Understanding
Large Scale Scrum (LeSS)

Concepts & Fundamentals

presented by: Gene Gendel

of

KSTS *Consulting*

About Me

Gene Gendel is an organizational design consultant, adaptive & lean coach and trainer, and independent adviser to senior leadership. Gene is a widely recognized, world-class trainer/instructor, and is mainly focused on organizational design and product centricity, the experience for which he has gained, over the decades of deeply embedded coaching and consulting. Gene's clients represent a wide industry spectrum. Almost 15 of 20+ years of his professional experience Gene has dedicated to working with companies of various sizes and lines of business, trying to help them improve internal dynamics, organizational structure and becoming a better place for people to work in. Gene engages at *all* organizational levels: senior- and mid-level management, teams and individuals. In his work, Gene uses various methods, tools and techniques to amplify learning of other people and to ensure that his followers gain autonomy after Gene "coaches himself out of the job". Over the last decade, Gene's big focus has been on large financial institutions and consulting companies that struggle with moving away, from traditional budgets and portfolio/program/project work decomposition, towards more adaptive/flexible budgeting and better clearly products (product-centric, customer-focused development).

Gene is the co-founder of **KSTS Consulting**, **the only company in the United States that has the credential of a *Certified LeSS Coaching Company***. Gene's, highly in-demand LeSS classes, both private and public, are based on advanced system modelling and rich exosystemic perspective that includes intra-organizational dynamics and market realities.

My Relationship To LeSS

https://less.works/profiles/gene-gendel

https://www.keystepstosuccess.com/large-scale-scrum-training/

About My Small "Me" Company

KSTS Consulting
Your choice of partnership matters

One Stop-Shop For:

❖ Organizational and team structure and dynamics

❖ Executive coaching and consulting

❖ Individual, single team and multi-team coaching

❖ Upskilling Scrum Masters and Product Owners

❖ HR advisory: building talent and defining careers

❖ Training: Agile, Kanban, Scrum, Large Scale Scrum

❖ Workshops: product discovery & business agility

❖ "SAFe Recovery" Program (gradual improvements)

❖ Complimentary lunch & learn sessions

www.keystepstosuccess.com

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Historical Terminology Abuse

Top-3 Abused Words

1) Agile
2) Enterprise
3) Scaling

Avoid This:

When put together, in the same phrase, they become "Enterprise Agile Scaling" – what seems to be the most popular and frequently used phrase, nowadays.

Instead of using this phrase obsessively (titles, job descriptions, etc.), please consider the following:

❖ *If "Agile" != "Adaptive", the word is probably misused*

❖ *"Enterprise" – does not always mean "huge". A 50-person company (HR, Finance, Legal, Vendor Management, Business, Operations, IT) – is an enterprise. A 500-person IT Department alone – is NOT an enterprise.*

❖ *In order to SCALE goodness, you may need to DE-SCALE (remove) badness. Therefore, by obsessively focusing on scaling, you might be increasing (scaling up) levels of badness in the system (organization)* ☹

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What Always Comes First

Organizational <u>STRUCTURE</u> –
is the <u>1st Order Factor</u> (Variable) that has impact on everything else in an <u>ECOSYSTEM</u>: behaviors, norms, values, principles, policies

Agile Mindset Does Not Live On Its Own

STOP

STOP

STOP

attempting to cultivate

Agile Mindset

of mature adults, <u>without</u> improving

Organizational Design

that surrounds them

"You cannot grow flowers in a desert. First, you must create a supportive habitat (oasis), where growth is even possible."

<u>Organizational design is the 1st order factor</u> that defines your system's dynamics. "Stuff" like: agile mindset, behaviors, norms, values, principles, policies – they can come only later.

😉 **Let's fix things in proper order!** 😉

Uncomfortable Truth: Economics of Agile

Economic$ Of Agile Transformation

Agile PMO
Epic OWNER
Agile COE

Agile Portfolio Level

Agile Program Level

Agile Project Level

Agile Team Level

Agile Train Station
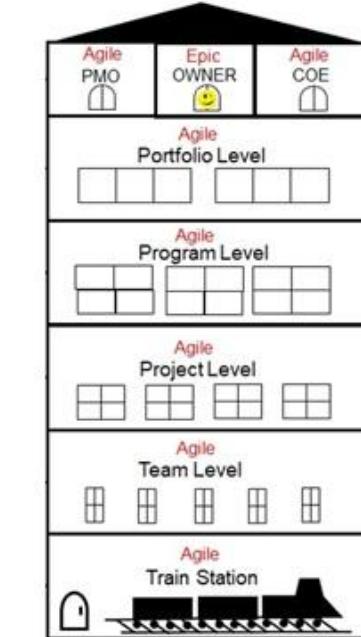
➢ **Traditional layered organization.**
➢ Managerial "support in spirit".
➢ Broad & Shallow. Superficial Big-Bangs.
➢ Top: Lip service. Bottom: False, broken hopes.
➢ No experimentation, before applying widely.
➢ Participation by mandate and enforcement.
➢ Thousands of component developers.
➢ Thousands of business people.
➢ Hundreds of "left over people".
➢ **High, unpredictable investments.**

......less......

......more......

Try This:

Avoid This:
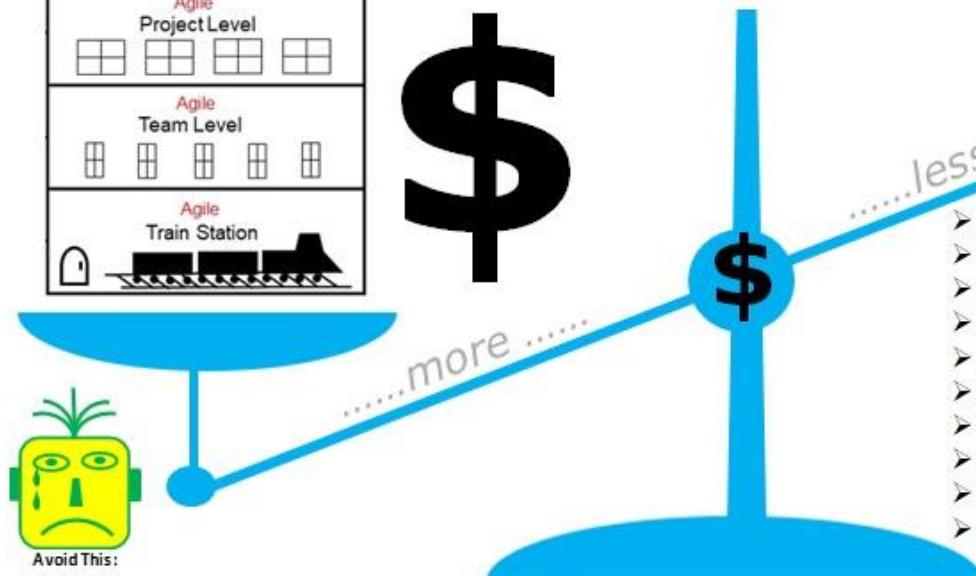
➢ **Parallel organization. Flatter structure.**
➢ Informed Consent by true leadership.
➢ Deep & Narrow: Systemic improvements.
➢ Meaningful efforts: Top-Bottom/Bottom-Up.
➢ Experimentation, before applying widely.
➢ Participation by volunteering/commitment.
➢ 50-60 cross-functional developers.
➢ Small group of customers/users/SMEs.
➢ One Product Owner. A few Scrum Masters.
➢ **Limited, more predictable investments.**

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Uncomfortable Truth: Economics of Agile
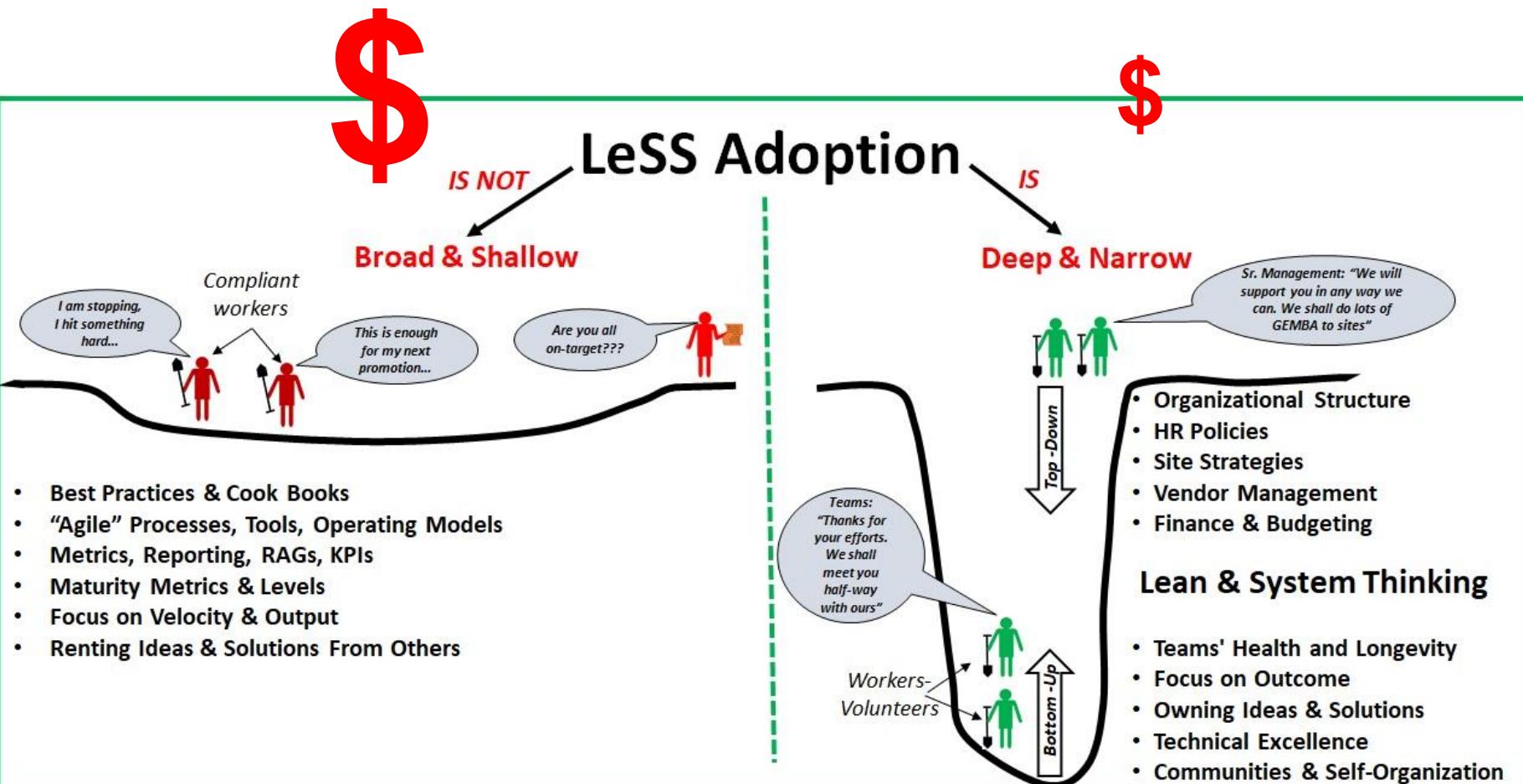
Doing This For Good Reasons

You may want to consider

SCALING

because your **PRODUCT** *is widely defined and/or its definition grows wider*

NOT

because your **ORGANIZATION** *is huge and you need huge "scaling" solutions*

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Doing This For Good Reasons

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180⁰
COURSE CORRECTION of "Agile Transformation"

From:

| Traditional Organizational Structure (Layers, Siloes) | → | Traditional Team Structure (By Components) | → | Creating Many Team-Level "Product Backlogs" | → | Defining Many FAKE Products, Around Components |

To:

| Defining REAL Products, By REAL Customers | → | Creating Product Backlogs, For REAL Products | → | (Self-) Designing Product Teams, Around REAL Products | → | Deriving Structure Of Simplified Product Organization |
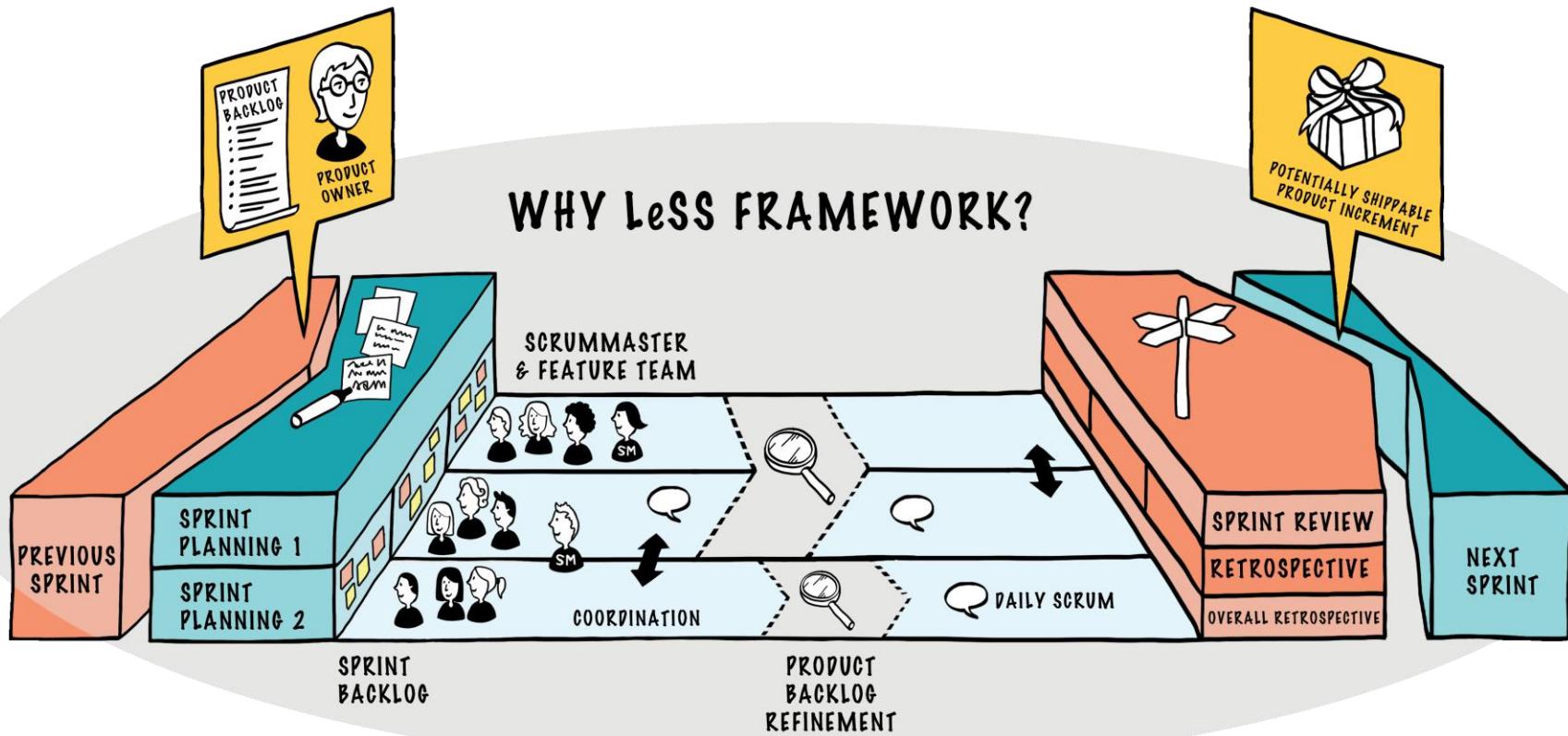
Gene Gendel, Certified Enterprise & Team Coach (CEC-CTC), Certified LeSS Trainer (CLT)

The Full Picture of LeSS

The Full Picture of LeSS
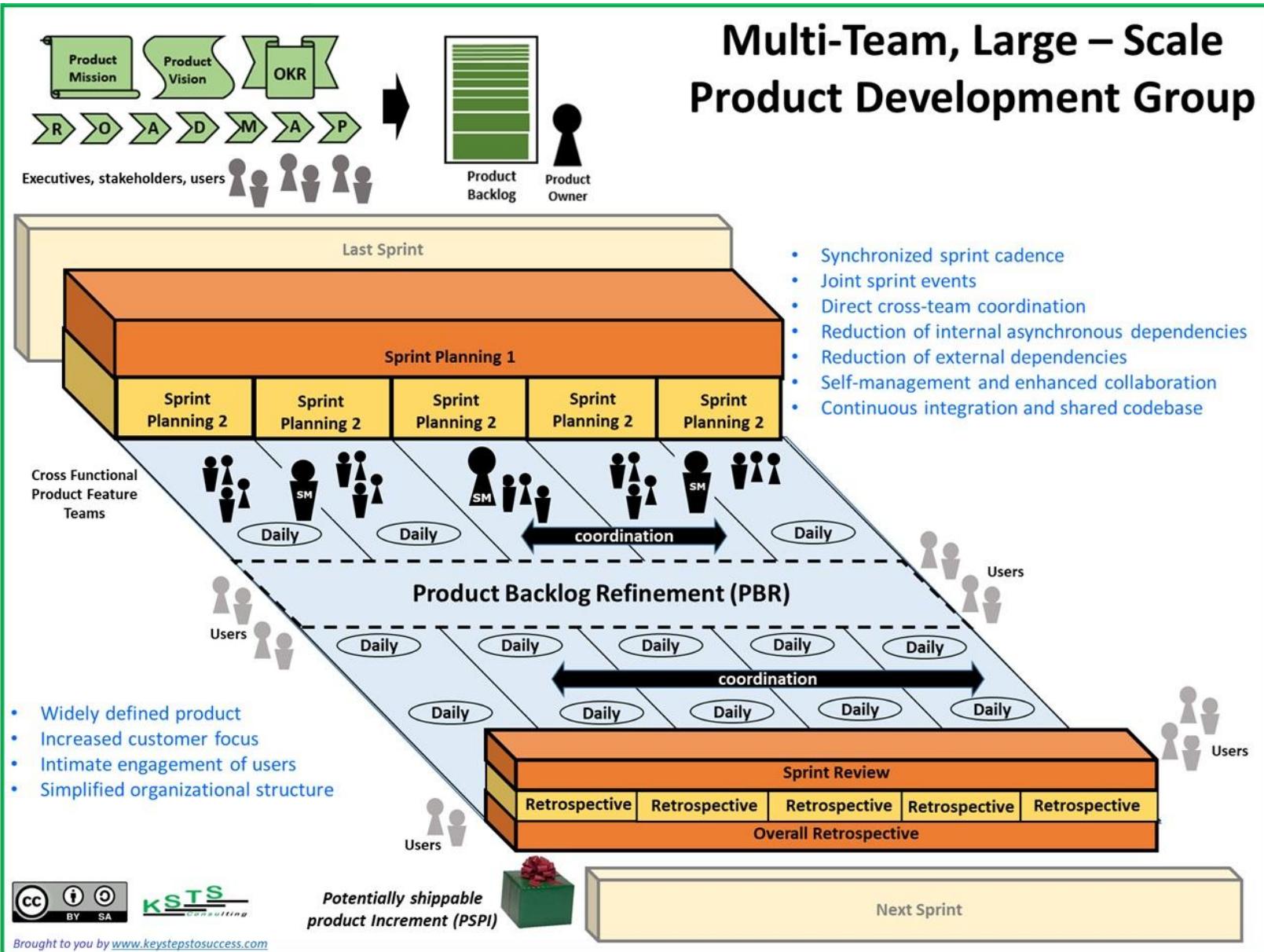
Multi-Team, Large – Scale Product Development Group

- Synchronized sprint cadence
- Joint sprint events
- Direct cross-team coordination
- Reduction of internal asynchronous dependencies
- Reduction of external dependencies
- Self-management and enhanced collaboration
- Continuous integration and shared codebase

- Widely defined product
- Increased customer focus
- Intimate engagement of users
- Simplified organizational structure

The Full Picture of LeSS
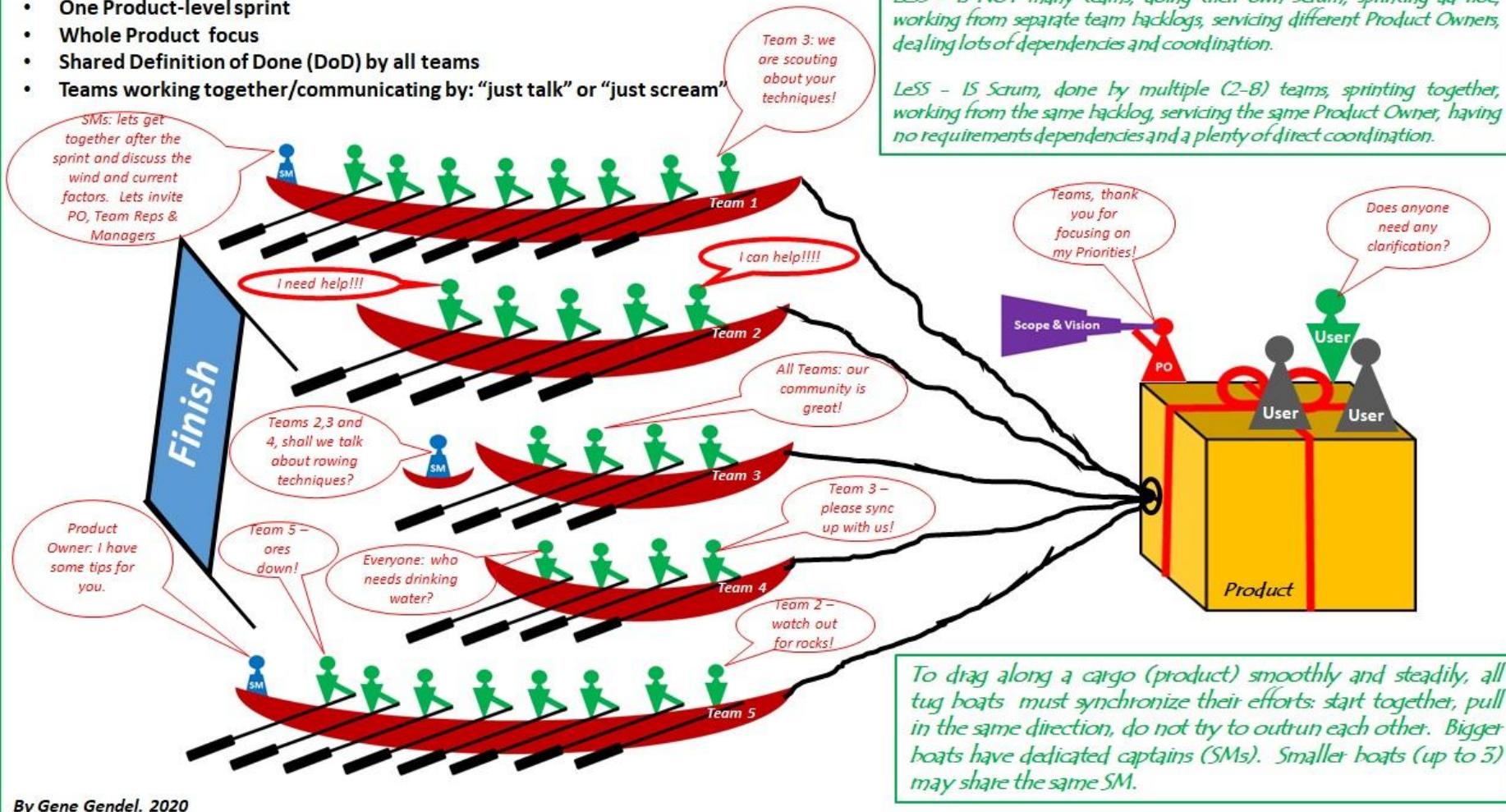
Fake Productization → Fake LeSS Adoption

"Productization" Gone Wild

If the marching order is "We Must Become a Product Organization **FAST**", whilst there is no true commitment to challenge organizational design, teams' structure and traditional status quo, then we might be facing a lot of relabeling and terminology overloading:

- ➢ Component teams → feature / product teams
- ➢ Technical tasks → "technical stories"
- ➢ Components → "products"
- ➢ And…. "tech for tech products" ☺

Avoid This:

Shared Services **Component**	→ Shared Services **"Product"**
Platform **Component**	→ Platform **"Product"**
Micro-service **Component**	→ Micro-service **"Product"**
Library **Component**	→ DLL Library **"Product"**
API **Component**	→ API **"Product"**
Middleware **Component**	→ Middleware **"Product"**
Front-End **Component**	→ Front-End **"Product"**
Back-End **Component**	→ Back-End **"Product"**
DB **Component**	→ DB **"Product"**
Framework **Component**	→ Framework **"Product"**

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"Dark" Scrum → "Dark" LeSS → "Dark" LeSS Huge
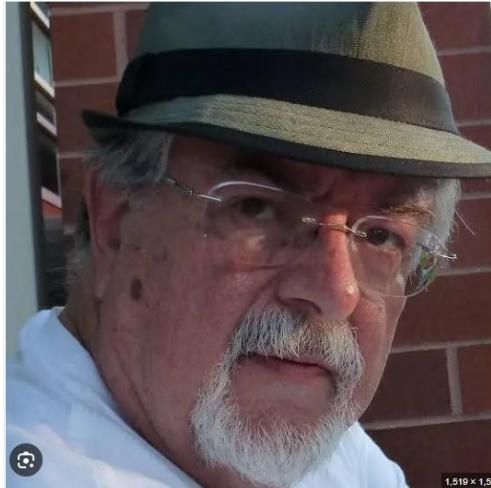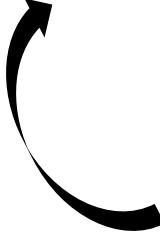
Manifesto Co-Author Interview: Ron Jeffries | Agile Uprising ...

Requirement Area	Development Area
organized around customer-centric requirements	organized around product's architecture
collective subsystem code ownership	code ownership per subsystem
temporary in nature; should change over the lifetime of the product, but not at every iteration	tends to be more fixed over the lifetime of the product
focus on the customer, using customer language	focus on the architecture, using technology language

Development areas are *not* recommended and are only shown to show the contrast with Requirement Areas.

https://less.works/less/less-huge/requirement-areas

The Full Picture of LeSS Huge
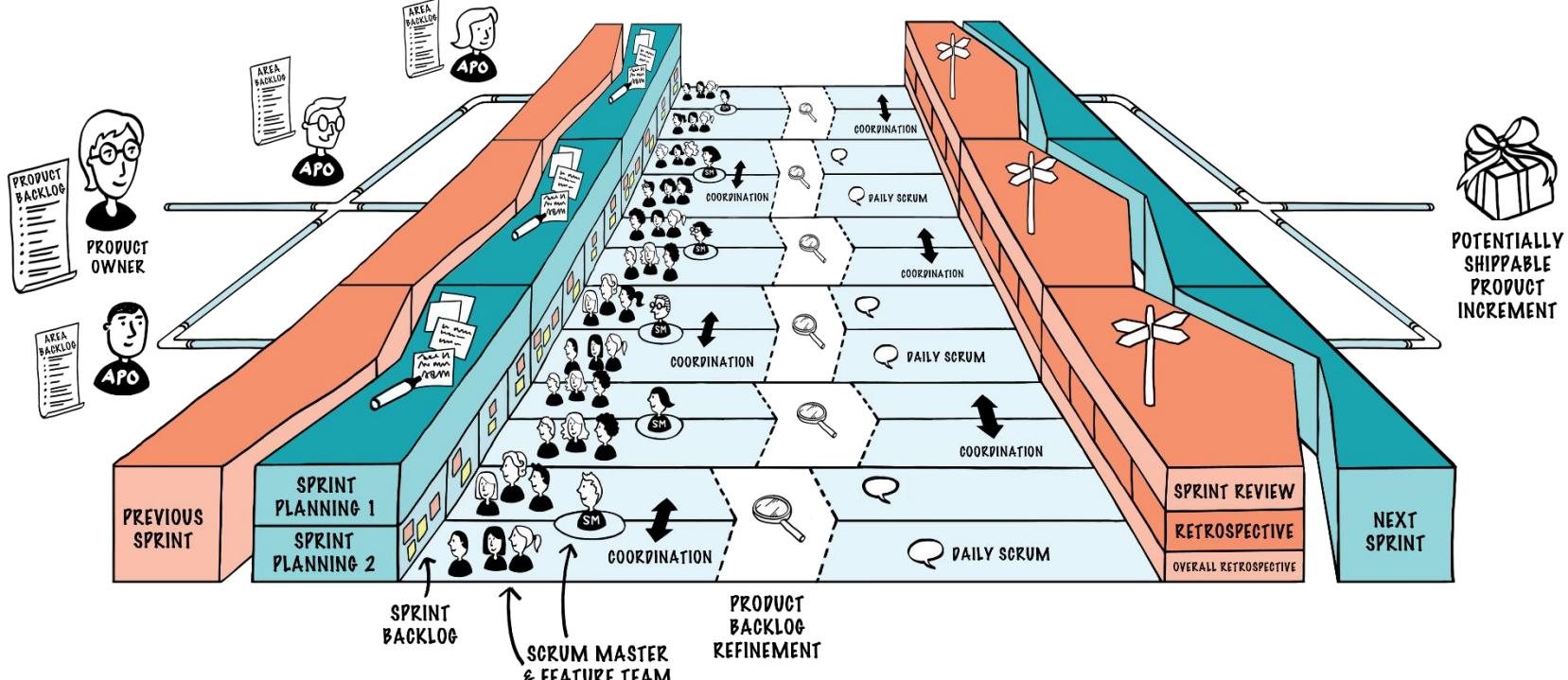
Product Size (Growth) Drives Scaling

Scaling Is NOT The Goal
(It is a necessity)

Scaling Scrum, by DE-SCALING organizational complexity

Scrum
3-9 developers
1 team

Large Scale Scrum (LeSS)
~50 developers
2-8 teams

Huge Large Scale Scrum (LeSS Huge)
Hundreds and hundreds of developers
Beyond 8 teams
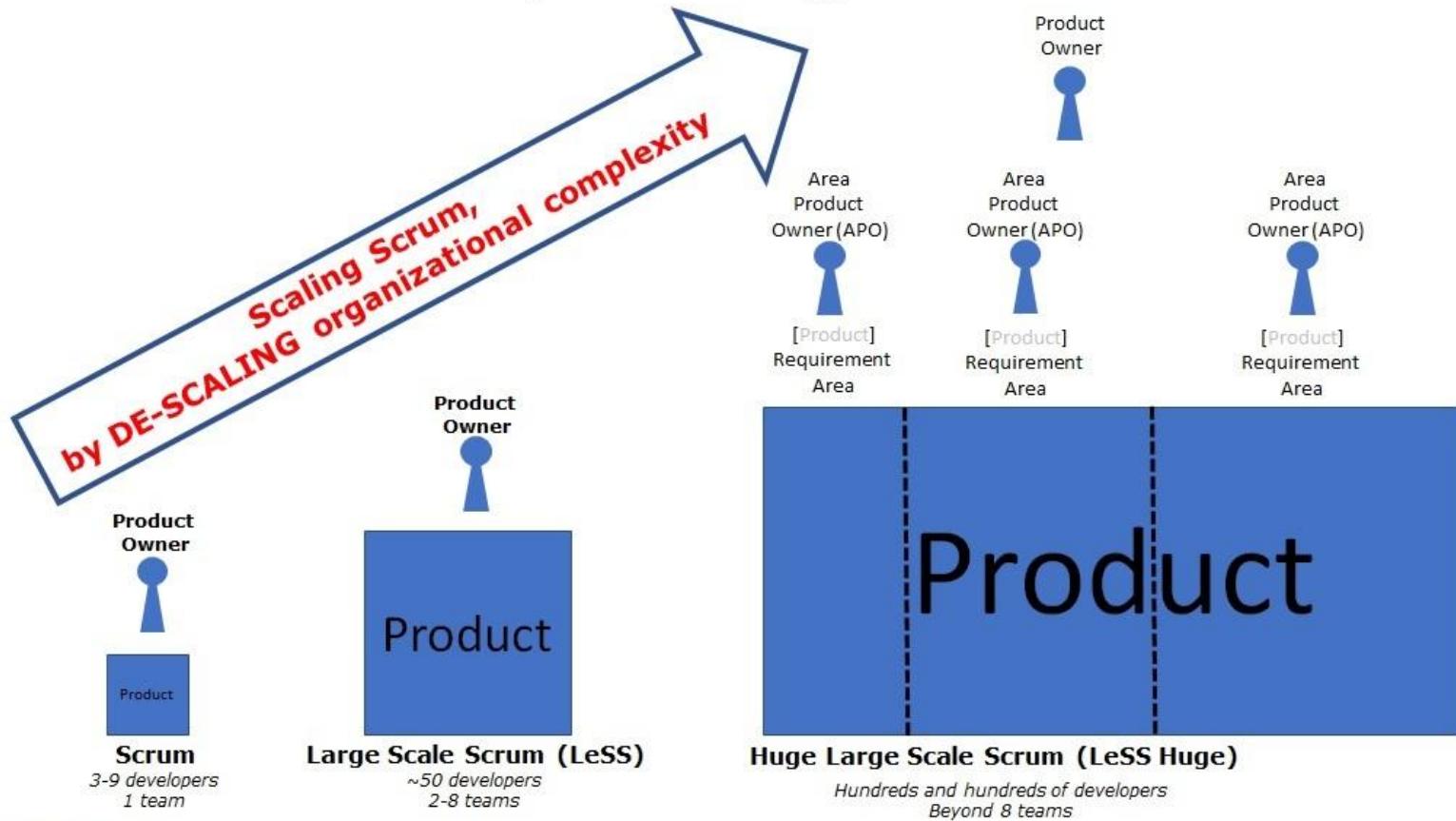
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Tiny Requirement Areas In LeSS Huge – Bad Smell


LeSS Huge

Avoid tiny (fake) Requirement Areas, with less then 4 Teams (a.k.a. Feature, a.k.a. Product, a.k.a. Scrum) working in each.

Try collapsing tiny (fake) RAs, by expanding your product definition (from a user's / customer's perspective)

"Area Product Owner"	"Area Product Owner"	"Area Product Owner"	"Area Product Owner"	"Area Product Owner"	"Area Product Owner"	"Area Product Owner"	"Area Product Owner"
Req. Area	Req. Area	Req. Area	Req. Area	Req. Area	Req. Area	Req. Area	Req. Area
1 component team	2 component teams	1 component team	1 component teams	3 component team	2 component teams	3 component team	2 component teams
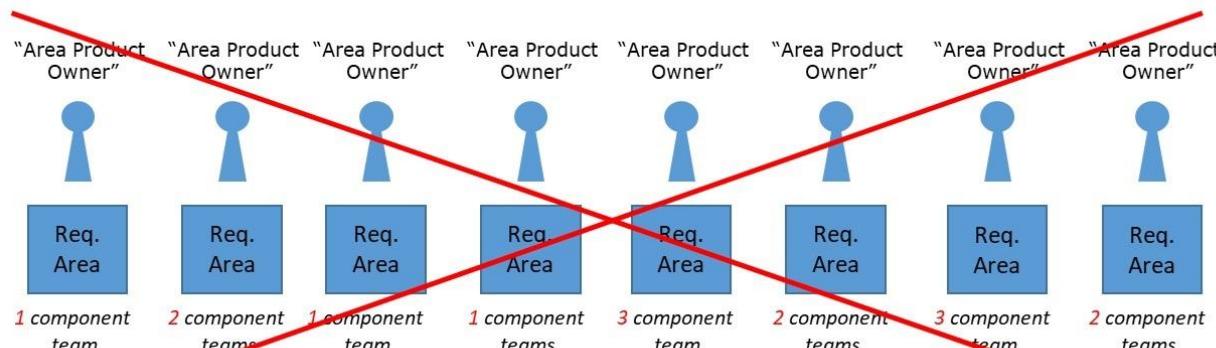
Avoid This:

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DO NOT Do This In The Name Of LeSS

➢ Eliminate roles

➢ Terminate people

➢ Abolish traditional structures

➢ Relabel everything into LeSS-like terminology

➢ Claim fake accomplishments

Q &A

Synopsis

On my site: https://www.keystepstosuccess.com/

On Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/people/KSTS-Consulting/61561671969644/

On LinkedIn:

- **Gene Gendel: https://www.linkedin.com/in/ggnyc/**

- **KSTS Consulting: https://www.linkedin.com/company/ksts-consulting/**

On Meetup:
https://www.meetup.com/large-scale-scrum-less-in-nyc/ (close to 6500)