# EPILOGUE
Sample Content

This is a free sample from the book 'The Five Tantras of Enterprise Agility' by *Paramu Kurumathur, PM Power Consulting*. Find here a ready-reckoner extracted from the Epilogue of the book, of key things to take care of to be truly 'Agile' and a list of Amber signals to watch out for during the Agile Transformation journey.

For more insights on Enterprise Agility, purchase the book. Visit https://pm-powerconsulting.com/the-five-tantras-of-enterprise-agility/
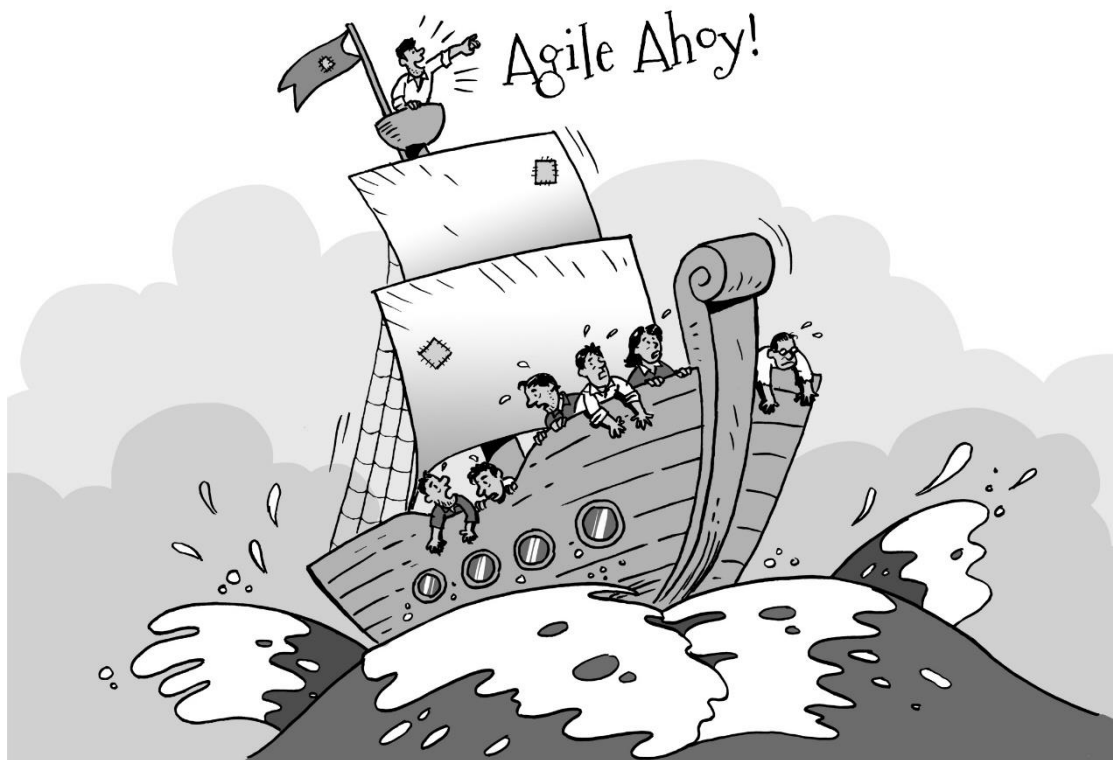
"During my discussions with your management and working teams, some key things stood out. To 'be' truly Agile, you have to:

- Have a change in mindset so that Agile implementation is not seen as a means to improve brand and share value but as a way to improving customer outcomes and the satisfaction of associates and other stakeholders. Over the nearly two years that you have been progressing on the Agile transformation journey, mindsets and culture have changed to a large extent. But you need some more improvement here. For example, people having a sense of wonder, or teams being better aligned with the business vision, etc.

- Also, the organization needs to remember that associates are as important as customers and shareholders. Sometimes, when there is a customer exigency, associates tend to work, forgetting their own comforts and needs. This area of work-life balance of your associates is something you need to improve on.

- You have to keep in mind the fact that focus on customer outcomes through an Agile set-up needs self-organization as a key ingredient. The directed organization will militate against being Agile. Self-organization should become automatic in the organization. It should be coded into the genes.

- As part of being Agile, associates and leaders should distinguish between their own goals and the organization's goals. Leaders, especially, should not be pushing their own agenda. Leaders, at any level, should give up their personal desire for success. It is always to be a shared success with the team. Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish between a leader's desire for success and the team's desire for success. Ideally, it should be the same.

- Associates should strive to reach ever-higher levels of EQ. This is very important. High levels of EQ allow for facilitative leadership and self-organized teams. Without high EQ, these two are impossible. And without these among the people, no organization can be truly Agile.

- Everyone should always be conscious of the changing environment and allow 'noble' thoughts to come to them from all sides. Associates should have a sense of wonder to look at, experiment with, and adapt new and disruptive ideas and innovations. Everyone should have the mental make-up to forget and discard old and obsolete knowledge and traditions.

- Cultivate a habit of trusting others and allowing others to trust you. This is a big part of being Agile. For one, leaders and managers should always do what they promise to do. This straightway builds trust among teams. For another, everyone

should consciously keep away from the practice of blaming others for their mistakes. They should treat failures as learning opportunities. The responsibility for their teams' mistakes should be taken by leaders. And leaders need to openly admit their own mistakes and the organization's mistakes. They should become role models for the teams.

- And finally, leaders should walk the talk. They have to show rather than tell. They have to be the change that they want to see in their teams and other associates. Without this, self-organization will not work.

"So, these are some of the values, principles, and leadership styles on which we still need to improve in for us to become truly Agile?"

"Yes. There are a few other things, too."

"What are these?"

"Most of these are what I thought were amber signals that flashed on your Agile journey. If you had taken care of these then, your journey would have been smoother and maybe even faster.

"Let me list the most important ones for you:

- Agile implementation should not be based on rigid plans. This would be completely anti-Agile. There needs to be flexibility for different departments and teams to move at their own pace.

- There should be an inclusive Agile environment. That is, customers, end-users, and other stakeholders should be made part of the Agile ecosystem. This will ensure continuous alignment with customers' and other stakeholders' needs.

- All teams should be completely aware of and aligned with the business of the organization. This will ensure that teams are developing products based on the customers' and end-users' actual needs.

- You have to recognize and reward customer-focused behaviour, actions, and solutions. This will ensure that your organization is always focused on customer outcomes.

- All associates should be empowered to take decisions within their area of influence. Leaders should then stand by the associates to celebrate the success of these decisions and to take responsibility for any failures.

- Managers should learn to not over-manage or under-manage self-organized teams. Leaders sometimes have to step in if a team wanders too much from their goals.

They will need to review and reverse certain decisions made by teams if they are way off goals. But, mind you, this should be the exception, rather than the rule.

- Another key aspect of the Agile journey is the Transformational Leadership paradigm. Your organization is quite good at this. But sometimes, when they feel there is a crunch, managers tend to switch to a directional style of leadership and interfere at the working level. This tendency needs to be completely weeded out of the organizational psyche, with some proviso made for the previous point.

- Your leaders should develop coaching styles that are consistent with this style of leadership. They must be agents of change rather than directors of change. This style of coaching empowers their teams. It also helps in identifying and developing potential leaders in the organization.

- Sometimes, the focus on hiring only those who fit into the new organizational culture inhibits you from getting top-class associates, who could have been hired and then easily trained to fit into the culture. Also, the opposite is important. Slackers and those who do not fit into the culture have to be dealt with as per the approved practices of the organization.

- You have to ensure that all your associates are sensitive to gender issues.

- As an organization that believes in experimentation and learning, it is important to educate teams and associates on developing hypotheses for experiments and validating them effectively.

- More work needs to be done to ensure that experimentation and learning and sharing of learning get better. The organization has to create an internal and external network for learning and sharing.

- It is important that the organization focuses on measuring and eliminating inefficiencies and waste, and not overly focus on measuring efficiency. You have to start accounting for 'wastes of omission'. You know, things like failing to utilize innovative ideas or valuable associates quitting.

- In addition to the above, teams need to focus on value creation / flow and removing constraints that affect the flow.

- Another key thing to keep in mind is that you will need some external experts as coaches in your transformation journey. Such a coach can help resolve rivalry among team members and facilitate interaction among team members. The coach can be a good listener and work with people to ensure that they are comfortable

with the new working environment. Being a mirror to associates to bounce off their ideas and fears, and observing teams and groups working and giving them unique perspectives are other important roles a coach can play. Some coaches also can bring technical expertise to the organization.

- And finally, remember to have 'Green IT'. It works towards waste reduction at the highest level through the implementation of policies for overall conservation, through reduced energy consumption and reduced carbon emission.