Get Seated for Agile
and what you can do if your'e in a Flexible Seating Office (disguised as ABS)

No more HIPPO decisions

"Difficult to get to know people when you start a new job in Flexible Seating"

"Overrides different types of accessibility needs"

"Teams assigned an "early bird" to go in the office at 7.00"

"Lot's of stuff to carry around..."

"Every day starts with "where the hell am I sitting?""
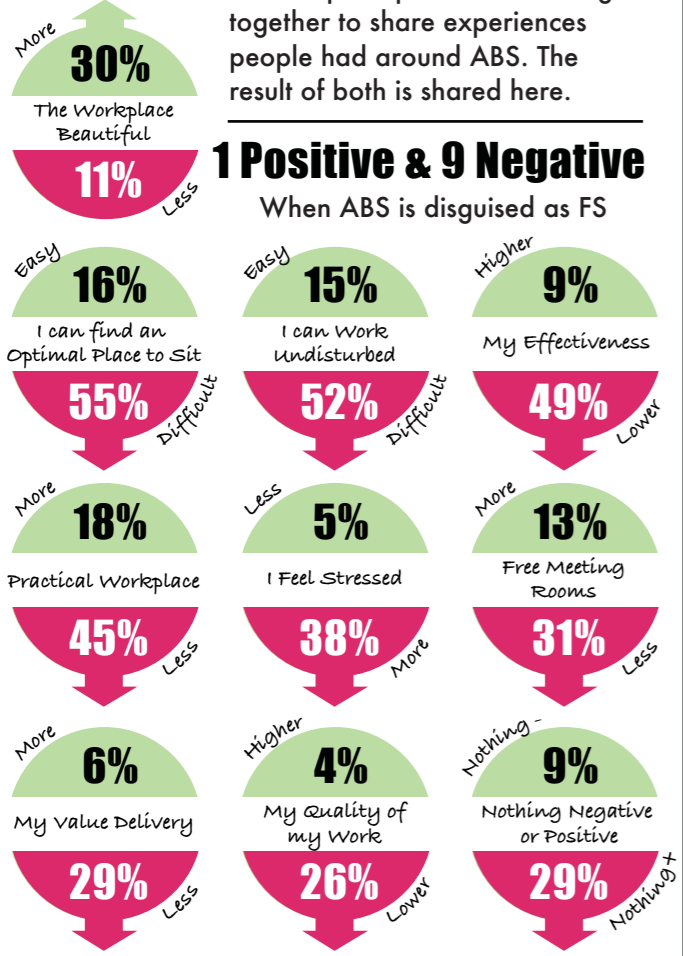
"Arguments over desks."

30 Voices about Flexible Seating disguised as ABS
Download the full 2018 Agile ABS Report for all data.

Version 1.0

Why This?

There is an increasing trend in Sweden to move in to something commonly called **Activity Based Seating, often confused with Flexible Seating**. We couldn't find any data on the actual impact of these kind of seatings for Agile Teams. Thats why we did a survey to uncover the "truth" with 177 people answering.
The survey was presented at Agila Sverige 2018.
At an Open Space session we got together to share experiences people had around ABS. The result of both is shared here.
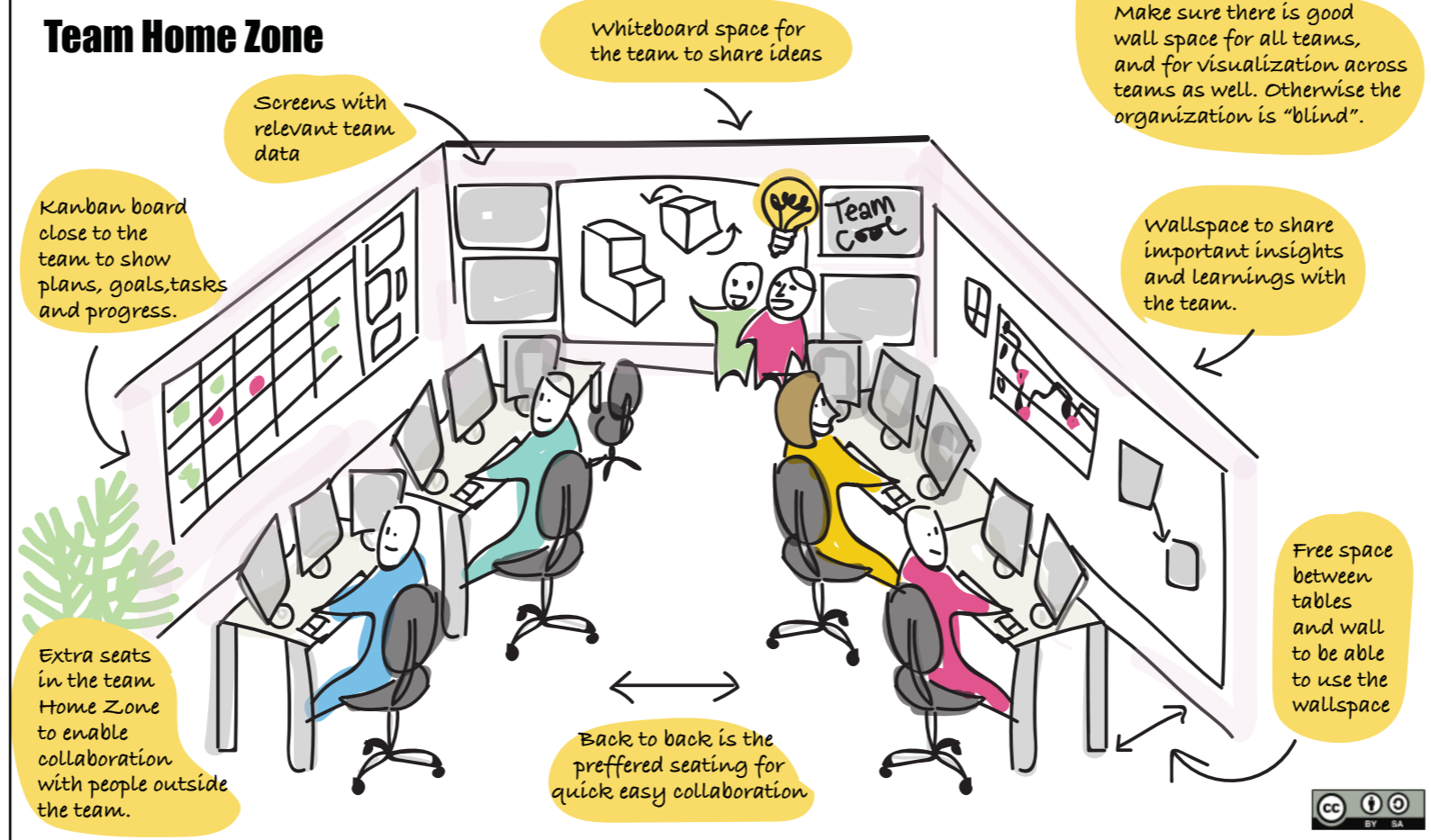
30% More — The Workplace Beautiful — **11%** Less

1 Positive & 9 Negative
When ABS is disguised as FS

16% Easy — I can find an Optimal Place to Sit — **55%** Difficult

15% Easy — I can Work Undisturbed — **52%** Difficult

9% Higher — My Effectiveness — **49%** Lower

18% More — Practical Workplace — **45%** Less

5% Less — I Feel Stressed — **38%** More

13% More — Free Meeting Rooms — **31%** Less

6% More — My Value Delivery — **29%** Less

4% Higher — My Quality of my Work — **26%** Lower

9% Nothing+ — Nothing Negative or Positive — **29%** Nothing+

Is it a Success or Failure?

Saved $ on space shows instantly, but decreasing deliveries and quality as well as stressed employees takes about 6-9 months.
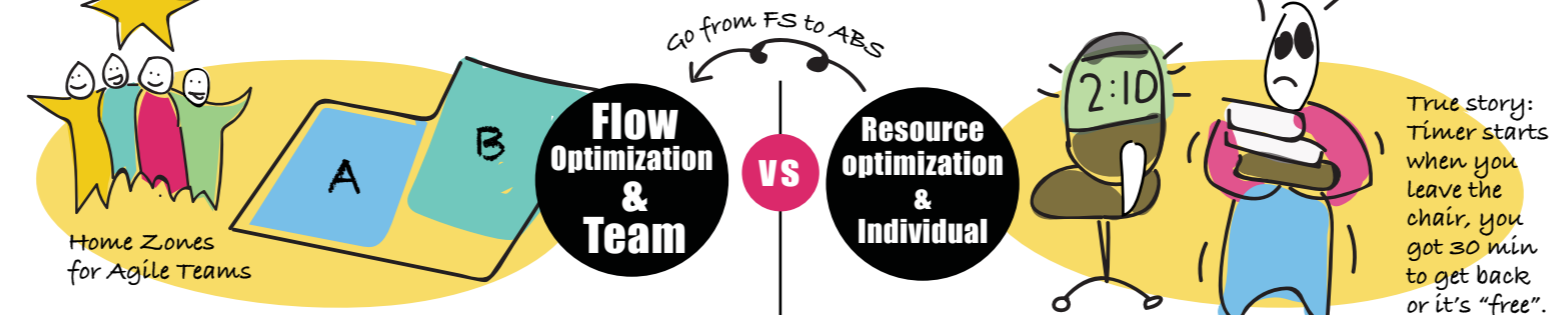
The True Purpose is Important

The positive examples of ABS we've see has been made from other reasons then savings. If you are doing Flexible Seating to save money, be open and clear about that. Don't make excuses to try to convince people otherwise.

Optimizated Seating

Team Home Zone

Whiteboard space for the team to share ideas

Make sure there is good wall space for all teams, and for visualization across teams as well. Otherwise the organization is "blind".

Screens with relevant team data

Kanban board close to the team to show plans, goals, tasks and progress.

Wallspace to share important insights and learnings with the team.

Extra seats in the team Home Zone to enable collaboration with people outside the team.

Free space between tables and wall to be able to use the wallspace

Back to back is the preffered seating for quick easy collaboration

Team Cool

Activity Based Seating vs Flexible Seating

Go from FS to ABS

Home Zones for Agile Teams

Flow Optimization & Team vs **Resource optimization & Individual**

True story: Timer starts when you leave the chair, you got 30 min to get back or it's "free".

Activity Based Seating

- Flow optimized, aligned with Lean & Agile thinking.
- If there are Agile Teams, one activity the office is optimized for is Agile Teamwork.
- More desks than people to optimize for flow.
- Can be re-arranged quickly for new team members or team collaboration.
- The goal is high performance teams.

Flexible Seating

- Resource optimization, against Lean & Agile thinking.
- No personal desks, fewer seats than employees, clean desk & wall policy.
- Optimized for individual work, not team work.
- Many organizations say they do ABS, but it is in fact FS.
- The organization is "blind" and teamwork is banned.
- The goal is to save space, and money, but deliveries from teams will fail and stress will increase.

Shared Learnings

- Have more seats than team members to enable collaboration with people outside of the team.
- Get teams their own Home Zones for min. 6 months.
- Let the teams decide how they want their Home Zone.
- Have few rules, and don't punish everyone if someone can't follow them.
- If teams can move around, it makes it easy to get team seated next to each other if close collaboration is needed - and they can easily self organize.
- The problems you think you will get, are not what will trouble you in the end, so think of it as a starting point, not the end solution, always improve.

Always Improve

Yay! Let's improve!
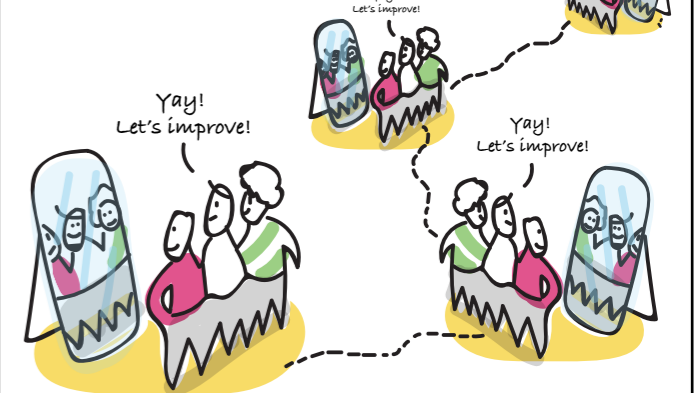
- Make sure to optimize for the type of activity the organization will have, team zones, quiet rooms, conference call rooms, workshop areas etc.
- It's important that people feel they can influence their situation or they will get demotivated & stressed.
- Invest in really good digital tools for visualization and collaboration if you want the teams to be able to move around.
- Get both monitors and white boards on wheels if you want the teams to be able to move around as a team.
- Show this to your Manager or the HR department, and ask them to involve people with Agile Mindset in the process to ensure securing delivery.

Infographic Poster by:
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