

Can I Change my Organization?

Prepared for ACCU 2018
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Who am I?

Software developer since 1994

Freelance developer 1996-2003

Programmer at MeVis Medical Solutions AG, Bremen
since 2003

Programmer and development manager since 2004

Member of ACCU conference committee since 2016

Who is OK with the all the
things in her/his company?

Who is **not** OK with the all the
things in his/her company?

What are potential problems?

- Processes / Regulations
- Diversity
- Mutual understanding
- Craftsmanship

What might blocks getting rid of the problem(s)?

- Tradition
- Fear of change
- Comfort
- Lack of knowledge / training

How to change other's behaviour?

[...] So, Robert [Martin], could you give me an advice how I could motivate my team more to try something new, that it does not hurt to learn something new? [...]

Private email from Robert C. Martin:

Yes, people ask me all the time how they can convince their coworkers to behave more professionally. As you have noticed, people do not like to change. They fear change. And they resent being told what to do.

*My answer is always the same. **You can't convince others to do what you don't do yourself. So you must be a role model. You must do the things that you ask the others to do. And you must do them every time without fail.***

Some of the others will notice and may start to adopt some of your methods. Others will not. Over time, those who do not will become uncomfortable, and leave. Then you can hire others who are more attuned to your values.

*I wish I could tell you that there was some simple way to get everyone to adopt the disciplines and values that we think are important; but the sad fact is that's not how things work. **Changes like this take a long time. But never fear that they will be made -- they will. Over time the older habits fade away, and the newer values grow to dominate.***

How to be a model?

- Code/ behave the better way, always
- Suggest improvements in code reviews
- Bring your own books to the office and/or start ordering books; setup a book shelf at a prominent place
- Start a tradition of Dev-Talks in your group; invite other groups
 - Use videos by a famous speaker from conferences as an introduction to your talk
 - Encourage others to speak as well
 - Provide an environment that helps those to get over their fear to speak in front of a group
- Encourage others to visit conferences and let them report from it

Is there more?

Convince your management that everybody shall have the possibility to spend 10-20% of her work time in private projects

As our business grows, it becomes increasingly necessary to delegate responsibility and to encourage men and women to exercise their initiative. This requires considerable tolerance. Those men and women, to whom we delegate authority and responsibility, if they are good people, are going to want to do their jobs in their own way. Mistakes will be made. But if a person is essentially right, the mistakes he or she makes are not as serious in the long run as the mistakes management will make if it undertakes to tell those in authority exactly how they must do their jobs. Management that is destructively critical when mistakes are made kills initiative. And it's essential that we have many people with initiative if we are to continue to grow.

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William McNight, CEO 3M, 1948

Q & A

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