Taking Your Agile Practice to the Next Level: The Benefits of a Holistic Approach

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Taking Your Agile Practice to the Next Level: The Benefits of a Holistic Approach

Dr. Stephen Mayner
SAFe Fellow & Principal Consultant
Scaled Agile, Inc.

TODAY’S PRESENTER

Dr. Stephen Mayner
SAFe Fellow & Principal Consultant
Scaled Agile, Inc.
Are you using Agile outside of software development?

A) YES  
B) NO
It’s more than just software development

✓ It impacts how we:
  • Work
  • Architect Solutions
  • Think
  • Organize
  • Manage
  • Improve

Our holistic approach to Agile
How we work

LEAN AGILE

LEAN SIX SIGMA

AGILE
How we architect solutions

- Lean-Agile architectural and design approaches to enhance agility and improve time to market
- Improve quality, performance, and time to market, while reducing risks
- Utilize citizen-centric approaches that ensure that we are building the right thing at the right time

Ensure
- Sustainability
- Viability
- Feasibility

Design the right solution

Understand the problem
How we think

Company Goals

Divisional Goals

Organizational Goals

My Goals

FIXED MINDSET

“Failure is the limit of my abilities”
“Failure is not a way to improve”
“I can do it, or I can’t”
“I’m not good at it, or I’m not”
“My abilities are unchanging”
“I don’t like to be challenged”
“My potential is predetermined”
“When I’m frustrated, I give up”
“I stick to what I know”

GROWTH MINDSET

“I like to try new things”
“I am inspired by the success of others”
“My effort and attitude determine my abilities”
“Failure is an opportunity to grow”
“Challenges help me grow”
“I can learn to do anything I want”
“Feedback is constructive”
How we organize

Management challenge: connect the silos
How we organize

Management challenge: connect the silos
How we organize

OUR TECH SUPPORT STAFF IS OVERWHELMED BECAUSE WE SHIPPED THE WRONG USER GUIDE WITH OUR PRODUCT.

MY BONUS ONLY DEPENDS ON LAUNCHING THE PRODUCT ON TIME. TECH SUPPORT ISN’T MY DEPARTMENT.

YOU CAUSED THE PROBLEM.

WHO TOLD YOU IT WAS A FAIR WORLD?
How we organize

✓ Organize your company/agencies around your value streams

✓ What is a value stream?

Benefits

• Avoid or limit handoffs
• Focus on value delivery instead of task delivery

• Improved time-to-market
• Smaller batches
How we manage

✓ Teams

Traditional Top Down Command-n-Control

Servant Leadership / Shared Responsibility

✓ Programs

✓ Contracts

Tailored
How we improve

- Provide time & space
- Ensure psychological safety
- Gemba

- Retrospectives
- Constant sense of danger
- Fact-based improvements
- Problem-solving culture

- Team learning
- Personal mastery
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Government has moved steadily toward Lean-Agile
The shift has accelerated in 2020

https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/500087p.PDF?ver=virAfQj4v_LgN1JxpB_dpA%3d%3d

https://derisking-guide.18f.gov/

Programs will require government and contractor software teams to use modern iterative software development methodologies (e.g., agile or lean), modern tools and techniques (e.g., development, security, and operations (DevSecOps)), and human-centered design processes to iteratively deliver software to meet the users’ priority needs.

-- from DoD Instruction 5000.87
The progress is encouraging, but challenges remain

- “Doing Agile” rather than “being Agile”
- Poor implementations of Lean-Agile and SAFe
- Agency level waterfall centric governance and lifecycle policies
- Acquisition workforce lacks experience with Agile contracts
- Project orientation is deeply engrained in the Government context
- Long acquisition lifecycles create delays in value delivery
- Lack of a common enterprise Lean-Agile framework
Agency culture can also be a barrier to agility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pathological Power-oriented</th>
<th>Bureaucratic Rule-oriented</th>
<th>Generative Performance-oriented</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low cooperation</td>
<td>Modest cooperation</td>
<td>High cooperation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Messengers blamed</td>
<td>Messengers neglected</td>
<td>Messengers trained</td>
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<td>Responsibilities shirked</td>
<td>Narrow responsibilities</td>
<td>Responsibilities shared</td>
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<td>Collaboration discouraged</td>
<td>Collaboration tolerated</td>
<td>Collaboration encouraged</td>
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<td>Failure leads to scapegoating</td>
<td>Failure leads to justice</td>
<td>Failure leads to improvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Innovation crushed</td>
<td>Innovation leads to problems</td>
<td>Innovation implemented</td>
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Leaders hold the key to completing the transition

People are already doing their best; the problems are with the system.

Only management can change the system.

—W. Edwards Deming
The paradox of expertise

“The more successful individuals and organizations are in their industry, the harder it can become to see the need for new learning. The best leaders are insatiable learners who continually ask themselves ‘am I learning as fast as the world is changing?’”

Bill Taylor
Author, Co-founder of Fast Company
Leader behaviors must evolve to succeed in the digital age

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<tr>
<th>Eroding</th>
<th>Enduring</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
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<td>Asks for permission</td>
<td>Creates a clear vision</td>
<td>Is purpose-driven</td>
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<td>Has no-exception protocols</td>
<td>Focuses on performance</td>
<td>Nurthes passion</td>
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<td>Reinforces command and control</td>
<td>Maintains a profit orientation</td>
<td>Makes data-driven decisions</td>
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<td>Manages top-down</td>
<td>Is customer-centric</td>
<td>Demonstrates authenticity</td>
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<td>Avoids transparency</td>
<td>Leads by example</td>
<td>Demonstrates empathy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Micromanages</td>
<td>Demonstrates ethics and integrity</td>
<td>Employs an inclusive approach</td>
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<td>Creates rigid long-term plans</td>
<td>Takes risks</td>
<td>Shows humility</td>
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<td>Takes a one-size-fits-all approach</td>
<td>Leads change</td>
<td>Works across boundaries</td>
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From “The New Leadership Playbook for the Digital Age” - MIT
Make it your business to draw out the best in others by being an exemplar yourself.

Epictetus
Greek philosopher
Influencer to Marcus Aurelius, Roman Emperor
What you do has far greater impact than what you say.

Dr. Steven Covey
One of the most common complaints we hear from Agile teams in SAFe implementations is that their leaders are not modeling the mindsets, behaviors, and practices that they are expecting the rest of the organization to follow.

This “do as I say, not as I do” approach erodes trust, lowers employee engagement, and creates a formidable barrier to mission agility.

Dr. Steve Mayner
SAFe Fellow
Where do I begin?
Embrace a growth mindset

**Fixed Mindset**
- "I can either do it, or I can't"
- "Failure is the limit of my abilities"
- "I'm either good at it, or I'm not"
- "My abilities are unchanging"
- "I don't like to be challenged"
- "My potential is predetermined"
- "When I'm frustrated, I give up"
- "I stick to what I know"

**Growth Mindset**
- "I like to try new things"
- "I am inspired by the success of others"
- "My effort and attitude determine my abilities"
- "Failure is an opportunity to grow"
- "Challenges help me grow"
- "I can learn to do anything I want"
- "Feedback is constructive"
Gain the knowledge

Coming soon! Deeper guidance on DevSecOps
Leading in the Digital Age

Scaled Agile’s leader development program designed to equip executives and senior leaders with the competencies needed to navigate fast-moving disruptions and technology driven opportunities in the Digital Age.

scaledagileframework.com/leading-by-example
So, are you DOING or BEING Agile?

- Conducting the various ceremonies
- Having communities of practices
- Tracking metrics
- Have backlogs
- Changing the culture
- Empowering and trusting your teams
- Full transparency at all levels
- Allowing for innovation and psychological safety
Agile mindset is part of your DNA:

- Leading by example
- Continuous learning organization
- Transparency & visibility
- Predictability
- Exploration & creativity
- Aligned strategy & execution
- Continuously improving
Q&A

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