LeSS to Improve on the 'Spotify Model'

Cesario Ramos – AgiliX Consulting

Disclaimer

- Disclose no more than was already shared in our public keynote at the Munich LeSS conference presentation in 2019.
- Only use and share already public available material and info.

Currently in the Product Group

- 500+ people
- Product is developed by more than 20 teams spread across 3 sites.
- Each team contains business, IT and operations skills.
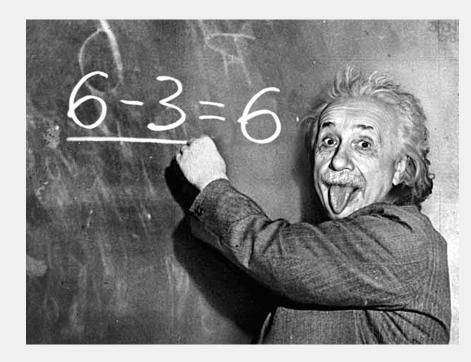- Deliver valuable product increment to our customers every 2 weeks.

It started with these observations...

- **Not working on most important functionality**
- **Unreliable market forecasts**
- **Painful release cycles**
- **"Them v.s. Us" mindset**
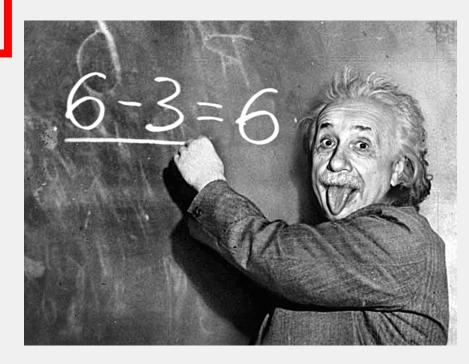
Go See Results

- Copy of 'Spotify model'
- Single function line managers

- 23 product-part owners and team backlogs.
- Connecting the dots teams.

- Squads have clear purpose.
- Poorly aligned on overall goals.
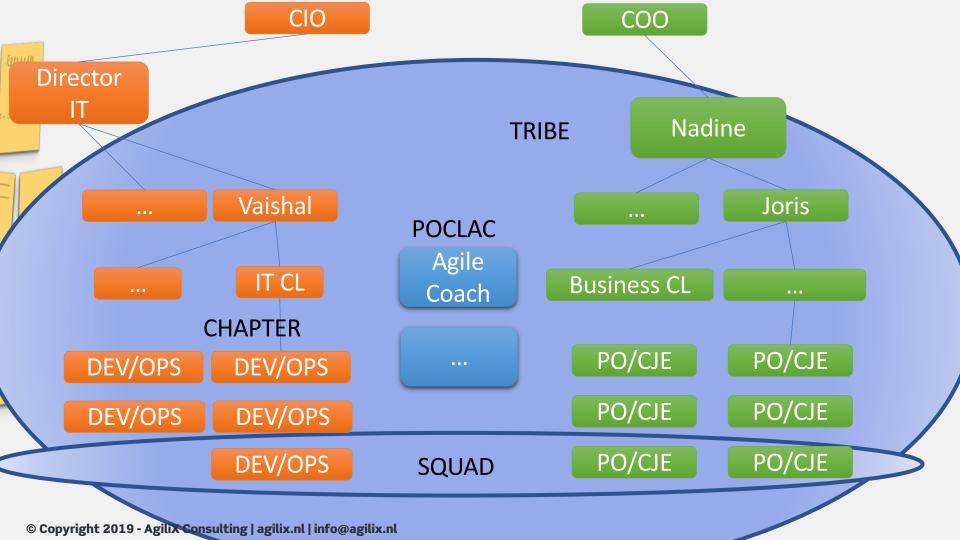
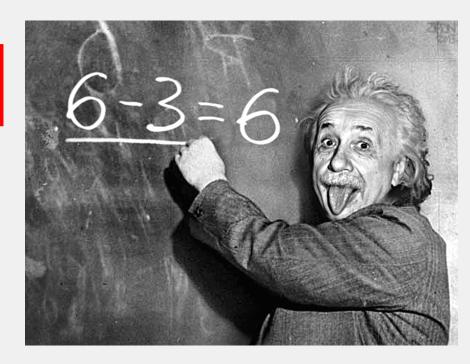- Output driven development.
- Side steering

And…

- 17 code branches
- A few auto tests
- 2 agile coaches

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And…

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CIO

COO

Director IT

TRIBE

Nadine

Vaishal

...

Joris

POCLAC

...

IT CL

Agile Coach

Business CL

...

CHAPTER

DEV/OPS   DEV/OPS

...

PO/CJE   PO/CJE

DEV/OPS   DEV/OPS

PO/CJE   PO/CJE

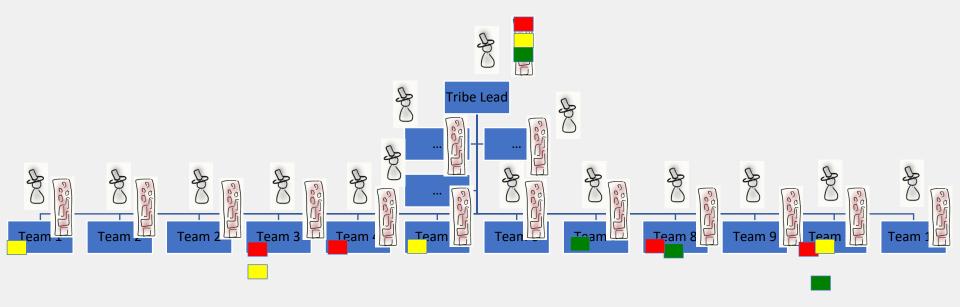DEV/OPS

SQUAD

PO/CJE   PO/CJE

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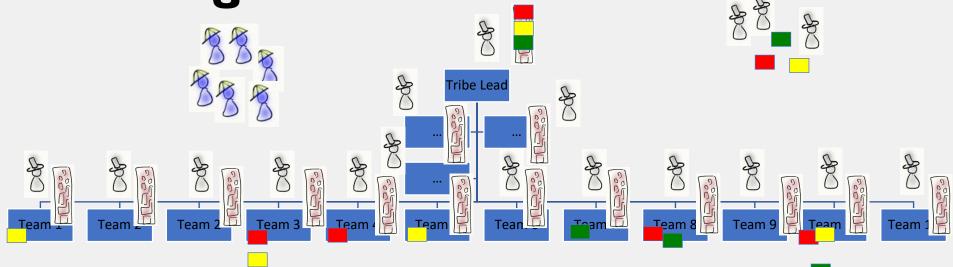- A few auto tests
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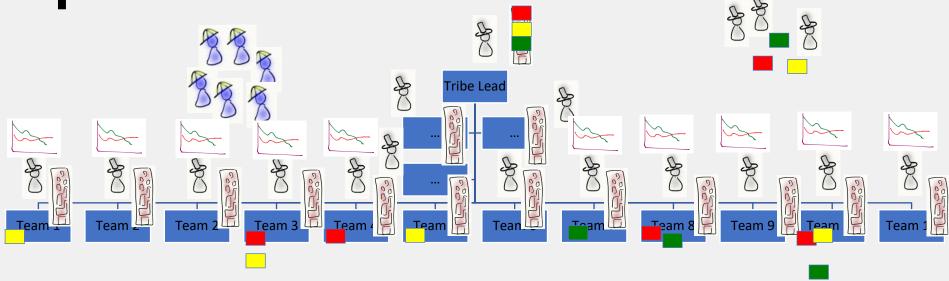
Work being done out of sync

Feature dependencies ranged from 30% to 80%

Connecting the DOTS team, POCLAC meetings...

Squads locally optimizing their performance...

Higher squad 'velocity' resulted in leads to more WIP and longer delays

Slowing you down rather than speeding up.

- Focus on parts of a product

- Poor learning because of long feedback cycles

- Use of output metrics

- <u>Each team locally optimizes!!</u>

Feb 2016

Scrum.org | *Whitepapers*

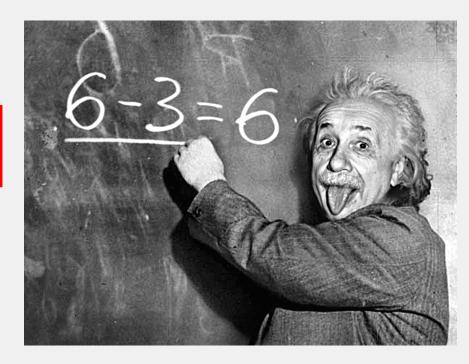# Scale your product NOT your Scrum

Cesario Ramos | PST & Product Development Coach

Coined the term 'Copy Paste Scaling'

https://agilix.nl/resources/ScaleYourProductNotYourScrum.pdf

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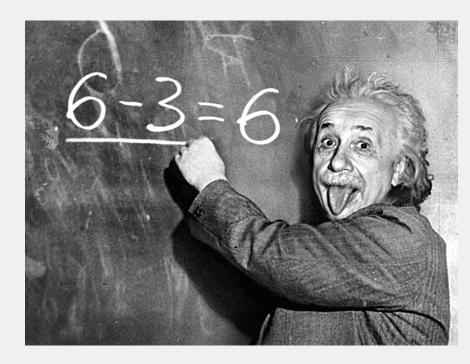
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STUDIED THE TRIBES WORK FOR THE COMING YEAR
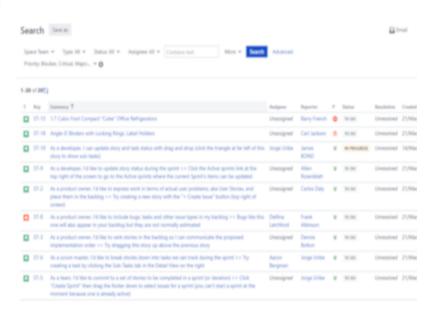
Identified Areas of dependencies

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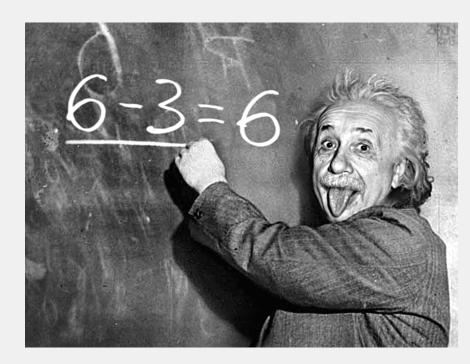- A few auto tests
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Outputs v.s. Outcomes

- Deliver a set of Epics.
- Performance tracked against % completed according to plan
- No validation of solutions by the squads
- Chapter Leads (single function line managers) introduced 'side steering'.

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Continuous Integration

- Squads were weeks or months working in isolation. Waiting for the integration phase.

- Result
  - Poor coordination
  - Unreliable measure of progress

How to prepare for the future?

How to focus the tribe on the most important work?

How to improve tribe reliability?

How to build a target platform across multiple countries?

How to increase Employee Satisfaction?

Our Strategy

Increase **focus** with 1 PBL prioritised on the **highest customer value**

All teams should to be able to deliver **shippable products**

Invest in **skills** and **expertise** of our **people** to contribute to target solutions
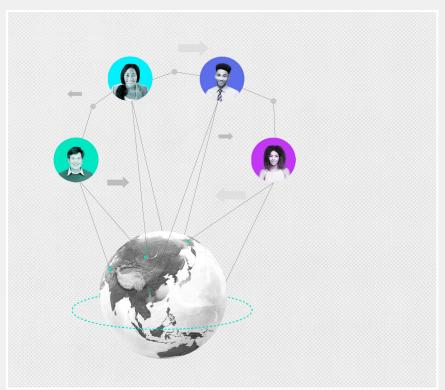
Tribe Redesign

Organized according to the most important concerns for the creation of value

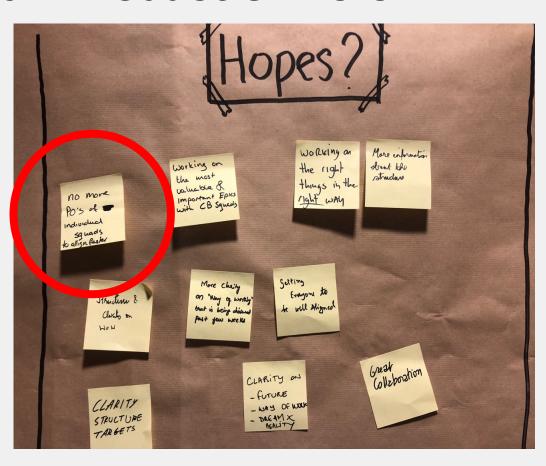# 1 Product with 3 Value Areas

Did not use Co-Located Teams

Instead, we used dispersed teams with BE-NL people to accelerate learning about Cross-country systems, business processes and customers
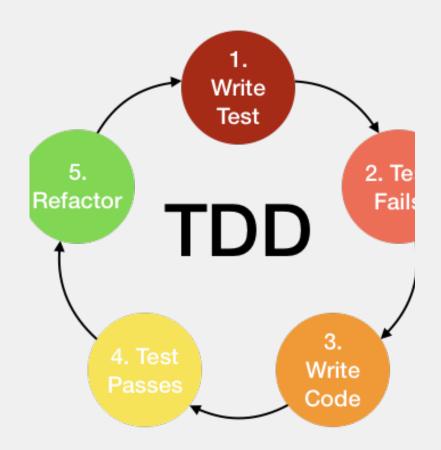
Did not Remove Team Product Owners

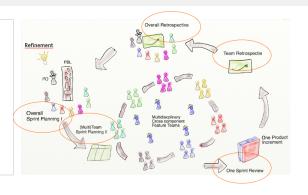Instead the team POs proposed themselves to eliminate their role.

Emergent Coordination

- We put CI on top of the single product backlog for months.

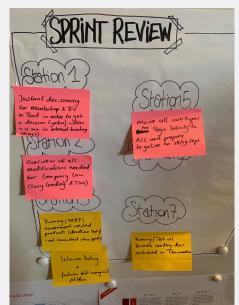- With 1 true Product Owner this was now possible.

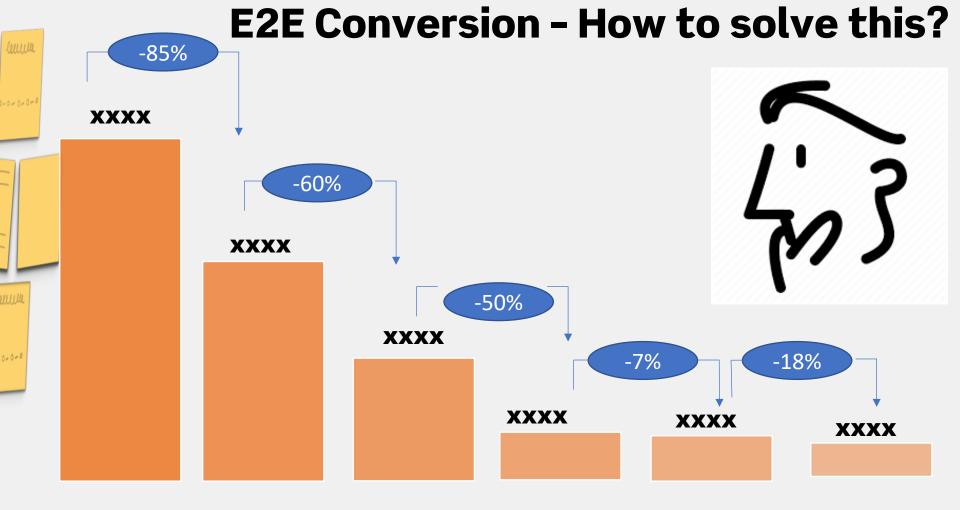|	
10.00 – 11.30 hrs	Sprint review
11.30 – 12.15 hrs	Squad retro
12.15 – 13.00 hrs	Time for lunch
13.00 – 13.30 hrs.	Overall planning
13.30 – 14.30 hrs.	Squad Planning
14.30 – 15.00 hrs.	Break
15.00 – 16.00 hrs.	Overall retro

- Bi weekly refinement and sprint change
- It was hard!
- How to let go their part of the product?
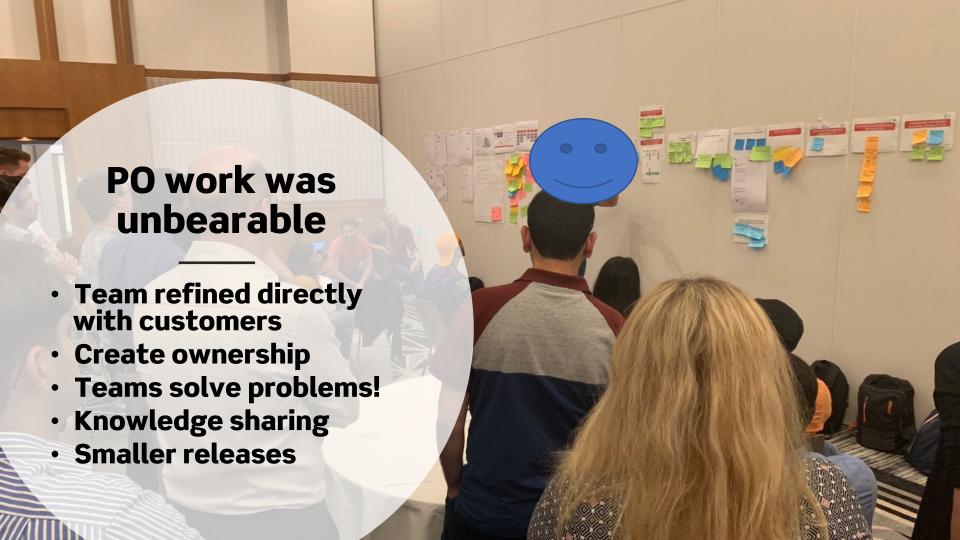- Why do we need to refine. I know already what I need to do?

DO NOT TELL OUR SQUADS WHAT TO DO, INSTEAD GAVE THEM A CUSTOMER PROBLEM TO SOLVE.

E2E Conversion - How to solve this?

-85%

xxxx

-60%

xxxx

-50%

xxxx

-7%

xxxx

-18%

xxxx

xxxx

PO work was unbearable

- **Team refined directly with customers**
- **Create ownership**
- **Teams solve problems!**
- **Knowledge sharing**
- **Smaller releases**

Key Insights

- Instead of making false predictions , first become more reliable.

- The Experts were not the HERO's but instead keeping others from developing.

- It is not about autonomy but about tuning the teams.

- Understanding purpose increases intrinsic motivation.

- Give teams a problem to solve, not work to do.

- Invest in Continuous Integration now is key for scaling.

Why your current approach to scaling isn't working.

- Provide The Answer Before Knowing The Question?

- Under Investing In Your Agile Engineering Practices?

- Organizational Design Conflicts with Goal Of Agility?

- You are 'Copy Paste' scaling?

LeSS adoption at a Large Dutch Bank

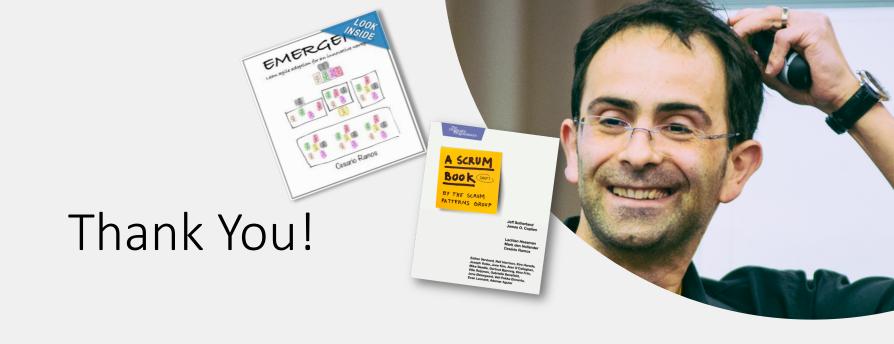https://agilix.nl/case-study/large-dutch-bank-our-journey-towards-agility-at-scale/?lang=en

Why Isn't Your Current Approach to Scaling Agile Working?

https://agilix.nl/case-study/why-isnt-your-current-approach-to-scaling-agility-working/

"It is **better** to do the **right thing wrong** then
Do the **wrong thing right**"

Prof. Russel Ackhoff

Thank You!

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