

Insurance Powerhouse Navigates Changing Market

The Challenge

An established insurer needed to adjust its business model and redefine products and services to survive in a changing market. To increase time to market without sacrificing quality, IT needed to undergo a major change in how projects were selected, conceived, and delivered. They had tried Agile but weren't getting the results they wanted.

The Solution

In the initial assessment of the client's lean/agile transformation, EBG discovered that the biggest bottlenecks for both discovery and delivery could be traced to story writing, acceptance tests, and product backlog. EBG trained and coached the teams, then worked one-on-one with analysts, testers and product owners to facilitate a backlog refinement workshop.

Highlighted improvements included:

- Use Kanban boards to quickly move stories from analysis to development
- Introduce specification by example and analysis models
- Identify test risks, cases and scripts using probing questions
- Clarify definition of ready & improve user story estimation and slicing
- Discover and document business rules
- Calibrate the level of detail for acceptance tests

"...Our team is not becoming frustrated by lack of progress or understanding, but instead is encouraged by the progress being made, which in turn leads to a more positive working environment."

~ Product Owner

The Results

The entire organization is using new discovery and delivery practices, which has increased the quality of delivered software and predictability of plans. Testers and analysts now play a leadership role by exemplifying to the developer and business communities how to effectively collaborate around agile requirements. Business owners are more tightly integrated into IT planning and analysis. All stakeholders have stronger relationships, more focused collaborative sessions, and are able to deliver features with higher quality, faster.

"We are not so focused on just filling in the story card, rather the story card is a by-product of the discussion. ... The 7 Product Dimensions approach is helping to focus the discussion."

~ Tech Lead