

Transforming IT at Steelcase: An Agile Case Study

Leadership + Communication



“As leaders, we needed to change how we worked with our teams and how we worked with our business partners outside of IT to help them understand agile and how it changes the way we prioritize, approach and deliver projects.”

STEVE MILLER | Steelcase CIO

As teams change how they work and where they work, leaders must take an active role in helping to change behavior and culture inside and outside their core. In an agile environment, leadership shifts from directing to enabling, from telling to empowering, and from creating boundaries to eliminating roadblocks.

In order for agile to be successful, leaders participated in workshops to consider how their own behaviors should evolve to help their teams reach desired outcomes.

KEY LEARNINGS INCLUDE:

Communicating differently

Respond to issues in-the-moment with less polish and more authenticity.

Empowering people

Those with knowledge on key topics are empowered to influence and decision making is distributed. Teams are empowered to direct their own work and provide each other with feedback.

Avoiding silos

Promote the development of skills and more fluidity in moving from one job to the next by cross-training team members and focus on breaking down 'towers of knowledge.' More flexibility helps in getting more work done.

Leading as a guide

The leader acts as coach to a team that is both enabled with skills and empowered to implement them in creating value for the customer.

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