



The innovator's guide to

# AGILE THINKING

Getting your people to understand and embrace agile behaviour is the best way to ensure that your processes deliver improved operational efficiency.

#10 IN A SERIES

## What is it?

**Agile thinking is a highly collaborative, flexible and resourceful approach to problem-solving that adapts well to the challenges of digital transformation. When enhanced by new technology and processes, agile mindsets come up with the useful ideas that deliver improvements in operational efficiency and capital discipline.**

Experimentation and 'freedom to fail' is all part of the agile mindset, along with a laser focus on delivering value to the customer. Learning from failure allows agile thinkers to find out rapidly what works and what doesn't, adding to the store of knowledge.

Agile thinking does not always come naturally to organisations with an established culture that goes back years. Winning the hearts and minds of staff is what enables agile thinking to spread and produce innovative solutions, which agile processes can then amplify.

## Why should I care?

**Agile mindsets enable your decision makers to think and act flexibly so that they can handle the constantly shifting objectives of the digitalised economy. Agile mindsets are needed to turn agile processes into the performance gains that every digital transformation aims to achieve.**

Innovation is driven by people supplying useful new ideas and solutions. Processes and technology facilitate these ideas, then add leverage to the decisions that are made. It therefore makes sense to nurture and encourage the human potential in your team, as well as providing them with the digital tools they need to enhance operational efficiency.

Your objectives of innovation and continuous improvement depend almost entirely on your staff successfully embracing agile thinking in a spirit of enthusiasm, openness and collaboration.

## What can I do about it?

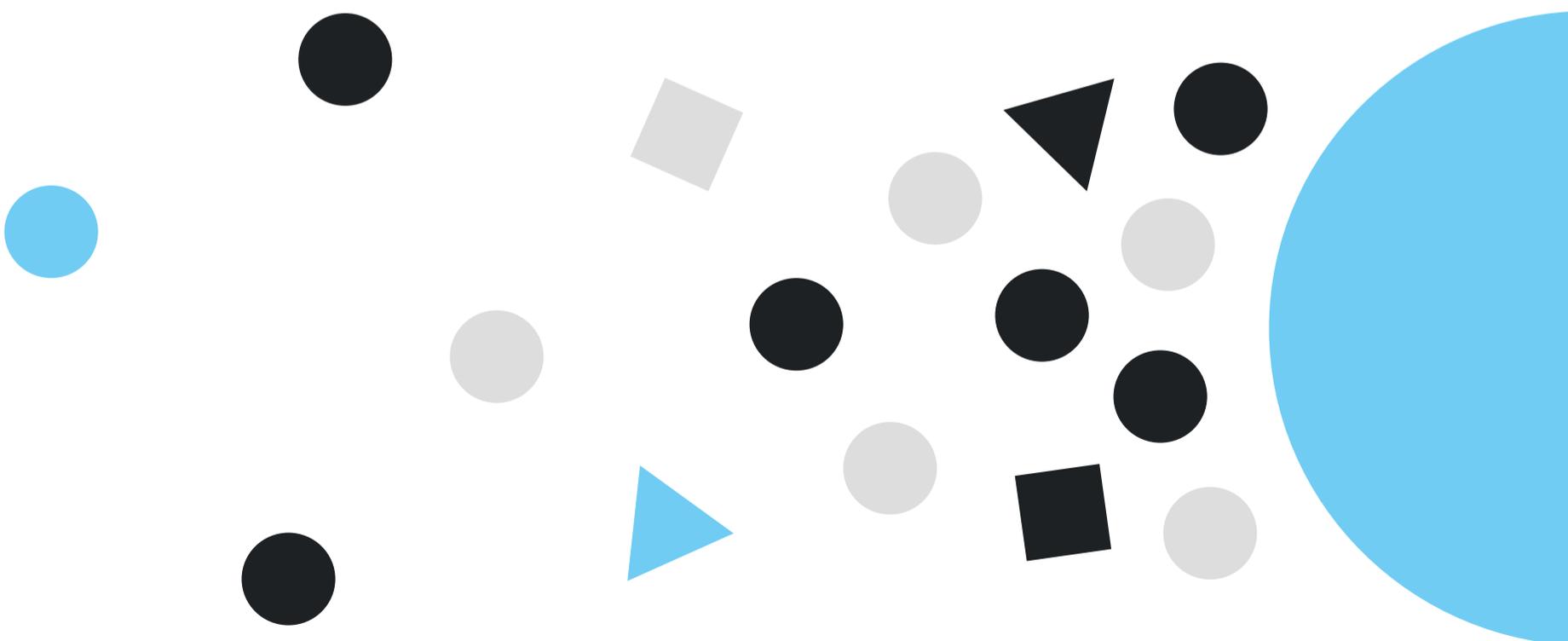
Don't assume that staff will simply 'fall in line' when you introduce new agile processes. Use training and practice to ensure that staff understand and hopefully embrace a new way of working.

# 01

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## GET THEM TO ENGAGE

Pay attention to each key individual's personal development. Explain how agile methods can maximise their talents and get their ideas implemented. Acting on their feedback will give them a sense of ownership.



# 02

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## ALLOCATE ROLES CAREFULLY

Team dynamics can make or break successful collaboration. Cross-functional teams inevitably throw together different personalities and skillsets. How they interact under pressure is affected by who you put in which roles. So you need to profile each individual carefully to achieve the best outcome.

# 03

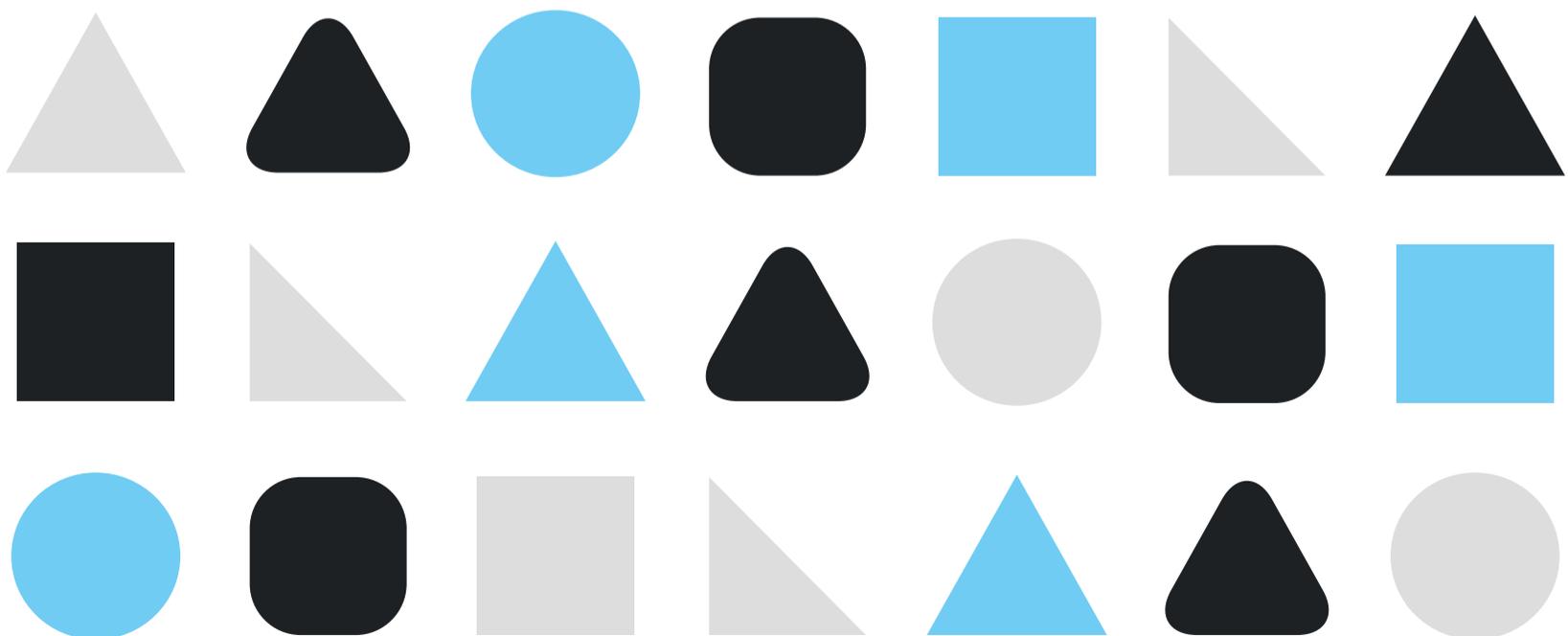
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## GIVE THEM AUTONOMY

Teams need to discover for themselves how agile thinking can make their jobs more rewarding and effective. So let them discover a team dynamic that works for them and give them a measurable metric of success. Encourage them to acknowledge mistakes as a way of improving, and authorise them to fix problems however they see fit.

## Innovator's checklist

- ▶ Identify the individuals outside senior management who have the standing and influence to lead by example and spread agile behaviour. Usually these individuals aren't high profile but know 'how things get done' in the business. Gaining their support will help overcome covert resistance that might otherwise undermine your organisation's agile transformation.
- ▶ Agile behaviour is based on transparency, iteration and non-hierarchical habits. So share information, learn from feedback whatever its source, and be prepared to change your mind.
- ▶ Don't lose sight of the unique values of the business in your efforts to drive agile transformation. When work becomes fun, it's a sign that the team is working.



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