

Why Agile Doesn't Scale  
- and what you can do about it

Dan North  
@tastapod

How Agile can Cross the Chasm  
- and why it usually doesn't

Dan North  
@tastapod

# A Guaranteed\* Formula for Scaling Agile

Dan North  
@tastapod

\* Not guaranteed. Or a formula.

What do we mean by **Scale** ?



What do we mean by **Scale** ?

- bigger problems ?

What do we mean by **Scale** ?

- bigger problems?

- bigger solutions?

What do we mean by **Scale**?

- bigger problems?

- bigger solutions?

- bigger programmes?





Why is scaling so hard?

Why is scaling so hard?

- Local optimisations don't roll up

# Why is scaling so hard?

- Local optimisations don't roll up
- Agile doesn't have an opinion!

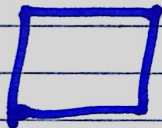
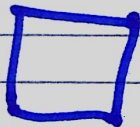
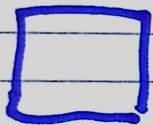


# Why is scaling so hard?

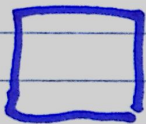
- Local optimisations don't roll up
- Agile doesn't have an opinion!
- Some of these things are **not like** the others...

Once upon a time...

Once upon a time...



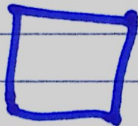
Once upon a time...



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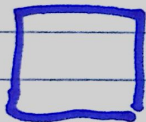


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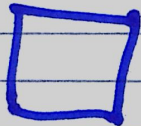
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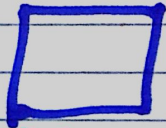
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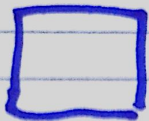


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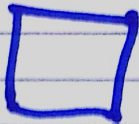
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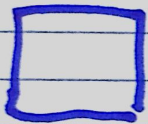


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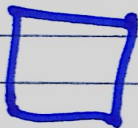
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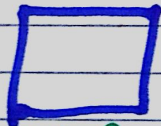
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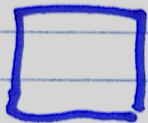


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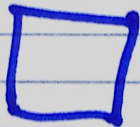
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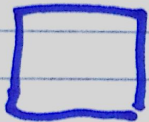
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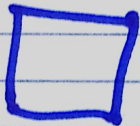
Once upon a time...



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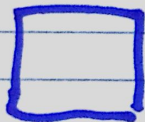


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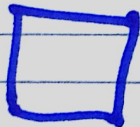
Once upon a time...



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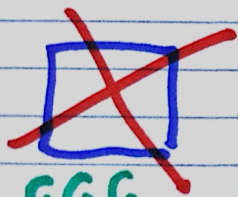
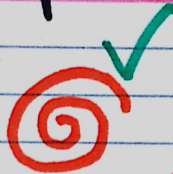

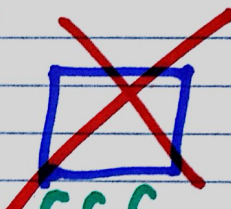


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Once upon a time...

			
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# Agile Adoption Patterns

- Richard Durnall, 2009

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Stage 1: The People break

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Stage 2: The Tools break

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Stage 5: The Money breaks

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Stage 1: The People break

Stage 2: The Tools break

Stage 3: The Governance breaks

Stage 4: The Customer breaks

Stage 5: The Money breaks

Stage 6: The Organisation breaks

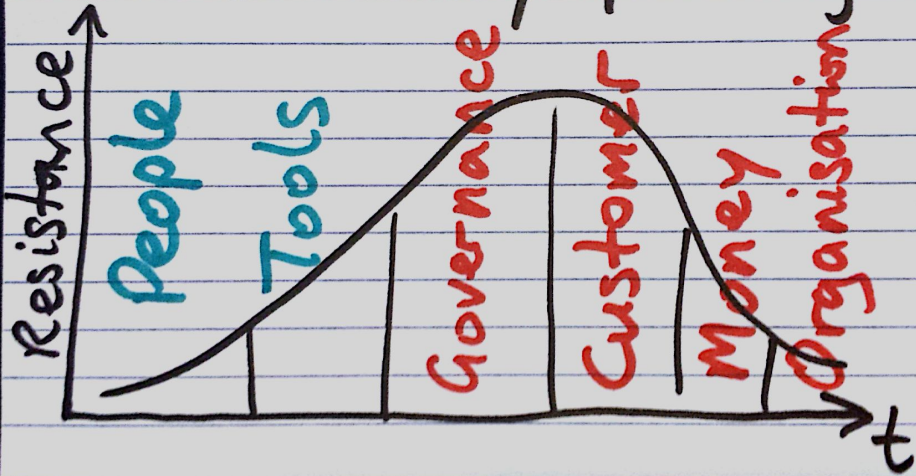
# Agile Adoption Patterns

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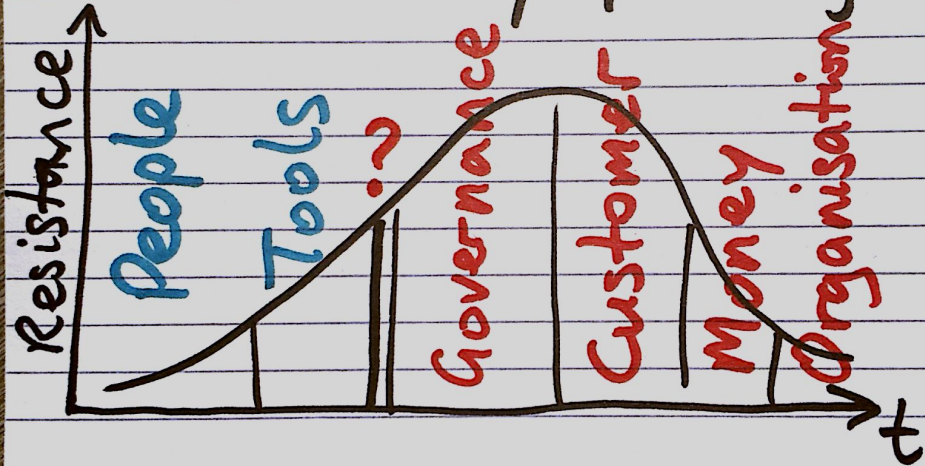
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- Stage 2: The Tools break
- Stage 3: The Governance breaks
- Stage 4: The Customer breaks
- Stage 5: The Money breaks
- Stage 6: The Organisation breaks

to 4 page  
←

# The Journey of Change



# The Journey of Change



What do we mean by Governance?

What do we mean by Governance?

Execution

What do we mean by Governance?

Delivery Assurance

Execution



What do we mean by Governance?

Governance

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Delivery Assurance

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Execution

What do we mean by Governance?

Portfolio  
Management

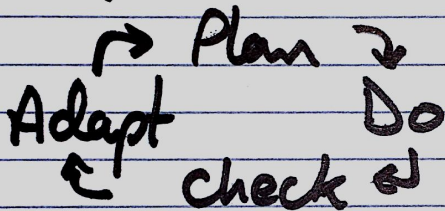
Governance

Delivery Assurance

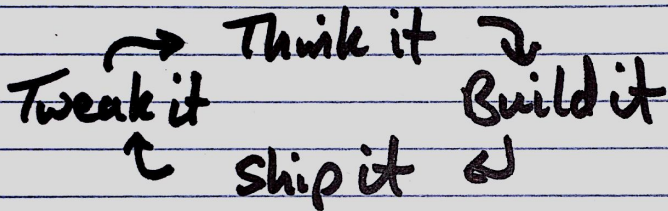
Execution

What happens in Execution?

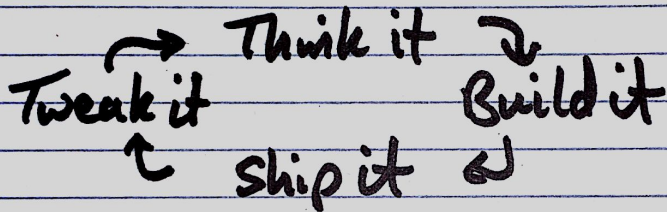
# What happens in Execution?



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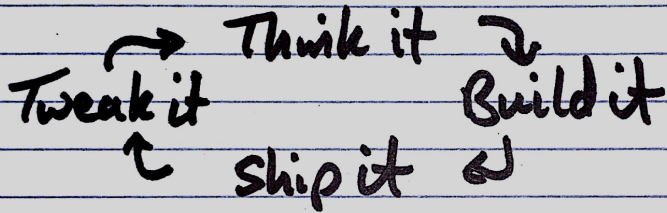


# What happens in Execution?



Team-scale, locally optimised

# What happens in Execution?



Team-scale, locally optimised

We're good at this!

What happens in Delivery Assurance?



What happens in Delivery Assurance?

- Cross-team concerns

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- Product trade-offs

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- Technical trade-offs

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- Product trade-offs
- Technical trade-offs

We're sometimes good at this

What happens in Governance?

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- Organisational concerns

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- Investment trade-offs

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- Organisational concerns
- Investment trade-offs
- Portfolio balancing

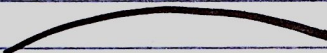


# What happens in Governance?

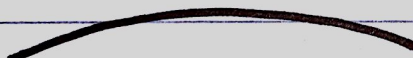
- Organisational concerns
- Investment trade-offs
- Portfolio balancing

We rarely experience this

Surfacing the right information  
Governance



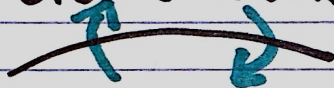
Delivery Assurance



Execution

Surfacing the right information

Governance



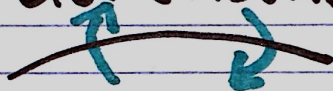
Delivery Assurance



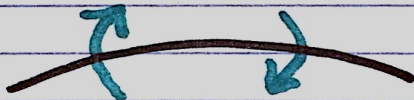
Execution

Surfacing the right information

Governance



Delivery Assurance



Execution

What matters to Delivery Assurance?

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"Have we learned anything new that might materially affect the delivery?"

What matters to Delivery Assurance?

"Have we learned anything new that might materially affect the delivery?"

"Are we nearly there yet?!!"

What matters to Governance?



What matters to Governance?

"Are our investments aligned with our objectives?"

# What matters to Governance?

"Are our investments aligned with our objectives?"

"Is there anything we should be doing differently?"

Contextual Consistency

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Create and share a clear vision

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Create and share a clear vision

Establish guiding principles

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Create and share a clear vision

Establish guiding principles

Requires strong, consistent leadership

# Contextual Consistency

Local decisions guided by  
global principles

# Contextual Consistency

Local decisions guided by  
global principles

Transparent, accountable  
decision-making



## Contextual Consistency:

Given the same context  
and the same constraints  
we are likely to make  
the same decisions

Some of my Guiding Principles

# Some of my Guiding Principles

Never the Expert!

Share Your Toys ☺

Difference is Data

Look where the action is, not the

Travel in Pairs

Wrapping Up

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Scaling is more than just  
small things bigger

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We need **guiding principles** and  
**strong leadership**

# Wrapping Up

Scaling is more than just  
small things bigger

We need guiding principles and  
strong leadership

Crossing the Chasm of Credibility  
is hard!

Thanks for listening!

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