



 AgileDad

# EXECUTIVE AGILITY PLAYBOOK

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A LEADERS GUIDE TO BUSINESS AGILITY

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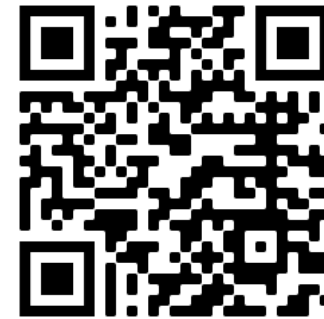
# How Do I Find Him?



- Over 900 Episodes Published
- Always 15 Minutes or Less
- Agile Expert Series
- Published Every Monday – Friday
- Available on AgileDad.Com or...

V. Lee Henson

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All Info For Lee:



# ABOUT AGILEDAD & THE EXECUTIVE AGILITY PLAYBOOK

## ABOUT AGILEDAD



AgileDad provides innovative solutions to help your organization achieve Agile Excellence in ANY industry. By engaging trainers and coaches that have not only book knowledge, but years of practical real world experience in various industries we have had the opportunity to service hundreds of companies ranging in size from Fortune 10 to incubator startup. Whether you are scaling your agile implementation or just getting started, let us teach you how to find excellence in business agility.

This Executive Agility Playbook was designed to answer the three most commonly asked question we hear from leaders in the Agile community.

- 1) What do I need to know about Agile?
- 2) How do we get started?
- 3) How do we responsibly scale business agility?

The challenge is that there are so many frameworks, books, publications, and coaches out there, it is no wonder that leadership feels lost in a sea of endless research with very limited success.

This playbook is designed to help you see a clear path.



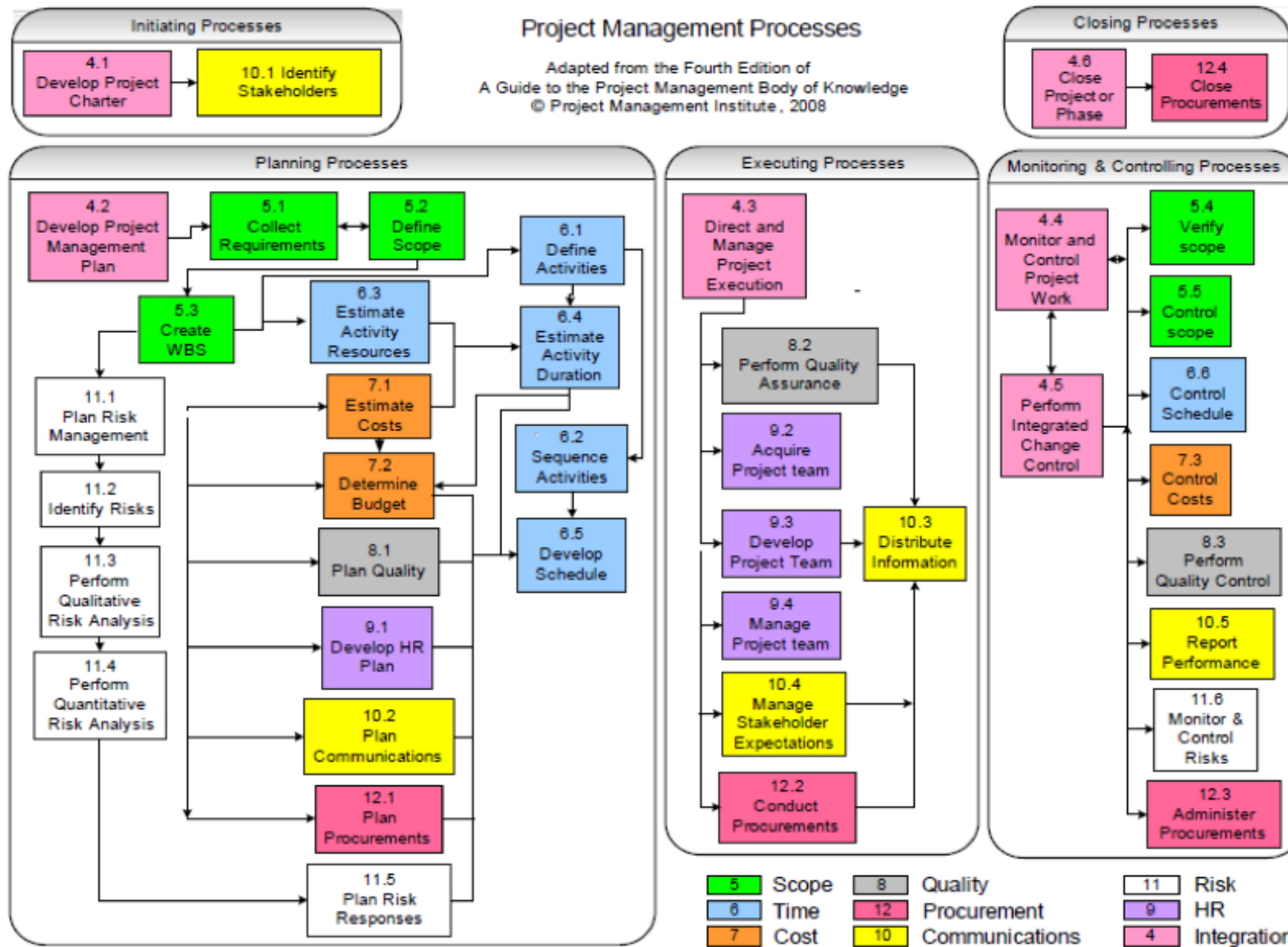
## THE EXECUTIVE AGILITY PLAYBOOK

# WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT AGILE?



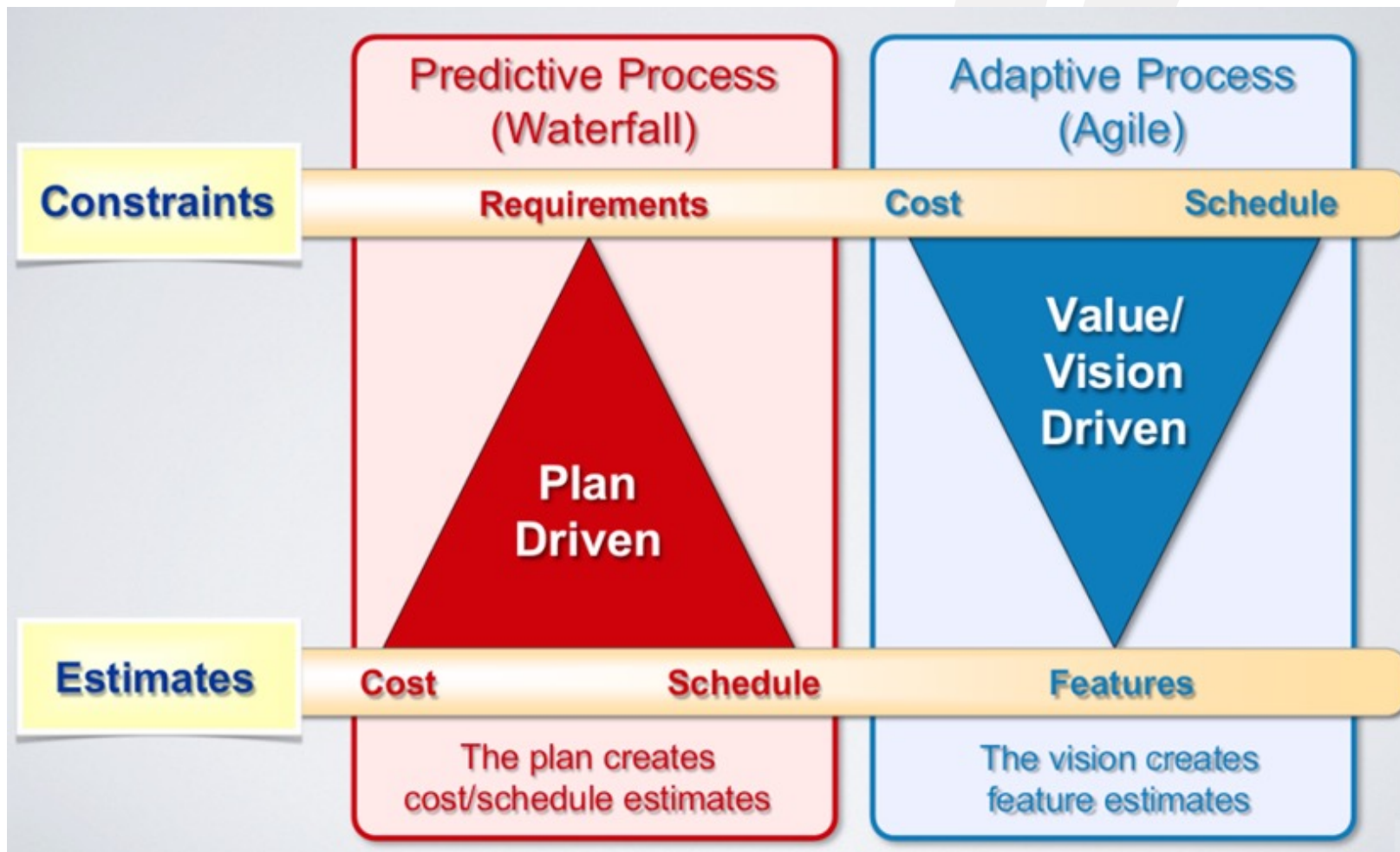
# Project Management Processes

Adapted from the Fourth Edition of  
A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge  
© Project Management Institute, 2008



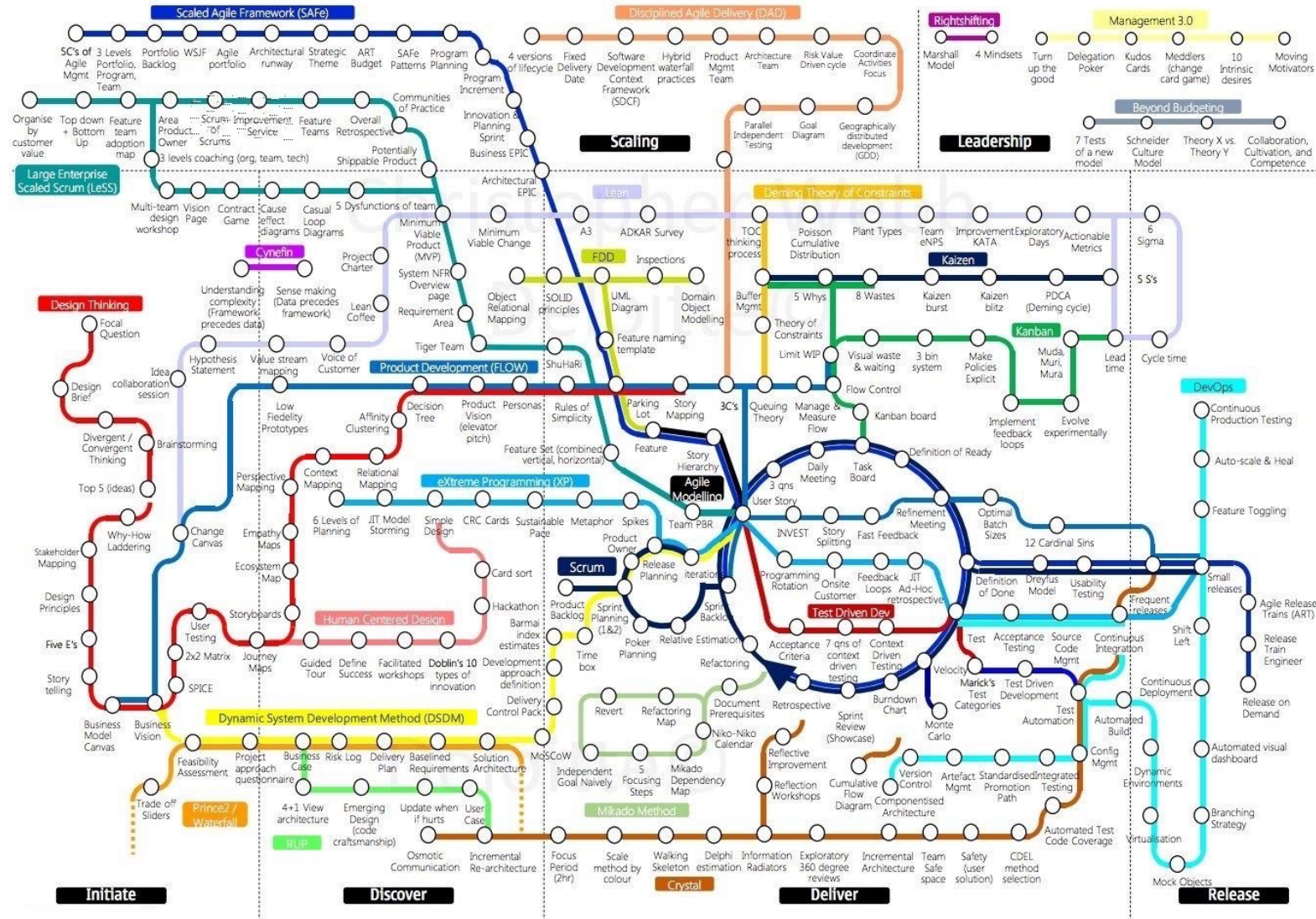
This image displays the traditional waterfall project management predictive process. Notice the loads of overhead, lots of meetings, tons of paperwork, and many checkpoints.





The traditional waterfall approach forces us to try and be completely predictive. We are required to know all of the requirements up front. This leads to unachievable results. We are also given a schedule with a hard deadline. Typically the deadline is unrealistic or unattainable. Finally we are given a budget that will not be enough for us to build the “complete” product or service. The Agile framework is an adaptive process that is value and vision driven.

# The Agile Landscape v3



The Agile Landscape, while better, is crowded with numerous ways to implement an Agile framework in your organization. Do not let this model confuse you. Projects or products should optimize to initiate, discover, and release incremental business value regularly. These steps insure Agile success.

# WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT AGILE?

First and foremost, Agile is not a one size fits all solution. There truly is no red pill - blue pill approach to business agility. Agile is not all about getting work done faster. It is not your ticket to an instant increase in productivity. When applied using a pragmatic humanized approach, Agile will become a tool to help you eliminate waste and focus on outcome over output. The race to build the most widgets is over. Modern companies are learning to dig in and identify their target consumers and their needs. This reduces the number of products or projects in flight. Well formed teams can now swarm and get the work done thereby driving increased revenue and faster time to market. Agile is centered in common sense.





# WHAT DOES AGILE HELP ME LEARN?



## ECONOMIC & MARKET FACTORS

- Technological Advances
- Internet, Mobile, & Social Media
- Globalization of Workforce & Economies
  - Quickly Evolving Environments
- Introduction of Disruptive Technologies
  - Acceleration of Information
  - The New War For Talent

McKinsey - 2018



## FIVE TRADEMARKS OF AGILE ORGANIZATIONS

1. North star embodied across organization (we call this mind-set shift)
2. Create a network of empowered teams
3. Rapid decision making and learning cycles
4. Dynamic teams that ignite passion
5. Next generation products and services

McKinsey - 2018



## FIXED VS GROWTH MINDSET

- Complexity & uncertainty lead to unfocused solutions.
- Using Agile allows teams & organizations to iterate product & service solutions.
- Empirical process allows organizations to inspect & adapt to transparently optimize.
- Agile promotes a true growth mindset.
- Limit work in progress and learn to focus on outcome over output. Less is more!

# START WITH TWO TIMELINES – FIVE YEARS EACH

Company A represents your organization.



Company B represents a fully scaled & coached Agile organization.

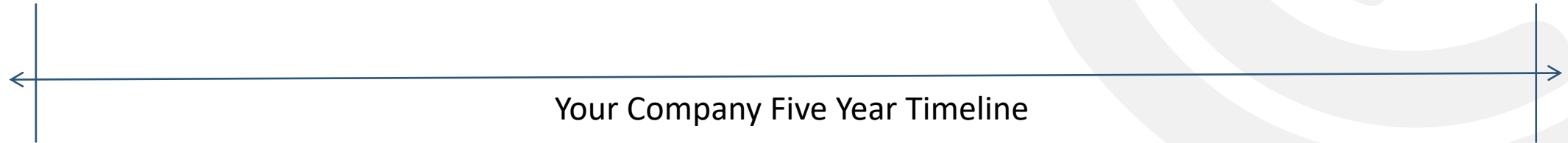


# COMPANY A IS IN TROUBLE...

Begin projects 1-5

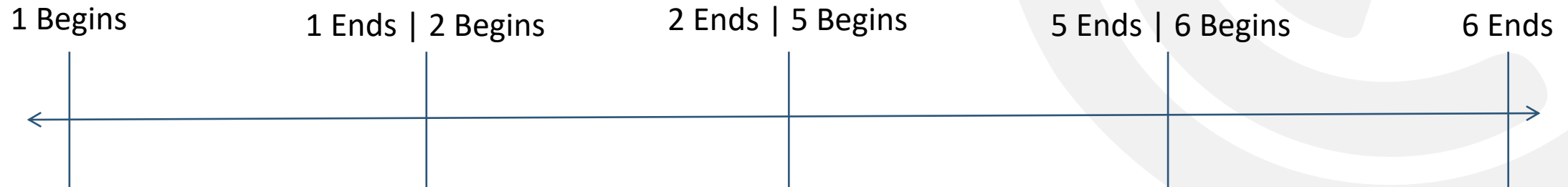
ZERO Revenue – 20% Customer Satisfaction

Complete projects 1-4



For the sake of easy math, both companies A&B have five major product or project initiatives that they need completed in the five year timeline. Company A gets all of the leadership team and product managers together on day one in order to decide which initiative would be most important to address first. After hours of meetings they decide that all five initiatives are important and will be worked on together. Team size is dramatically reduced and key associates are requested to divide their time across multiple projects leading to a battle for the best people. After five years of often painful engagement, the group delivers projects 1-4 on the last day possible to meet the deadline. Each initiative is low quality and is exactly what the customer asked for five years ago. The fifth project was never delivered and the company earned exactly zero dollars in revenue on delivery of any of these five initiatives over the course of this five year period. When asked, this company even proclaimed to do agile. They met every day for a status meeting, broke work into 3-6 week chunks, and held meetings as often as possible to check the status of the project.

# COMPANY B WORKS DIFFERENTLY



On day one, Company B has the very same meeting with Product Owners and Key Stakeholders. They agree that project 1 should be the first initiative that they tackle. Well formed, cross functional, t-shaped teams swarm to work on the first initiative. Any team that does not add value to the first initiative will move forward and begin laying the groundwork for project 2. At the 1.25 year mark, project one is complete and released. The teams all move on to project 2 and dedicate their attention there. While working on project 2, the key stakeholders notice shifts in the market and changing customer desires. As a result, projects 3&4 no longer make sense to work on. The teams complete project 2 and quickly pivot to work on project 5. Finally at the five year mark, the teams also deliver project 6. In either case, the team delivered four completed initiatives over the five year period, however, there are 3 key differences in Agile Delivery.

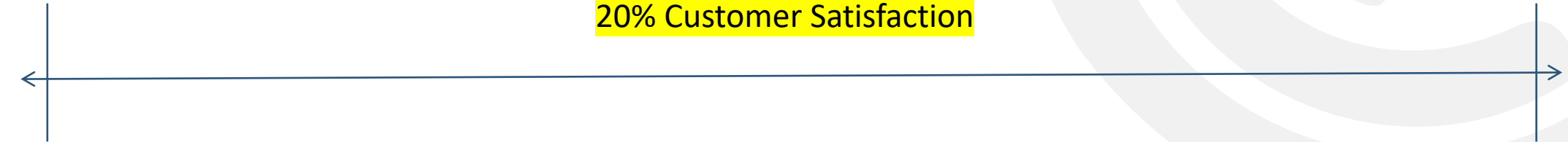


# AGILITY DIFFERENCE #1 – CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Begin projects 1-5

Complete projects 1-4

20% Customer Satisfaction



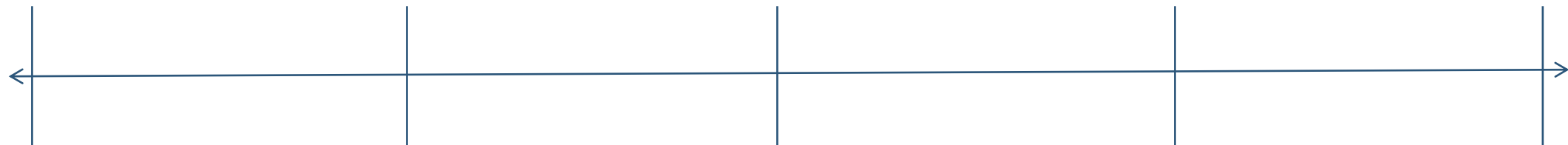
1 Begins

1 Ends | 2 Begins

2 Ends | 5 Begins

5 Ends | 6 Begins

6 Ends



70-90% Customer Satisfaction

Regular incremental delivery dramatically increases customer satisfaction. Our goal should be to always focus on outcome over output. Our number one goal should be happy end consumers with as little output as possible. Agile promotes working smarter not harder.

# AGILITY DIFFERENCE #2 – ELIMINATE WASTE

Begin projects 1-5

Complete projects 1-4

Projects 1-4 Completed

1 Begins

1 Ends | 2 Begins

2 Ends | 5 Begins

5 Ends | 6 Begins

6 Ends

Projects 1, 2, 5, & 6 Completed

Because the organization limited the number of projects in progress, they were easily able to pivot and deliver the correct projects to meet the end consumer needs without delivering waste. In this example projects 2&3 did not need to be delivered. This was discovered halfway through the delivery of the first five initiatives. Instead of continuing to build pointless projects, the team pivoted in order to deliver value. 200% waste eliminated.

# AGILITY DIFFERENCE #3 – INCREASED REVENUE

Begin projects 1-5

Complete projects 1-4

ZERO Revenue Received

1 Begins

1 Ends | 2 Begins

2 Ends | 5 Begins

5 Ends | 6 Begins

6 Ends

3.75

2.5

1.25

0

7.5 Years of Revenue Received!

Limiting the scope of Work In Progress (WIP Limits), allows teams to swarm and deliver early. In no way am I saying working on a single project is required. A great strategy is to reduce the number of initiatives you have in progress, increase team size, and allow them to swarm to get the work done. This is scalable.

# A QUICK SUMMARY

Once Company B discovered that this model worked so much better, they made an incremental delivery timeline for each product that they delivered and successfully implemented Agile within their organization. This led to a dramatic increase in revenue and even greater consumer satisfaction.

Although both companies claimed to be doing Agile, only one company was truly being Agile in thought and deed. The other was agile in name only. While they had great intentions, they did not have the qualified training and coaching needed to take their company to a fully scalable Agile Implementation. A coaches view from the outside is what makes this implementation run smoothly until your group is ready to take the wheel.

Company A	Company B	Advantage
20% Consumer Satisfaction	100% Customer Satisfaction	Company B
200% Waste	ZERO Waste	Company B
ZERO Revenue	7.5 Product Years Revenue	Company B



# HOW DO WE GET STARTED?

This question is likely the most commonly asked question that we receive. We always start by asking what problem are you trying to solve and why did you choose Agile to solve the problem? We ask this question in order to best understand what expectations you might have as an executive or leader.

Once it is determined that Agile is a great fit for you from both a cultural and organizational perspective, we choose an initiative to kickoff your Agile implementation. The team at AgileDad has created a document called the Agile 12 Step Implementation program.

While the document is not all or nothing, and is not required to be completed in order, it does highlight the first twelve steps a coach would take to help your organization get jumpstarted with their Agile implementation.



# THE AGILE TWELVE STEP PROGRAM OVERVIEW



## STEPS ONE - FOUR

- Identify the problem you are trying to solve and tell us why you have chosen agile to solve the problem.
- Set proper management and leadership expectations in order to gain a clear vision.
- Identify and establish a distinction of every Agile role. Learn the responsibilities of each. Avoid role sharing and keep teams together.
- Focus on true product ownership by creating and refining a well defined backlog.



## STEPS FIVE - EIGHT

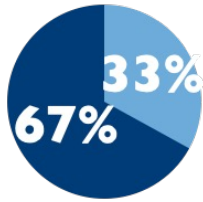
- Hold proper Agile meetings with the correct purpose, attendees, and agenda.
- Clearly identify and define proper release cycles. Establish a delivery cadence.
- Take time to measure end consumer satisfaction. Clearly identify the persona.
- Enhance programming or build practices. Focus on delivering outcome with as little output as possible. Less is more!



## STEPS NINE - TWELVE

- Enhance testing or inspection practices. Focus on consistent high quality delivery.
- Secure the appropriate Agile Tool solution to best track status and create great visual indicators of work at every level.
- Identify ways to measure team success. Help teams assemble working agreements and set goals for success.
- Identify the top three outstanding remaining issues and address them.

# DATA DRIVEN PROOF – AGILE WORKS!

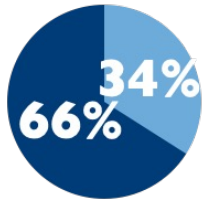
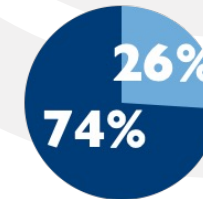


**67%** of organizations find that Agile has **improved** the **frequency** of their product **releases**.

*May 2009 - Forrester Research*

**74%** of organizations report that Agile practices have resulted in **increased productivity**.

*2008 State of Agile - VersionOne*

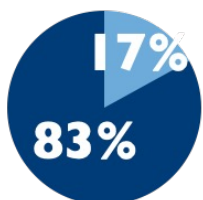
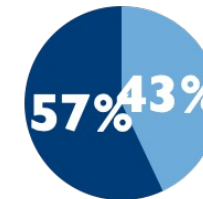


**66%** of organizations have found **reductions in cost** greater or equal to 10%

*2008 State of Agile - VersionOne*

**57%** of organizations report **improvements in execution** capabilities due to increased company wide collaboration.

*May 2009 - Forrester Research*



**83%** of organizations attribute **improved transparency** and project level **visibility** to their Agile practices

*2008 State of Agile - VersionOne*

# HOW DO WE RESPONSIBLY SCALE BUSINESS AGILITY?

Most organizations are moving towards scaled agile solutions without having a clear well established foundation of their current agile implementation. Organizations should focus on nailing business agility on a number of small projects first prior to considering a scaled approach. This is a point of failure for many companies on their Agile journey. It is important for leadership to remain patient with teams and product owners as they initialize the framework.

Once the organization has established a good flow, at that point they are ready to consider scaled implementations. We strongly recommend bringing in a strong Agile coach with experience in scaled implementations to act as a guide at least initially to get you on the right track. At this point you can establish an internal Agile Center of Excellence where you can grow and manage your implementation without the assistance of an external coach.





# THREE KEYS TO PREPARING TO SCALE



## TRAINING

It is very helpful for the organization to all be on the same page. Even if many of your teams have Agile experience, an Advancing & Scaling Agile Workshop could prove to be worth its weight in gold. Gaining clarity around the vision and strategy and getting everyone on the same page for implementation consistency is key.

One key here is to find a trainer or organization that uses a pragmatic Agile approach and comes from a wealth of on the ground experience. You will need to know a lot more than what the book says in order to succeed.



## COACHING

No single external person is more critical than a well qualified Agile Coach. The coach will help you as you go through the empirical process of inspection and adaptation of your framework. They will help you create an environment of psychological safety and encourage teams to display radical candor based communication.

The view from the outside is a lot different than what you may see internally. Invest in a strong coach. The reduced time to implement and the speed to high performance alone make this a perfect investment for any organization.



## CULTURE SHIFT

Business Agility requires a mindset shift. Agile organizations think and behave differently. They put great focus on the needs of their internal users, their people, first prior to shifting their focus to external consumers of the product or service.

Once you can feel the organizational mood is shifting, this is a great time to work with your Agile Center of Excellence (ACE) to discover how well the implementation of Agile has been disseminated throughout the organization. Finally, you can consider a scaling approach.

# WHAT ARE MY RESPONSIBILITIES?

Any change to the framework that you use to deliver products or services should be treated with a serious demeanor. This is the time for leadership to step up and engage to help create the environment of psychological safety that is needed for organizations to be successful in the Agile implementation.

Great Agile Leaders do the following:

- Provide a clear organizational vision and strategy
- Look to the people doing the work for answers
- Inspire and reward innovation
- Instill passion in every team
- Lead with wisdom and by example

*“If I did my job right, they won’t be saying it was a one man show.” ~ Jack Welch, GE*



# EXECUTIVE AGILITY FOCUS



## AGILE FUNDING

Successful Agile organizations change the way they fund product or project implementation. Just as you would expect the delivery of the product or service to be incremental, the funding for the project or product increment should be broken into smaller pieces. While it is still perfectly fine to set aside funding for an entire project, it is best to break funding into four phases. Ideation, Minimal Viable Product, Feature Buildout, and Release. This will allow you to pivot as needed and see a concept of Agile Earned Value. This also helps the organization focus on delivery and outcome.



## VISION & STRATEGY

Organizational Vision and Strategy are critical to the successful implementation of Agile. Every team and member should have clear direction of where we are going and how you plan to get there. We have learned that most organizations have a misdirected vision and often times no strategy to deliver on the vision.

A common technique that we teach in our Agile Leadership Summit is the Agile Press Release which includes a solid elevator pitch. We also heavily recommend using the GROW model to assist in driving a clear direction.



## OUTCOME OVER OUTPUT

Our focus needs to shift from delivering as many widgets as possible to delivering as few widgets as possible to solve the issue or please the end user. A key goal should be to eliminate waste. We need to remember that less is more.

This also means that we should at minimum scale back the number of product increments or projects in flight at any given time. By keeping fewer items in motion, we are more quickly able to deliver and gather feedback. This is what sets the empirical process in motion and drives true business agility.

# BECOME AN AGILE LEADER

Being a manager is easy. Becoming a true servant leader takes work and practice. Learning to put the needs of others first and losing yourself in service of them are key components to facilitating a successful Agile implementation.

Agile leaders trust at every level that the work will be done and resist the urge to put undue pressure on teams or individuals in order to gain or elevate efficiency. Discovering and implementing techniques such as Team John allow the organization to grow and scale while still remaining focused on clear targeted initiatives.

Becoming certified in Agile Leadership is a great way to show the organization that you are serious about organizational change and ready to implement true business agility.

Manager	Leader
Drives Resources	Coaches Teams
Depends on Authority	Acts With Goodwill
Inspires Fear	Generates Enthusiasm
Says 'I'	Says 'We'
Places Blame	Addresses Breakdowns
Knows How It Is Done	Shows How It Is Done
Uses Resources	Develops Team Members
Takes Credit	Gives Credit
Commands	Asks
Says 'Go'	Says 'Let's Go'



# THANK YOU

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