DevOps Culture & The Meaning of "However"

by Cary Dym | Aug 10, 2018

We'd love to embrace DevOps; **however**…

As I prepare to embark on the next phase of a career focused on recognizing new trends and accelerating the adoption of emerging technologies, I harken back to 2013. I had recently landed in Tel Aviv with my family for a 2-year stint and was having a discussion with an Israeli colleague about the cultural differences between the US and Israel. He was expressing his frustration from his time living in the US with the word "however".   He explained that there is no equivalent in Hebrew for the word "however" when encountered – which happened quite frequently – as follows: "I'd really love to help you with your driver's license application; however…" He quickly realized that no matter how he tried to negotiate, cajole or plea, in the US, "however" meant "no way".

And this got me thinking to the challenges facing organizations going through Digital Transformation – the process of leveraging new processes, technology and data to improve productivity, increase financial performance and remain competitive. In discussions with clients, I often hear "We'd love to embrace DevOps; however we are not properly organized or staffed to implement a DevOps Strategy we don't know where to start our management wants to see quick results and DevOps sounds big and costly we can't just throw everything into the cloud, we have to be mindful of compliance

I'd argue there is a bigger HOWEVER at play which is that Digital Transformation is difficult, and many initial attempts tend to fail; HOWEVER, not transforming is not an option. According to IDC's April 2018 report Designing Tomorrow "73% of companies will either be out of business or marginalized if they don't transform."

So how to resolve these conflicting "howevers". The concerns expressed by organizations are valid and should not be brushed outside.   However, digital transformation can still occur while recognizing and acknowledging the challenges above. And that is why I am so excited to join Risk Focus! Bringing a unique blend of a PLAYER/COACH model together with their years of experience in dealing with risk mitigation, Risk Focus is singularly focused on helping organizations deal with these challenges.

Our engagements begin with a listening workshop where we gather information on the client's unique organizational challenges – structural, cultural, resources, regulatory/compliance and technology. We then align on a "quick win" project that allows our player/coaches to work

directly with the organization on a specific deliver that can be implemented using new processes and technologies including Infrastructure as Code, comprehensive CI/CD pipeline, Container solutions, and Cloud transformation. These quick win projects usually run 4-6 weeks and are intended to deliver the following objectives:

Facilitate organizational alignment around Dev/Ops

Initiate "on-the-job" hands-on training

Implement and adopt new technologies

Identify a backlog of follow-on projects and deliverables

Demonstrate a low-cost quick win as a Proof of Possible

I am thrilled to be part of the Risk Focus team and look forward to working with you to enable your organization to address your cultural **HOWEVERS!**