How to Teach Agile to Anyone & Have Fun Doing It

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Disclaimer: The opinions here are my own and I am not speaking on behalf of IBM
Agile instruction vs learning

Adult learning science + real world experience + fun activities
Treat them like children
Treat them like students
Treat them like adults
College students can’t go more than 10 minutes before daydreaming.

“A 2015 study showed the average attention span to be 8 seconds.”

“The true scarce commodity is increasingly human attention.”

– Satya Nadella, Microsoft CEO
Take breaks

- Give them breaks every 90 min
- Keep them fed & caffeinated
- Vary methods & media – lecture, video, discussion
- Limit the lecture to 20-30 min
Tell stories

- Human memory is tied to emotion
- Information conveyed as stories is 6-7x more memorable than facts alone
- Weave real-world stories into your classes
Play games

- Game-based learning increases knowledge retention and assessment scores
- Incorporate games into your classes and workshops
- Check out TastyCupcakes.org
Treat them like children

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Adults learn by doing

![Retention of Learning Pyramid]

- **Receiving**: Reading, Lecture (<20%)
- **Participating**: Audiovisual, Discussion, Demonstration (20% - 75%)
- **Learning by Doing**: Play, Exercises, Immediate practicing (>75%)
- **To work with a coach**: >75%
Let them get behind the wheel

- Reinforce every concept with a follow-on activity
- Examples: wall of work, retrospective, team teach
- “Watch me, guide me, let me”
- Nudge the skeptics
Use Agile simulations

• Use fictional scenarios for complex activities – cognitive overload is real

• Throw in some real-life complications

• Make it fun
Treat them like students

Introduce then apply
Watch me, guide me, let me
Use fictional simulations
Treat them like children
Treat them like students
Treat them like adults
Experience provides the basis for adult learning.

Learning should be relevant and applicable to their job.

For adults, motivation to learn is internal.

Malcolm Knowles, 1984
Make it meaningful

- Encourage sharing experiences – it’s better coming from a peer
- Establish the ‘why’ up front
- Teams that work together, learn together & apply it together
Use activities to manage skeptics

- Acknowledge motivations, elephants and prisoners with Hopes and Fears activity
- Address “yeah buts” by leaving them motivated and energized
- Know when to ELMO – the parking lot is your friend
Treat them like adults

Foster internal motivation
Acknowledge experiences
Make it meaningful
Treat them like children
Treat them like students
Treat them like adults
Questions?
References

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