

# High Tech unit launches Agile Work Location Manifesto

Like many others, we - the High Tech business unit of ICT Netherlands- certainly had not expected to be working from home for nearly half a year now. As a project-oriented organization - developing complex technical software for our customers - we were accustomed to having the project teams sit together in our office. Although the IT infrastructure to work from home was always in place, it felt much more comfortable to have all team members work in the same location. Being out of the office was a rarity.

Well, until mid-March at least. Due to the measures taken following the COVID-19 outbreak in March, we were forced to close the offices and roll out mandatory remote work. As we, Frank van der Kruijssen, Stefan te Winkel and Tjitske Hartman, realized that it was realistic to assume that shifting to the 'home office' will become the new normal for many of us we decided to rethink the way of working within the projects of the High Tech

unit. After a few weeks of working from home, we sent out a survey to evaluate how colleagues handled the new situation and what they think of this new way of working. Working from home turned out to be a positive experience for the vast majority of our colleagues yet most of them would prefer a mixture of home and office working to spend some face-to-face time with their teammates as well.

## BLOG High Tech unit launches Agile Work Location Manifesto

Taking this as a starting point, we began working on something that would later be called “the Agile Work Location Manifesto”. By default:

- You have a flexible work location (not necessarily being your home)
- People have access to a proper workspace
- Everyone within the team has access to information (e.g. decisions taken, planning etc.)

We envision a hybrid situation where colleagues can choose their work location, within a framework that is called the Agile Work Location Manifesto. Its fundamentals are:

Result	over	Presence
Trust	over	Activity Management
Team Empowerment	over	Direct Guidance
Direct Communication	over	Personal Preference
Flexible Schedule	over	Scheduled Interaction
Objective Driven	over	Fixed Office Hours
Location	over	Calendar Driven Location

*While there is value in the items on the right, we value the items on the left more. The items are not put in the list based on a priority, all are equally important.*

Teams will use these items as guidelines to decide when to meet in person (as a team) and when to work from their individually chosen location. We believe this has many benefits, e.g. more autonomy as a team to decide how you want to work, choosing your location depending on the type of work you do, flexibility in schedule, etc. Having more influence on the process will lead to happier people, resulting in more efficiency and higher productivity, and therefore satisfied customers. The Manifesto aims to take ‘the best of both worlds’: work individually at your chosen location and come together as a team when the project requires personal interaction.

While the Manifesto may seem simple, it takes effort to make it work. The mindset of teams and all their individual members (including project leads and architects!) must change. This means restructuring the process; work face to face when needed, work remotely when possible. As a team, you really have to think about what you are doing, how you want to do it and why you want to do it in a certain way. It also requires more preparation when getting together as you box the time spent as a team. To support the teams and project leads in implementing this new approach, we organized introduction and coaching sessions. After all, we envision this process not just to be applicable during the COVID period. It is something we are embedding in our project organization to make it future proof.

It's a new way of thinking that is in line with the desire of our colleagues to be more self-organizing. We are already seeing benefits in our projects in terms of team members having more control over their way of working. This leads to a more attractive and satisfying work environment.

This is part of our future. Would you like to discuss yours? Contact us at [tjitske.hartman@ict.nl](mailto:tjitske.hartman@ict.nl)



Kopenhagen 9  
2993 LL Barendrecht  
The Netherlands

T +31 (0)88 908 2000  
E [info@ict.nl](mailto:info@ict.nl)  
W [www.ict.eu](http://www.ict.eu)

