

(So) What is the Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe®)?

Feld Group Institute Community Call – March 31, 2021



TOPICS

SAFe and the Scaled Agile Inc. Business Model

SAFe from Bottom to Top

Lessons Learned/Pluses and Minuses

Positioning the Feld Group Institute Transformational Framework (iCap™) and The Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe®)

Overview: SAFe Perspectives From a Technical Leader

My opinions are based on my 35 year mix of hands-on development, delivery, operations, and consulting experience.

My experience crosses large enterprises as well as startups, both in product and services.

I've followed my "curiosity" to find the best processes & methodologies throughout my career, believing that organizations work better when working expectations are reasonably explicit and broadly understood.

Arrowhead Labs is a SAFe Transformational Partner, we actively work with clients with regard to their SAFe implementations.

My intent today is to have a discussion, not death by PowerPoint.

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SAFe and the Scaled Agile Inc. Business Model

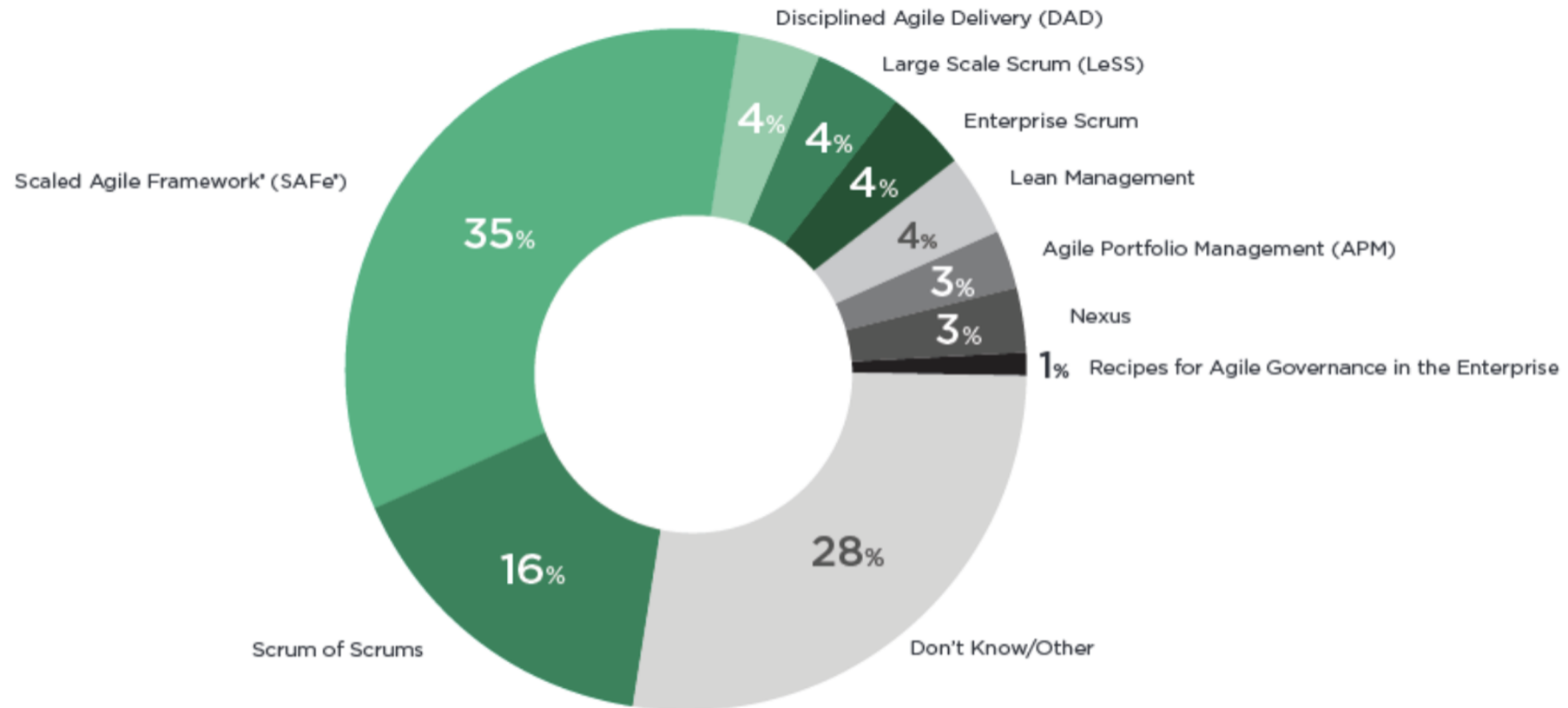
Understanding SAI, the Provider of SAFe

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Labs

Where Does SAFe® Fit in Scaling Agile Practices?

Digital.ai 14th Annual “State of Agile” (2020)



<https://stateofagile.com/#>

SAFe® at a Glance

The world's leading framework for business agility

700,000

SAFe-trained professionals in 110+ countries

20,000

SAFe enterprises across every industry from healthcare to aerospace

400

Scaled Agile Partners in 50+ countries

CLEAR LEADER

- ✓ Gartner Agile in the Enterprise Survey
- ✓ Digital.ai State of Agile Report

SAFe®
SUMMIT



Premier events for business agility and Lean-Agile professionals—virtual and in person

SAFe® **DAYS**

SAFe® PROVIDED BY
SCALED AGILE

PRIMARY PURPOSE FOR TRANSFORMATION



- 1 BUSINESS AGILITY**
- 2 DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION**
- 3 SCALING AGILE PRACTICES**

Survey results
September, 2020

SAFe CASE STUDIES - TYPICAL RESULTS

50%

Faster
Time-to-Market



35%

Increase in
Productivity



50%

Improvements
in Quality



30%

Increased Employee
Engagement



PLEDGE
1% DO ALL THE
GOOD YOU
CAN

Scaled Agile
stock equity and
employee time to
Pledge 1% campaign



SAFe® ENTERPRISE



Transformation



Professional Growth



SAFe Practice

The framework keeps evolving with ever-growing thought leadership

2011

NOW

Field experience at enterprise scale



Lean product development | Agile development | DevOps | Systems thinking



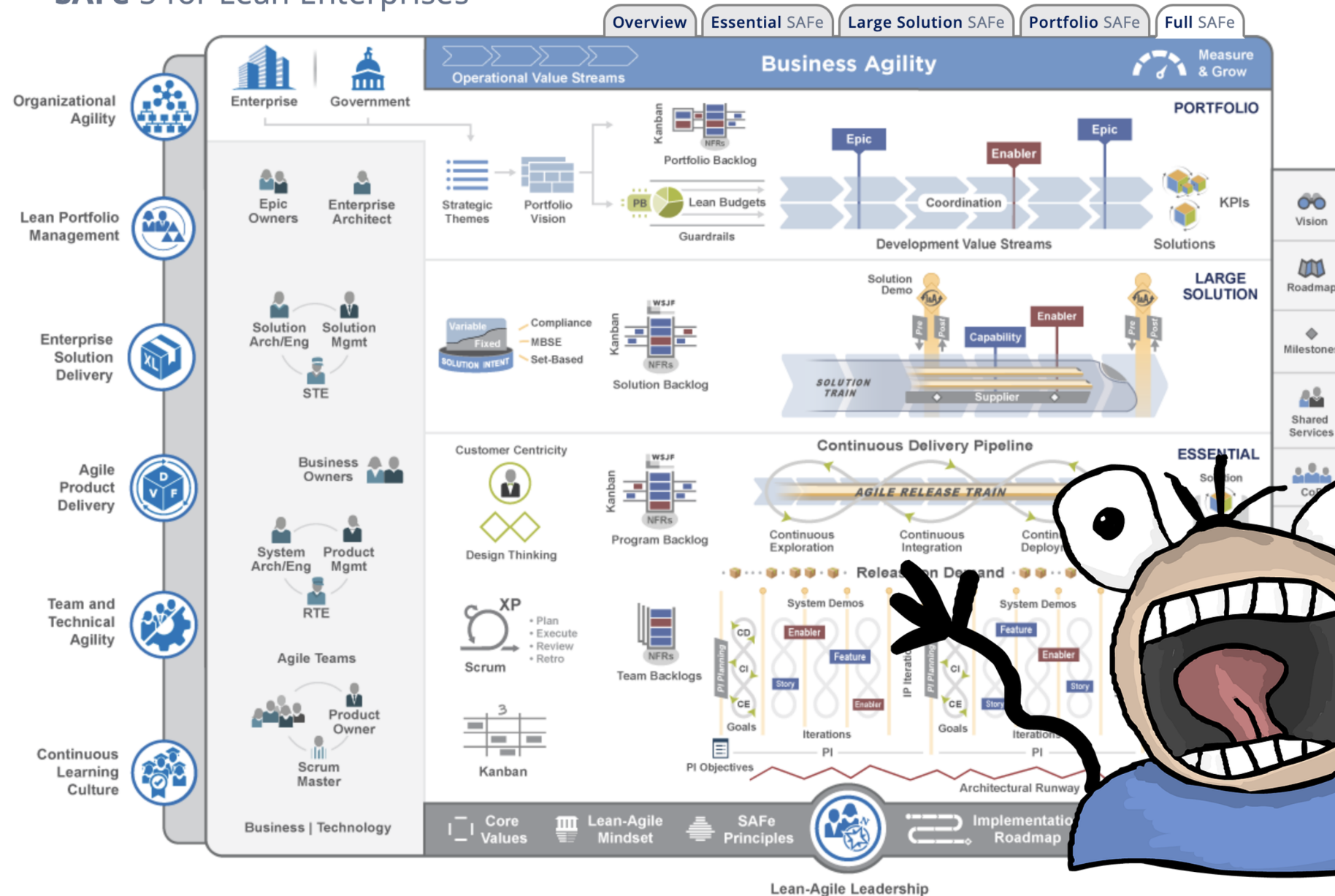
SAFe from Bottom to Top

A Quick Fly-Over of SAFe's Approach to Scaling Agile Methods



SAFe 5 for Lean Enterprises

Select Configuration



SAFe Starts with a Set of Values and Principle-driven Practices

Values

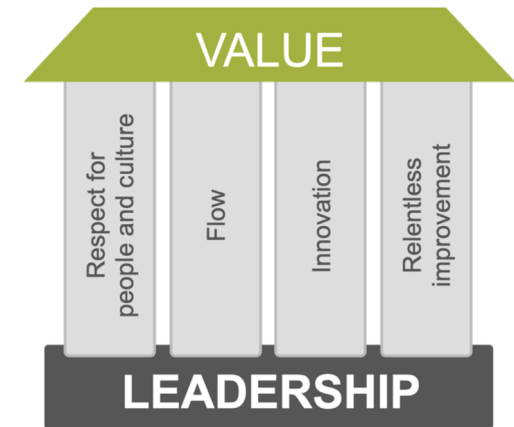
SAFe Core Values

1. Built-In Quality
2. Program Execution
3. Alignment
4. Transparency

Agile Manifesto

- INDIVIDUALS & INTERACTIONS
over processes and tools
- WORKING SOFTWARE
over comprehensive documentation
- CUSTOMER COLLABORATION
over contract negotiation
- RESPONDING TO CHANGE
over following a plan

Lean-Agile Mindset



Principles

SAFe Principles

- #1 Take an economic view
- #2 Apply systems thinking
- #3 Assume variability; preserve options
- #4 Build incrementally with fast, integrated learning cycles
- #5 Base milestones on objective evaluation of working systems
- #6 Visualize and limit WIP, reduce batch sizes, and manage queue lengths
- #7 Apply cadence, synchronize with cross-domain planning
- #8 Unlock the intrinsic motivation of knowledge workers
- #9 Decentralize decision-making
- #10 Organize around value

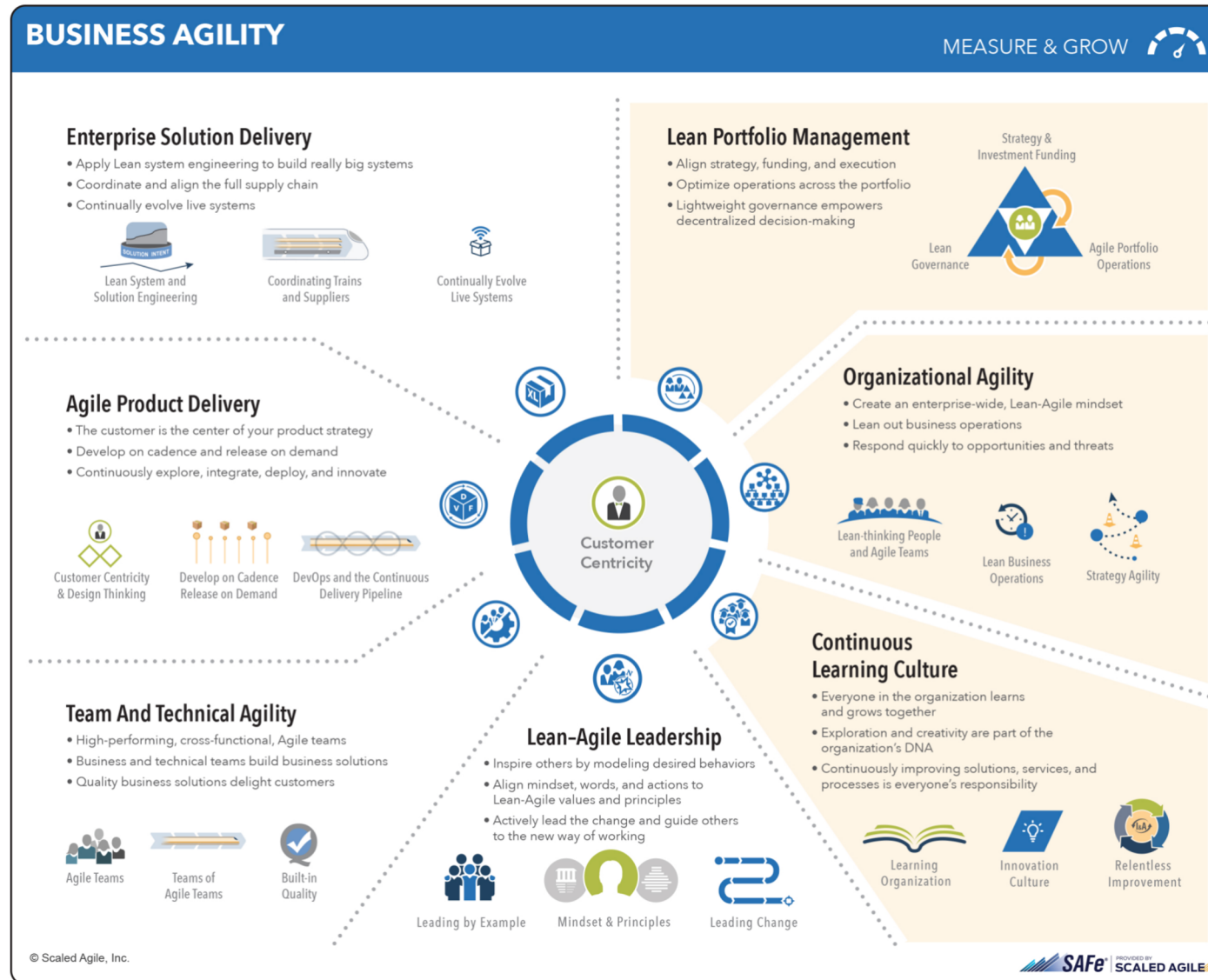
12 AGILE PRINCIPLES BEHIND THE AGILE MANIFESTO

- 1 Our highest priority is to satisfy the customer through early and continuous delivery of valuable software.
- 2 Welcome changing requirements, even late in development. Agile processes harness change for the customer's competitive advantage.
- 3 Deliver working software frequently, from a couple of weeks to a couple of months, with a preference to the shorter timescale.
- 4 Business people and developers must work together daily throughout the project.
- 5 Build projects around motivated individuals. Give them the environment and support they need, and trust them to get the job done.
- 6 Agile processes promote sustainable development. The sponsors, developers, and users should be able to maintain a constant pace indefinitely.
- 7 Working software is the primary measure of progress.
- 8 The most efficient and effective method of conveying information to and within a development team is face-to-face conversation.
- 9 Continuous attention to technical excellence and good design enhances agility.
- 10 Simplicity – the art of maximizing the amount of work not done – is essential.
- 11 The best architectures, requirements, and designs emerge from self-organizing teams.
- 12 At regular intervals, the team reflects on how to become more effective, then tunes and adjusts its behavior accordingly.

Principles of Lean



The Seven Core Competencies of Business Agility



Don't be Overwhelmed by the SAFe "Big Picture"

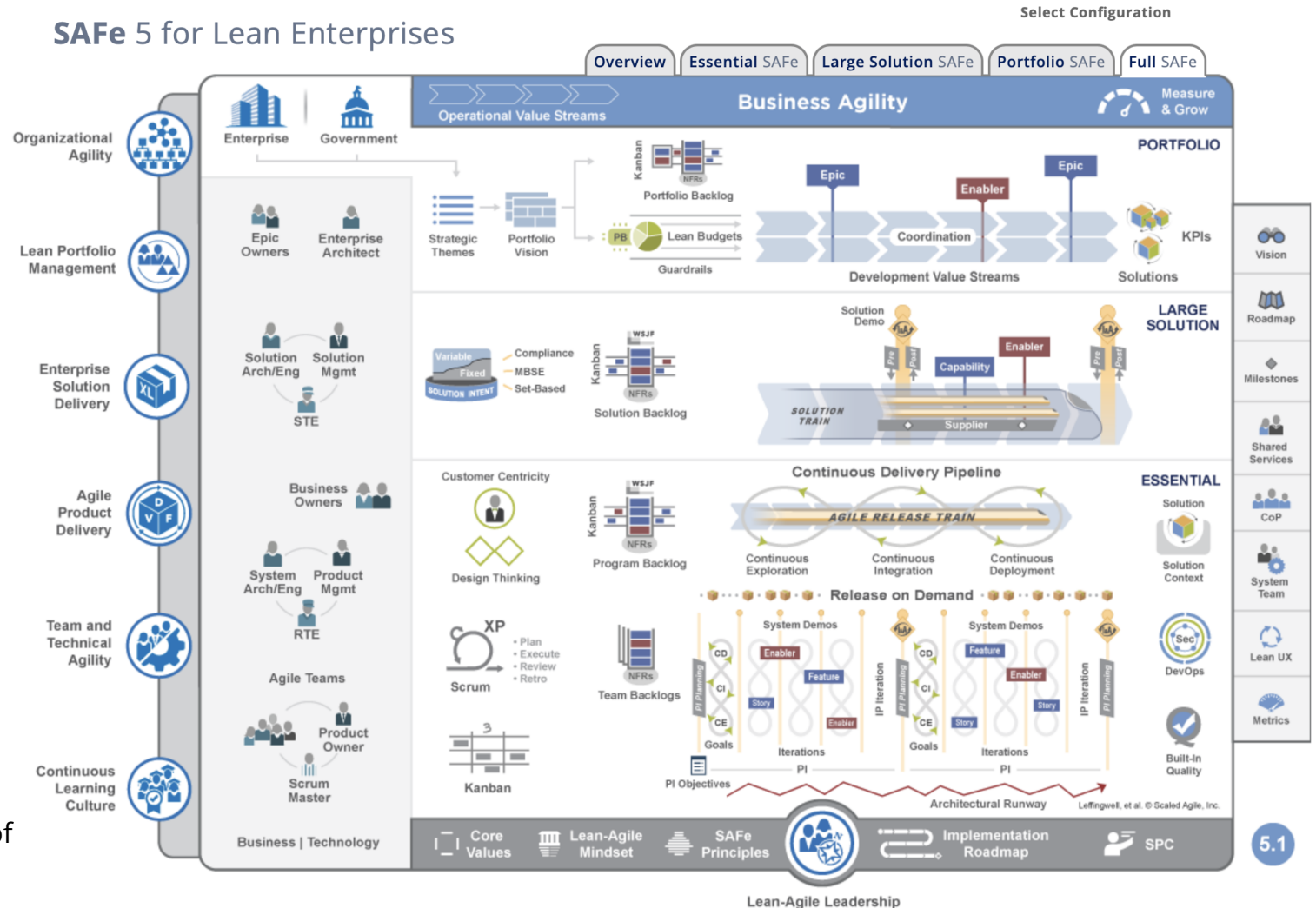


People become blinded to SAFe's value based on the complexity of the "Big Picture"

Without context, the "Big Picture" looks complex, heavy, and waterfall

It's like opening a toolbox filled with junk and losing sight of the problem you're trying to solve

SAFe 5 for Lean Enterprises



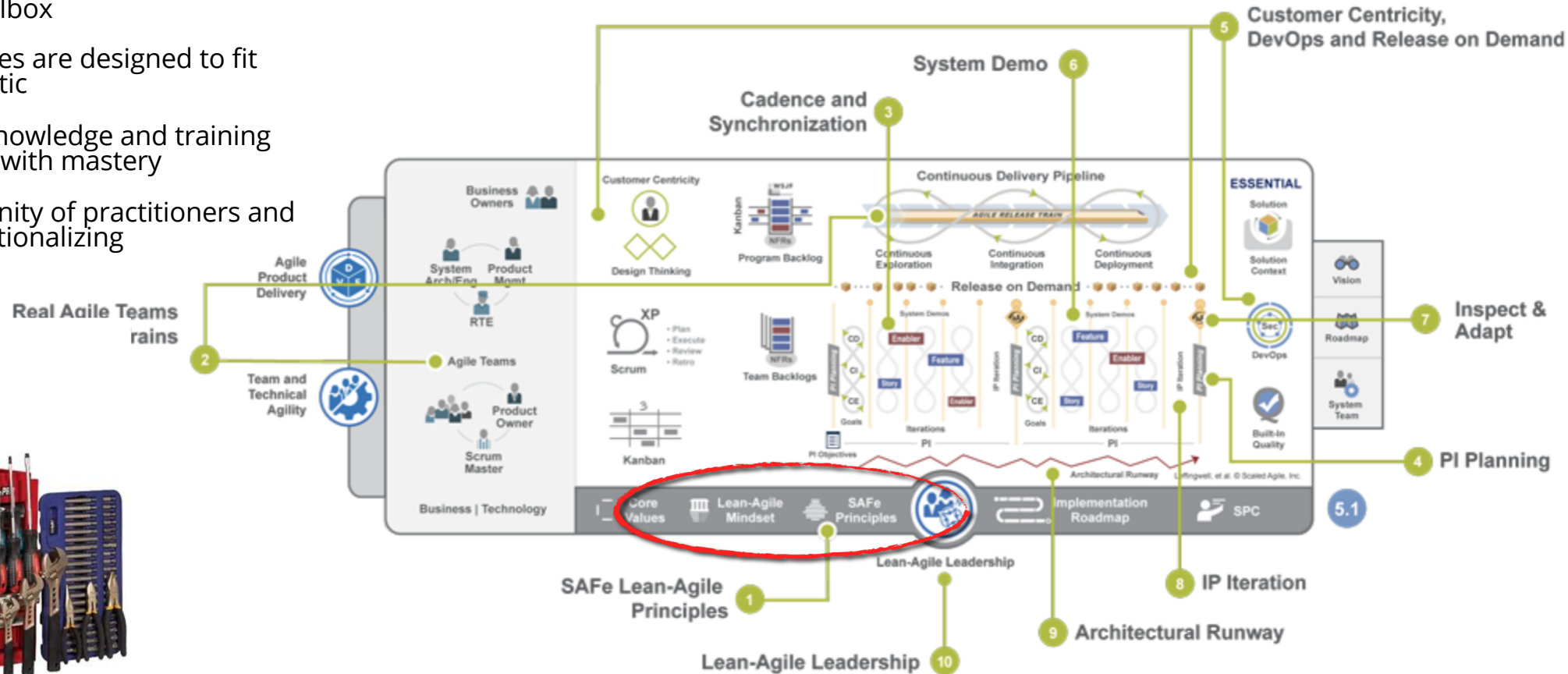
SAFe Practices are Simply a “Toolbox of Consistent Tools and Common Measurements”

When you look at the big picture, you are looking deep inside a very full toolbox

All the tools and techniques are designed to fit together and are synergistic

There is a huge body of knowledge and training regimen available to help with mastery

There is a vibrant community of practitioners and deep experience in operationalizing



** Careful and experience-led usage of the framework can yield impressive and sustainable results*

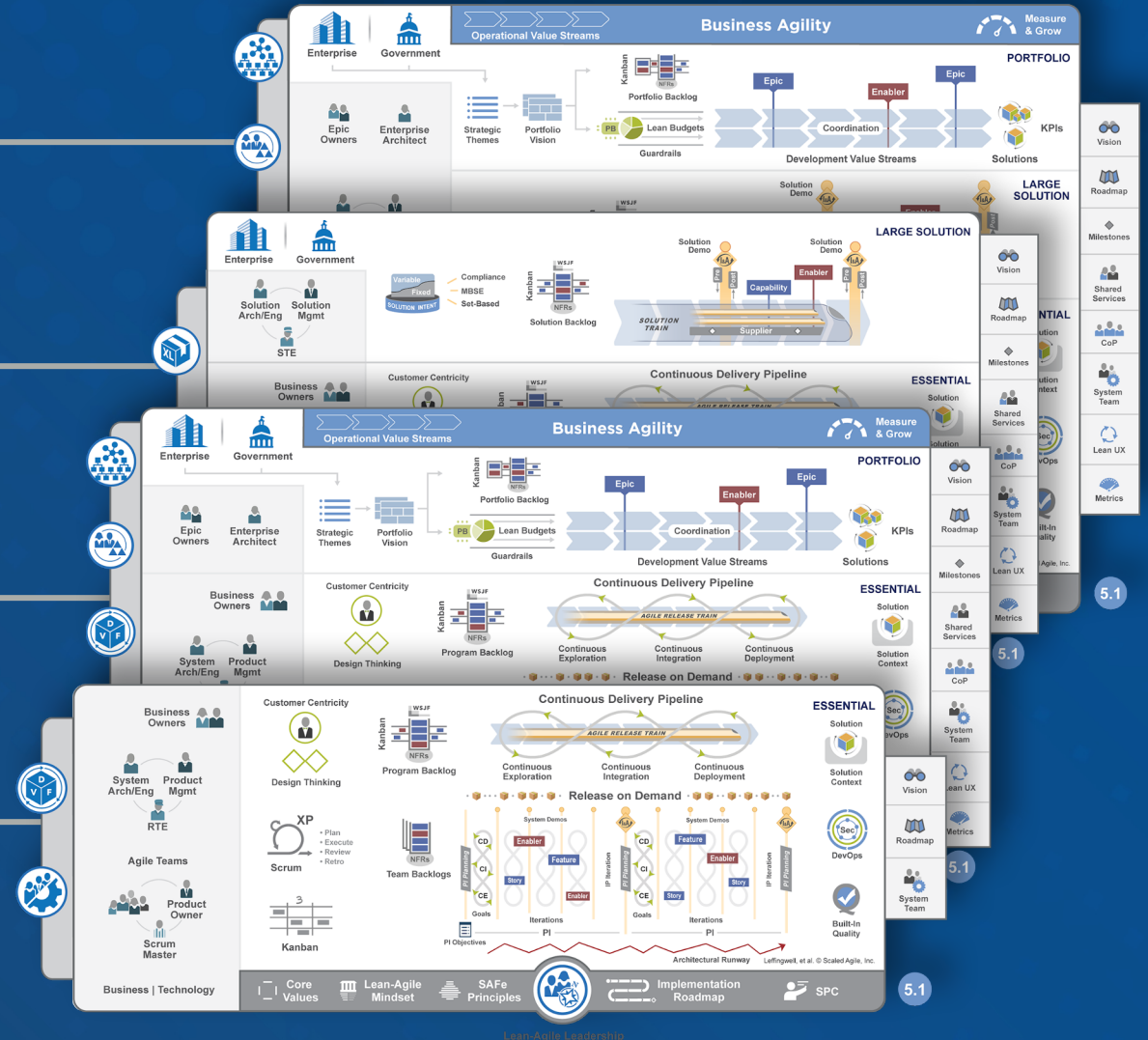
Configure SAFe to meet your needs

Full Configuration

Large Solution Configuration

Portfolio Configuration

Essential Configuration



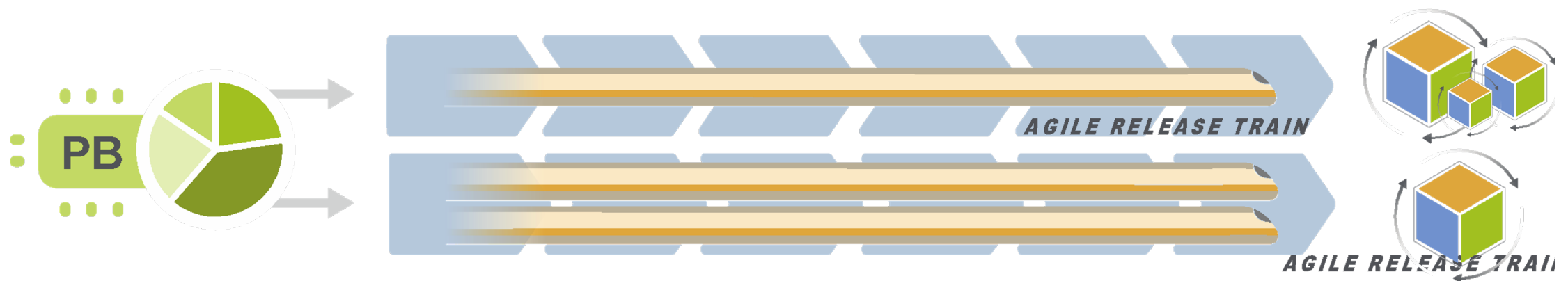
SAFe's Approach to “Organizing Around Value”

Understanding SAFe's use of Value Streams

What is a SAFe portfolio?

A SAFe portfolio is a collection of *development* Value Streams.

- ▶ Each Value Stream builds, supports, and maintains Solutions
- ▶ Solutions are delivered to the Customer, whether internal or external to the Enterprise



An Enterprise may have a single portfolio or multiple portfolios



Small Enterprise



Single Portfolios

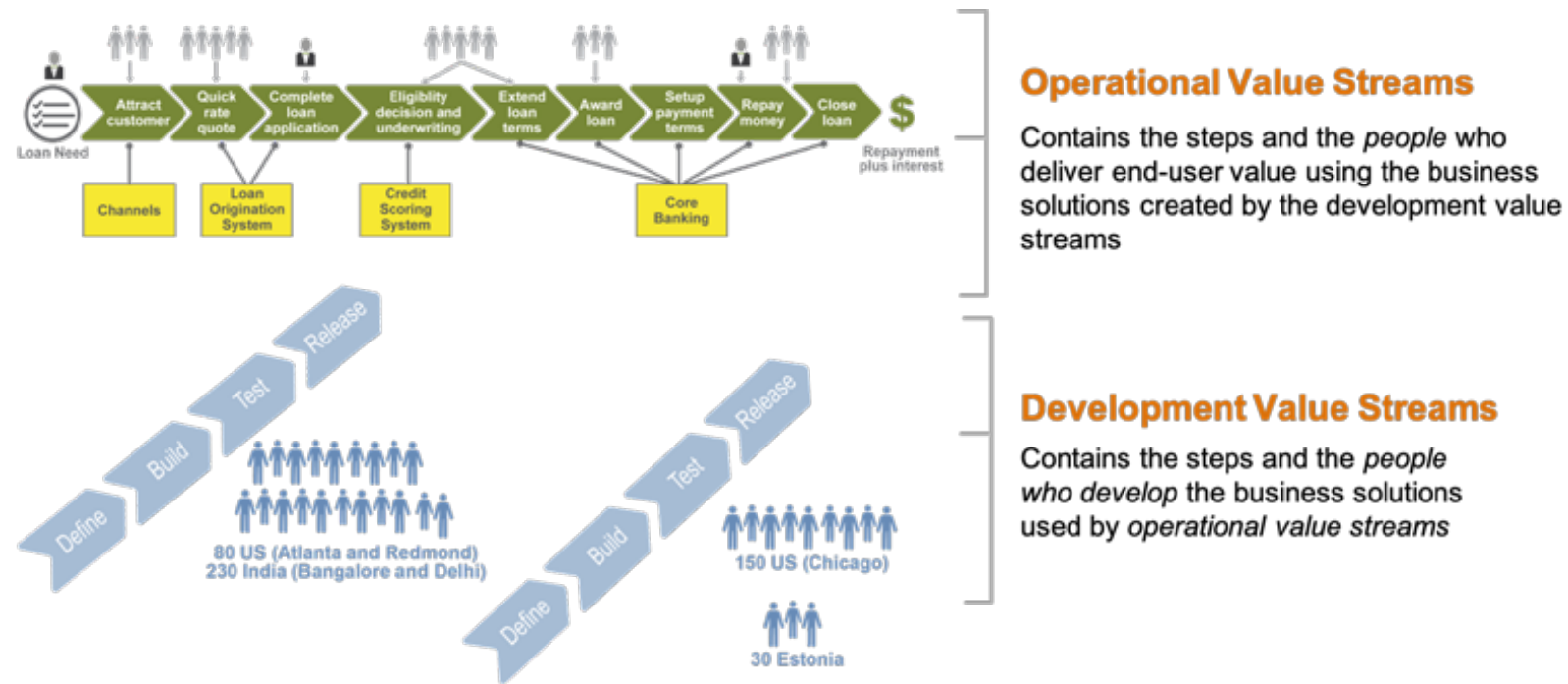


Large Enterprise



Multiple Portfolios

SAFe Specializes Value Streams into Two Types

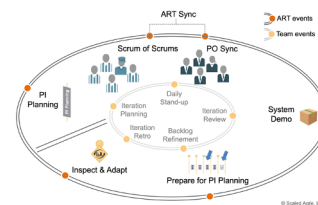
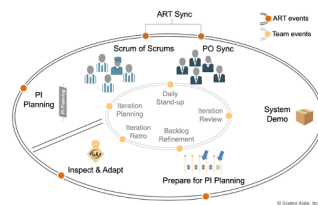
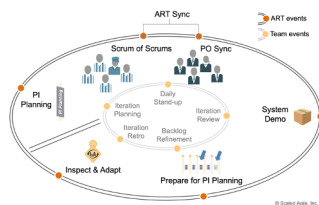
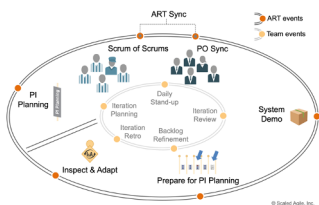
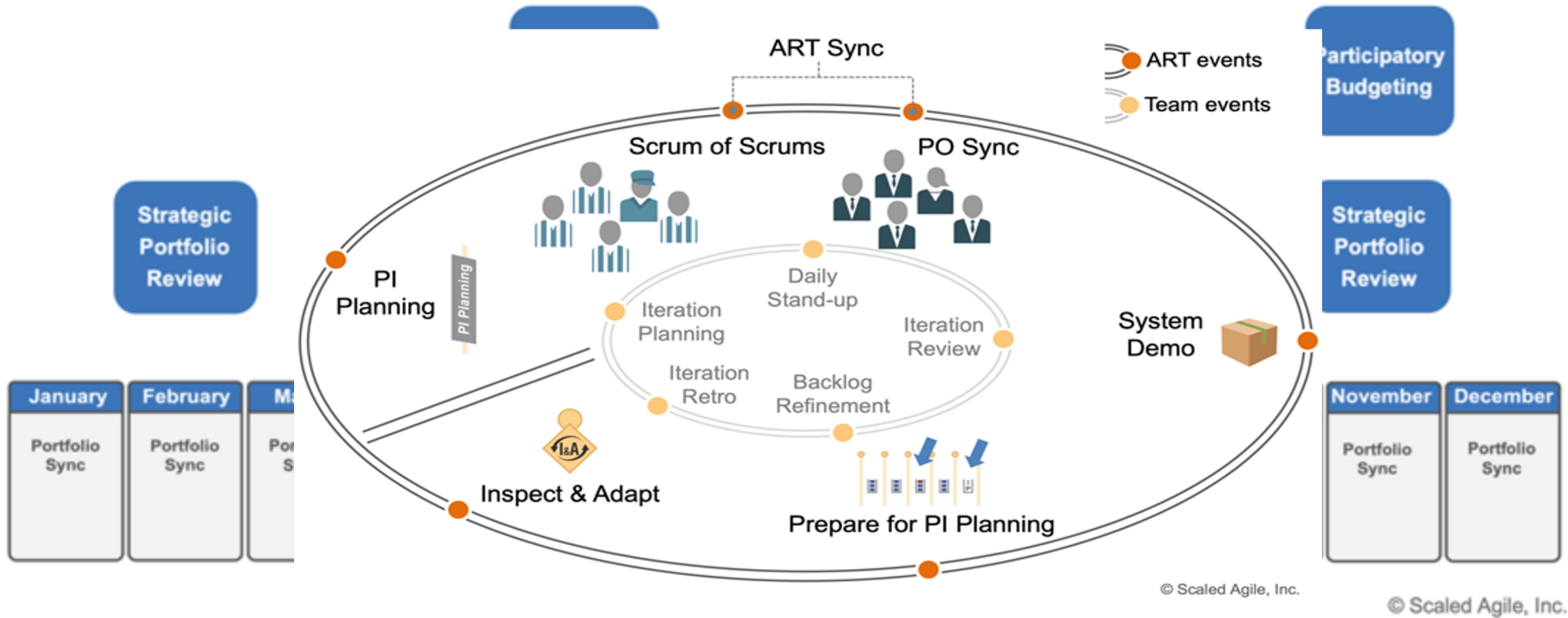


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SAFe's Approach to “Team-Level Agile Practices”

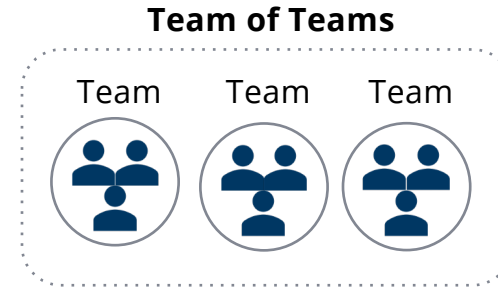
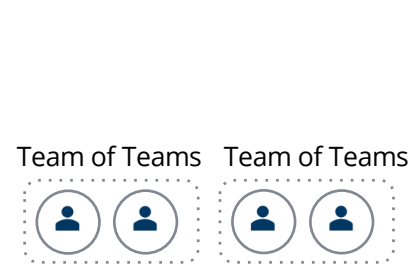
Team and Technical Agility, DevSecOps, Flow of Work

Cadence of SAFe Ceremonies

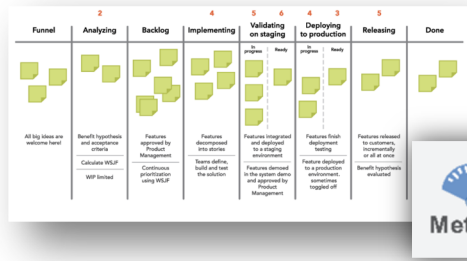


Planning & Coordinating Work in SAFe

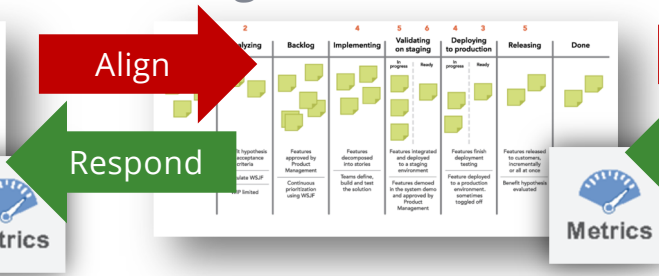
Achieving flow through visualizing work, reducing batch sizes, limiting WIP, Managing Queue Lengths



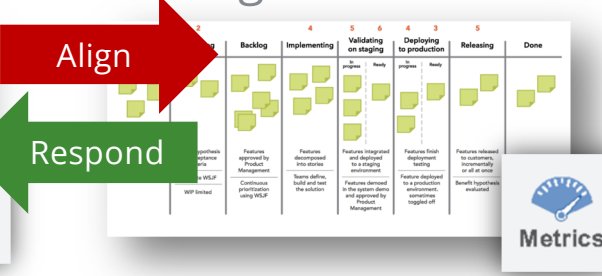
Portfolio Kanban



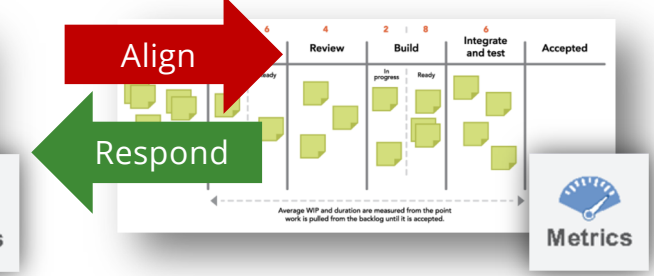
Large Solution Kanban



Program Kanban



Team Kanban



Epic

An Epic is a container for a significant Solution development initiative that captures the more substantial investments that occur within a portfolio.

Epic

Capability

Capability

A large Feature that includes many teams-of-teams

Capability

Feature

Feature

Feature

A Feature is a service that fulfills a stakeholder need. May or may-not be pure technology.

Feature

Story

Story

Story

Story

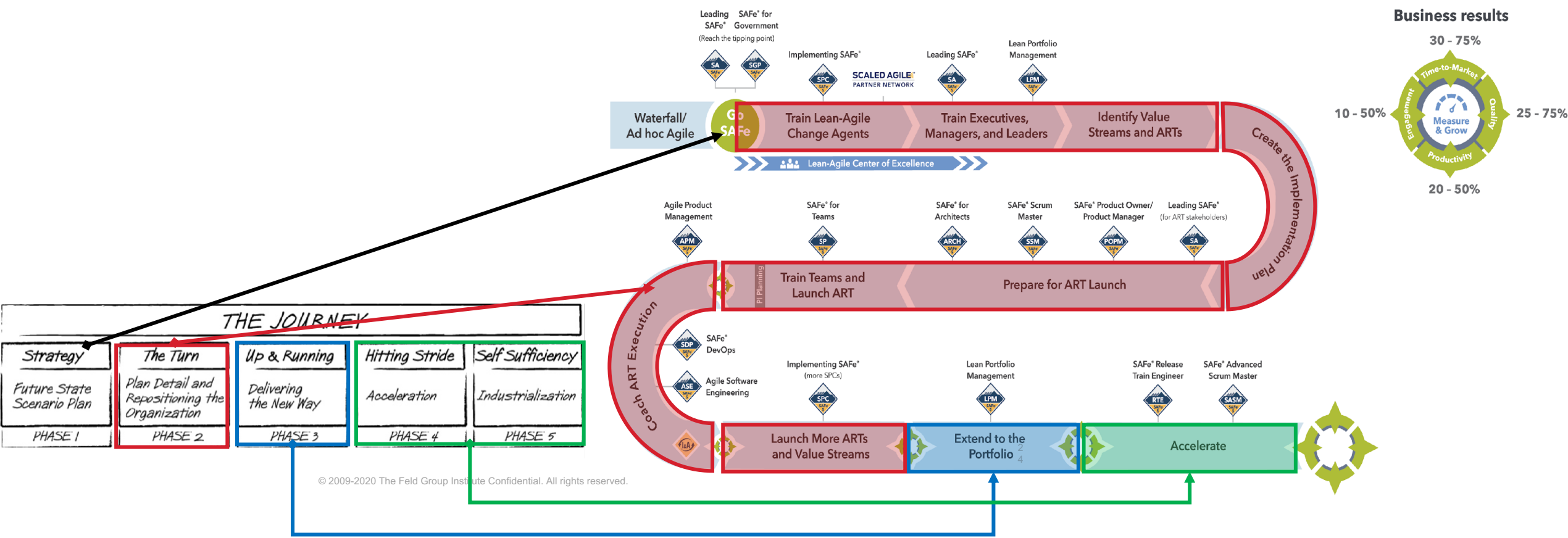
Stories are short descriptions of a small piece of desired outcome, written in the user's language. May or may-not be technology related.

Lessons Learned / Pluses and Minuses

Perspective from the SAFe trenches



The TFGI & SAFe Implementation Journey(s)



Lessons Learned from Observing & Coaching SAFe Implementations

Leadership Needs to Be Invested and Committed

The Nature of Leadership Changes in SAFe – Leaders Need to Understand and Lead the Change.

SAFe organizes around Portfolios & Value Streams

Agile Release Trains (ARTs) are expected to be long-lived. Its critical to understand this, and not just operationalize provided examples for value streams.

Beachhead, Beachhead, Beachhead

Target a small starting point, expect to learn, expand the implementation as adjustments are made.

Eat Your Own Dog Food

Using Lean-Agile principles and practices to drive the transformation yields both learning and results.

Visualize Everything

Strategic Themes, Business Canvasses, Roadmaps, Kanban, KPIs, OKRs, etc.

Recognize SAFe's Limits

SAFe is an execution framework, not a strategic planning/vision or operations framework.

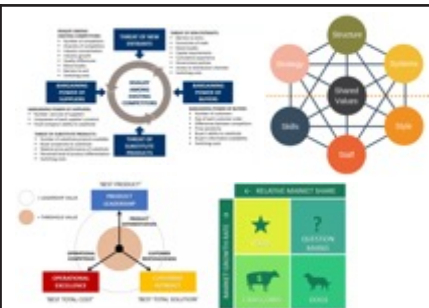
Positioning TFGI's Transformational Framework (iCap™) and The Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe®)

Understanding How iCap & SAFe Fit Together



Blind Spot Between Strategy & Execution

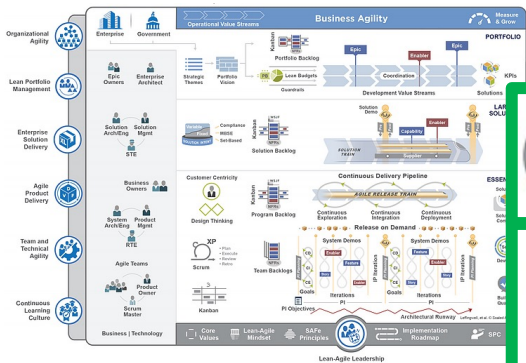
Strategy



WHY

Blind Spot
WHAT, HOW, WHO, WHEN

Execution



Planning

Building

Running

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Eliminate the Blind Spot

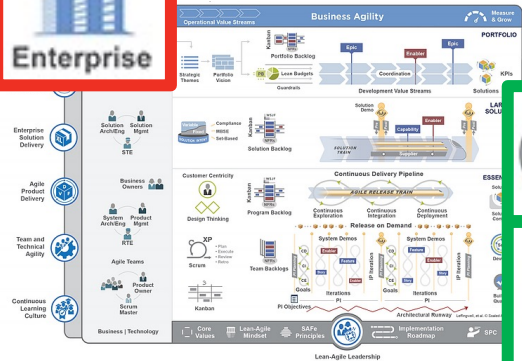
Strategy



WHY



Execution



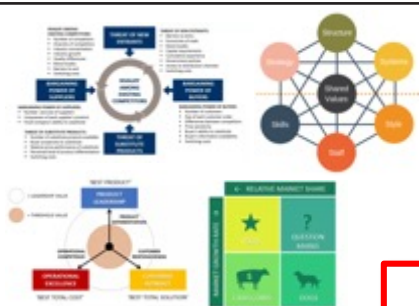
Planning

Building

Running

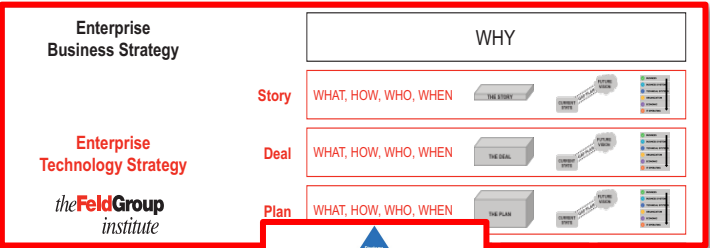
Eliminate the Blind Spot: The Feld Group Institute

Strategy

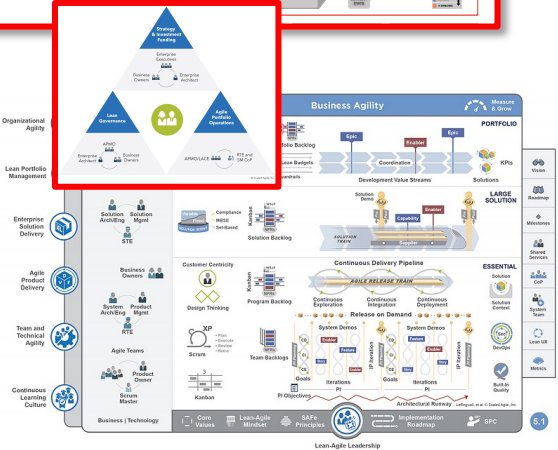


WHY

Enterprise Technology Strategy



Lean Portfolio Management



Execution

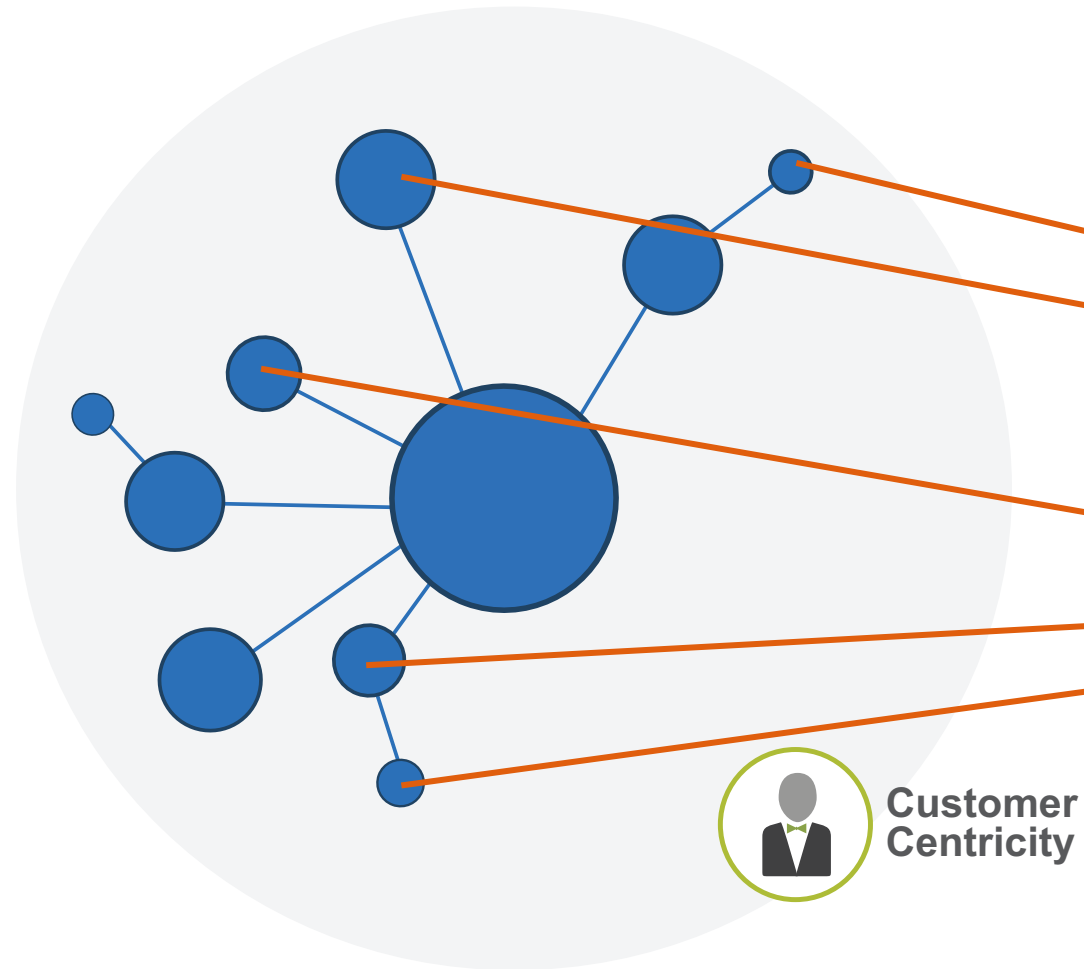
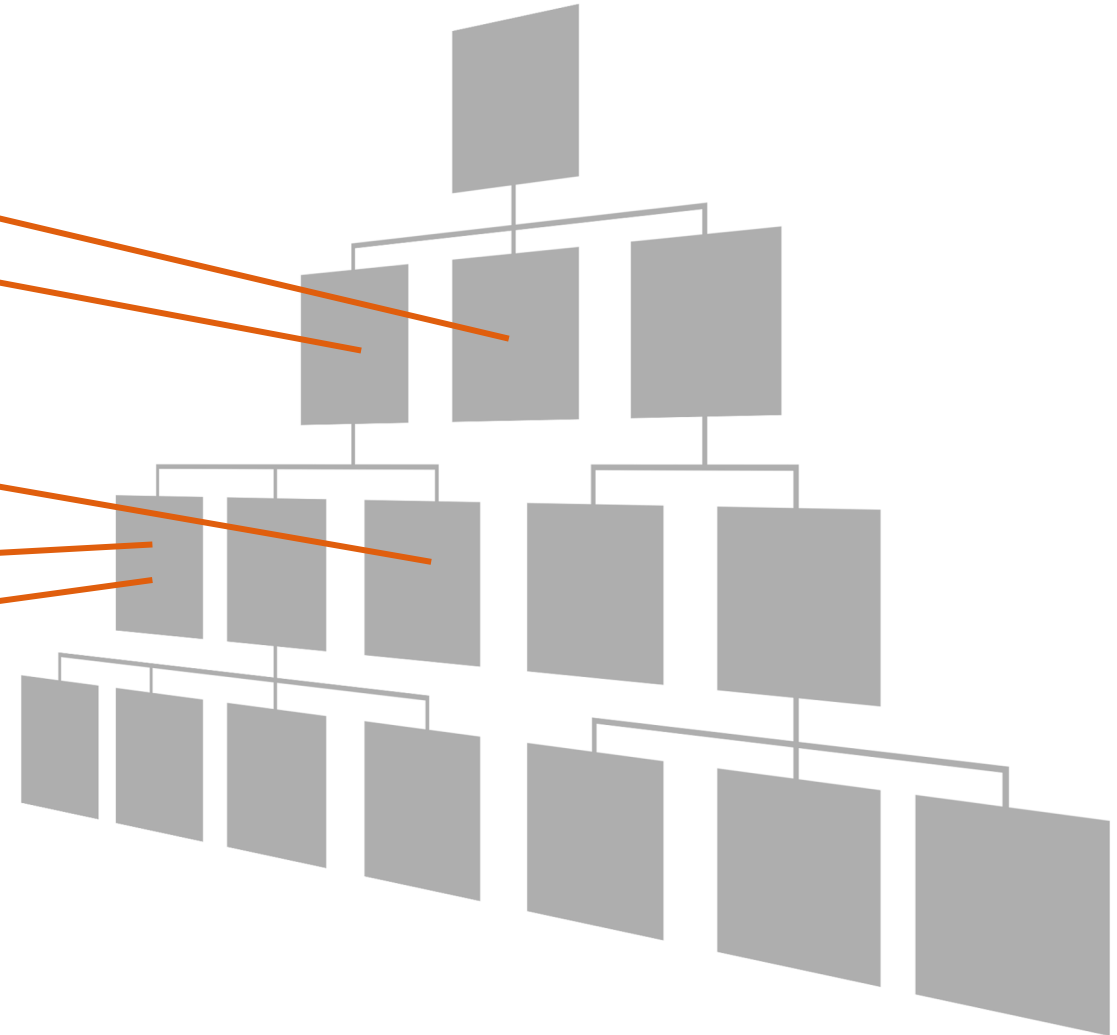
Planning

Building

Running

We need a dual operating system for Business Agility

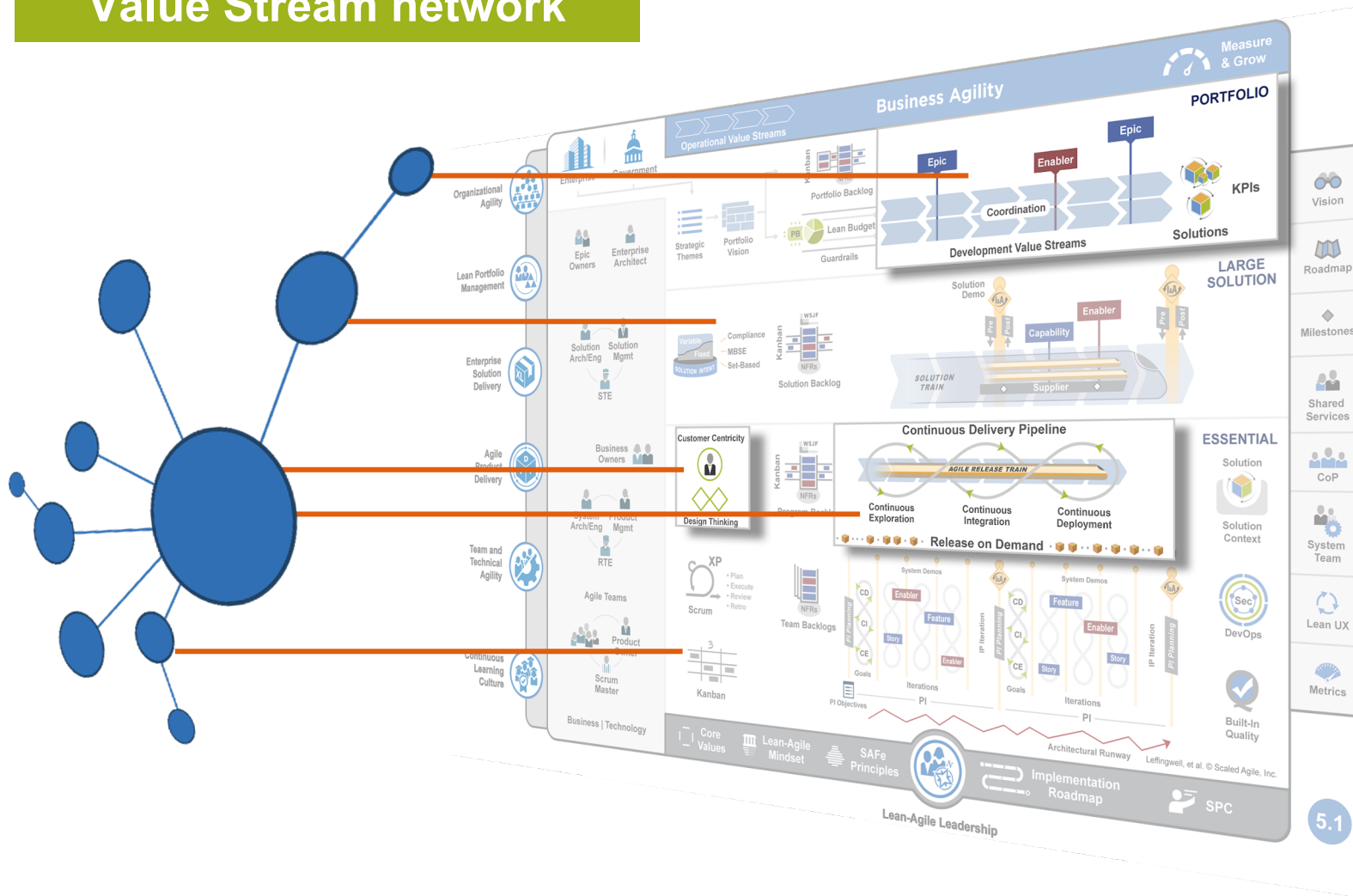
Efficiency and stability



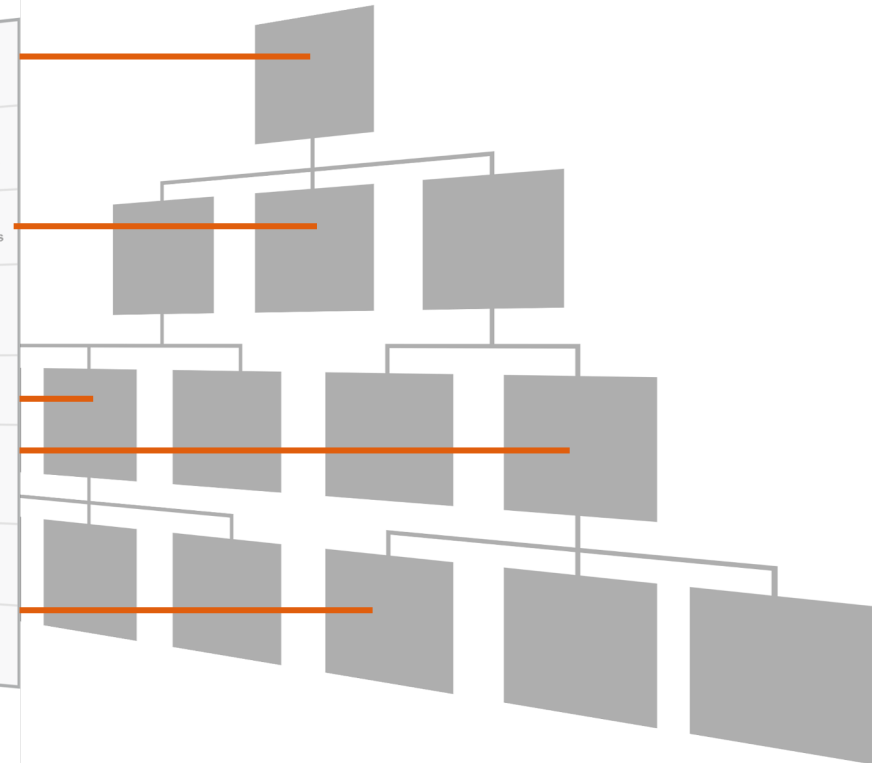
Speed of innovation

And we have just such an operating system at our fingertips

Value Stream network



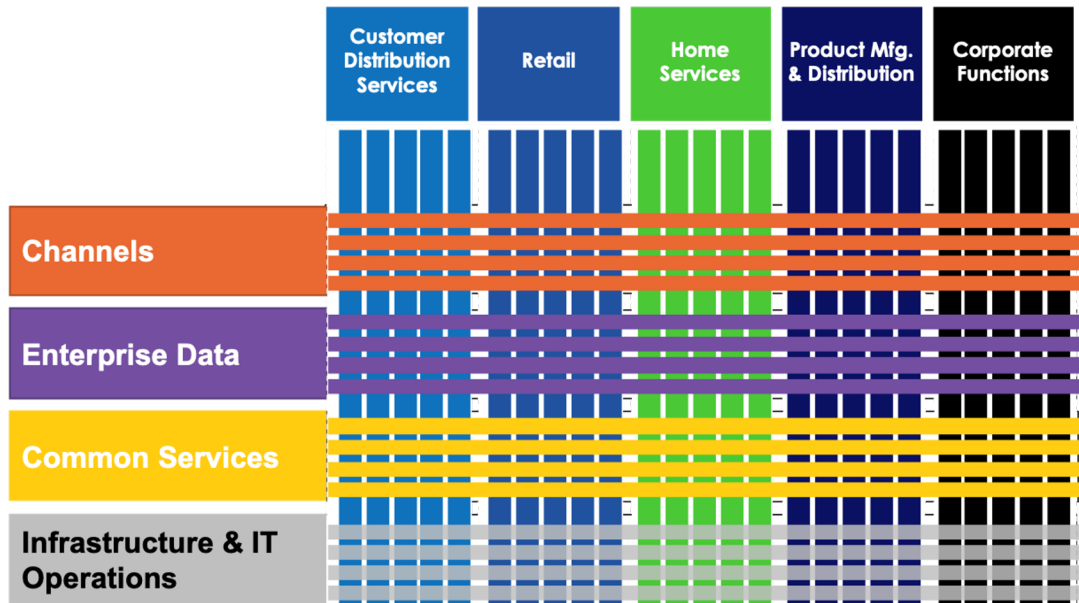
Functional hierarchy



Organization At Rest vs Organization in Motion

“At Rest”

Structure – Leadership – Culture – Workforce



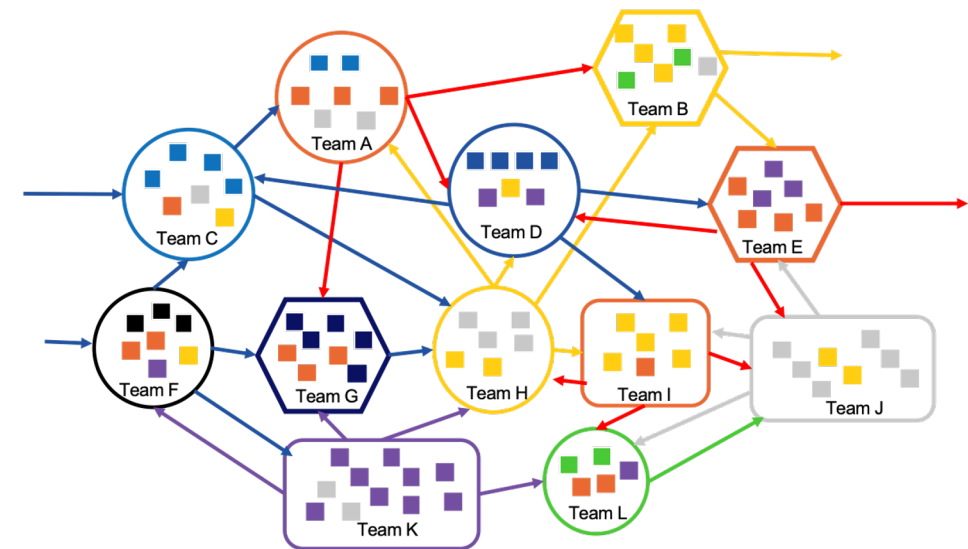
Shared Consciousness

Enterprise Technology Strategy – Story, Deal Plan

Enterprise Reference Architecture – Guardrails, Intent, Structure

“In Motion”

Alignment – Capacity – Flow – Feedback



Empowered Execution

Outcomes – Business, Architecture, Productivity

Scaled Agile Practices / DevOps / Continuous Delivery

About Arrowhead Labs

We're Change Catalysts - Preparing our Clients for Success in an Always Changing World

We possess decades of experience, both within large global organizations, as well as in emerging startups. Our expertise covers the spectrum ranging from hands-on-keyboard development, architecture, product management, security, infrastructure, and operations.

Transformation Requires an Organization In Motion

We bring proven techniques, frameworks, and tools to help our clients organically and sustainably transform into breakaway organizations.

We Believe Your Technology Organization Can Become the Engine Driving Your Business

Arrowhead Labs believes every organization can achieve radical and sustained improvements in technical performance and business impact; our purpose is to see that happen for our clients.



THANK YOU!

