Going beyond Agile, becoming an antifragile organization

How to live (and thrive) in a world we don’t understand

Angelo Caruso, 2014
Wind is blowing stronger and stronger...
Actions…

- *Wait and hope* -> *Fragility*;
Actions...

- *Wait and hope* -> *Fragility;*
- *Build strong walls* -> *Robustness;*
Actions…

- *Wait and hope* -> *Fragility*;
- *Build strong walls* -> *Robustness*;
- *Build Windmills* -> *Antifragility!*
Fragile all in all means

- Something, let’s say a glass, is subject to stressful events;
- Its robustness diminishes over time through wear;
- Sooner or later it will be broken!
A practical meaning of Antifragility

- Our (fictitious) glass improve its robustness through time and stresses;
- It can be broken, more force is needed;
- It’s a dynamic process, typical of organic materials.
It’s now on us...

- Mr. Taleb has been so kind to suggest us we live in a world we don’t understand, so planning is futile and we have to pursue antifragility in us and in our organizations in order to survive future black swans;

- He also reiterated how this is crucial and urgent…

- Unfortunately he didn’t give us clear directions on how to concretely do this!

- Let’s work together, being creative, to transform concepts in actions and risks in opportunities.
What is an organization?

- An organization is a complex entity (cognitive artifact) that has a collective goal and is linked to an external environment;

- Its basic, universal, goals are:
  - to survive;
  - to produce value;

- Each organization structure conducts activities oriented toward its general and specific goals;

- These activities are usually structured in “processes” and “projects”, possibly crossing the boundaries.
Processes and Projects?

Why two different concepts and specific methods and tools?
- Organizational structure antifragility;
- Processes antifragility;
- Projects antifragility;
- Relational antifragility.
Fragile

Robust

Antifragile

Let’s play games - Mapping in the Triad
Let’s play games - Sources of organization (anti)fragility

- Governance / Leadership
- who we are
  - Structure
  - Vision
  - Growth
- dynamics
  - change
  - Innovation
  - Products / Services
  - Processes
  - what we do
    - Projects

- People
- human factor
  - Diversity
  - Culture
  - Information
  - Knowledge
  - Supply Chain
  - Environment
  - Relations
- decisions
  - technology / methods
Let’s play games - Measure organization (anti)fragility

Now, to recap:
let’s propose five key questions to assess an organization antifragility!
The Basic Organizational Fragility Test

- How good are our current approaches to managing the organization? (0-10)
- Do we include deliberate diversity of approach and deployment? (0-10)

- How aware are we as an organization of our environment (0-10)

- Do we learn as an organization? (0-10)
- Do we implement what we learn? (0-10)

- Do we learn fast? Fast enough? (0-10)
- Do we have the infrastructure to learn, and apply our learning? (0-10)
- Do we evolve? (0-10)
- Do we have the infrastructure to evolve? (0-10)

- How optimized are our processes? (0-10; 0 = maximum optimization)

(score out of 100) - Tony Bendell, Building Anti-Fragile Organizations
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Thank You!