DORA for busy CTOs and tech execs

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Introduction

Software ate the world. Most businesses nowadays offer digital products and services, which means the technology behind those offerings is a core business asset. CTOs and tech execs face a tough challenge at hand: aligning the tech strategy to the business strategy and directing a team of technologists toward achieving the business goals.

It turns out that tech leaders commonly struggle to assertively direct the performance of their teams. This is probably because information technology, software engineering, and product management are pretty young disciplines compared to others, like marketing and sales.

Fortunately, the tech industry recently reached a major milestone. DevOps Research and Assessment (DORA) is now the largest and longest-running research program of its kind. 10 years of pretty established research and 10 editions of the famous DevOps Report.

This book is written for you, busy CTO or tech exec. The content is tailored to help you increase your impact, by assertively directing your team performance with actionable KPIs, built on top of DORA's expertise.

DORA Case Studies

This content is not available in the sample book. The book can be purchased on Leanpub at http://leanpub.com/DORA-for-busy-CTOs.

DORA Core Model: Outcomes, Performance, Capabilities

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DORA Key Findings

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DevOps Report 2024 Key Findings

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ROI of Technology Transformation

DORA research established that software delivery performance (throughput + stability) predicts business performance.

Good news! That means technology investments do pay off.

Your software delivery performance might not score Elite or High yet. That means plenty of investments could be made to support your technology transformation.

If we only had a way to collaborate with the CFO and make a strong business case for those investments…

Even better news! In 2020, the DORA team published "The ROI of DevOps Transformation". That notable whitepaper revealed three calculation models that will help you quantify the costs and returns of technology transformation initiatives.

Here are those three calculation models:

1. Unnecessary rework avoided per year
2. Potential value added from reinvestment in new features
3. Saved cost of downtime per year

Calculation Walkthrough

Hopefully, this chapter of the book seems practical for you. How about working through that third model with a given scenario?

↘️ Let's say this given team maintains a critical service
Also, this team didn't hit high performance yet

↪️ 32 deploys per year x 15% change fail rate x 8 hours MTTR x $500,000/hr outage cost = $19.2M downtime cost per year

↘️ Now let's say the next year comes by...
That team manages to fail fewer deploys and respond faster to those failures

↪️ 32 deploys per year x 10% change fail rate x 4 hours MTTR x $500,000/hr outage cost = $6.4M downtime cost per year

By improving the CFR and MTTR numbers... 💪
$12,8M yearly cost savings might be yielded to the business 📉

A Leadership Playbook on Top of DORA

In the introduction of this book I've sold you the idea that this content is tailored to help you increase your impact, by assertively directing your team performance with actionable KPIs, built on top of DORA's expertise.

I've created this leadership playbook to help engineering leadership effectively collaborate toward achieving business goals.

Playbook Principles

The playbook guides the implementation of these two principles, from DORA research: 1. Software Delivery Performance predicts Business Outcomes; and 2. DORA Capabilities predict Software Delivery Performance.

Software Delivery Performance predicts Business Outcomes

We are in the market of software delivery performance because we are in the market of business outcomes. DORA research established that software delivery performance (throughput + stability) predicts business performance.

DORA Capabilities predict Software Delivery Performance

DORA capabilities foster a learning environment, efficient processes, and rapid feedback. Those capabilities provide a clear direction and strategy while you look to move the needle of software delivery performance.

Playbook Components

The playbook is currently shaped by these two components: 1. Leadership Responsibilities; and 2. Support Tools.

Leadership Responsibilities

Engineering leadership is usually made up of executives, directors and managers.

Let's zoom in those responsibilities, acoording to each of those three engineering leadership roles.

Executives (CTO & VPs)

- Set business goals and clear KPIs;
- Promote innovation and empower the teams;
- Provide resources, training and development.

Directors

- Establish, track, and communicate each team's performance path;
- Identify and prioritize key DORA capabilities for investment;
- Allocate resources accordingly.

Engineering Managers

- Measure and report DORA performance metrics for each software application owned by their team;
- Consider improvement opportunities accordingly.

Support Tools

TBW.