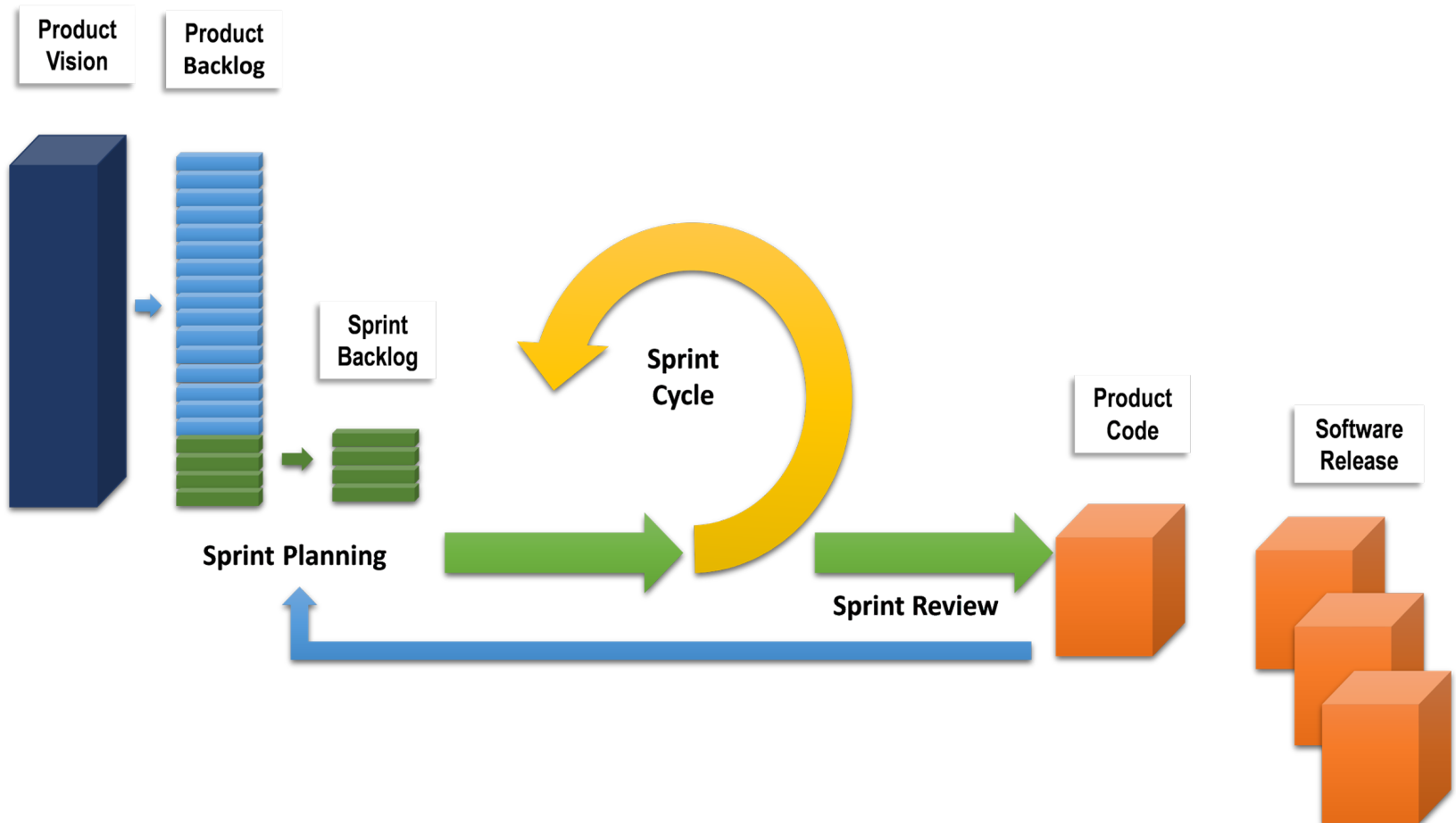# 18F Consulting

http://18f.github.io/consulting/

Your trusted technical advisors.

18F **Consulting**

Is your IT project at risk of failing because you're not using Agile methods?

Risks of "traditional" methods (e.g., waterfall).

1. "Mega launches" lead to mushroom clouds of failure.

2. Hard to respond to changing needs and requirements.

3. Unclear project status and unknown true progress.

4. Technical and integration problems are discovered late in the project

5. Surprise needs or problems not known until the end.

6. Customer is only involved at the end of the process during "launch."

18F **Consulting**

The Agile way.

Product Vision → Product Backlog → Sprint Planning → Sprint Backlog → Sprint Cycle → Sprint Review → Product Code → Software Release

Benefits of Agile development.

1. With continuous iteration, small failures are quickly course corrected. This leads to faster learning and more **successful outcomes.**

2. User research and usability testing happen throughout the project so the product is **tightly aligned with user needs.**

3. Agile demands continuous integration of all systems, **removing risk of technical integration failure.**

4. You have continuous, accurate **insight into actual project progress** and contractor performance.

18F **Consulting**

What's stopping you from incorporating Agile methods into your next Federal acquisition?

Some of the adoption challenges...

1. How do you **start design research/brainstorming** right at the beginning of projects, where it is most effective?

2. How do you **understand and iterate on the technical considerations** before a vendor is contracted?

3. How do you **assess the agile competency of vendors** you are considering?

4. How do you **redefine the definition of "done"** so it is instead about "continuous improvement"?

5. How do you **rewrite traditional contracts** to support Agile methodologies?

18F **Consulting**

18F Consulting offers services to help you at any stage of your project.

Contracting lifecycle.

Pre-award

Acquisition Pre-Planning

Brainstorm product ideas

Run agile product idea **workshops**

Quickly **prototype** and validate ideas

User experience considerations

Design thinking

Acquisition Planning

Scope a **product vision** that can grow iteratively

Research which regulations allow **agile contract construction**

Recommend which **metrics measure success**

Provide **technical expertise** at the early phases of a project

Contract **modularization**

Solicitation Development
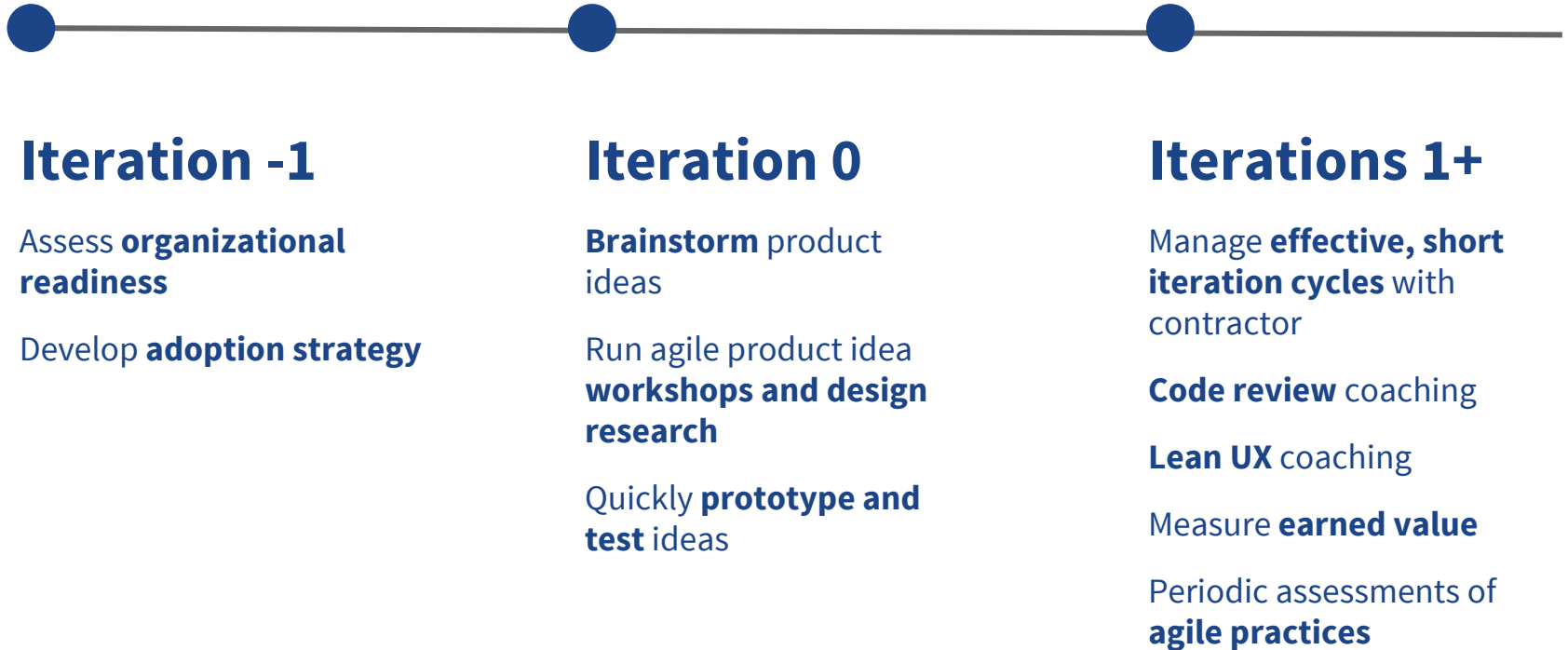
API Design for RFP

Test writing for RPF

RFP ghostwriting and review

Source Selection

Evaluate technical abilities of vendor prospect(s)

18F **Consulting**

Project delivery lifecycle.
Post-award

Iteration -1

Assess **organizational readiness**

Develop **adoption strategy**

Iteration 0

Brainstorm product ideas

Run agile product idea **workshops and design research**

Quickly **prototype and test** ideas

Iterations 1+

Manage **effective, short iteration cycles** with contractor

Code review coaching

Lean UX coaching

Measure **earned value**

Periodic assessments of **agile practices**

Improve your project at any stage...

How do we start a project off using agile?

At project start, we frontload technical expertise to get maximum return on investment.

18F Consulting can:

➔ Brainstorm product, technical, design direction
➔ Run stakeholder workshops
➔ Prototype
➔ Direct user research
➔ Do contract modularization and planning

Is my current project using technical practices that reduce risks?

You have an project in place, but you are not realizing the full benefits of Agile.

18F Consulting can:

➔ Assure Good Technical Practices
➔ Recommend contract modifications
➔ Provide iteration management coaching

How do I introduce agile to a failing project?

Your waterfall process is failing. How can you transition mid-project to agile?

18F Consulting can:

➔ Move to Good Technical Practices
➔ Help with contract modifications
➔ Recommend tactical changes
➔ RFP Ghostwriting

18F **Consulting**

The 18F Consulting Team

Leadership

Chris Cairns | Managing Director
Technology strategy, agile development, and acquisition strategy expertise. Former Presidential Innovation Fellow.

Robert L. Read, PhD | Managing Director
Technical architecture, agile development, and software team management expertise. Former Presidential Innovation Fellow.

Hillary Hartley | Deputy Director of 18F
User research and experience design expertise. Former Presidential Innovation Fellow.

Other 18F Resources:
Over 50 designers, developers, and product strategists currently working inside the GSA at 18F

About us

18F Consulting is a project of 18F, the Federal government's first in-house digital services agency.

We formed in response to the need to help agencies improve the success rate of their IT projects.

Let's talk

christopher.cairns@gsa.gov | 267-228-1390

GSA, 18F Headquarters, 1800 F Street, Fourth Floor "Infill Area"

http://18f.github.io/consulting

18F **Consulting**

Case Study:
SAM Status Tracker

Prototype demonstrated specifications and potential API strategy

18F Consulting helped us define our tests explicitly upfront for the vendor. It was key to our ability to lift the project off the ground at a lower cost than expected.

Navin Vembar, Director, GSA IT Integrated Award Environment Division (PMP)

What did they need?

Integrated Award Environment (IAE) wanted to add a SAM Status Tracker to System for Award Management (SAM). They wanted to work with their existing vendor at low cost and low risk of misunderstanding.

What did we do?

- Brainstormed for 3 hours.
- Created a working prototype within 80 hours.
- Improved Existing Test Strategy in RFP
- Improved Existing API Specification in RFP
- Helped contractor better understand scope of project moving forward.

What were the results?

Provided the client a 3 to 1 cost savings over the cost of the small investment of 80 hours.

Improved communications with contractor

Why should you consider using 18F Consulting?

Our value proposition.

Expertise with:
- User research and user experience design
- Agile methods and practices
- API design
- Coaching and mentoring agencies and contractors

While offering:
- Agile Contracting Services
- Agile Project Delivery Services

Helps YOU:
- Reduce the risk of adopting Agile
- Mitigate project and contract risks
- Reduce development and post-deployment costs
- Gain greater insight into contractor performance
- Increase time-to-market
- Improve value and usability of product
- Learn agile methods for future projects

18F **Consulting**

18F Consulting
http://18f.github.io/consulting/

Your trusted technical advisors.

christopher.cairns@gsa.gov | 267-228-1390
GSA, 18F Headquarters, 1800 F Street, Fourth Floor "Infill Area"

18F **Consulting**