Closing the Gap Between Business & IT
Smart practices the key to successful collaboration
Agneta Jacobson
Ericsson’s former CEO, Carl-Henrik Svanberg is quoted:

”about 80% of Ericsson’s R&D costs are related to software development”

And says that he believes that as a consequence:

”Ericsson is the fifth largest software development companies in the world”

Source: Ny Teknik 2008-05-14
Partnership through shared practices – the only way forward!
Agenda

- How Practices Close the Gap
- What Makes a Good Practice?
- Practices for Successful Collaboration
- Wrap Up
Isn’t it obvious how to play together?
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Surely they just need to understand one another and know about each others processes?
So how do they learn about each other?

- Often contradictory or in violent agreement!
- Hard to find the real nuggets of information
- Difficult for ‘mortals’ to put into practice
- Advice from different communities can’t be combined
Could we break the knowledge into bite-sized chunks…

- Untangle process into independent practices
  - A practice provides a way to systematically and verifiably address a specific problem or issue.
  - It has a clear goal and a way of measuring success.
  - A practice is an end to end thread
- That make the important knowledge accessible
- And focus on the touch points between teams and individuals

…and focus on the key knowledge needed to help the people involved learn how to work together?
Let’s be realistic…..

…there are 100’s of different practices
There are different kinds of practices...

Specialist business practices that help the business do the business.

Shared practices that bridge the gap.

Specialist software development practices that help software developers develop good software.
...that need to come together....

The practices come together to form a collaborative way-of-working.

The practices support and complement each other rather than compete and interfere.

...to help people work together.
Smart with process, smart with practices

- Understand other people’s ways of working, and you will respect it
- Standardize the practices where people will work together
- Encourage collaboration and team working
- Share the touch points not the details
- Allow people to mix and match practices
- Optimize the whole not the parts

Without practices to bring people closer together you will never close the gap.
Agenda

• How Practices Close the Gap
• What Makes a Good Practice?
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A bit of organization…

- Competency / Skill set
- Key Concepts / Drivers
- Things To Do
- Things To Produce
The “Essentials” are in the cards

**Analyst**
- Applies Complementary Techniques
- Adapts Techniques
- Facilitates Discussions
- Builds Models
- Clearly Describes What’s Needed

**Find Actors and Use Cases**
- Opportunity
- Identified System
- Baseline

**Specified System**
- Conceived
- Shared
- Stable
- Correct
- Testable
- Fulfilled

**Use-Case Specification**
- Bulleted Outline
- Essential Outline
- Fully Described

**Key Concepts / Drivers**
- The specified system is the shared definition of the system to be developed.

- The specified system:
  - Is instrumental when agreeing on the system to be implemented
  - Captures the requirements of the system to be built
  - Traces requirements back to the opportunity and backfill items that gave rise to them
  - Is used to scope the development effort

**Essential Contents:**
- 1. n Use-Case Modules
- Described by:
  - Glossary
  - Feature List
  - Use-Case Model
  - Supplementary Requirements

**Use Case Notice**
- Individually may have different degrees of elaboration

**Recommended approaches:**
- Use-case modeling workshop
- Structure the use-case model
- Handle changes (e.g. use-case model)

**The activity is completed when:**
- The Use-Case Model is Established or beyond
- Use Case Specifications are Briefly Described or beyond
- Supplementary Requirements are Initiated

**The activity contributes to achieving:**
- Specified System is Shaped
- Use-Case Modules are Scoped

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The essentials are what bring people together

- People can appreciate each others expertise
- People without formal training can make a sensible start
- They create an awareness of the competencies and skills needed on the team
- They give structure to the knowledge within a specialism
- They bring specialisms together
Support is needed to bring the practices together

Kernel
The kernel defines a very small “empty process”

Practices “slot” into the common kernel.

Practice
Each practice contains practice-specifics to add to the kernel.

Way of Working
Individuals just need enough to get the job done
– Not the whole composed process
– Just the bits needed for the specific point in time
– Context sensitive to the problem at hand
– Focused on the essentials

Specialists just need enough to work together
– Not the whole composed process
– Just the touch points…
– …and the collaborative activities
– Focused on collaboration and team working
– Focused on bridging the gap

This is smart!
Remember even experts can do with guidance!

Especially when working with other experts from other areas 😊
Agenda

• What’s Needed to Close the Gap?
• What Makes a Good Practice?
• Practices for Successful Collaboration
• Wrap Up
We need practices that bridge the gap…
... and provide a recipe for business success

1. Build Trust by Making and Meeting Commitments
2. Speak the Same Language
3. Share the Same Objectives
4. Work Together
5. Enable Business Agility

This takes team work
There are many practices that could fill the gap

- Iterative Essentials
- Use-Case Essentials
- Product Essentials
- IT Business Dashboard
- Business Feature Teams
- Business Use-Case Essentials

We’ve found these to be the most effective.
• Most companies still follow the waterfall approach

This is unsmart!

Bus Modeling & Requirements

High-Level Design

Coding

Testing

Crash!
Iteration Essentials – Smart with Projects

• Build a skinny system to demonstrate that you have eliminated all critical risks
• Add more capabilities on top of that skinny system
• Show the business working software not technical specifications

Focus on producing working software.
Think big, build in many steps
Use-case Essentials – Smart with Requirements & Test

• Many managers (and customers) believe you can detail all requirements upfront...
  – ...and based on these you can predict the cost of the solution

• People specify too much requirements:
  – A high percentage (maybe more than 50%) will never ever be implemented nor tested - a lot of waste

• People specify test cases as a separate activity as an afterthought
  – Too late and too expensive
  – You do the same job twice – a lot of waste

It is beyond human ability to figure out all requirements upfront
Use-case Essentials - Smart with Requirements

• Specify, develop, test and validate
  – a little at a time,
  – starting from the essentials,
  – over and over again until your customers accept

• Base early decisions on lightweight use cases and detail as and when it is needed

• Remember requirements are negotiable and priorities will change

This is smart!

Your use cases are your test cases!
No-one seems to know where they’re going!

- Projects have no long-term plans
  - And no long-term funding
- Business plans and project plans aren’t synchronized
  - The right people are only available at the wrong time
- The business and IT have no long term partnership
  - Business and technical risks are not balanced

Remember: “There is no such thing as a favorable wind for a man who has no idea where he is going.”

Seneca 4BC – 65 AD
Product Essentials – Smart with Release Planning

• Understand the purpose and intention of each release
• Ensure the product addresses the real business needs
• Synchronize business and development plans
• Involve the right people at the right time
• Understand everybody's commitments

Collaborative release planning – the key to successful partnership

This is smart!
• People look at the wrong things:
  – Lots of quantitative, but few qualitative measures
  – Secondary rather than primary measures
  – Short-term rather than long-term measures
  – Focused on compliance rather than results

• And present them in the wrong way:
  – Confusing and contradictory data
  – Purpose is unclear, often telling people what they already know
  – Point data and not trends
  – Complex not intuitive presentation
  – Meaningful only to specialists

To close the gap the business needs to know when you are doing well.
IT Business Dashboard – Smart with Measures

• Look at what’s important:
  – Better
  – Faster
  – Cheaper
  – Happier

• And present it intuitively:
  – Eliminate seasonal fluctuations
  – Graphs with obvious trends
  – Simple meters for compliance
  – Focused on results
  – Both quantitative and qualitative
  – Use the language of the business

Communicate the effectiveness of IT in a way that everybody can understand.
• People force the business and IT apart:
  – They set up rival business and IT teams
  – They have cross-functional development teams but include no more than one customer rep
  – They blame and re-work each others work products
  – They erect walls and fences between each other

To close the gap
business and IT should be one team.
Business Feature Teams – Smart With Business Change

• Bring all the skills necessary to make the change into one cross-functional team:
  – Marketing
  – Product Design
  – Software Development
  – Financial
  – Business Process Experts

• Line everybody up behind one goal…
  …to improve the business

Going beyond agile software development to enable agile business development.
Two extremes:

Mr Technology

No business model, no requirements, just solutions

Mr Business Architect

Thou shalt model everything until it’s one person, one place, one time.

This is unsmart!

Traditional business modeling re-inforces the gap.
Business Use-Case Essentials – Smart with Business Modeling

• Lean business modeling and business design
• Avoid activity diagrams – “activity diagrams just float around in the semantic emptiness”
• Just model the bits of the business that are being changed
• Ensure that the business and IT understand the context and impact of their solutions
• Identify increments of business change so change can be made early and often
• Consider the potential of the new technologies when we are modeling the new business

This is smart!

An agile approach to business modeling. Evolving business understanding alongside the development of the supporting systems.
## Practices that get to the heart of the problem

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Agenda

• What Gap?
• The Real Role of IT
• What’s Needed to Close the Gap
• Practices for Successful Collaboration

• Wrap Up
Partnership through shared practices – the only way forward!

1. Two teams separated by their way-of-working.
2. Two teams using shared practices to work together.
3. A single team united by shared objectives, shared practices, and shared results.

It’s the only smart thing to do.
IT is a competitive advantage!
The role of IT and the IT manager

• Make IT an integral part of all business units.
• Give the CIO a seat at the executive management table.
• Choose a technically competent CIO.
• Let IT be responsible for an improved business process network.
• Let IT work strategically with technology to find solutions, stimulating creativity and innovation.
• Recruit key people who have business sense.
• Communicate in business terms and not in technology terms.
• Stimulate cooperation!
Thank You!

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