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Elements of Transparency

BUSINESS INSIGHTS

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When I think of integrity, the first thing that pops into my head is transparency. At Clientek, we believe transparency is one of the most important factors in forging a long-term relationship with our customers. We want them to see our successes and our mistakes, but most of all, we want them to see how we fix those mistakes. In order to do that, we've identified four elements that allow us to operate successful, transparent development teams. One is relatively difficult while the other three are quite simple.

The first element, and I would argue the most difficult element, is creating an environment in which people are comfortable making mistakes and be wrong. Without this atmosphere, no other process or technique can help build transparency. If people are scared to admit their mistakes or ask for help, they will have a difficult time being transparent with customers or leaders. Does your organization have such an environment? A few simple questions you can

ask yourself are: how did I reacted the last time I or my subordinate screwed up? Was the immediate focus on how to resolve the situation or was it to assess blame?

If you believe you have achieved this sort of environment, then an easy, yet powerful, first step to increasing transparency is a daily standup meeting. During this discussion, simply ask each team member to talk about what they've accomplished since your last meeting and what they plan to do tomorrow. These two questions give everyone a comprehensive understanding of what people have on their plate and what they may need help with. It also generates a clear understanding of what progress has been made thus far.

The second easy element: instead of asking for progress reports or project status, ask your teams to show you what they've done. In some cases, you may find you need to make changes to your decomposition to make this work, but I assure you it is well worth it to be able to demonstrate

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progress. This ability to demonstrate progress gives everyone a much clearer picture of what has been completed and what has not.

Last, but certainly not least, do everything together (as a team). Plan together, execute together and demonstrate together. This way, you mitigate misunderstandings and miscommunications between your team and any other teams you work with. Of course, this does not mean I’m suggesting you have an all-day 75 person planning meeting. I mean that your team (5-7 folks) can do these things together and in turn they will create a better plan that they can execute faster and deliver with higher quality, all in a predictable manner!

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