

Insight Paper

The Agility Shift: Creating Agile and Effective Leaders, Teams, and Organizations

Author: Sreekanth K. Arimanithaya

Co-Author : Mansha Garella

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Executive Summary

In today's volatile business environment, the **Agility Shift** emphasizes building **Holistic Competence**—a combination of mindset, skillset, and toolset—to create agile leaders, teams, and organizations. By fostering adaptability, innovation, and responsiveness, this framework enables organizations to thrive amid uncertainty. Key elements include the **Three Cs**—Competence, Capacity, and Confidence—ensuring teams are equipped to navigate disruptions effectively. Agile organizations align purpose with action, empowering employees, driving engagement, and achieving sustainable growth in a rapidly changing landscape.



Holistic Competence: The Pillars of Agility

Mindset

The foundation for navigating disruption, mindset shapes attitudes and responses to challenges, driving growth and transformation.

Skillset

Key in stable times, skillsets ensure operational efficiency and reliable performance through expertise and knowledge.

Toolset

Toolsets enable strategy execution with modern tools and techniques, enhancing adaptability and productivity.

Importance of Agility

Navigating Uncertainty

Agility enables organizations to adapt effectively to rapid changes and unpredictable challenges in dynamic environments.

Sustaining Competitiveness

Agile organizations pivot faster than competitors, turning disruptions into opportunities for growth and innovation.

Building Resilience

Agility strengthens an organization's ability to recover from setbacks and transform challenges into long-term success.

Fostering Innovation

By embracing creativity and experimentation, agility allows organizations to innovate and maintain leadership in their markets.

Engaging Teams

Agility enhances collaboration, accountability, and alignment within teams, driving purpose and performance.

**AI IS NOT THE FUTURE OF TECHNOLOGY
IT'S THE TECHNOLOGY OF TODAY THAT'S SHAPING OUR FUTURE.**

The Core of Agility

COMPETENCY

The Foundation of Agility

The skills, knowledge, and expertise required to navigate and respond effectively to unplanned events.

CAPACITY

Sustaining Agility Under Pressure

The ability to operate effectively in uncertain and volatile conditions without burnout or compromise.

CONFIDENCE

The Catalyst for Action

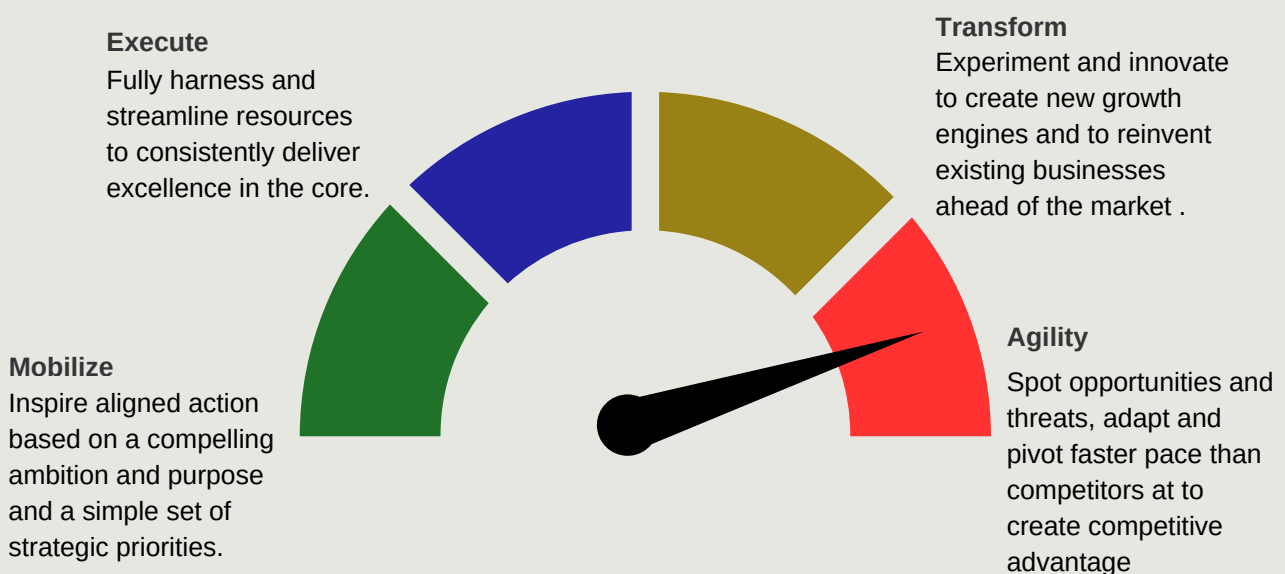
Trust in one's own abilities and in the collective capability of the team to respond to challenges effectively.



The Three C's of Agility

The Three Cs of Agility—Competence, Capacity, and Confidence—are critical drivers of organizational success in a volatile world. Enabling these pillars ensures that your workforce is not just prepared to survive but equipped to lead and innovate in the face of change

M+E+T+A Model



“Are you building these enablers into your organization’s DNA?”

The Drive factors

When teams go right

Mobilize



Customer First

Teams: Customer-led decision making, joined-up service across teams.



Energizing Leadership

Teams: Focused, aligned, proactive, compelling.



Clarity

Teams: Shared purpose, agreed priorities, and trade offs.



Execute



Simplicity

Teams: Efficient project governance, clear lines of authority, targeted metrics.



Ownership

Teams: Individual and collective accountability, proactive support, and challenge.



Winning Capabilities

Teams: Best talent in key roles, synergy between team members.



Transform



Innovation

Teams: Seek new ideas from multiple sources, fail and learn fast.



Challenge

Teams: High-quality debate, embrace paradox, ability to rupture and repair relationships.



Collaboration

Teams: Collective ownership, sharing, and transparency.



Agility



Agility

Teams: Execution bias, change orientation, active learning.

When teams go wrong

Mobilize



Internal Focus

Teams: No shared ownership for resolving service failures



Fatigue

Teams: Reluctance to step up, minimal effort, slow progress.



Confusion

Teams: Lack of shared purpose; competing agendas.



Execute



Complexity

Teams: Poor integration between projects and metrics, complicated decision processes.



Unclear Accountability

Teams: Missed deadlines and deliverables, blaming others.



Skills Gaps

Teams: Weak team members, poor succession pipeline.



Transform



Fear Teams

Waiting to be told what to do, lack of experimentation



Complacency Team

Avoidance of conflict; group-think, acceptance of mediocre thinking, arrogance.



Competition Teams

In-fighting, silos, competing agendas.



Agility



Inertia

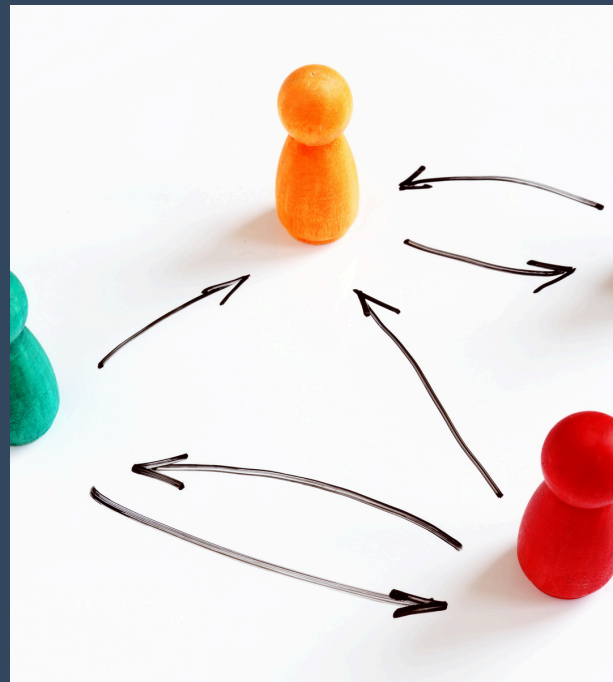
Teams: Lack of urgency, old solutions to new problems.

The Relational Web

Building Connections for Organizational Agility

The Relational Web is a conceptual framework that highlights the interconnected capabilities and dynamics required for organizational agility. It emphasizes relationships and interactions—both within teams and across broader organizational ecosystems—that enable resilience, adaptability, and sustained success in complex and changing environments.

The Relational Web ensures that organizations are not only agile in their systems and processes but also in their human connections and interactions. It helps bridge silos, enhance cross-functional collaboration, and create a culture where adaptability and learning are embedded into everyday operations.



Key Pillars of the Relational Web

Relevance

Aligning values, goals, and efforts with purpose to maintain focus and engagement.

Responsiveness

Aligning values, goals, and efforts with purpose to maintain focus and engagement.

Resilience

Recovering and thriving during crises, transforming setbacks into growth.

Resourcefulness

Maximizing available resources creatively and efficiently to overcome constraints.

Reflection.

Continuously learning from past experiences to improve future strategies

Characteristics



Trust and Safety

Enables open communication and risk-taking without fear of negative consequences.



Interconnectedness

Builds dynamic relationships across teams and functions for collaboration.



Flexibility

Allows quick reconfiguration to adapt to new challenges or opportunities.



Shared Purpose

Aligns relationships with common goals and organizational vision.



Communication Flow

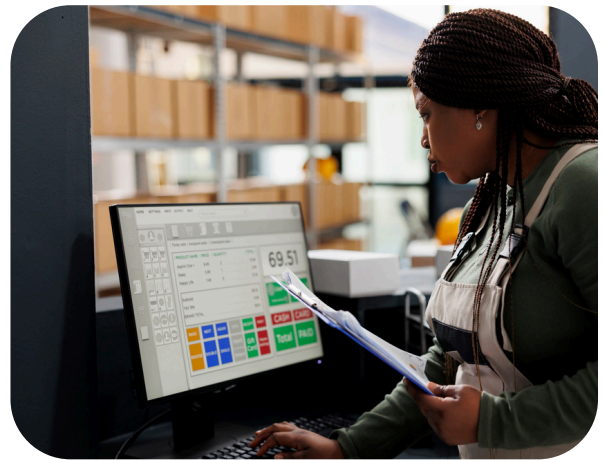
Maintains transparent, continuous dialogue and feedback for agility.

Case Study

Ericsson: Resilience in Action

The Challenge: Supply Chain Vulnerability Exposed

In 2000, a fire at Philips' Albuquerque plant disrupted chip supply for Ericsson, which failed to react swiftly, leading to production delays, financial losses, and a 3% market share decline. Meanwhile, Nokia secured alternative suppliers and gained 3% market share. This highlighted the importance of agility, diversified sourcing, and resilience in supply chains.



What Went Wrong? A Deeper Look

Underestimation of Risk

Ericsson initially viewed the disruption as minor, delaying action.

Lack of Agility

Slow internal decision-making processes compounded the impact.

Supplier Over-Reliance

Dependence on a single supplier amplified the crisis.

Lessons Learned from Failure

Agility Wins

Quick decisions are critical during crises.

Diversification Reduces Risk

Spread supply chains across multiple suppliers and geographies.

Preparedness is Essential

Proactive risk planning minimizes disruption.

Ericsson's Transformation

Diversified Supply Chain

Reduced reliance on single suppliers and developed contingency plans.

Agility Focus

Empowered teams to act quickly in crises through simulations and planning.

Resilience Investment

Strengthened risk management and early-warning systems.

Impact

Improved crisis readiness and operational agility.

Enhanced competitiveness in a volatile market.

Resilience became a strategic advantage.

Takeaway

Agility, diversification, and preparedness are essential for resilience in an unpredictable world.

Case Study

Mightybytes Inc.

Strategic Shift: From Growth to Purpose

Mightybytes transitioned from transactional services to a purpose-driven business model, integrating B Corporation certification and sustainability into operations.

Key Actions

- Aligned problem-solving with ESG standards.
- Partnered with like-minded organizations.
- Embedded sustainability in all projects.



Insights for Leaders

- Align purpose-driven strategies to unlock market relevance.
- Foster long-term growth through sustainability.

Outcomes

Market Relevance

Competitive edge by aligning services with client needs.

Loyalty

Purpose-driven alignment enhances customer and employee loyalty.

Sustainability Leadership

Balances profitability with social impact.

Takeaway

Purpose-driven strategies ensure relevance, innovation, and leadership.

UPS: A Masterclass in Resourcefulness

Global logistics leader with 500,000 employees delivering millions of packages in 200+ countries.

Key Strategies

Culture of Ownership

Fosters resilience and adaptability.

Innovation

Data-driven operations ensure growth.

Sustainability Focus

Uses eco-friendly methods, drones, and EVs.

Global Impact

Seamless Trade: Facilitates global commerce in 220+ countries.

Precision Delivery: 16M packages daily with advanced tracking.

Fleet Excellence: 125,000+ vehicles and 815 airports.

Takeaway

Agility, diversification, and preparedness are essential for resilience in an unpredictable world.

Lessons from Agile Development Teams



From Waterfall to Sprints Waterfall

Sequential development delays and resists change.
Agile Sprints: Smaller increments provide quick value and allow continuous improvement (e.g., Google's Chrome team updates every six weeks).



From Command and Control to Self-Organization

Agile teams abandon traditional hierarchies.
Those doing the work decide what gets done and how.



Work at a Sustainable Pace and Capacity

Agile teams ensure sustained focus and engagement through regular reflection.



Rapid Prototyping

Agile teams create quick prototypes for real-world feedback, avoiding costly errors (e.g., IDEO in design thinking).



From False Security to Anxious Confidence

Agile teams thrive on a mix of anxiety (prepared for the unexpected) and confidence (relying on skills, goals, and networks)



Create an Agile Manifesto for Your Team

Follow principles like continuous delivery, welcoming change, motivated individuals, and sustainable development

CONCLUSION

In today's fast-changing and uncertain environments, agility is not merely an option but a necessity for sustainable success. The Agility Shift underscores the critical importance of fostering competence, capacity, and confidence within individuals, teams, and organizations. By embracing agility, leaders and teams can navigate complexity, respond proactively to disruptions, and seize emerging opportunities. The key takeaways highlight the importance of adaptive leadership, resilient systems, resourcefulness, and reflective practices to drive innovation and maintain relevance. Successful organizations prioritize purpose-driven strategies, dynamic interactions, and continuous improvement, enabling them to thrive amidst volatility. By embedding these principles into their culture, businesses can transform challenges into opportunities and secure long-term growth.

Agility is the foundation for acceleration, fostering not just survival but the ability to lead and innovate in a competitive world. The time to make the shift is now—begin with clarity, collaboration, and an unwavering commitment to adaptability.



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