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Digital Agency Performance Metrics

Casey Cobb



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Business Track



Who am I? Why am I qualified to talk about this stuff?

- ❖ Co-founder of Project Ricochet
- ❖ Angel investor & co-founder of several startups
- ❖ Worn many hats and developed metrics for many industries over the past 15 years





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“What gets measured gets managed”

~ Peter Drucker



Let's start with some basic building blocks.

(none of which are technical)





The Three Signs of a Miserable Job

By Patrick Lencioni

1. Immeasurement
2. Irrelevance
3. Anonymity

These things keep people happy and turnover low.





What to avoid in metric design

Don't put too much pressure on one side of the wall.

For example:

- ❖ Potty training my kid
- ❖ Fulfilling ecommerce orders

Realize that people are usually doing the best they can. There might be deeper reasons as to why a metric isn't being achieved.

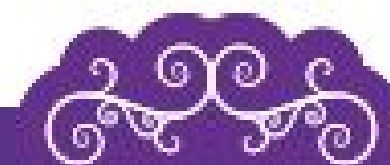
Metrics should promote discussion and communication to a solution!





How to think about developing metrics and a dashboard

- ❖ We are running a marathon, not a sprint. The iterative mindset is key.
- ❖ Start as simple if possible.
- ❖ Metrics are about improvement, not blame.
- ❖ Break everything down to the lowest common unit.





Interesting Realization

Who needs business school when you have a garbage disposal?

Small inefficiencies can have compounded & exponentially toxic effects on:

- ❖ Your team's happiness
- ❖ Your work product
- ❖ Your company profitability.





What is *Accidental Evil*?

When individuals make decisions that incur costs that the individual doesn't have to pay for.

When a small tweak to the approach can result in exponential returns.

(Google "Casey Cobb Accidental Evil" for a Medium blog post with more details)





Great! So what should I measure?

- ❖ What's not working right now? What keeps you up at night? **You** have the power to change the course of your job / life through metrics, regardless of your place in the organization.
- ❖ What's simplest to measure? Dev time can be a hard sell. Can you use tools like Zapier, IFTTT, or even **human beings**?

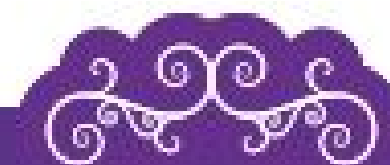




The Development Role, Part I

The metrics I measure

- ❖ Ticket Burn % (and why we cheat)
- ❖ Tickets without AC, estimates, user_story
- ❖ Zombie tickets
- ❖ Ticket re-opened rate





The Development Role, Part II

The metrics I measure

- ❖ Planned time accuracy
- ❖ Developer accuracy vs. team (w/data)
- ❖ Scheduled vs. actual accuracy





Interesting Realization

(Warning: This is probably particular to Ricochet. Don't get caught up on details!)

We were able to improve our estimate accuracy by digging into the data and correlating accuracy data with estimation data.

$\text{emp_accuracy} * (\text{emp_avg_estimate} / \text{team_avg_estimate}) = \text{adjusted accuracy}$

$$90\% * (2.7 \text{ hours} / 1.9 \text{ hours}) = 127\%$$

$$120\% * (1.5 \text{ hours} / 1.9 \text{ hours}) = 95\%$$





Project Management

The metrics I measure

- ❖ Problem tickets across all projects
- ❖ Status of tickets in workflow
- ❖ Team allocation across all projects
- ❖ Sprint tidiness
- ❖ Sprint completion %





Interesting Realization

Swiss Cheese model of fault tolerance:
it needs to be baked into the model.

How can we reinforce our culture and values through metrics?





Business Development

The metrics I measure

- ❖ Calendar accuracy (check out timelyapp.com!)
- ❖ Pipeline into the future
- ❖ Social media metrics





Agency Leadership

The metrics I measure

- ❖ Revenue targets being achieved?
- ❖ Worked vs. Scheduled (projects & team)
- ❖ PM Billable vs. Project %
- ❖ Team feedback per week
- ❖ Accidental Evil per week





How to implement this stuff

- ❖ **Dashboard tool:** Periscopedata.com (or alternative)
- ❖ Pull in all your data across all tools to a mysql db
 - PM software (we use JIRA)
 - Resource planning
 - CRM
 - Financial suite (we use Xero)



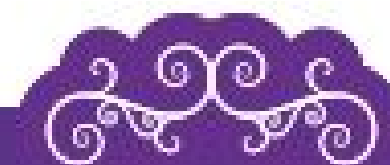


Tying it all together for maximum impact

- ❖ Weekly 30-minute one-on-ones
- ❖ Systemic Feedback
- ❖ Coaching for growth & improvement

[Learn more at managertools.com]

Don't forget: It's all about love.





Question + Answer

Questions?

Please reach out:

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Join us for Sprints

Friday, May 13 at the Convention Center

First-Time Sprinter Workshop - 9am-12pm in Room 271-273

Mentored Core Sprint - 9am-6pm in Room 275-277

General Sprints - 9am-6pm in Room 278-282



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So How Was It? - Tell Us What You Think

[Evaluate this session](#)



Thanks!