

Detecting and Improving an Innovative Attitude in Teams

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Red Hat Agile Day

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<https://github.com/ccurley/presos/blob/master/Agile%20Attitudes.v2.pdf>

"Action by all means. But in a complex world, there are many kinds of action. Action requires programs -- programs require vocabulary. To act wisely, in concert, we use many words. If we use the wrong words, words that divide up the field inadequately, we obey false cues. We must name the friendly and unfriendly functions and relationships in such a way that we are able to do something about them. In naming them, we form our characters, since the names embody attitudes; and implicit in the attitudes are the cues of behavior....
...it is an act for you to attempt changing your attitudes, or the attitudes of others."

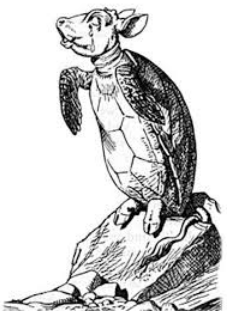
. Burke, *Attitudes Toward History*, 4.

Attitude is Incipient Action

Tools to gather data about a team's attitudes

Name those data, based on a framework for categorizing attitudes

Once named, use the properties of that category to attempt to change the attitude



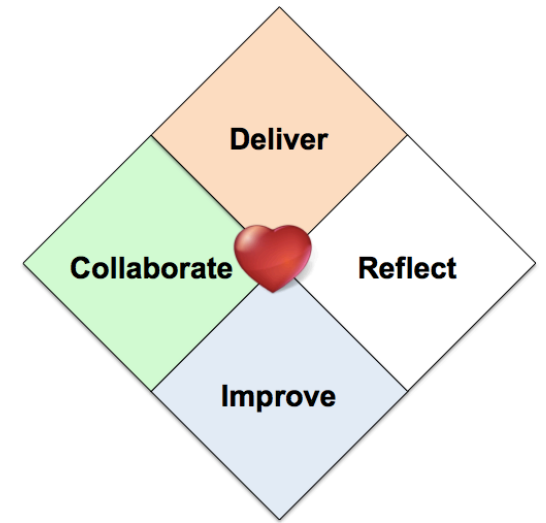
Agile: Since 2003, various roles from Scrum Master to Org. Transformation

Penn State University, Schreyer Honors College (Political Science and History)

Based on the work of Kenneth Burke and research in the field of *Social Epistemology*

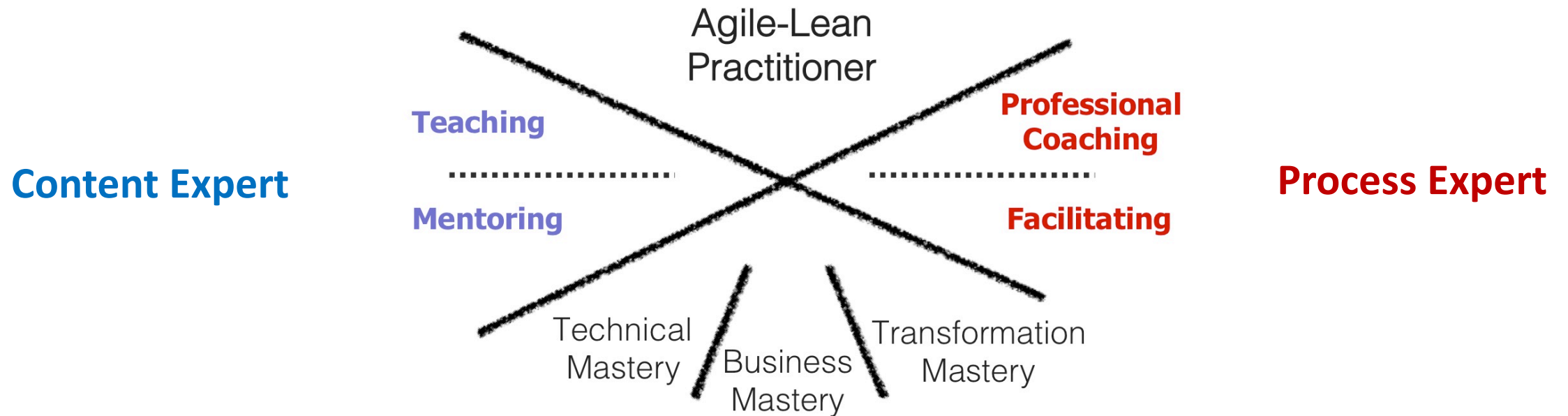
How we *think* about the things we *do*





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$f(\text{metaphor}): \text{compare}(A, B)$

$f(\text{metonymy}): \text{reduce}(A \rightarrow \{a \in A\})$

$f(\text{synecdoche}): \text{substitute}(A \rightarrow B \mid B \rightarrow A)$

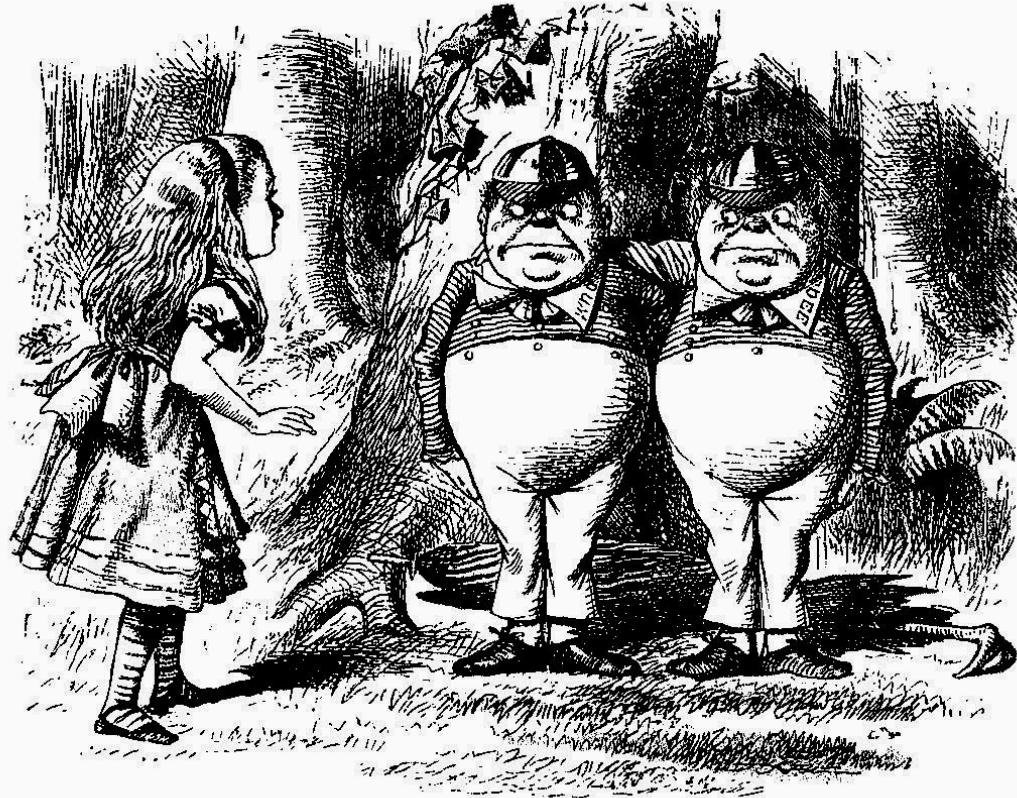
$f(\text{irony}): \text{synthesize}(A, B) \rightarrow C$

Trope	Function	Definition	Example
Metaphor	Compares	$f(\text{metaphor}): \text{compare}(A, B)$ Metaphor compares two things	Hot Water (environmental) Eat Our Own Dog Food (food) That Ship Has Sailed (travel) Toss A Grenade Over the Wall (war) Scrum (sports)
Metonymy	Reduces	$f(\text{metonymy}): \text{reduce}(A \rightarrow \{a \in A\})$ Metonymy reduces a whole to a part	Boots on ground Resource, FTE Hands on Keyboards, Coder, Tester
Synecdoche	Substitutes	$f(\text{synecdoche}): \text{substitute}(A \rightarrow B \mid B \rightarrow A)$ Synecdoche substitutes one thing with another, and it has to work bi-directionally	“Management said...” “DevOps is on the bridge...” “We are Penn State” The Development Team
Irony	Synthesizes	$f(\text{irony}): \text{synthesize}(A, B) \rightarrow C$ Irony synthesizes two things to create a new meaning	Craptacular We’re a family here (at Yoyodyne) Consensus Acceleration Servant Leader

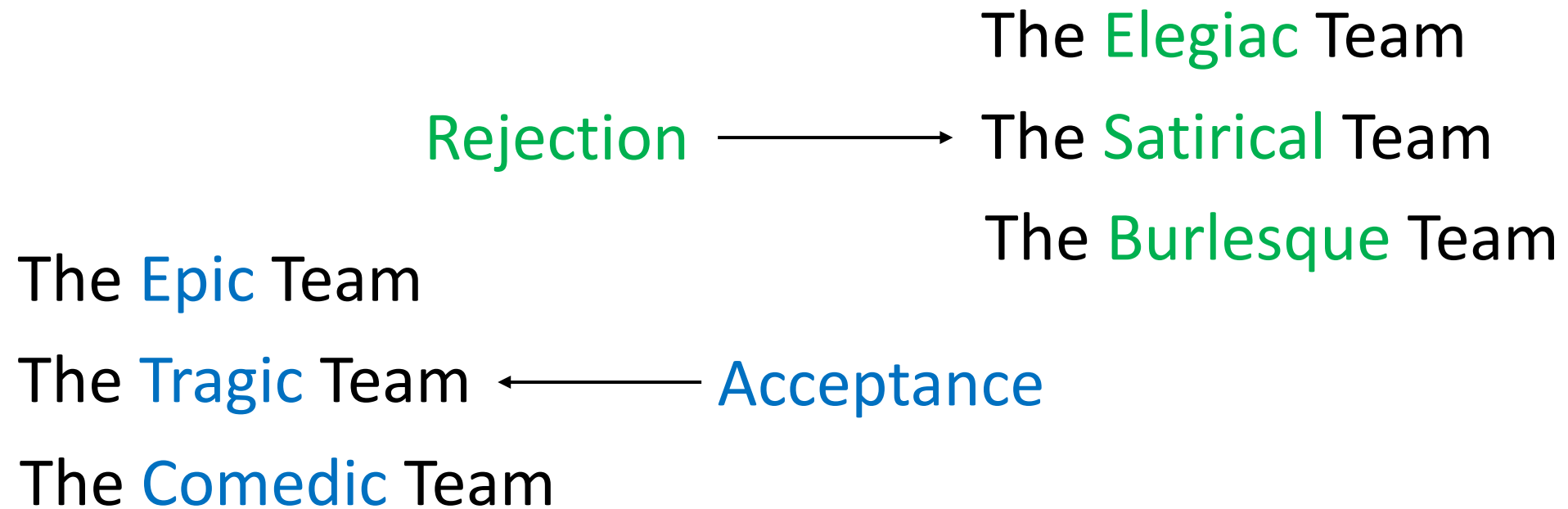
Trope	Cues	False Cues
Metaphor	Establishes understanding quickly	If the properties don't match, you'll take the wrong actions; metaphors can 'fossilize' into abstractions
Metonymy	Focuses attention to the essence of the matter	Ridicules, exploits, objectifies: racism, sexism, and prejudices
Synecdoche	Simplifies complexity	Obscures responsibility and accountability. Inaccuracy.
Irony	Conveys complexity	Multiple different ways to synthesize. Different people get different answers.

When Engineers Stop Talking in the Technical Language of Engineering and Start Talking in the Figurative Language of Poets, Coaches Need to Pay Particular Attention.

Acceptance and Rejection



Is your team turning toward Agile or turning away from Waterfall?



Transitional

The **Didactic, Grotesque, or Monastic** Organization,

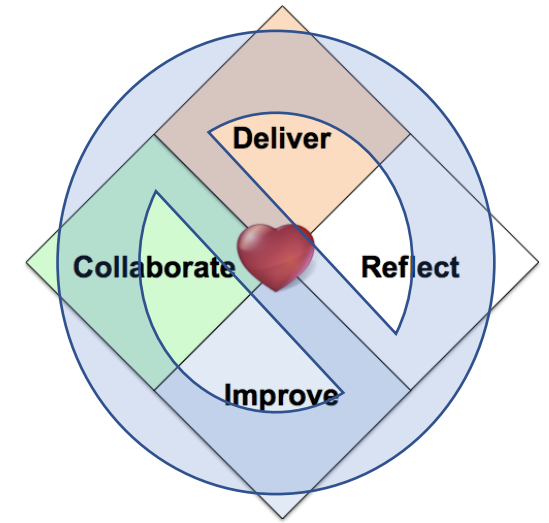
The Elegiac Team



The Elegiac Team complains

Everything “sucks,” “[It’s] a bucket of crap,” They’re on a “sinking ship.” They’re “the walking dead.”

They exaggerate obstacles, emphasize their own limitations



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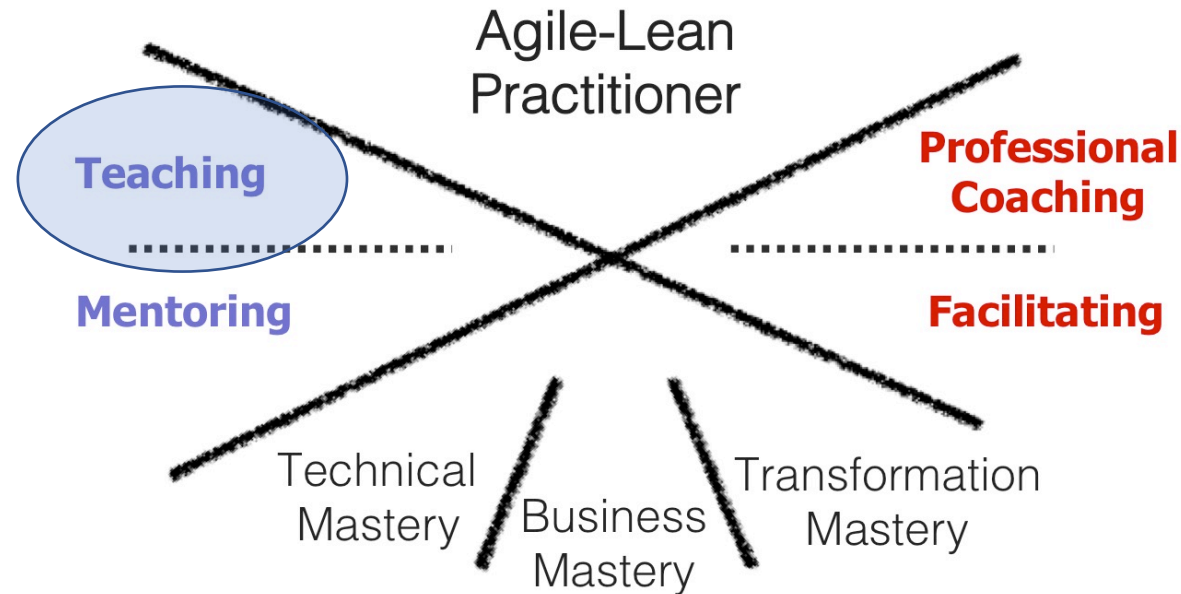
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Work on “muscle memory.”

“Fake it ‘til you make”
strategy.

Small, frequent instruction
on Agile practices.

Quick movements, rapid
benefits.



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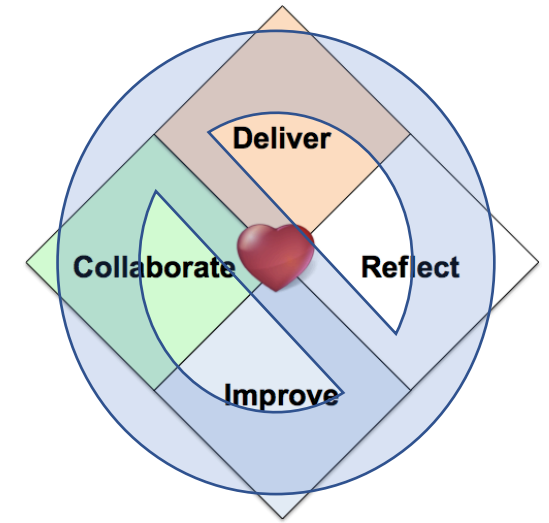
The Satirical Team



The Satiric Team disassembles.

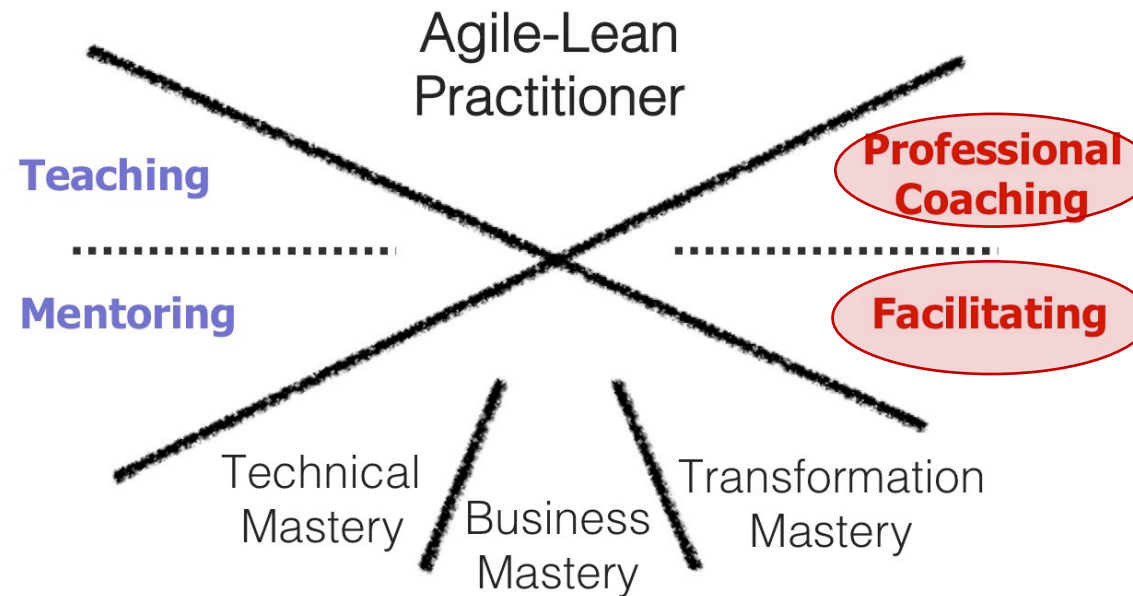
Public agreement, private disagreement. “Do as I say, not as I do,” “Someone, somewhere needs to do something about this sometime.” “...put a coversheet on the TPS report.”

They exaggerate external stupidity, as if they’re not a part of that system; they make inaction look like action.



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They point out the flaws in the organization outside the team.

Can that much energy be misdirected by a team that doesn't want to succeed?

Facilitation: Re-direct the team toward usefulness.

Coaching: what is holding you back?

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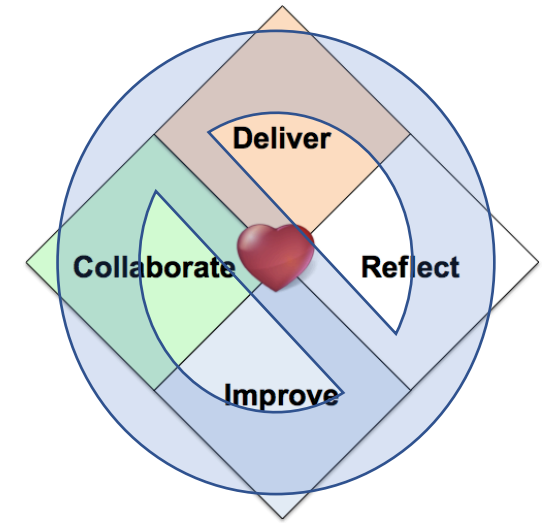
The Burlesque Team



The Burlesque Team ridicules

“Agile is a stand up meeting everyday” “Agile is being able change direction, suddenly”

They put all of their energy into ritual, but not the underlying reason or benefit.



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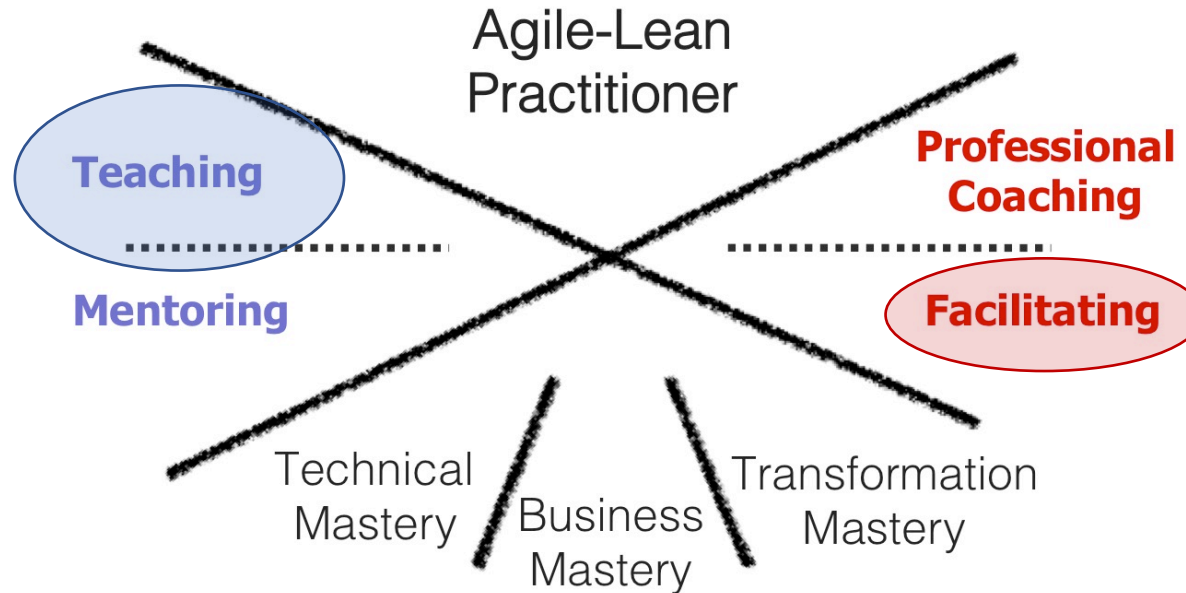
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The unintentional burlesque...

They've been 'trained' but not 'educated'

Bring them back to the basics, emphasize the "why" over the "what"

Practical teaching, teaching in the field.



The intentional burlesque...

Ceremonies are key teaching opportunities.

The coach structures ceremonies, events, and exercises to re-direct the team toward reasons and outcomes.

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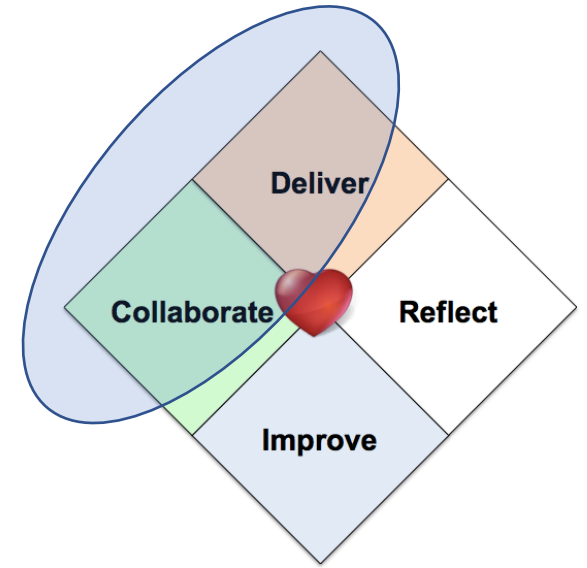
The Epic Team



The Epic Team endures

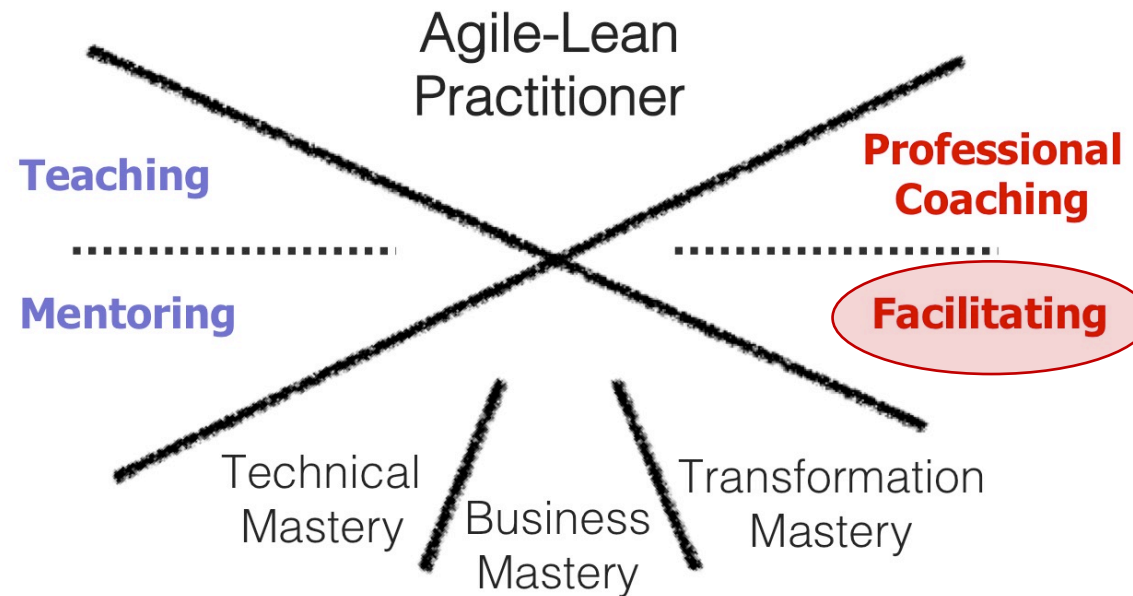
“The top floor demands,” “Weather the storm,” “Getting hammered.”

They put all of their energy into struggle, but no inspection or adaptations.



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The team has “the answer,” but can’t do anything about it.

Ceremonies are key learning opportunities.

The coach structures ceremonies, events, and exercises learn to inspect and adapt the product and that team.

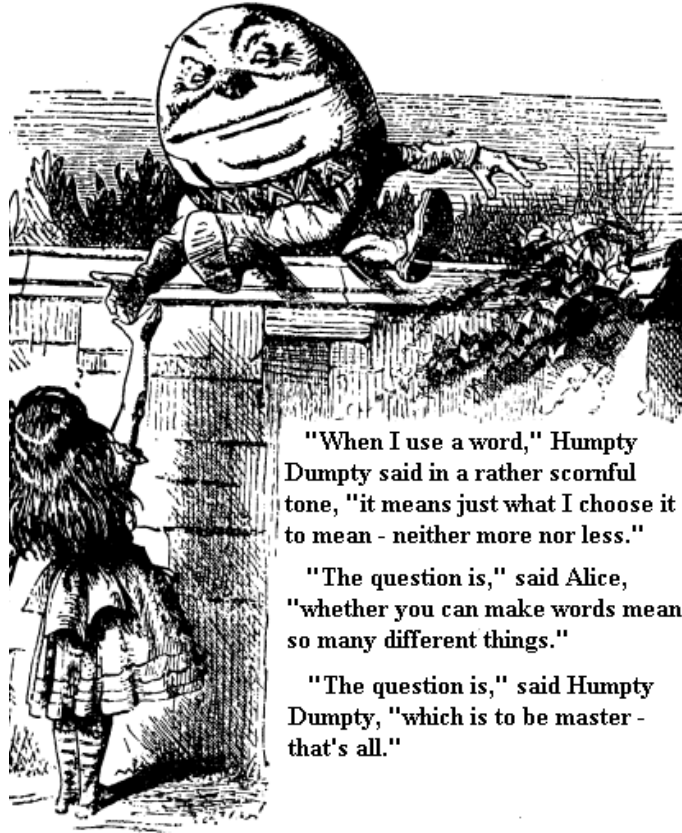
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The Tragic Team



"When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said in a rather scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean - neither more nor less."

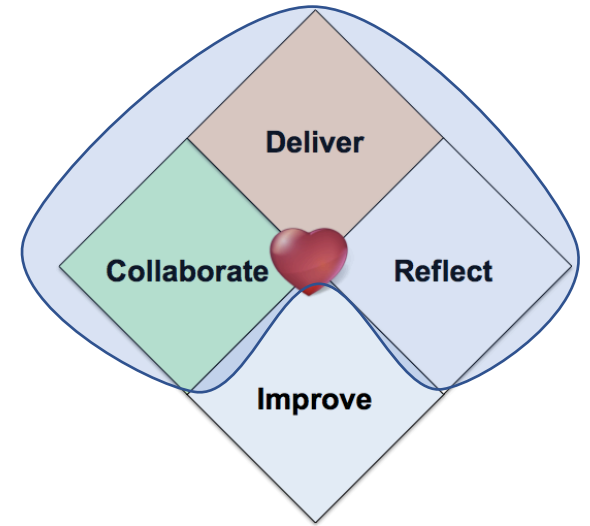
"The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things."

"The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master - that's all."

The Tragic Team atones

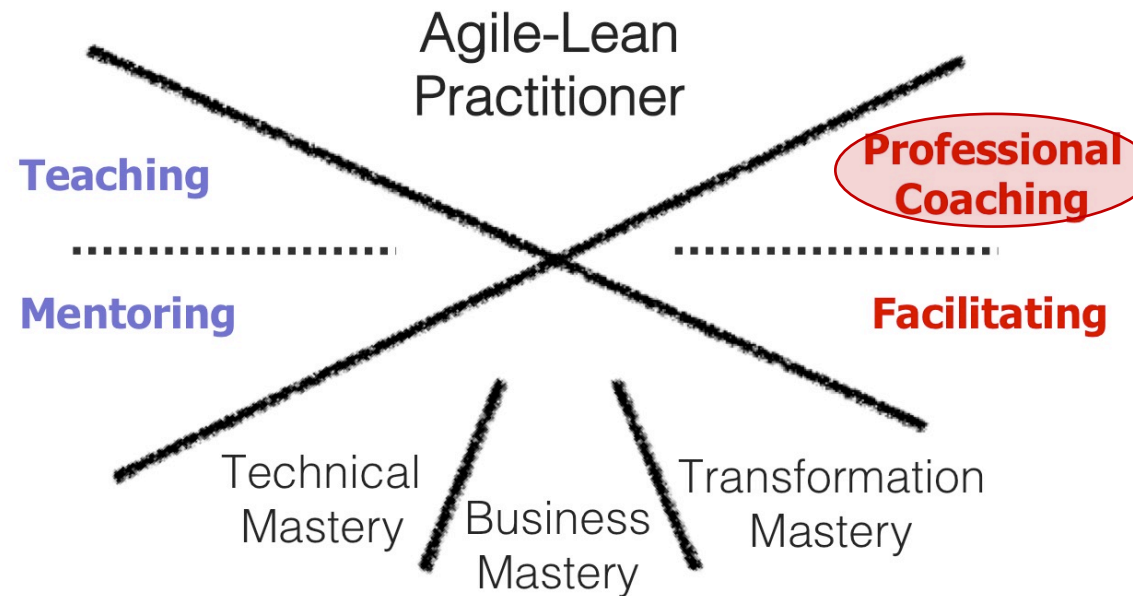
They put all of their energy into inspecting what always goes wrong, but never on adaptation.

“A leopard can’t change its stipes,” “That ship has sailed,”
“We’ll never clear that hurdle.”



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The team does have the “the answer,” but they’re not using it.

Coaching the team members explores the question “what’s holding you back?” when it comes to incremental and iterative improvement.

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The Comedic Team

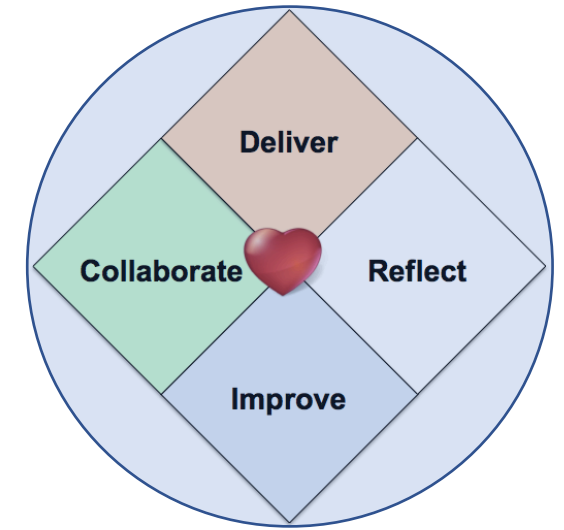


The Comedic Team *LEARNS*.

They put energy into correcting and improving.

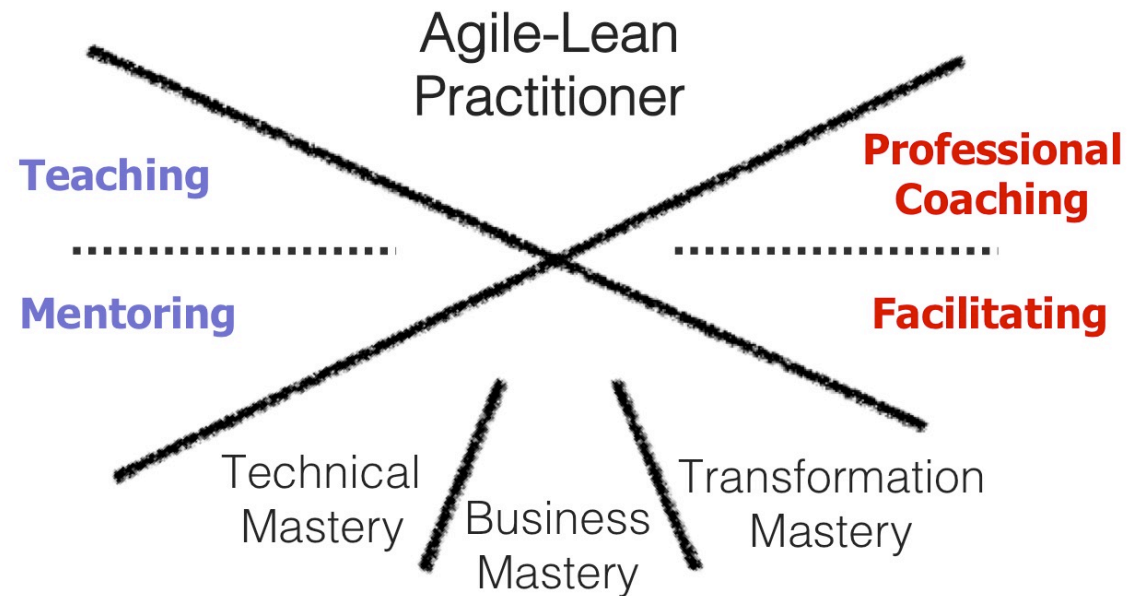
“Well, we made a pig’s ear of that one,” “We completely tripped up,” “We fumbled the ball.”

Congratulations. The Comedic team is the only team with an Agile attitude.



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Category	Faces	What it does	Tropes that tend toward or hint at	Critical Response
Elegy	Rejection	Complains	"We're drowning," "Living under cloud"	Coaching
Satire	Rejection	Dissembles	"We (but not me)..." "Fudging the data"	Facilitating, Coaching
Burlesque	Rejection	Ridicules	"The daily sit-down"	Teaching
Epic	Acceptance	Endures	"Pushing a rock uphill"	Facilitating
Tragic	Acceptance	Atones	"It's our cross to bear"	Coaching
Comedic	Acceptance	Learns	"Pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off"	
Didactic	Transitional (?)	Prevaricates	"We're number one!" "Our vision rocks!"	Trans., Bus. Mastery
Grotesque	Transitional (?)	Misdirects	"We're Scrumfall," "We're Waterfragile"	Trans., Bus. Mastery
Monastic	Transitional (?)	Misdirects	"We're Scrumfall," "We're Waterfragile"	Trans., Bus. Mastery

Attitude is Incipient Action

When Engineers Stop Talking in the Technical Language of Engineering and Start Talking in the Figurative Language of Poets, Coaches Need to Pay Particular Attention

Is your team turning toward Agile or turning away from Waterfall?

The comedic attitude is the only innovative attitude

Backup Slides



“All That Stuff in High School English Class That You Thought Was Really Stupid and That You’d Never Use Outside the Classroom.... Yeah, That Stuff Is Really Important After All.”

Christopher Curley

Red Hat Agile Day

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<https://github.com/ccurley/presos/blob/master/Agile%20Attitudes.v2.pdf>

Burke, Kenneth. *Attitudes Toward History*. 2 vols. New York: New Republic, 1937; 2nd rev. ed., Los Altos, Calif.: Hermes Publications, 1959; Beacon paperback, Boston: Beacon Press, 1961; 3rd rev. ed., Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984. The 1984 edition contains a new afterword, "Attitudes toward History: In Retrospective Prospect."

... *The Philosophy of Literary Form: Studies in Symbolic Action*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1941; 2nd ed., 1967; rev. abr. ed., Vintage paperback, New York: Vintage Books, 1957; 3rd ed., Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973.

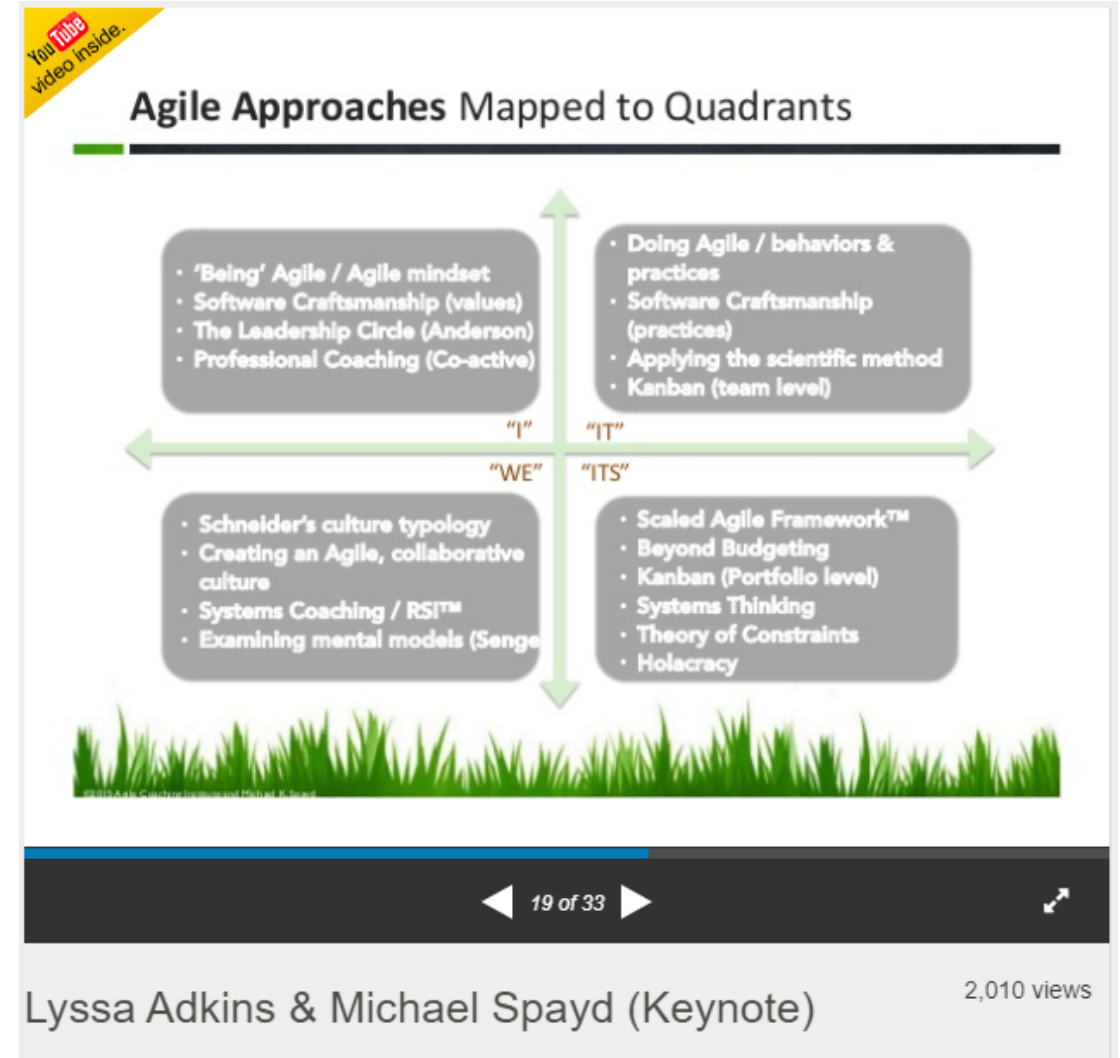
... *A Grammar of Motives*, New York: Prentice-Hall, 1945; London: Dennis Dobson, 1947; 2nd ed., New York: George Braziller, 1955; Meridian paperback, Cleveland and New York: World Publishing Company, 1962 (together with *A Rhetoric of Motives*); Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969.

... *A Rhetoric of Motives*, New York: Prentice-Hall, 1950; 2nd ed., New York: George Braziller, 1955; Meridian paperback, Cleveland and New York: World Publishing Company, 1962 (together with *A Grammar of Motives*); Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969.

Spence, Larry D. "The Case Against Teaching,"
(<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/c2b8/4df7c0730434402f53a3a7dd1b0e7b4f841d.pdf>)

Ken Wilber's AQAL Diagram

- “I” is the first person personal pronoun
 - “We” is the second person personal pronoun
 - “It” is the impersonal pronoun uses as a provisional subject
 - “Its” is a possessive pronoun (the genitive), which qualifies another noun
-
- In “Theory of Truth” representation, LL is 2nd Person (You), but in AQAL it's 1st Person Plural (We)



Source: <https://www.slideshare.net/AgileNZ/lyssa-adkins-michael-spayd-keynote>

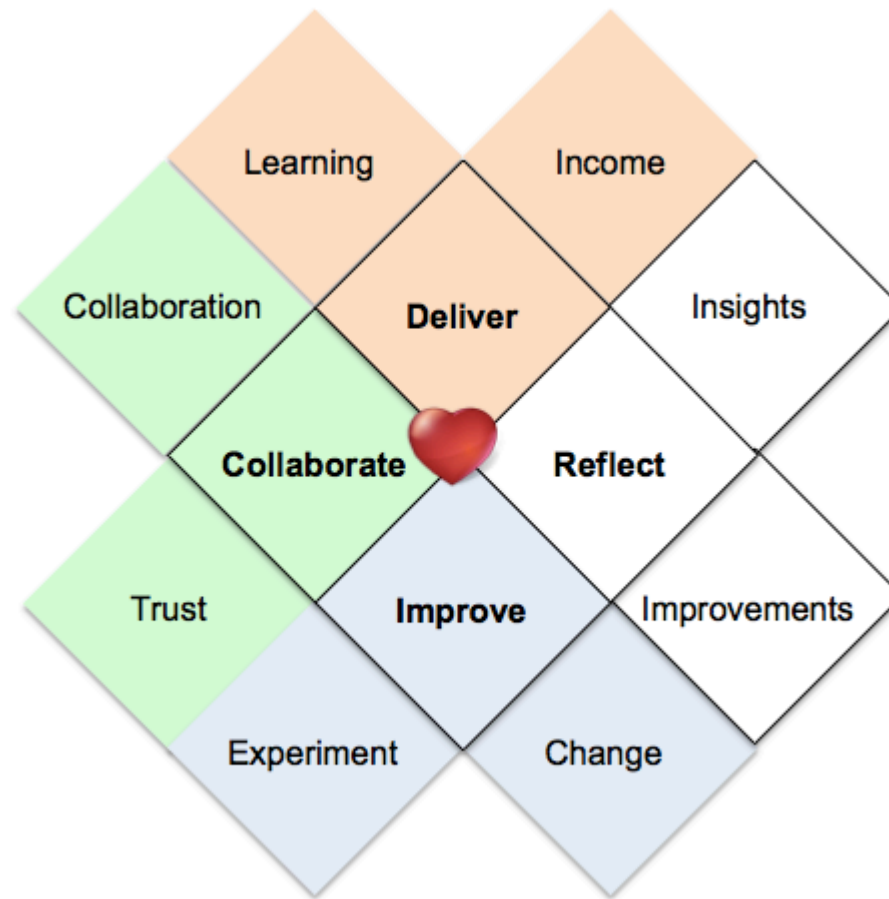
Laloux's "Guiding Metaphors"

- Like a "Wolf Pack" or "Army"
- Is a "machine" or a "family"
- If the organization is a machine (synecdoche) then people are its parts (metonym)
- If the organization is a family, this is a really funny kind of family.
- If an organization is a collection of people, then calling it a living organism might not be trope.

Exhibit 1: Evolutionary Breakthroughs in Human Collaboration

Color	Description	Guiding Metaphor	Key Breakthroughs	Current Examples
RED	Constant exercise of power by chief to keep foot soldiers in line. Highly reactive, short-term focus. Thrives in chaotic environments.	Wolf pack	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Division of labor• Command authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organized crime• Street gangs• Tribal militias
AMBER	Highly formal roles within a hierarchical pyramid. Top-down command and control. Future is repetition of the past.	Army	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Formal roles (stable and scalable hierarchies)• Stable, replicable processes (long-term perspectives)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Catholic Church• Military• Most government organizations (public school systems, police departments)
ORANGE	Goal is to beat competition; achieve profit and growth. Management by objectives (command and control over what, freedom over how).	Machine	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Innovation• Accountability• Meritocracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Multinational companies• Investment banks• Charter schools
GREEN	Focus on culture and empowerment to boost employee motivation. Stakeholders replace shareholders as primary purpose.	Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Empowerment• Egalitarian management• Stakeholder model	Businesses known for idealistic practices (Ben & Jerry's, Southwest Airlines, Starbucks, Zappos)
TEAL	Self-management replaces hierarchical pyramid. Organizations are seen as living entities, oriented toward realizing their potential.	Living organism	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self-management• Wholeness• Evolutionary purpose	A few pioneering organizations (see "Examples of Teal Management")

Source: Frederic Laloux, *Reinventing Organizations* (Nelson Parker, 2014)



Transitional The Didactic, Grotesque, or Monastic Organization



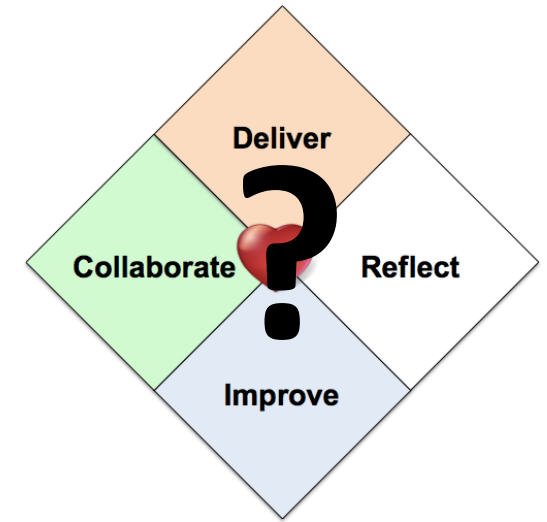
Applies to Organizations, impacts teams

When turning “toward” or “away” from Agile or Waterfall, the org got “lost”

Rather than changing the organization, key leaders changed words

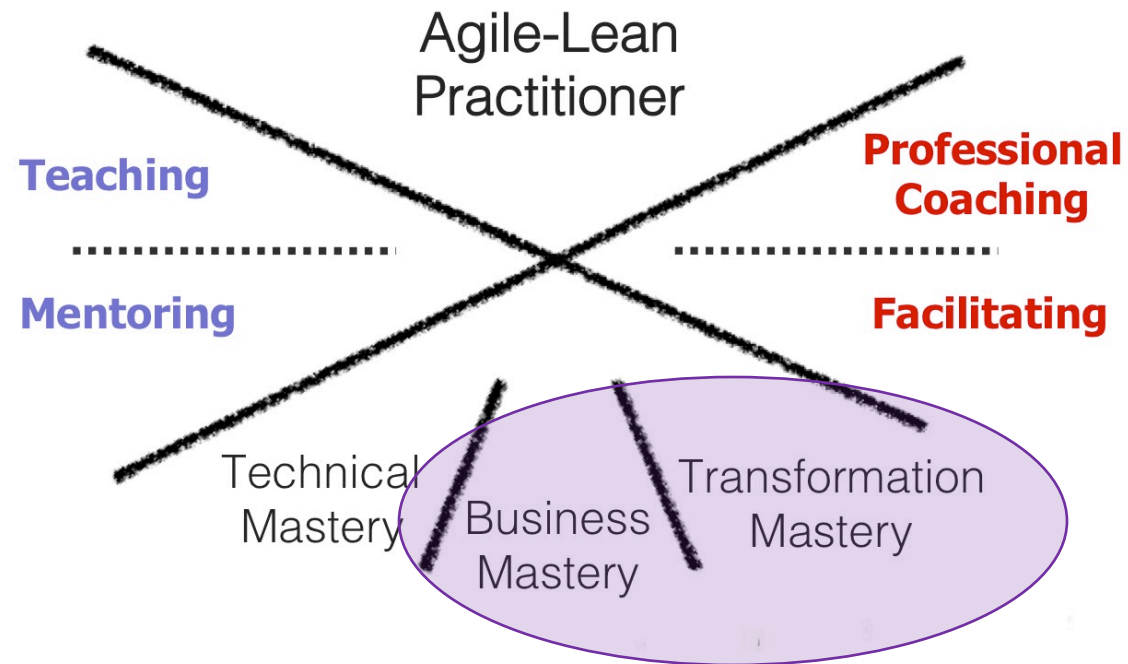
Not an attempt to change a value stream, but an attempt to change how we think about or perceive it

This is toxic. Fast action is vital.



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