

# DARWIN AND A THEORY OF AGILE COACHING EVOLUTION

RON WHITEBREAD  
SCRUM MASTER / AGILE COACH  
PREVIOUS PRODUCT OWNER – AGILITY ENABLEMENT PARTNERS  
SYSCO

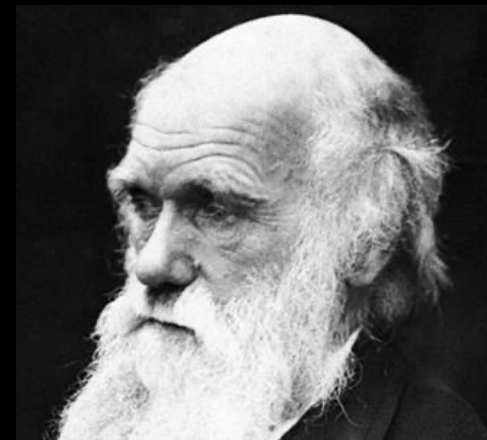
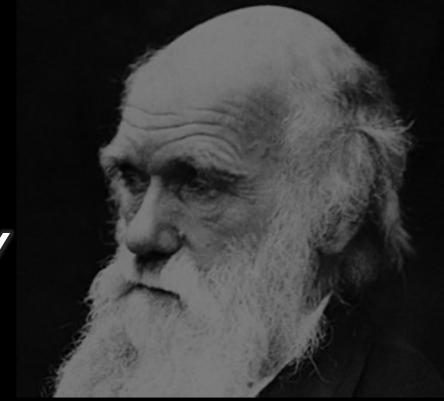


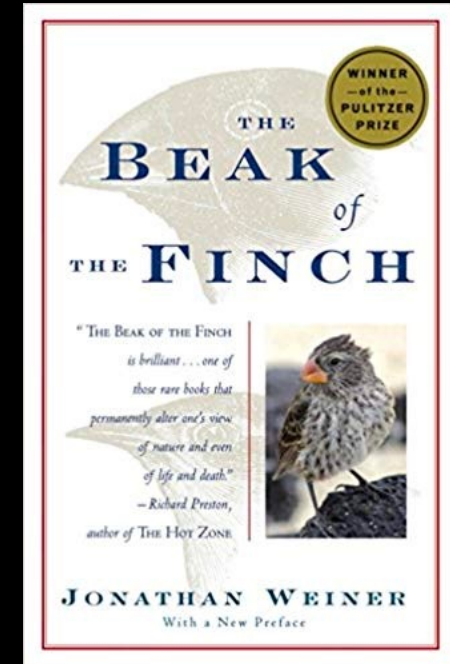
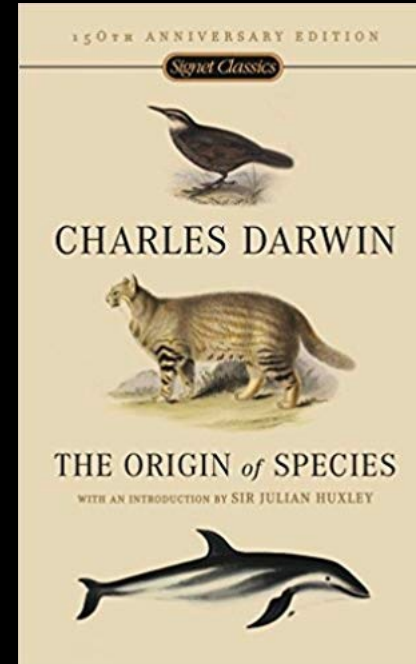
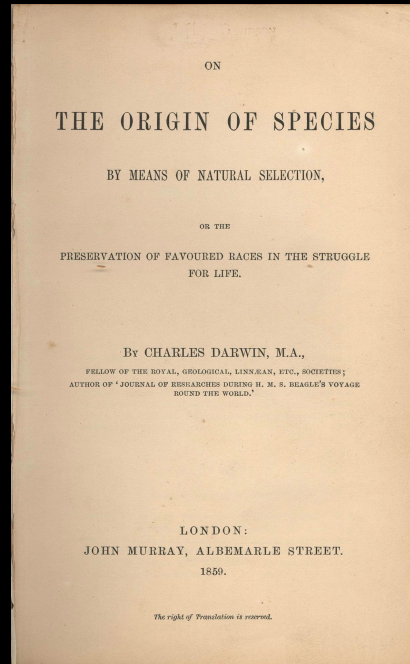
Image courtesy of <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/the-evolution-of-charles-darwin-110234034/>

# CHARLES DARWIN LAUNCHES A NEW THEORY



Changes in ecosystems (ecology + environment) results in changing or new species.

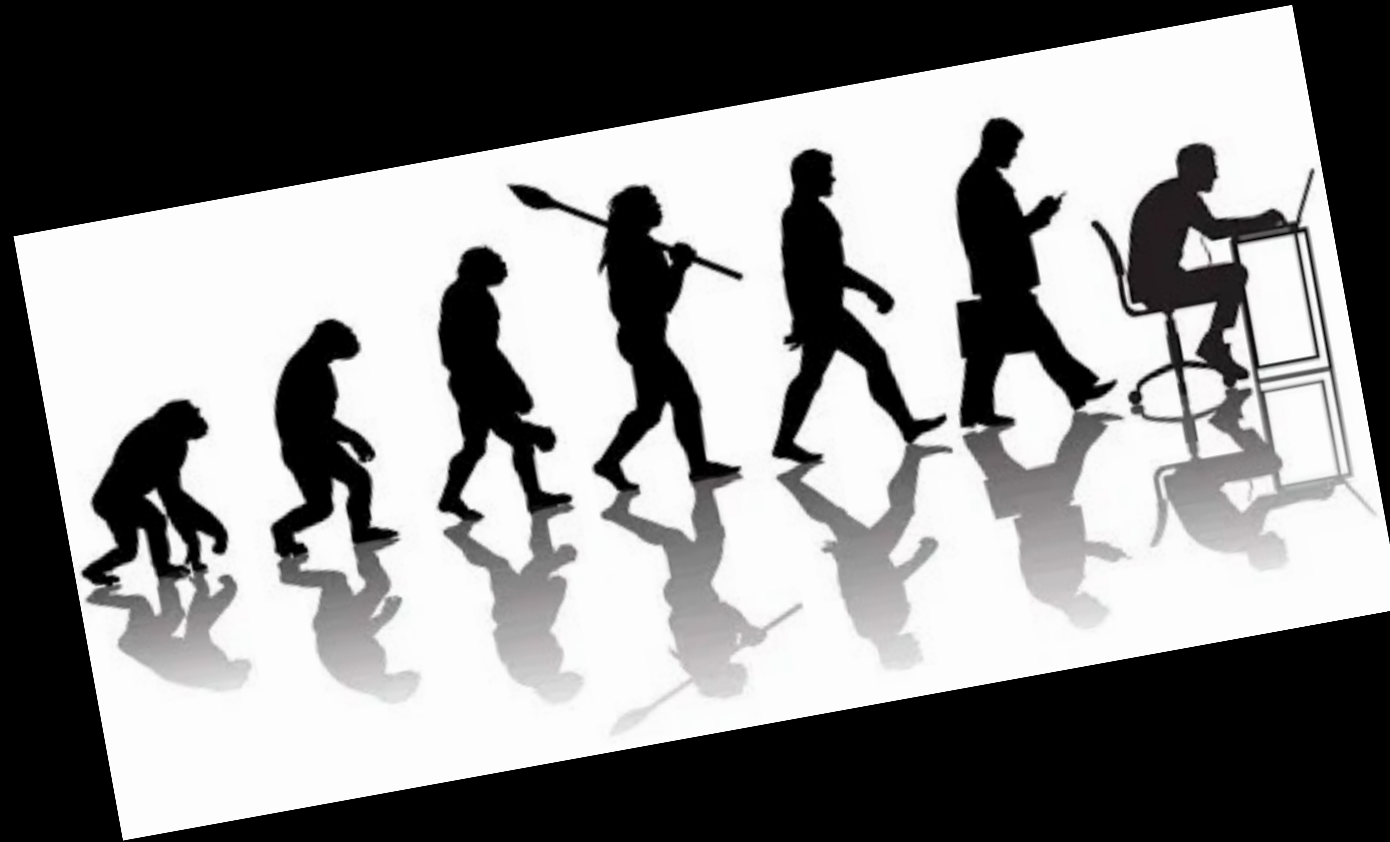
Darwin did not realize how fast changes (evolution) can occur



15 min documentary film:

<https://www.biointeractive.org/classroom-resources/origin-species-beak-finch>

# DOES AGILE COACHING EVOLVE TOO?





Pre-condition

# “PATHFINDER” ERA / ECOSYSTEM



Waterfall projects with temporary resources



Siloed teams based on function/system supported creates dependencies, queues...

...resulting in long lead times



Business only involved @ start/finish (handoff)

2016

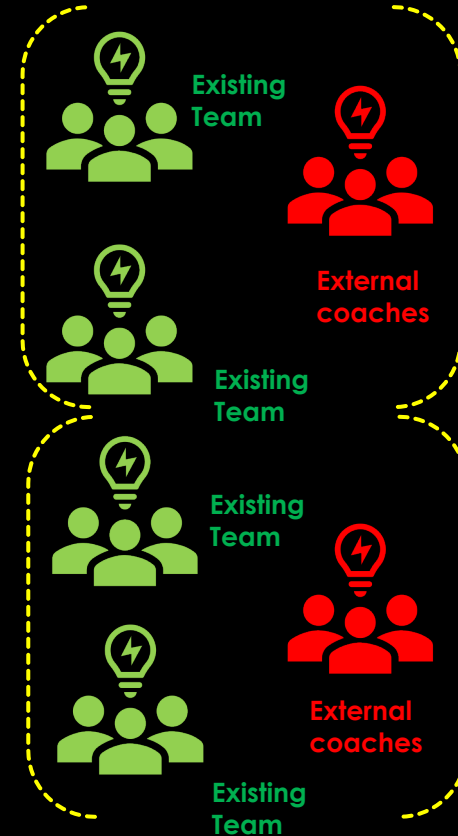
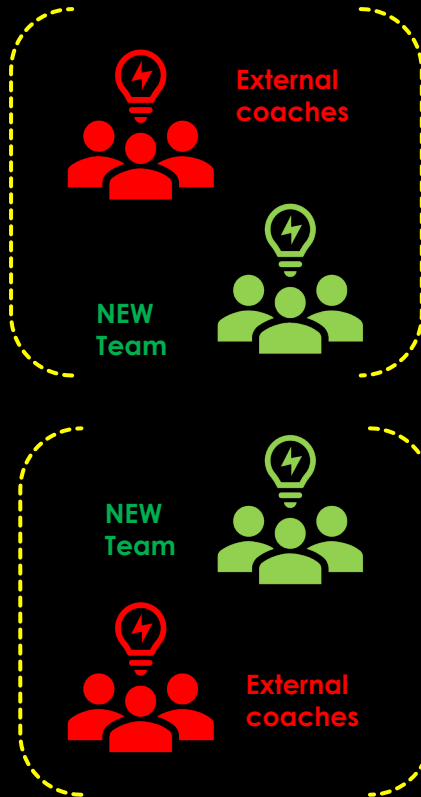
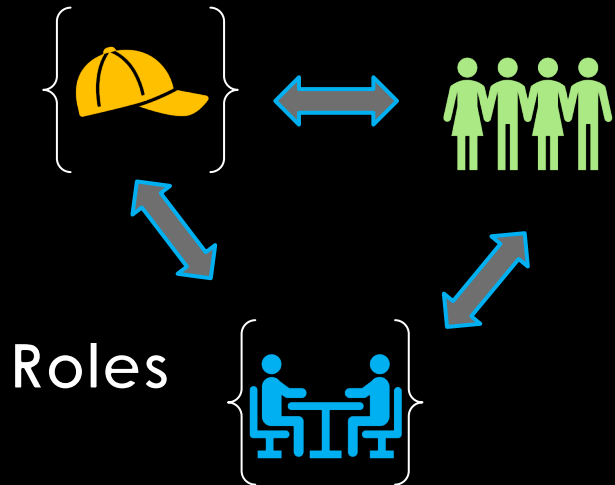






# "PATHFINDER" ERA / ECOSYSTEM

RULES  
NEW!



Pairing external coaches with team members per each role



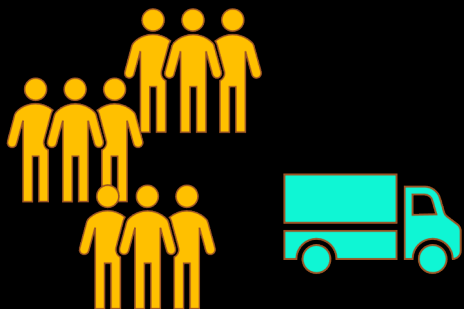
Experimentation encouraged



# “PATHFINDER” ERA / ECOSYSTEM



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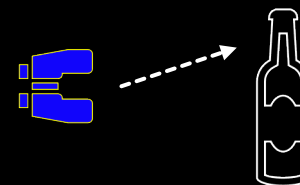
Dedicated teams =  
prioritized value delivery



Time to learn



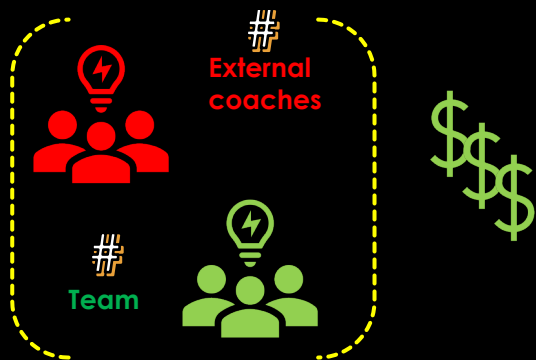
Experiment  
with new tools



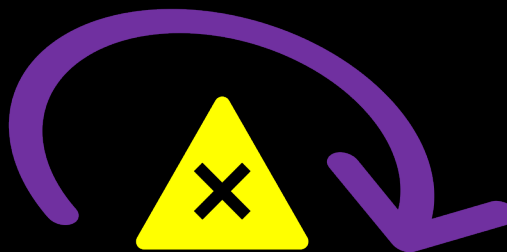
Spot bottlenecks  
in processes



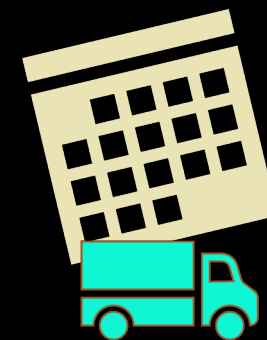
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Model too expensive to scale



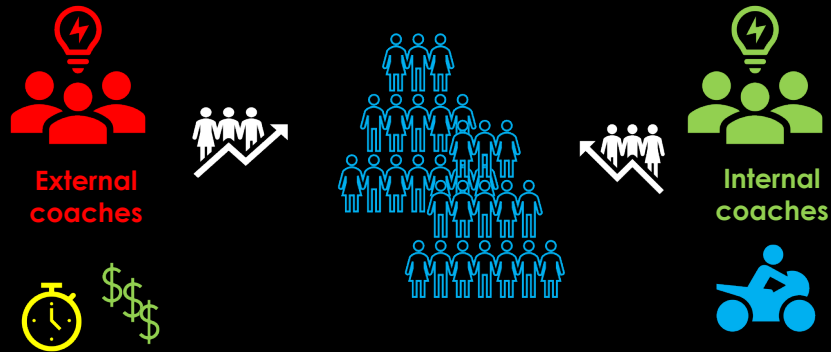
Need workarounds  
in processes



Takes time to learn Agile  
and consistently deliver



# “PATHFINDER” ERA / ECOSYSTEM



External coaches not cost-effective way to scale without internal coaching capability

Need definition of done when teams are self-sustaining



Experiment showed we can do Agile but not scale the same way



Post condition

# “PATHFINDER” ERA / ECOSYSTEM



Pilot success

Executive buy-in to  
continue Agile

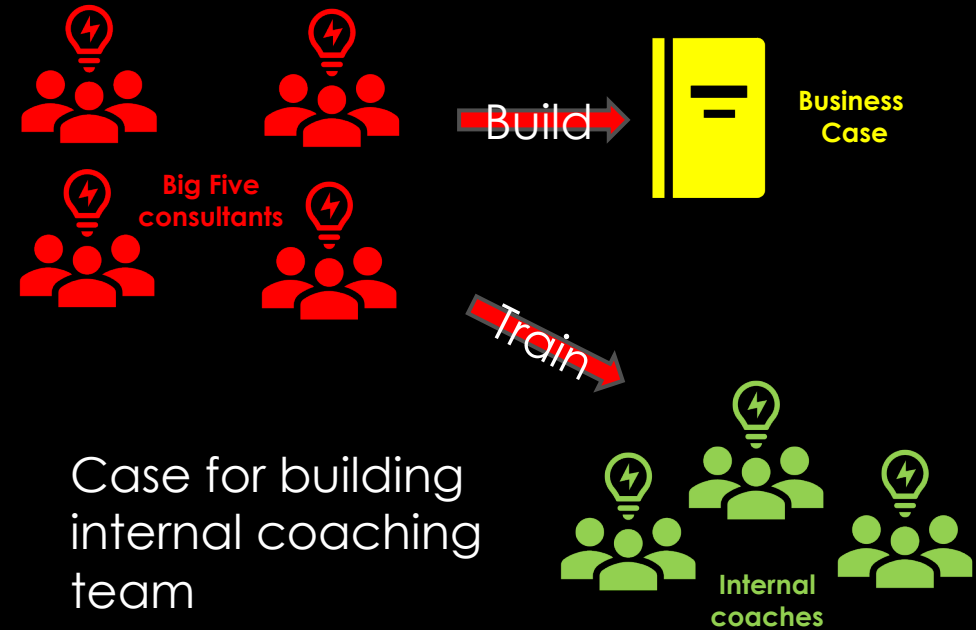






Pre-condition

# “TRANSFORMATION” ERA / ECOSYSTEM

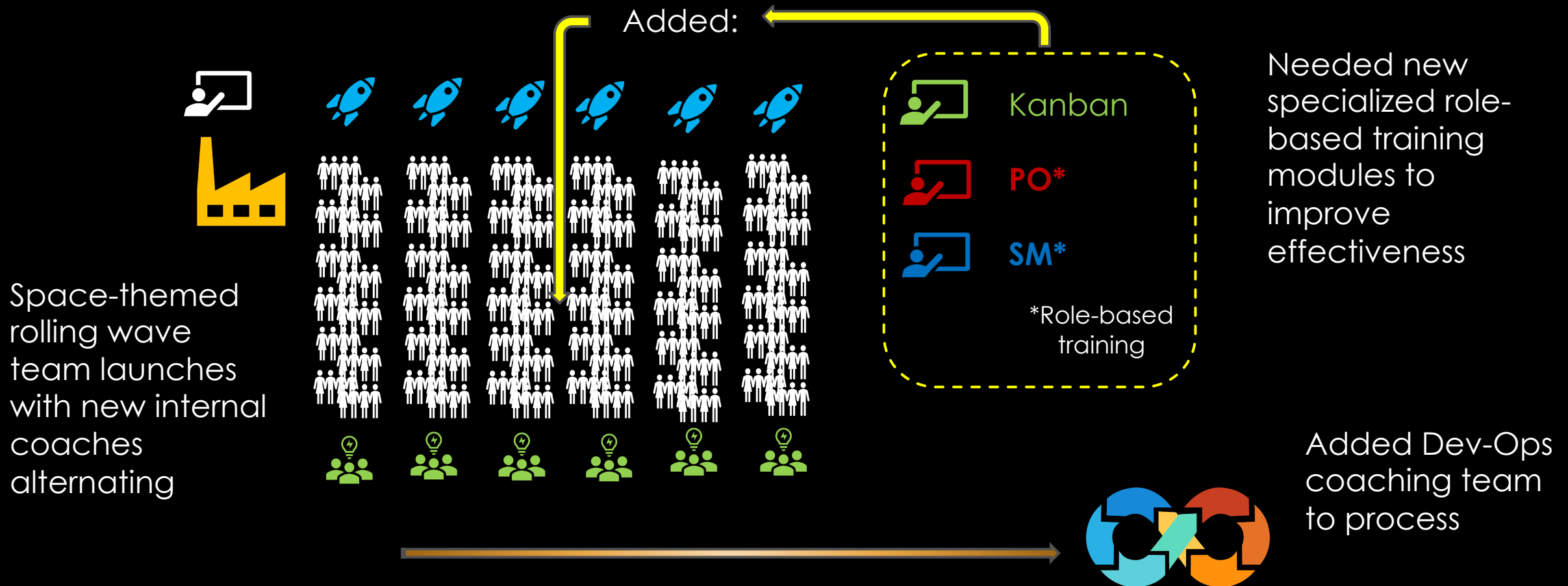


Case for building  
internal coaching  
team

2017 - 2018



# “TRANSFORMATION” ERA / ECOSYSTEM



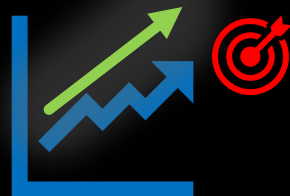
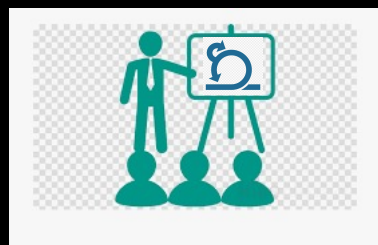
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# “TRANSFORMATION” ERA / ECOSYSTEM

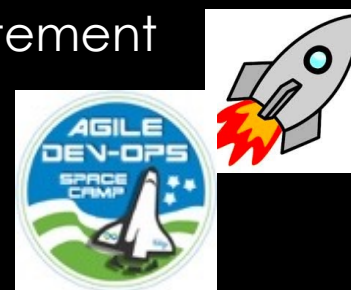
Introduced Agile  
to IT

Exceeded #  
team goals

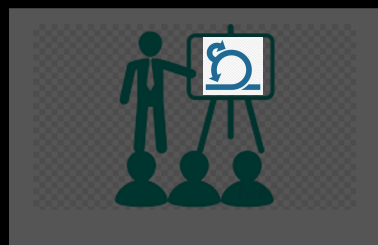
New theme  
excitement



Reusable  
Material

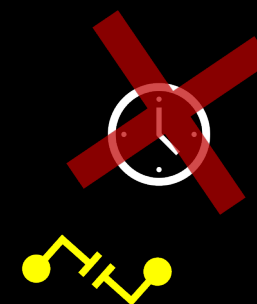
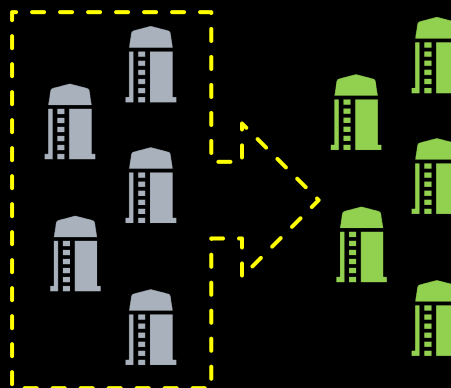


**NEW!**



**I.T. ONLY**

**Go Faster!**



Reputation



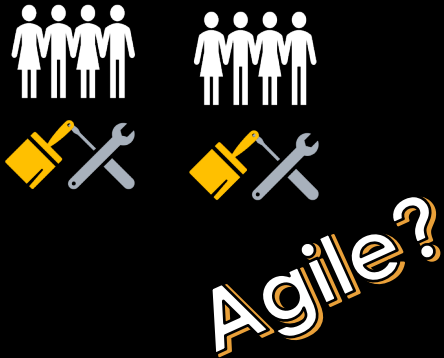
Disconnect

“Lift and shift” approach = minimal change



# “TRANSFORMATION” ERA / ECOSYSTEM

Should service teams be...



**Training**     alone doesn't last...  
...but **Coaching** will ... 



**Experience**  
(Agile team)

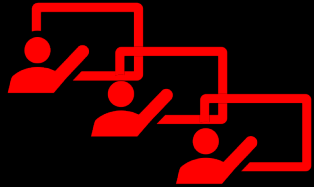
**Credibility**  
(Agile coach)



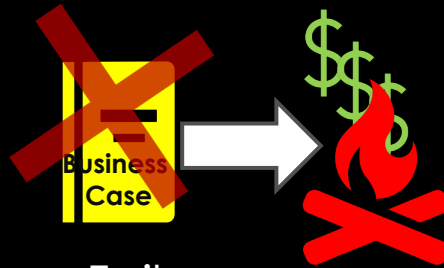


Post condition

# “TRANSFORMATION” ERA / ECOSYSTEM

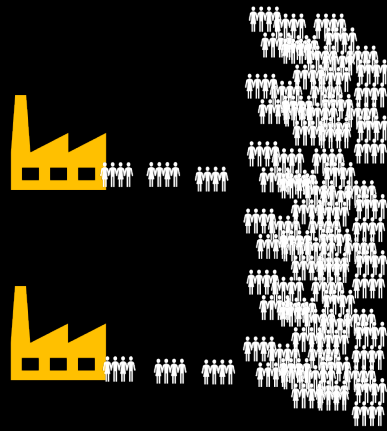


“Death by PPT”



Fail

Launched  
nearly 100  
teams





Pre-condition

# “ENABLEMENT” ERA / ECOSYSTEM



IT leadership  
change



New coach-the-coach partner

2019 – early 2020

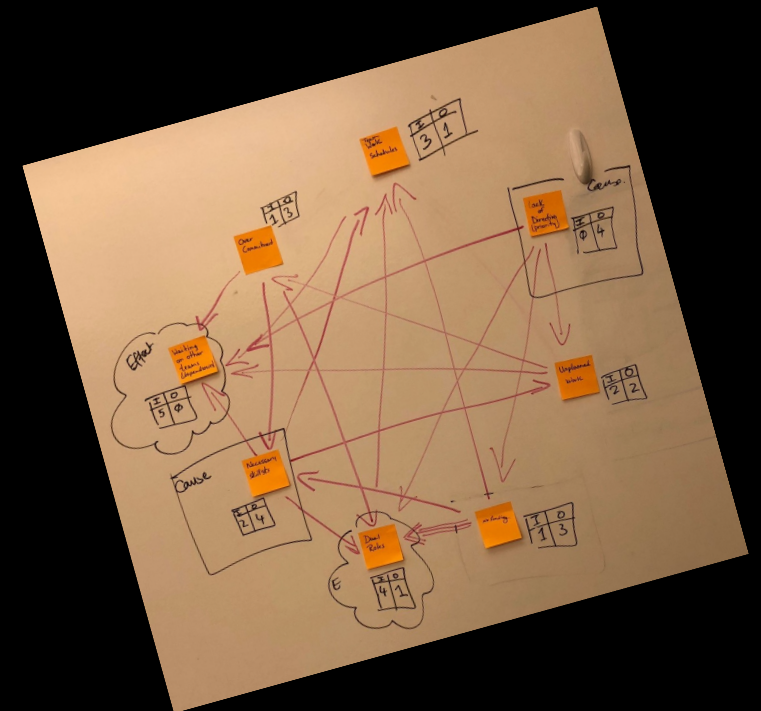
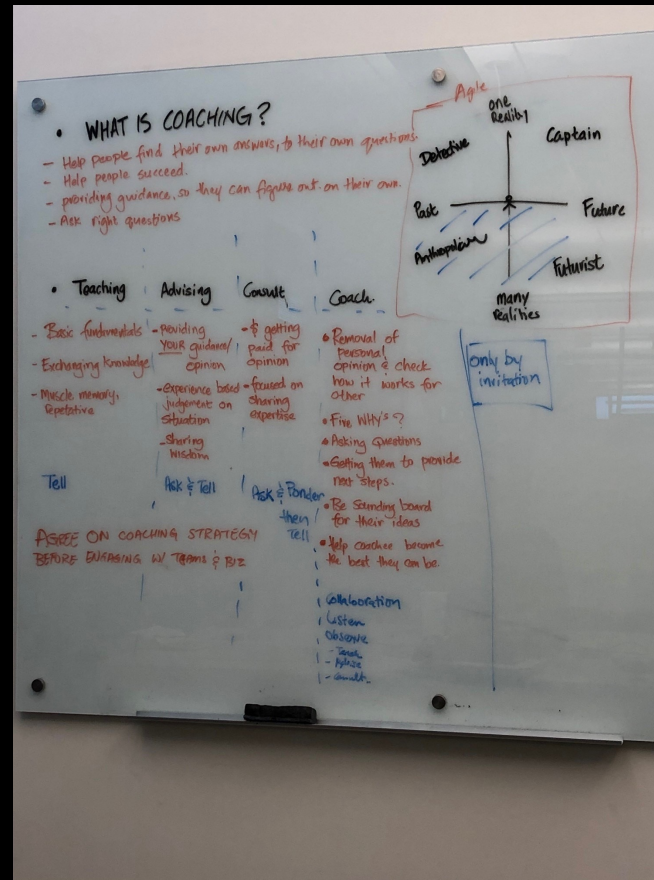


# “ENABLEMENT” ERA / ECOSYSTEM

Component teams led to  
creation of product,  
platform and service  
pseudo-Agile teams

Shift from local optimization  
to system optimization

Apply systems thinking  
approach to coaching  
Agile teams



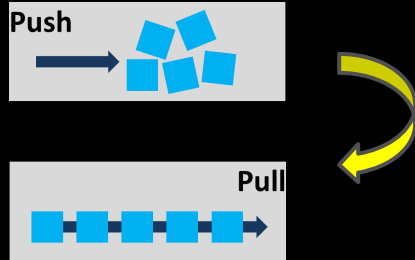


# "ENABLEMENT" ERA / ECOSYSTEM



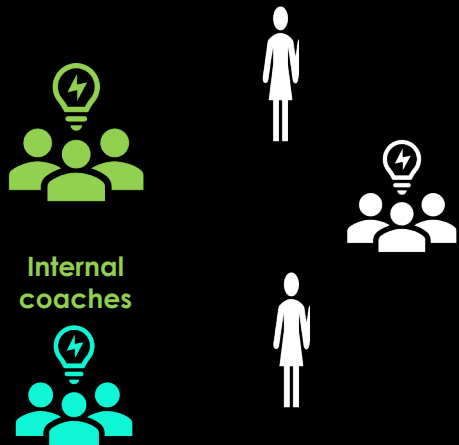
...shared  
outside  
company

Model  
pivot



Reorg / rebrand

Hosted on-site Scrum,  
Kanban certification



Internal  
coaches

Learn to coach  
individuals + teams

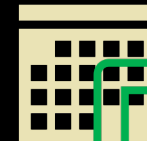


Coach pairing to  
help teams solve  
own problems



It's BAAACK!

Open invitation to...



...focused training workshops

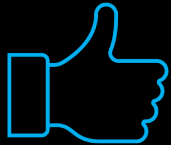




# “ENABLEMENT” ERA / ECOSYSTEM



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Recognition  
Appreciation

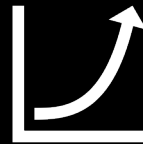
Rebuilding

IT



Business

Coaching team



Effectiveness



Collaboration  
Mondays



-



Not quickly scalable;  
partnership funding ends



Internal  
coaches



Solution seekers don't want to  
be accountable for solutioning

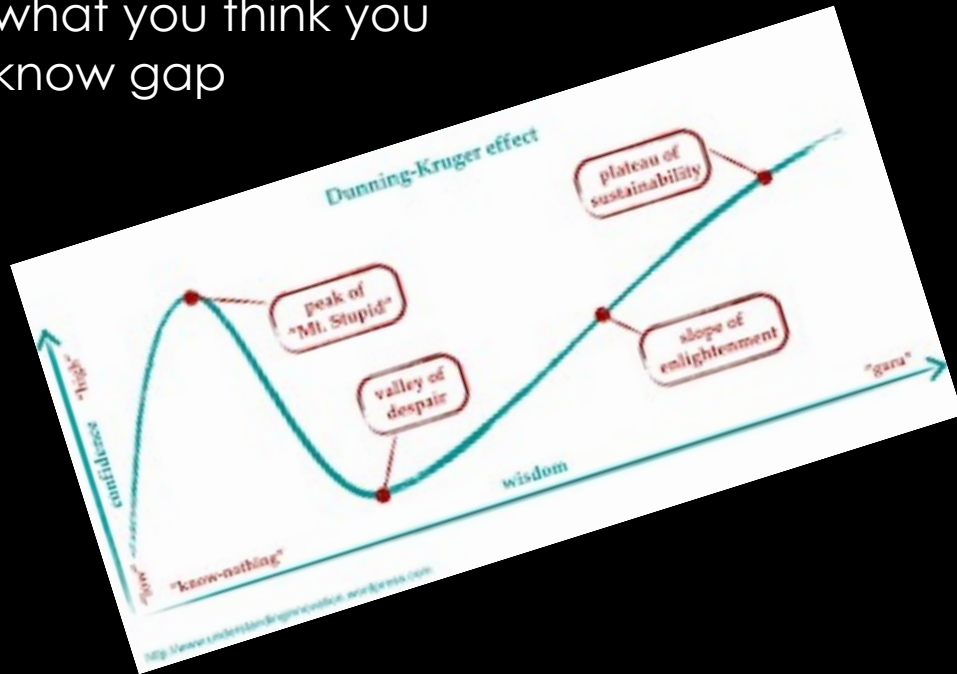


Pull model  
requires  
marketing



# “ENABLEMENT” ERA / ECOSYSTEM

What you know vs.  
what you think you  
know gap

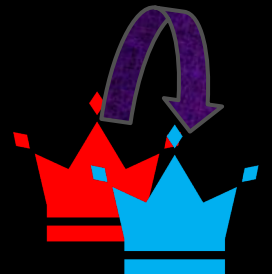


Coaching

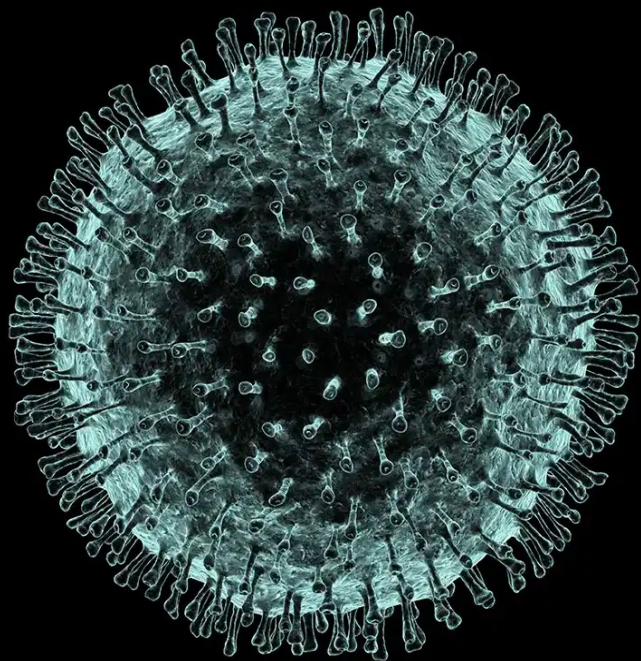
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Training

...is more powerful



Path was only way we could have arrived where we are...



An  
unexpected  
era/ecosystem!



Changes in ecosystems (ecology + environment) results in changing or new species (i.e., teams and organizations)

Darwin did not realize how fast changes (evolution) can occur

...neither did we

...until NOW!

New dedicated, cross functional teams -  
CREATED BY EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP -  
delivering solutions quickly to solve major  
problems for us, our customers and the  
entire industry supply chain

Impetus for change across the  
entire organization for  
everyday, not just a crisis?







# Thank you for your time!



Ron Whitebread

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