

~~10~~ 13 Surefire Ways to Kill your Agile Transformation

Jason Kline

dsmAgile 2016
September 9, 2016



Jason Kline

San Jose, CA



jasonjkline



Director, West Region &
Agile Solutions Consultant

SolutionsIQ



TIMELINE



Context and Culture

- Context Matters
 - Company size
 - Industry
 - Location
 - Culture

CULTURE = "How we do things around here to succeed."

[] "The Reengineering Alternative."
William Schneider

All models are wrong, but some are useful.

- George E. P. Box



Failure Patterns



#1 Fail to secure Executive-level Sponsorship



spon·sor

'spänsər

noun

1. A person that provides funds for a project or activity
2. A person who introduces, leads, and supports a change initiative

#2 Fail to identify a Transformation Product Owner



vi·sion
'viZHən
noun

1. The ability to think about or plan the future with imagination or wisdom.
2. A mental image of what the future will or could be like.

#3 Introduce Agility as just another business process

- Implement Agile “processes” without learning lean principles & adapting them to your specific context
- “Change management plan?” Huh?

02

ADOPT

01

CONVERT

- Convert all Project Managers to Scrum Masters
- Migrate all work to Agile “projects”

- Retain existing behaviors and delivery expectations, while using the scrum framework
- Maintain existing management models

04

RETAIN

03

DECLARE

- Declare success that the organization is now Agile!
- Think of Agility as a destination instead of a mindset for continual delivery and improvement

WITHER

05

- No focus on innovation and continual improvement
- Incur technical debt to allow for more feature development

Teams

- » Speed
- » Engineering
- » Quality
- » Cost
- » Fit
- » Predictability

Alignment

- » Leadership
- » Roadmap
- » Communications
- » Feedback



Leadership

- » Portfolio
- » Innovation
- » Governance
- » Metrics
- » Compliance
- » Stewardship
- » Roles

Management

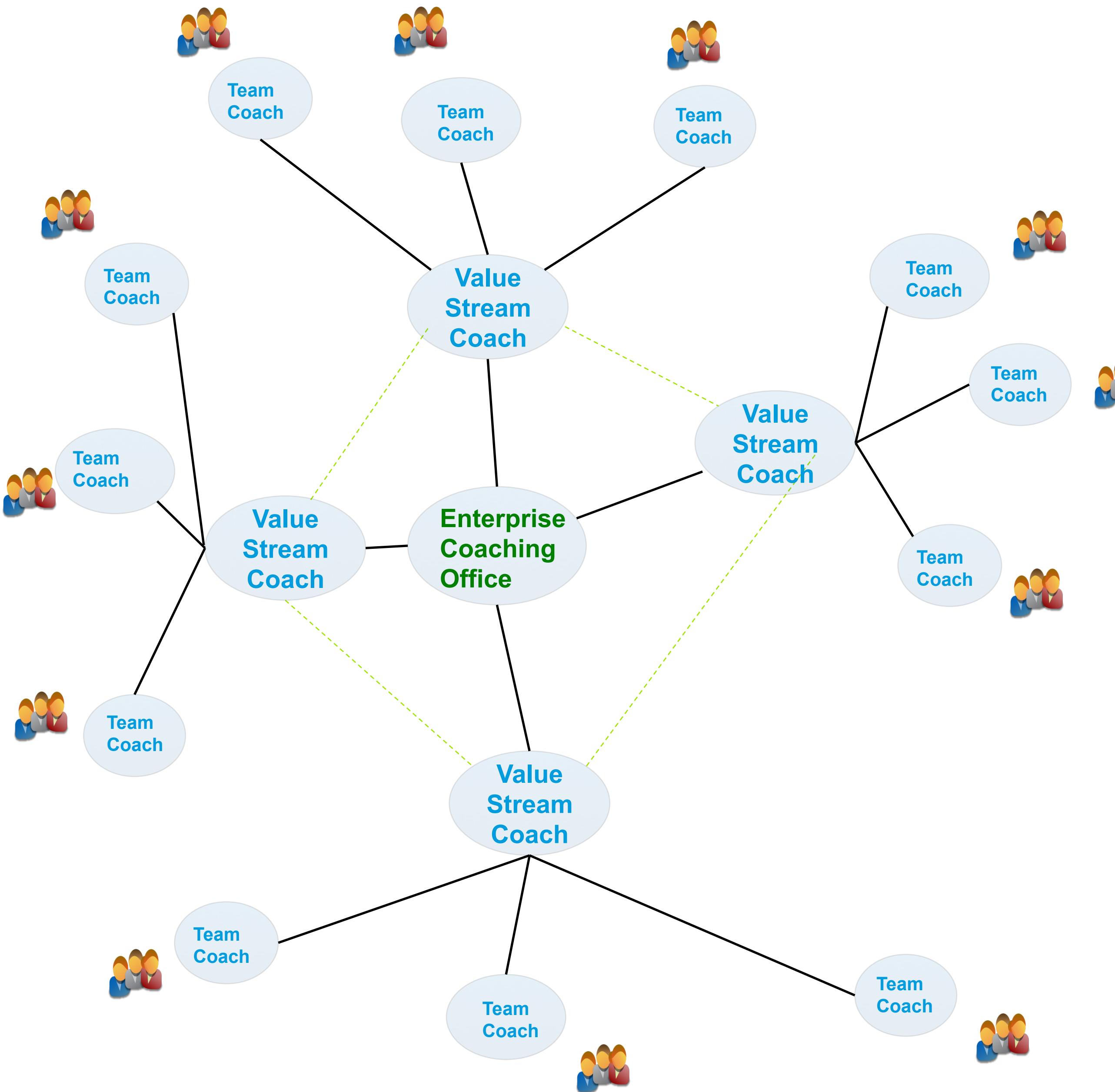
- » Learning
- » Coordination
- » Value Stream
- » CD/DevOps



#4 Don't define career paths for new roles (Scrum Master, Product Owner, Agile Coach, etc.)

Or: Teams are not adequately staffed, e.g. Scrum Master positions are not filled and product owners have to serve two roles at the same time.

Scaling Coaching



- Shift towards Value Streams having accountability for their own Agility (gradually move towards decentralized team-level coaching model, but retaining centralized coaching office)
- Centralized Coaching Office: Assigns primary coach for each value stream
- Implement Scrum Master scaling program (scaling the coaches for Organizational Agility)
 - Internal Scrum Master Certification Program
 - Create career ladder for SMs/coaches
 - Create structures to demonstrate SMs is a valued role



#5 Ignore Transforming Leader Behaviors

A perceived loss of control at management level leads to micro-management.

Agile Leadership Behaviors

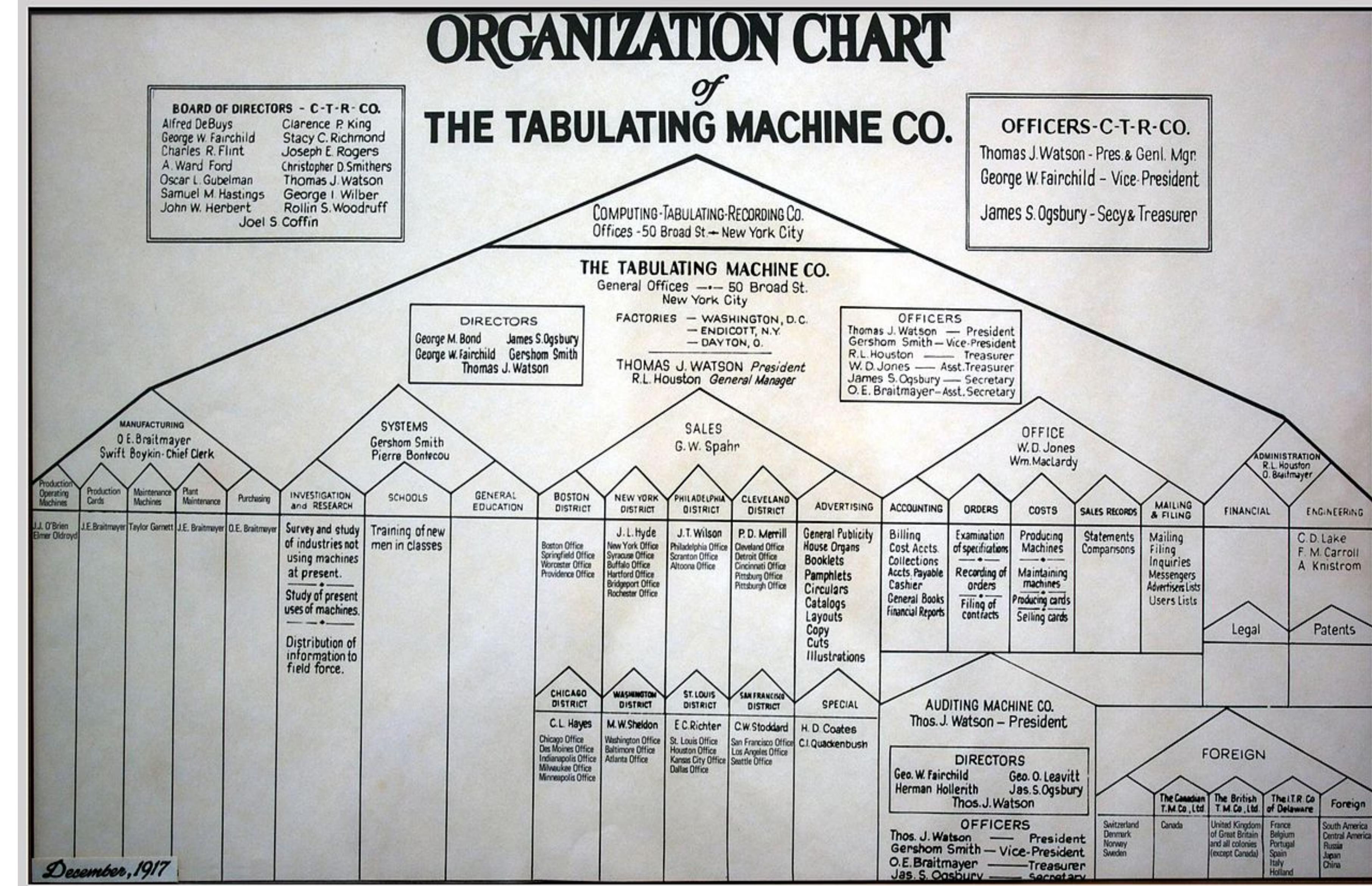
- Lead the Change
- Emphasize Lifelong Learning
- Develop People
- De-centralize Decision-Making
- Unlock the Intrinsic Motivation of Knowledge Workers

• Source: Scaled Agile Framework

6 Don't adapt your organizational model (or form value streams)

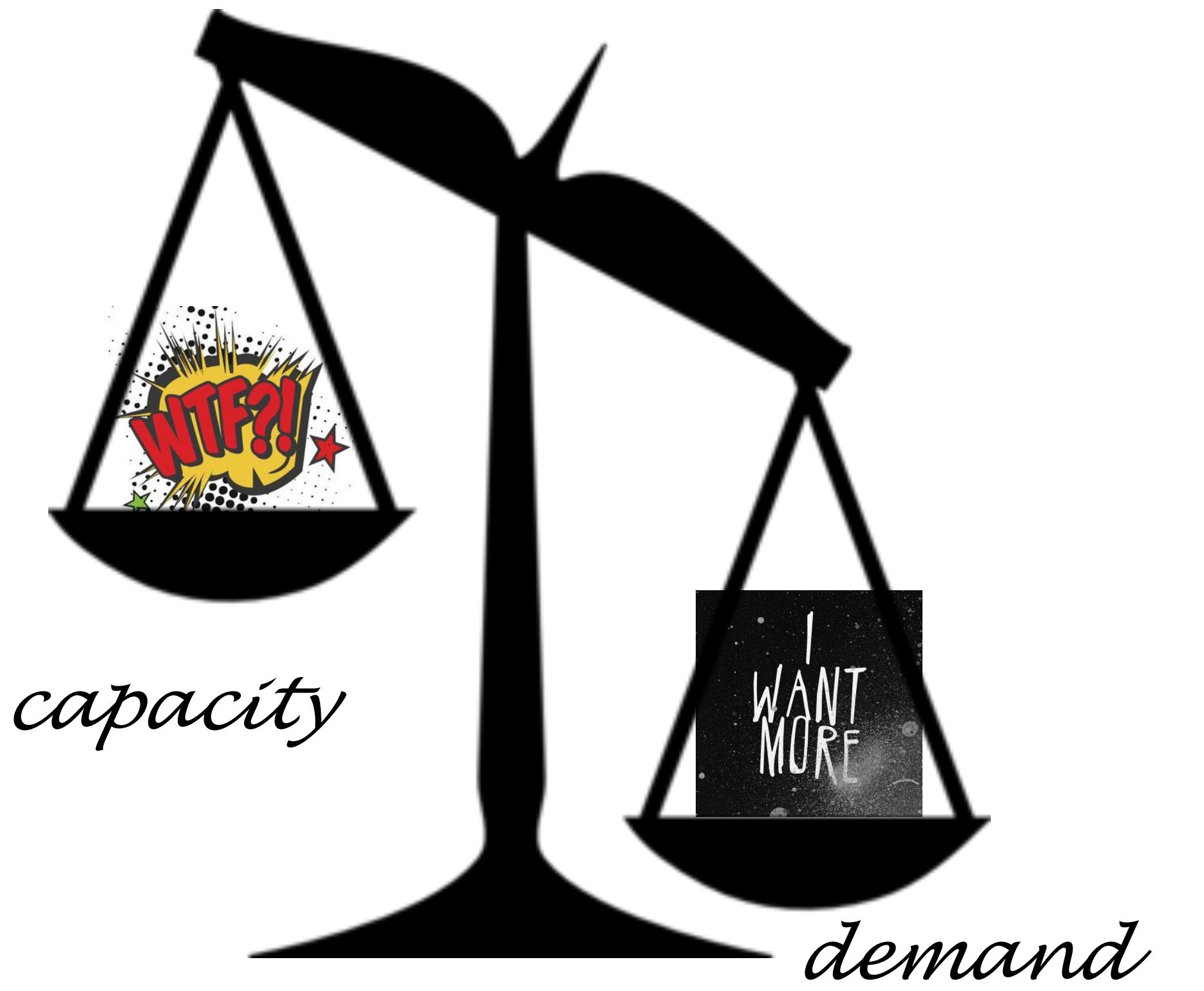
"2 Captains sink the ship"
-- Turkish Proverb

The formation of Value streams
helps to eliminate organizational
dependencies. Aggressively remove
technical dependencies wherever
possible.





#7 Insist on overburdening your teams





Your company's culture is defined in part by your hiring practices.

- Richard Sheridan

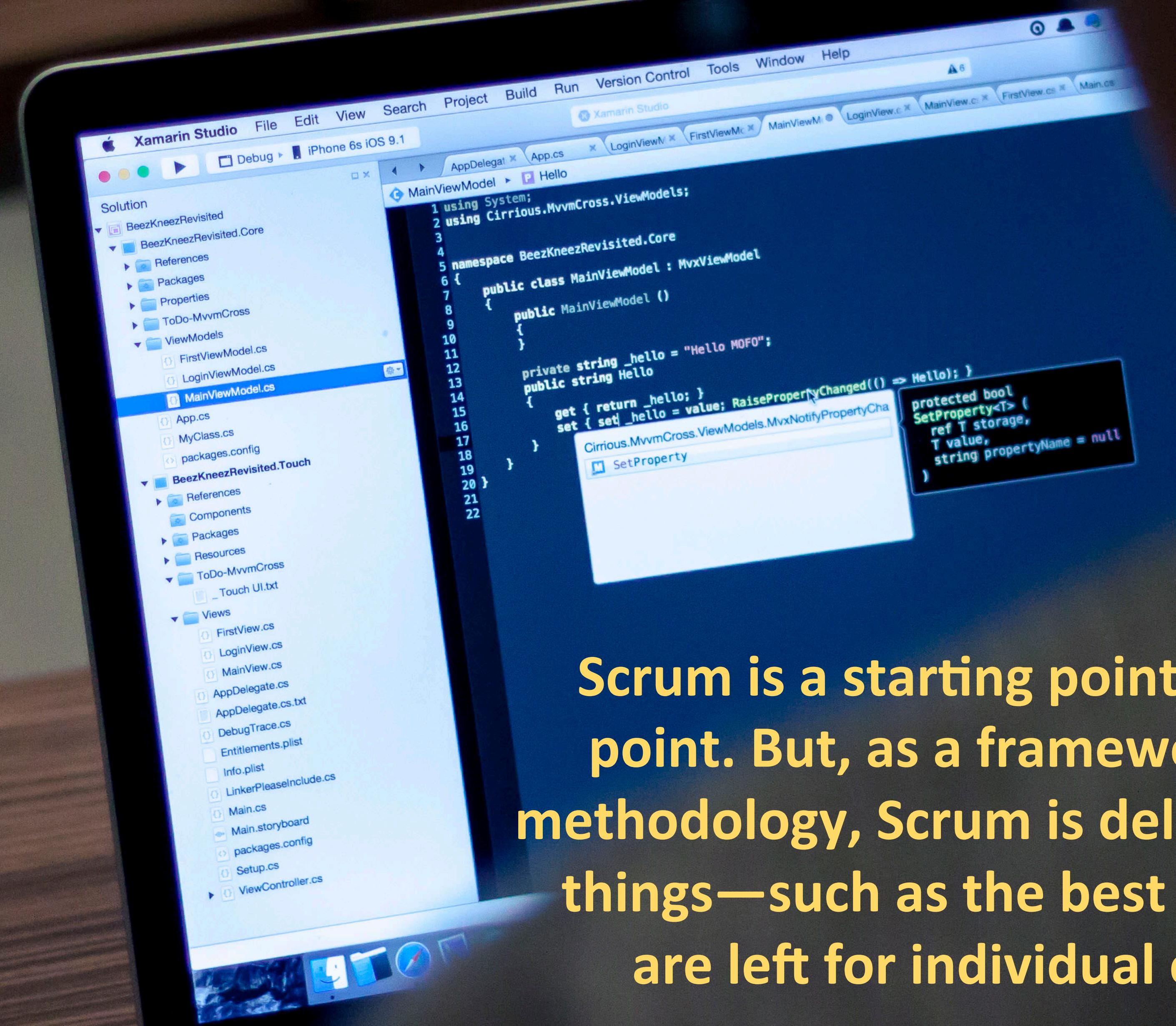
#8 Underestimate the Importance of Culture

Innovation and Culture

**There is no culture of failure:
Teams therefore do not
move out of their comfort
zones, but instead play safe.**



- Innovation
 - Chief Innovation Officer
 - Innovation programs
 - Hackathons
 - Developer job fair (allow developers to move around the organization quarterly)
 - Innovation awards
 - Encourage Personal development time (1 day a month)
- Culture
 - Employee retention
 - Fail Fast culture
 - Incentives that are aligned with Agile/Lean thinking



Scrum is a starting point. In fact, it's a great starting point. But, as a framework rather than a full-blown methodology, Scrum is deliberately incomplete. Some things—such as the best technical practices to use—are left for individual organizations to determine.

- Bob Martin

#10 Employ Agile Practices Without Lean Principles

LEAN PRINCIPLES

- Eliminate Waste
- Build Quality In
- Create Knowledge
- Defer Commitment
- Deliver Fast
- Respect People
- Optimize the Whole

7 LEAN WASTES

- Partially Done Work
- Extra Features
- Relearning
- Handoffs
- Delays
- Task Switching
- Defects

Exercise: Identify an example of violating each of these principles in a software development context

#11 Failure to Create Fast Feedback (Continually Inspect/Adapt)





#12 Unwillingness to Address Illusions Around Distributed Teams

#13 Fail to decentralize control



FAILURE PATTERN SUMMARY

- 1 Fail to secure Executive-level Sponsorship
- 2 Fail to identify a Transformation Product Owner
- 3 Introduce Agility as just another business process
- 4 Don't define career paths for new roles
- 5 Ignore Transforming Leader Behaviors
- 6 Don't adapt your organizational model
- 7 Insist on overburdening your teams
- 8 Underestimate the Importance of Culture
- 9 Neglect the Need for Technical Excellence
- 10 Employ Agile Practices Without Lean Principles
- 11 Failure to Create Fast Feedback
- 12 Unwillingness to Address Illusions Around Distributed Teams
- 13 Fail to decentralize control

Setting up an Agile transformation for success

The scope of an Agile organizational transformation is often completely underestimated....

STEP 1 :
Establish a
Vision and
Roadmap

Align metrics
to the agile
vision

STEP 2 :

STEP 3 :
Define
governance
structures

Create
backlogs for
Agile
transformation

STEP 4 :

STEP 5 :
Craft a
communication
plan

STEP 6 :

Provide
coaching to
teams and
leaders

Agile Transformation Framework



Leadership Agility and Complexity

Management/Executive Consulting
Leadership Mentoring & Environment Design

Organizational Structure & Strategy

Theory of Constraints & Systems Thinking, Roles,
Organizational Structures and Policies
Continuous Improvement

Product and Business Strategy

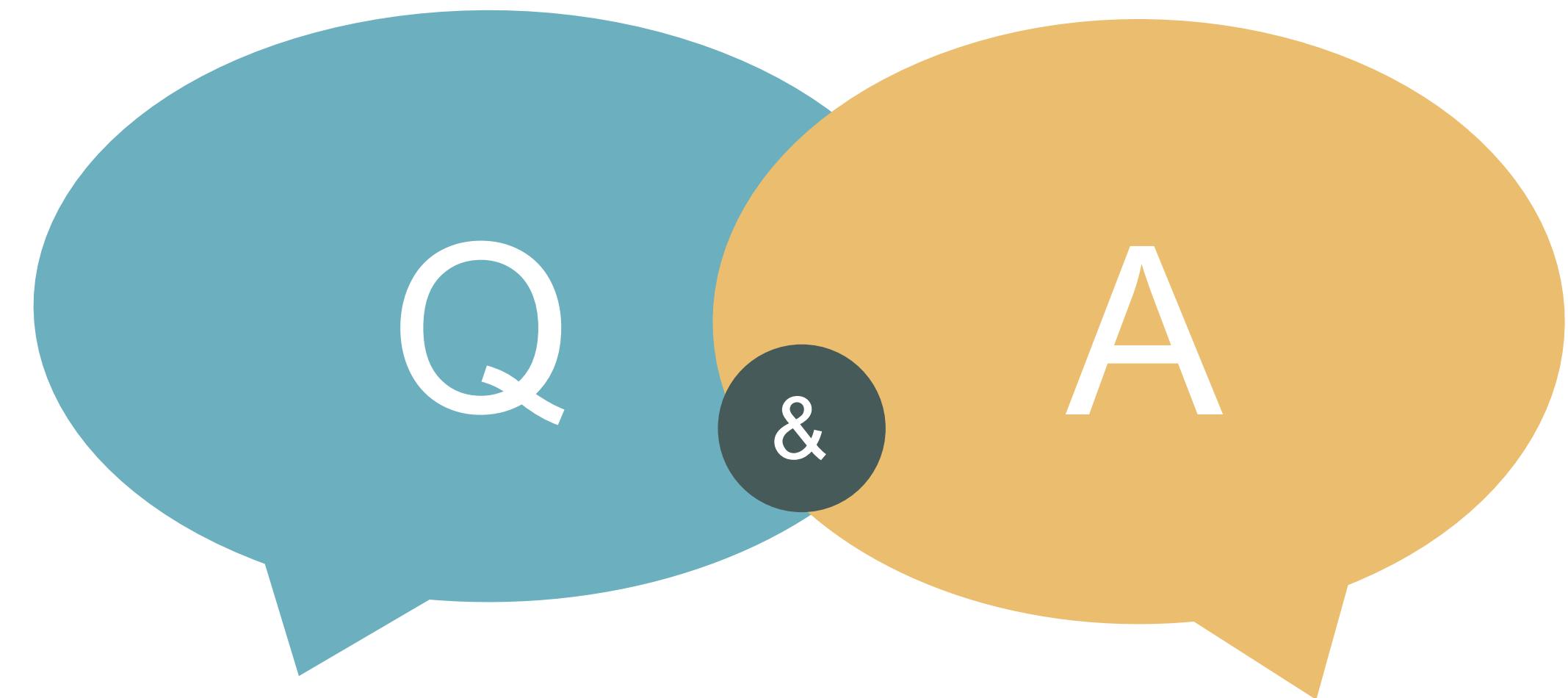
Innovation & Lean startup
Portfolio and Budgeting

Product and Project Delivery

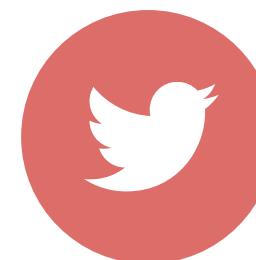
Scaling/Large Programs
Scrum/Kanban/XP/Lean

Execution and Practices

Technical Mentoring & XP
Team Dynamics/Collaboration



THANKS FOR LISTENING



jasonjkline



+1 408.784.2904



jkline@solutionsiq.com



linkedin.com/in/jasonkline