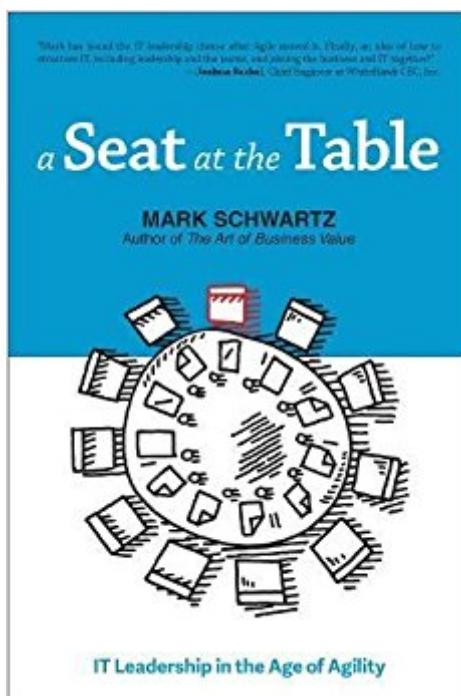


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# A Seat At The Table: IT Leadership In The Age Of Agility



## Synopsis

Agile, Lean, and DevOps approaches are radical game changers, providing a fundamentally different way to think about how IT fits into the enterprise, how IT leaders lead, and how IT can harness technology to accomplish the objectives of the enterprise. But honest and open conversations are not taking place between management and Agile delivery teams. In *A Seat at the Table*, CIO Mark Schwartz explores the role of IT leadership as it is now and opens the door to reveal IT leadership as it should be—can integral part of the value creation engine. With an easy style, Schwartz reveals that the only way to become an Agile IT leader is to be courageous—to throw off the attitude and assumptions that have kept CIOs from taking their rightful seat at the table. CIOs, step on up, your seat at the table is waiting for you.

## Book Information

Paperback: 376 pages

Publisher: IT Revolution Press; 1 edition (October 2, 2017)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1942788118

ISBN-13: 978-1942788119

Product Dimensions: 5.9 x 0.9 x 8.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

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Best Sellers Rank: #78,156 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #25 in Books > Business & Money > Human Resources > Knowledge Capital #170 in Books > Business & Money > Management & Leadership > Information Management #1157 in Books > Business & Money > Management & Leadership > Leadership

## Customer Reviews

Mark Schwartz is a rare combination: a deep thinker who has also applied lean, Agile, and DevOps principles at the highest level, leading an extraordinary Agile transformation in the US Federal Government at USCIS. In this book, he shows how modern IT leaders succeed by driving business outcomes rather than operating an order-taking function. This shift in organizational mindset is critical to any successful technology transformation but requires substantial changes in behavior at every level, and Mark's thorough analysis will prove invaluable to leaders who must execute it. (Jez Humble, CTO, DevOps Research & Assessment LLC) This book should be required reading for all technology and business leaders who are serious about digital transformation. It takes you on a

provocative, fun, and comprehensive tour of the key areas that will promote and ignite agility, creativity, learning, community, and collaboration. This book may be about taking a seat, but this is no time to be sitting still! IT leaders will be convinced that their job is now about incentivizing and inspiring courage, passion, and technical excellence in service of business objectives rather than blindly servicing requirements. You will find practical advice on how to deal with projects, scope creep, IT assets, governance, security, risk management, quality, and shadow IT. (Jason Cox, Systems Engineering, The Walt Disney Company) In his first book, *The Art of Business Value*, Mark brought together a unique understanding of modern techniques—Agile, DevOps, and Continuous Delivery. In *A Seat at the Table* he grabs hold of these concepts and disrupts the conventional dynamics around the role of the CIO in any organization. His progressive thinking is unmatched and a must read for leadership and practitioners of all kinds. (Luke McCormack, former CIO of the Department of Homeland Security) Mark has found the IT leadership cheese after Agile moved it. Finally, an idea of how to structure IT, including leadership and the teams, and joining the business and IT together! (Joshua Seckel, Chief Engineer at WhiteHawk CEC, Inc.) High-performing organizations see technology as a strategic capability of their business. The walls, inertia, and confusion of seats, sides, and responsibilities does not exist for them. Yet many organizations still retain legacy mind-sets and behaviors that limit their opportunities to improve, innovate, and inspire their people. Mark shows the steps needed to break free of these challenges and unlock potential, speed, and growth. His advice is pragmatic, practical, and to the point. (Barry O'Reilly, co-author of *The Lean Enterprise*) “Agile” is more than a new software development practice; it is a new way to think, engage, and lead. As Mark Schwartz points out in his compelling new book, *A Seat at the Table*, when CIOs re-conceptualize their role based on Agile principles, they will stop worrying about having a seat at the table, and start realizing all of the full potential of IT. (Martha Heller, CEO of Heller Search Associates and author of *Be the Business: CIOs in the New Era of IT*) I used to feel guilty when someone would ask me how do I get my leadership to understand DevOps if they refuse to accept it. My answer was, basically, you can't. Now I can give them a copy of *A Seat at the Table*. (John Willis, co-author of *The DevOps Handbook*) Fresh thinking and useful advice fill the pages of Mark Schwartz's *A Seat at the Table*, which strikes an encouraging, instructive tone about the future of IT leadership and the CIO's expanding business role. “If we cannot know the future, then we have to think a bit differently,” he writes. And he does just that. Mark's argument that IT executives must change their behaviors—dropping the “command and control” mindset in favor of community building and Agile leadership practices—resonates throughout this

well-organized, thoughtful book. While attaining that “seat at the table” often refers to CIO career goals, the ideas and approaches explored in this book are essential reading for anyone hoping to advance in the IT profession today. (Maryfran Johnson, Executive Director of CIO Programs, IDG (International Data Group))Mark Schwartz is a rare combination: a deep thinker who has also applied lean, Agile, and DevOps principles at the highest level, leading an extraordinary Agile transformation in the US Federal Government at USCIS. In this book, he shows how modern IT leaders succeed by driving business outcomes rather than operating an order-taking function. This shift in organizational mindset is critical to any successful technology transformation but requires substantial changes in behavior at every level, and Mark’s thorough analysis will prove invaluable to leaders who must execute it. (Jez Huble, CTO, DevOps Research & Assessment LLC)If you’re a CIO, read this book. If you’re not a CIO but work closely with one, read this book. Mark Schwartz is the best of iconoclasts. He brings deep insights from his unique erudition and real-world experience—ranging from a startup to government agency—in untangling the dilemma of the CIO in the second decade of Agile. There aren’t many people who can swing from Horace to Daniel Pink without losing a breath. And there aren’t many who can critique Agile and Waterfall with equal insight. This is a surprising book—well worth your (20%) time. (Sam Guckenheimer, Product Owner, Visual Studio Team Services, Microsoft)As with his book *The Art of Business Value*, Mark Schwartz directly confronts the tensions that exist across the corporate IT landscape, showing us how we got here and what to do about it. Almost every page contains a situation I’ve seen in my day-to-day work, but that have not been articulated before. [A Seat at the Table is] required reading for anyone seeking to understand how IT should work with an organization to achieve success in an Agile age. (Ian Miell, Lead Software Architect, Financial Services)Mark Schwartz’s *A Seat at the Table* will be one of the most important books on technology and business leadership of our generation. (Gene Kim, researcher, founder of IT Revolution, and co-author of *The DevOps Handbook* and *The Phoenix Project: A Novel About IT, DevOps, and Helping Your Business Win*)

Mark Schwartz is an iconoclastic CIO and a playful crafter of ideas, an inveterate purveyor of lucubratory prose. He has been an IT leader in organizations small and large, public, private, and nonprofit. As the CIO of US Citizenship and Immigration Services, he provokes the federal government into adopting Agile and DevOps practices. He is pretty sure that when he was the CIO of Intrax Cultural Exchange he was the first person ever to use business intelligence and supply chain analytics to place au pairs with the right host families. Mark speaks frequently on innovation,

bureaucratic implications of DevOps, and Agile processes in low-trust environments. With a computer science degree from Yale and an MBA from Wharton, Mark is either an expert on the business value of IT or just confused and much poorer.

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