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Changing Perception

PART 5: DELIVERY

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Over the past few weeks, I have written about how to change the perception of your delivery teams within your organization. By rebuilding **confidence**, enhancing **predictability**, becoming more **transparent**, and working on the quality of your **estimates**. Through these practices your teams can begin to change the business units' perceptions.

The tactics we've discussed thus far are important and will go a long way in rebuilding the trust in your organization, as well as aligning the business and technology teams to be anchored in achieving common goals. While all these things are incredibly important, one item still stands out amongst the rest: delivery.

Project complexities, challenges, and requirement changes are inevitable on any project. The tools outlined in previous articles will help to set expectations, smooth discussions with stakeholders, and provide transparent updates amongst teams. At the end of the day though, the team must deliver

high-quality, working software that meets the needs of the business.

We have all seen projects that take months (or years) to deliver any value at all. Sometimes those projects go so far off the rails that they never deliver anything, being relegated to the cancelled pile and written off as failures. Teams can easily get themselves into "release fear" mode, thinking that if everything that has been asked for is not yet complete, they shouldn't release anything. Sometimes, we see teams trying to continually polish the output, afraid to even show it to anyone before they feel it is ready.

We take a different approach and push our clients to adopt it as well. Teams should be delivering early and often - showing in-progress work as it gets completed. While this "seeing the sausage made" approach can be uncomfortable for some clients at first, we find that it provides too many benefits to not do it this way.

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- Jesse LaDousa

First, stakeholders see the missteps that teams take. While this may seem like a negative thing, it is beneficial. Although missteps are visible, so is the reaction of the team to correcting it. Again, transparency plays in our favor here. Allowing the stakeholders to see the team react, correct course, and get on track builds confidence.

Secondly, real time feedback on delivered product is infinitely valuable. Seeing in-progress work, using the application, and reacting to the implementation as it's being built allows for quick directional changes. Updates and re-prioritization of features ensures that the highest value items are being delivered at all times.

Lastly, getting product out the door quickly allows the stakeholders to start realizing the value of their investment sooner. Instead of waiting months for a full suite of features, allow the business to begin using the product early to take advantage of a subset of features with follow on releases to increase functionality. You will never get more relevant feedback than when a user can interact with the system.

Managing communication, transparency, and perception are all important but delivery is still the key.

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