Technology and other resource developments and implementations to enforce business policy decisions and to detect policy violations in business operations for appropriate action

IV. **Provide Security** – Physical and Cyber Security for People and Property

- A. Analysis of internal and external role assignments and role authorizations to permit viewing, accessing, using, changing (etc.) proprietary business knowledge or business resources including data, business processes, business properties (facilities, technology, etc.)
- B. Physical isolation and security protection for people, intellectual property, and other valued assets as appropriate
- C. Protection against cyber-attacks and other threats to customer and other proprietary information and knowledge for which the business has fiduciary responsibility

V. **Assure Sustainability** – Sustainability in the Context of Business Ecosystem Changes

- A. Continuous analysis of the external ecosystem for critical opportunities and threats and analysis of internal strengths and weaknesses in relation to those opportunities and threats (SWOT)
- B. Continuous assessment of the Business Knowledge-Base to identify and develop appropriate investments and courses of action and to acquire appropriate resources to address SWOT
- C. Continuous observation and monitoring of all Business Imperatives to ensure conformance in practice

VI. **Manage Business Risk** – Risk of Loss of Money, Customers, Assets, Good Will, Credit, Compliance, etc.

- A. Business design for eliminating, mitigating or avoiding materially uncontrolled risks including potential inconsistencies due to weaknesses in processes, policies and business rules
- B. Removing redundancies business-wide that could lead to lack of traceability, vulnerabilities or liabilities if/when discovered by external agencies including government, customers, plaintiffs, etc.
- C. Analysis of Business Knowledge-Base to discover logic flaws or inconsistencies in business designs, to uncover their root causes, and to develop and implement appropriate solutions or mitigations

VII. **Encourage Appropriate Innovation or Control** – Balance Disruption vs. Optimization

- A. Adjustment to the system of management to encourage open innovation (creativity, decentralization of design decisions) and/or to encourage optimization (control, centralization of design authority) in the areas of business design, product and service development, business strategy and policies, etc.
- B. Access to and analysis of the Business Knowledge-Base to identify the impact of proposed changes and development of specific plans for program management and change assimilation

VIII. Enable Collaboration – Collaboration Internally Within the Business as well as Externally with Other Businesses

- A. Attention to extending the scope of business design to include all participants involved in delivering the value of an extended value chain to the ultimate customers/markets
- B. Access to and analysis of the Business Knowledge-Base to identify potential and required interactions among business units of independent responsibility in order to assure optimal design of the entire network to support complementary operations
- C. Seamless, sustainable innovation and creation of products and services by independent, collaborating business units while preserving value for recipients of those products and services under changing conditions

IX. Optimize Resources – Identify/Qualify Investment Alternatives and Maximize Resource Utilization through Sharing and Reuse

- A. External business ecosystem assessment and Business Knowledge-Base analysis to identify, qualify and quantify investment candidates that best fulfill the goals of the business strategy and best close any performance gaps
- B. Componentization and design of resources for reusability in diverse implementations to reduce development costs, risks, redundant effort, and time required for implementing business change
- C. Establishment of the mechanisms and ability to measure, monitor and easily adapt operational work, business rules, and supporting capabilities in near real-time operating conditions

X. Manage Knowledge – Manage Business Knowledge for Knowledge Advantage

- A. Incremental accumulation and iterative refinement of the set of business definitions, descriptions and rules, the business knowledge required for communicating and managing how the business works
- B. Analyzing how the business can optimally be changed for innovation, improvement, risk mitigation, cyber security, resource allocation, competitive advantage, etc.
- C. Understanding the impact of changes in policy, processes, business rules, resources, and other mechanisms required to make optimal change decisions