

llamatrix

by llamawerx

...an innovative solutions partner™

Don't tell me when it's due, I know how much work there is.

How many times have you heard that from your development staff? As a developer, how many times have you said something like that? As a project manager or technical lead, you call a meeting to try and resolve these different perspectives. Many times, these meetings break down, issues remain unresolved, and team morale sinks lower. To have an effective discussion, remember these ground rules.

Listen to the other person's explanation of the problem and don't interrupt until they finish. Until you understand the reasons behind the other person's point, you can't make informed decisions.

Check the sarcasm at the door. All it does is undermine the discussion. You may think it provides humor, but you're not Jay Leno. In the end, someone invariably gets hurt.

Validate your understanding. After you've listened to the other position, try reiterating it in your own words. See if you come to agreement on the stated position.

Stay cool. Getting into an argument helps no one and only serves to prolong the discussion. Take a deep breath and repeat after me, "We're all on the same team." Try counting to 10 and remember everyone has a different point of view.

Keep an open mind. If you make assumptions about the other person's perspective or think to yourself, "It's just Joe", you stop listening. Remember the first ground rule?

Negotiate. If you put a stake in the ground, not only do you fail to resolve the issue, but you leave yourself backed into the corner. Instead of saying "There's no way we can do that in 6 weeks" try stating positive alternatives. "We can complete feature x and y in 6 weeks. Feature z requires an additional 4 weeks." On the flip side, if you're the manager, ask what can be completed in the required time.

Customer requirements, new product deliveries, bug fixes... If you're working in product delivery, you're probably feeling stressed out with too much work and too little time. New demands on your overburdened schedule are likely to send you over the top. Remembering that everyone is on the same team, trying to reach the same goals is a start. Add in a few people principles and you'll feel better about your work and your job. Combine them altogether for a more successful team. Isn't that something that everyone wants?

llamawerx is an agile technology services group using proven and cutting-edge techniques to solve real-world problems. From concept to final integration, the power to succeed.

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