Kanban is The New Scrum! Failure Transformation Patterns, Similarities and Learning

Shahin Sheidaei
@sheidaei

Elevate Change
Elevating with a Smile!

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Entrepreneur & Coach

Trouble Maker & Problem Solver!

Elevate you and your organization with a smile!

Shahin Sheidaei
Founder & Principal Coach
Elevate Change Inc.

Elevate To Coach Program

Lean On Agile Podcast

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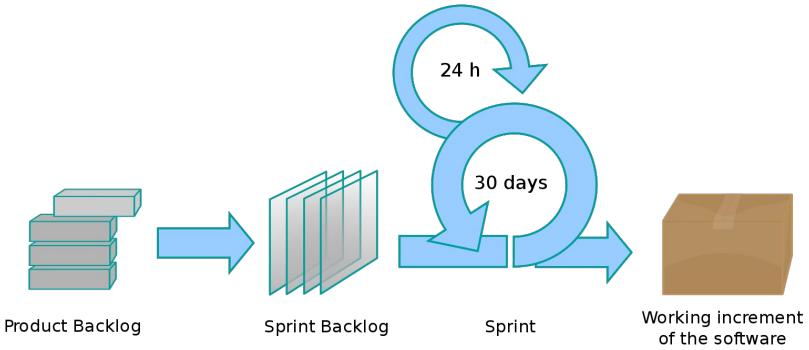
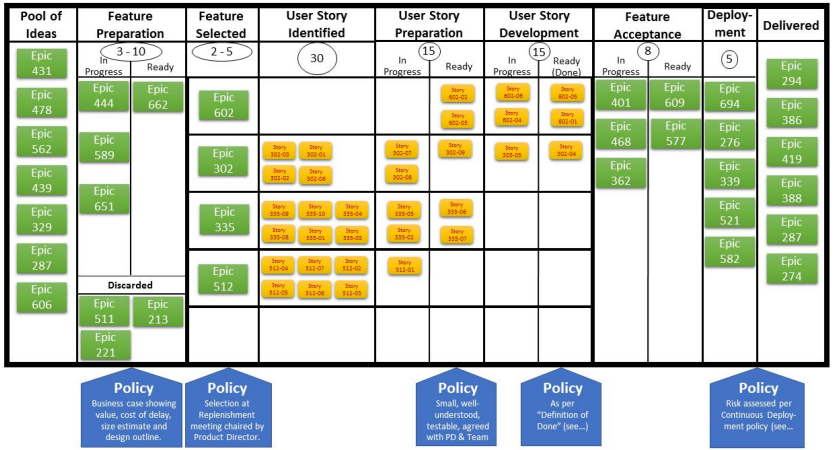
What Are We Going to Talk About?

1. Experiences, observations, and learnings of Agile Transformations
2. Failures and Patterns
3. A tool that you might use, and it might be stinky!

My Assumption

A very quick introduction on Kanban and Scrum



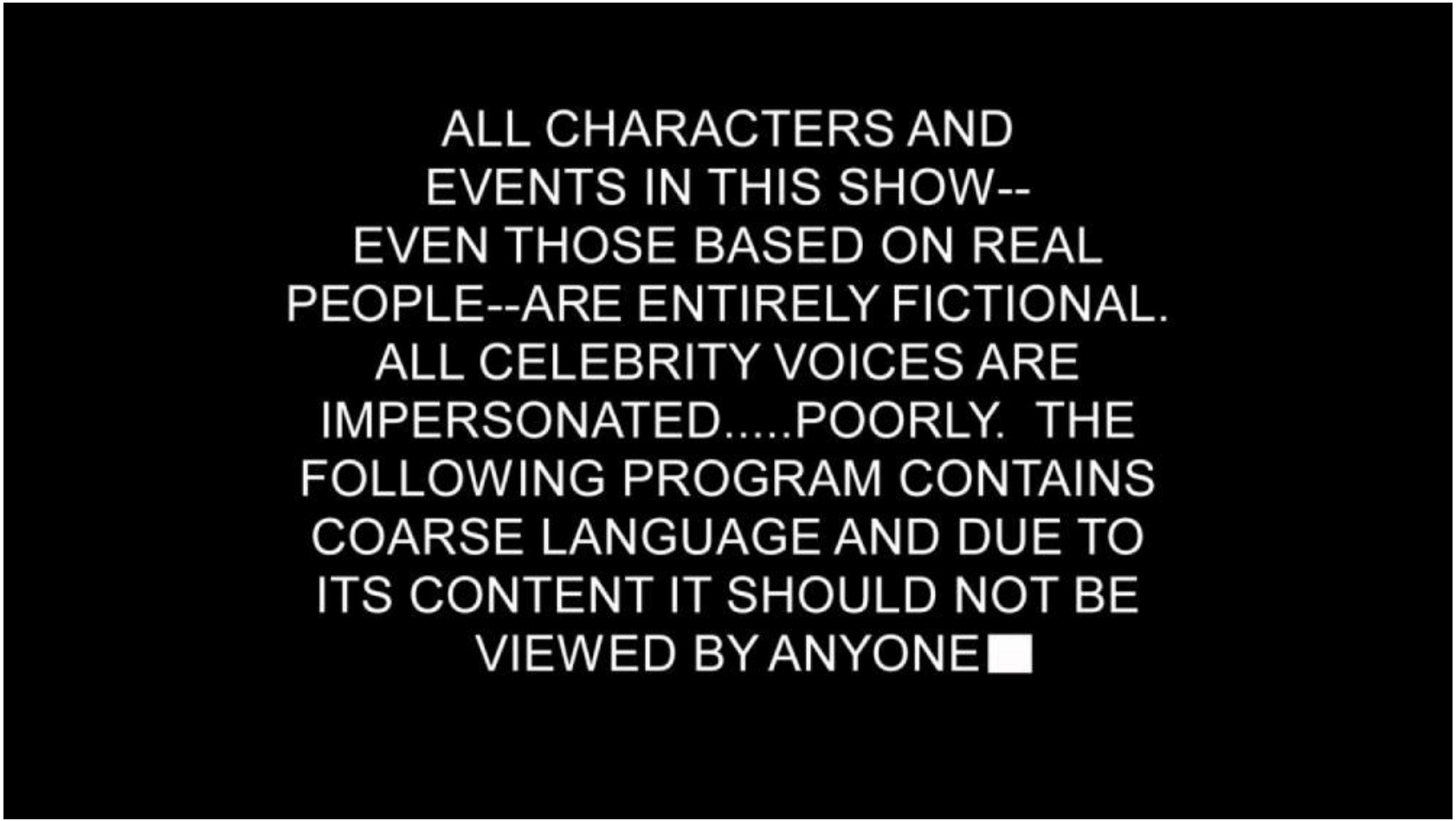


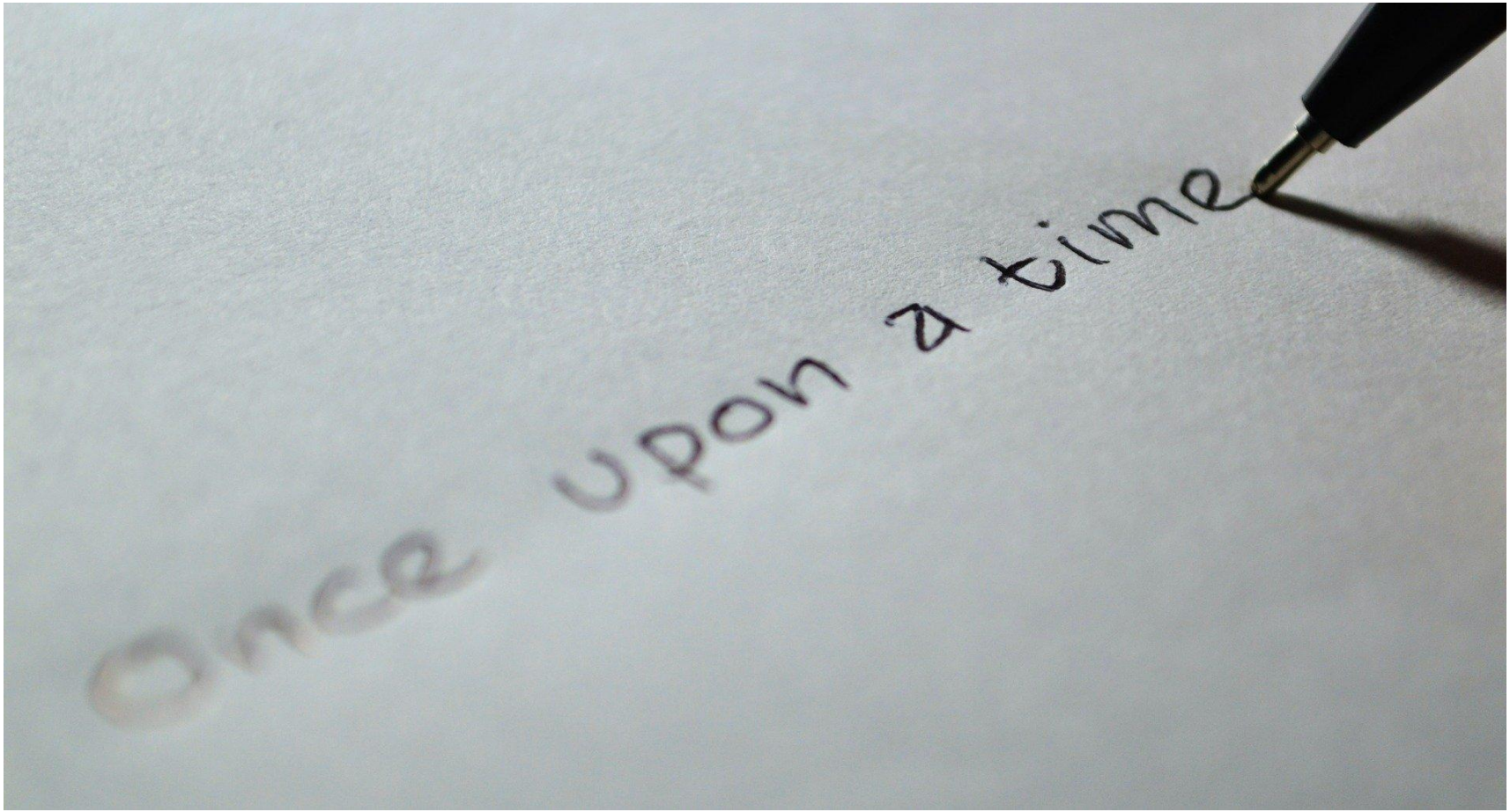
1986 HBR article “The New New Product Development Game”, Takeuchi and Nonaka

In 1995, Jeff Sutherland and Ken Schwaber, ”The SCRUM Development Process”

David Anderson initial work of 2004 at Microsoft

David Anderson work 2006–2007 project at Corbis in which the kanban method was identified.


ALL CHARACTERS AND
EVENTS IN THIS SHOW--
EVEN THOSE BASED ON REAL
PEOPLE--ARE ENTIRELY FICTIONAL.
ALL CELEBRITY VOICES ARE
IMPERSONATED.....POORLY. THE
FOLLOWING PROGRAM CONTAINS
COARSE LANGUAGE AND DUE TO
ITS CONTENT IT SHOULD NOT BE
VIEWED BY ANYONE


Once upon a time

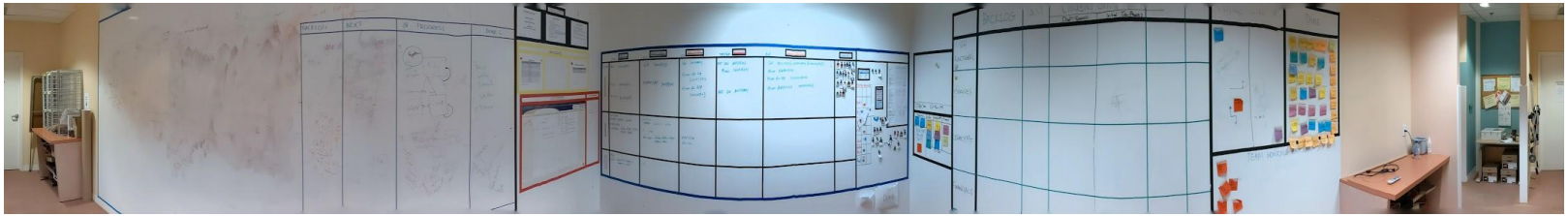
Agile Transformation in a Government Organization

First Story!

Are you ready?

Government Story - Signs of Success

Kanban



Success with Kanban Very Early

Sign: one of their biggest program in portfolio

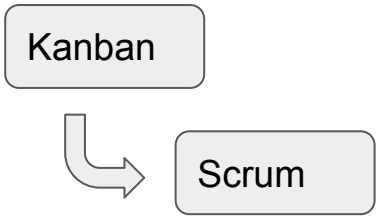
Support for transformation visible

Sign: big consulting company there

A big program to go Agile

Sign: a huge room used for visualization of flow

Government Story - Shu Ha Ri



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Successful

Let's expand that to other part of organization

We can do it, we learned all secrets

Scrum seems to be more fit for Dev teams!

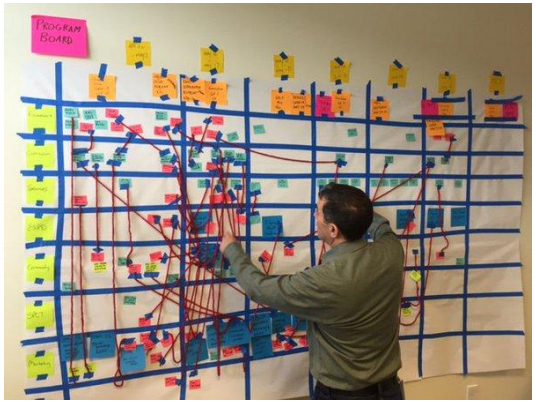
Everyone else doing scrum

We don't need much support as before.

Government Story

Kanban

↳ Scrum



Scrum working well for Dev teams.

However, we don't see Done Done!

Still lots of handoffs, miscommunication, missed requirements ...

Still lots of dependencies, with other teams to make it Done Done!

Government Story

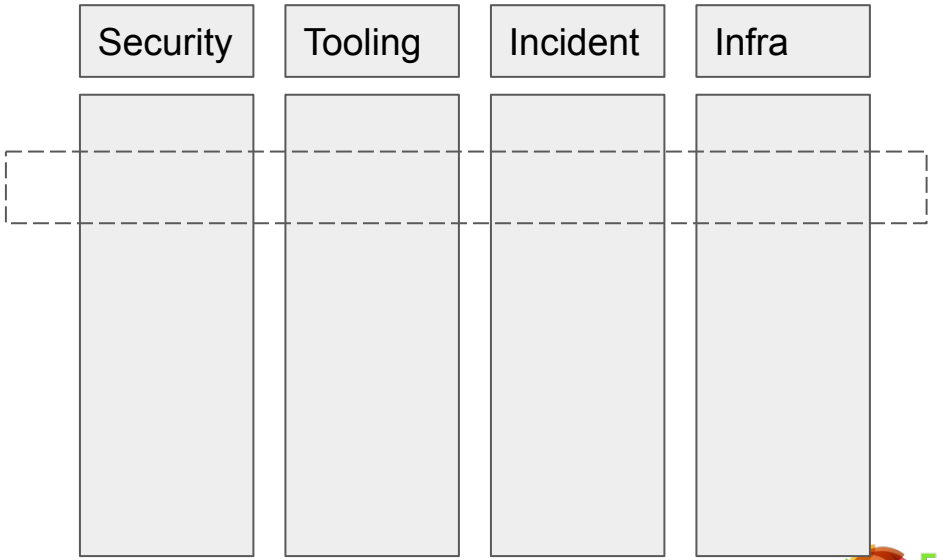
For Infrastructure Teams
Tried “Scrum”

Not as expected

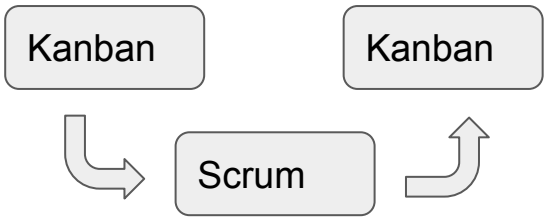
Nature of work disruptive

People not attending events

Seeing SM as not effective



Government Story



Scrum is good for small dev teams.

What shall we do about externals to the team?

Let's do Kanban.

We know how to do it!

Hire coaches to help with Kanban

Infrastructure teams "Nature" fits Kanban very well.

CIO changed.

Government Story

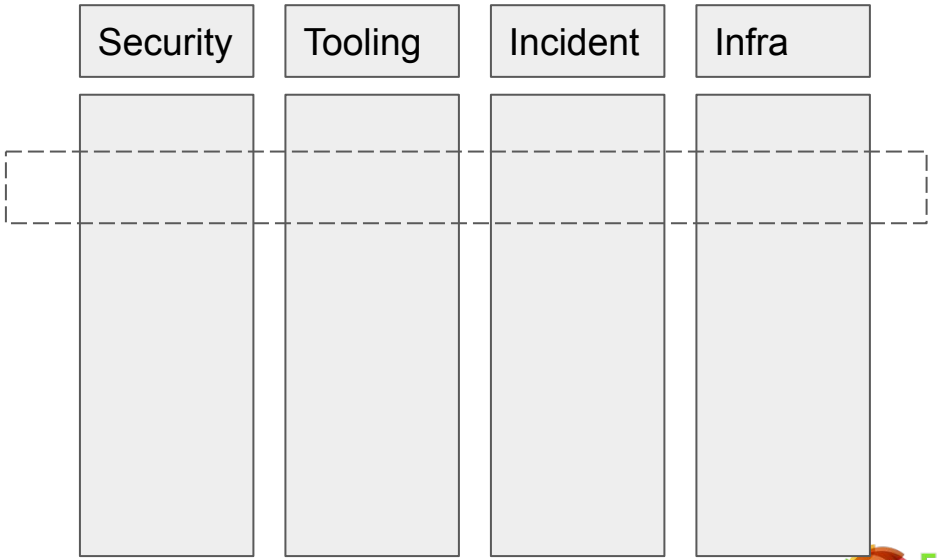
My Engagement Started Here

It's a flow, let's Kanban!

Kanban for the Infrastructure Team

It's a gentle change, meet them where they are

...



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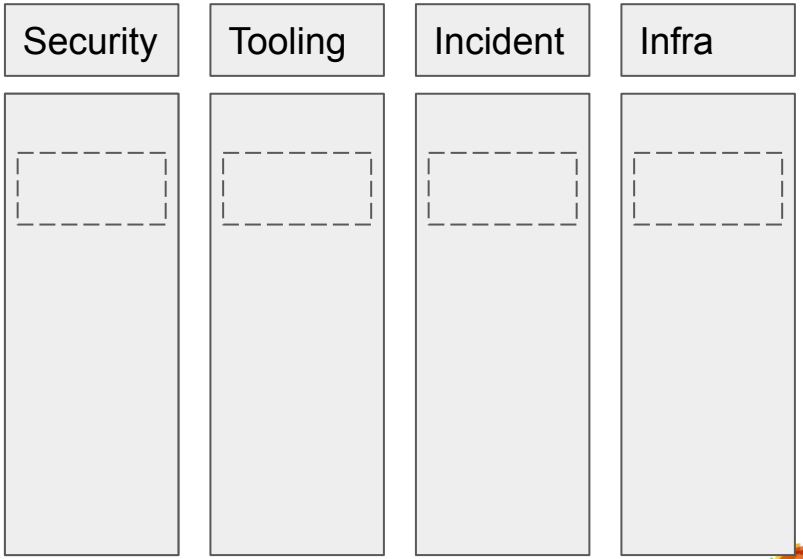
Government Story

Started locally, to elevate all to a level that we can talk about flow.

To show them the common denominator to agree upon.

If you think about it, each providing a service.

Although systematically looking was a service for Dev teams.



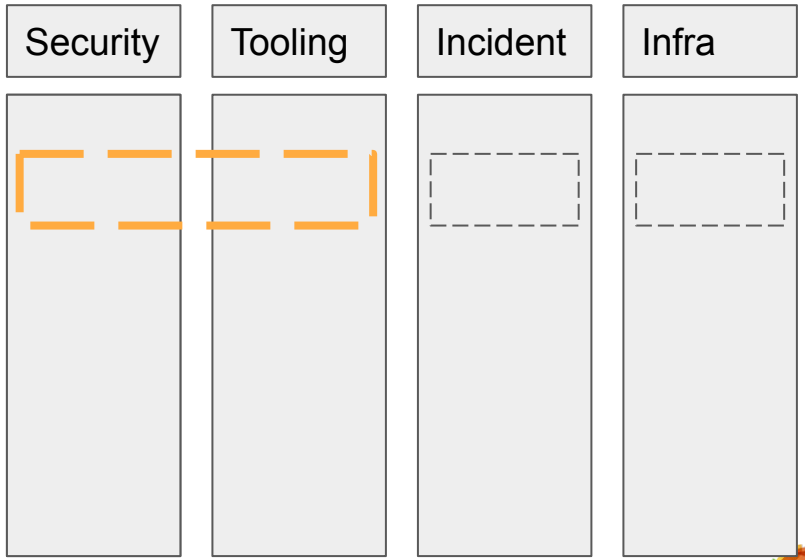
Government Story

We got some local to whole flow optimization:

Agree on Dissatisfactions was not there: The basis of evolution.

Each providing a service.

Changes of managers in between, consultants as managers, not there for the full picture.



What Happened at Last?

No more transformations!

Organization-wide cease.

Was it the layers of Decision Making?

Was it the vision?

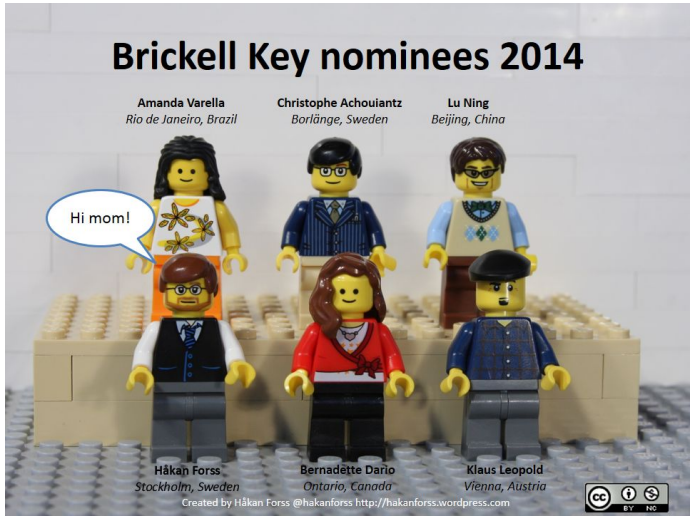
Was it the culture the root cause?

A complex domain it is.

No more consultants!

Government Story - Highlights

Kanban



Pioneers in Kanban once others Scrum

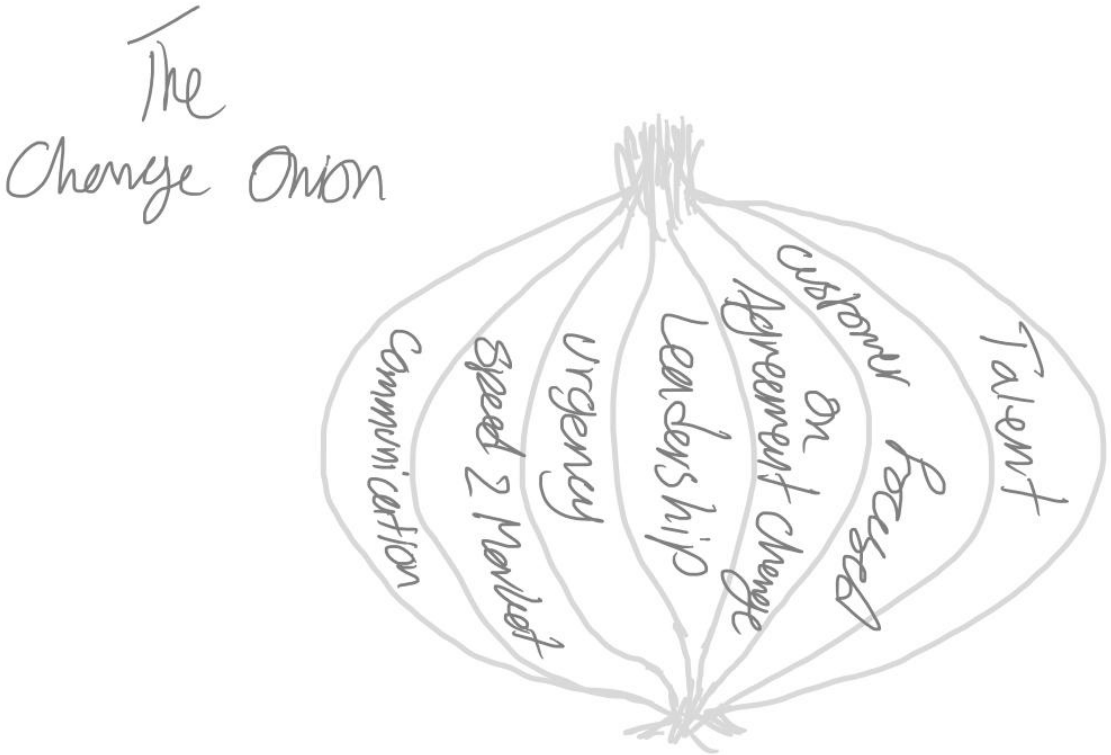
CIO Direction

Many Lessons to Learn

- Locally Optimizing can be done in Kanban or Scrum
  - None would be effective
- Leadership Direction
  - Constant vision about Transformation helps a lot
- No real urgency
  - Business Model Monopoly
- Speed to market not a concern
  - Customer have to come to them
- Shall we put all pins on Culture?
  - We saw an organization that raised thought leader and lost them too

Let's Talk about The Change Onion.

How Would you Take a Bite?



How much appetite do you have?

How much can you have at the same time?

And How?

- **Cut it?**
- **Take a bite?**
- **Smash it?**
- **Peel layer by layer?**

Is that All? More Story? Around It? In Depth?

Speed of “things” ...

Startup

Telecommunications

Banks

Government

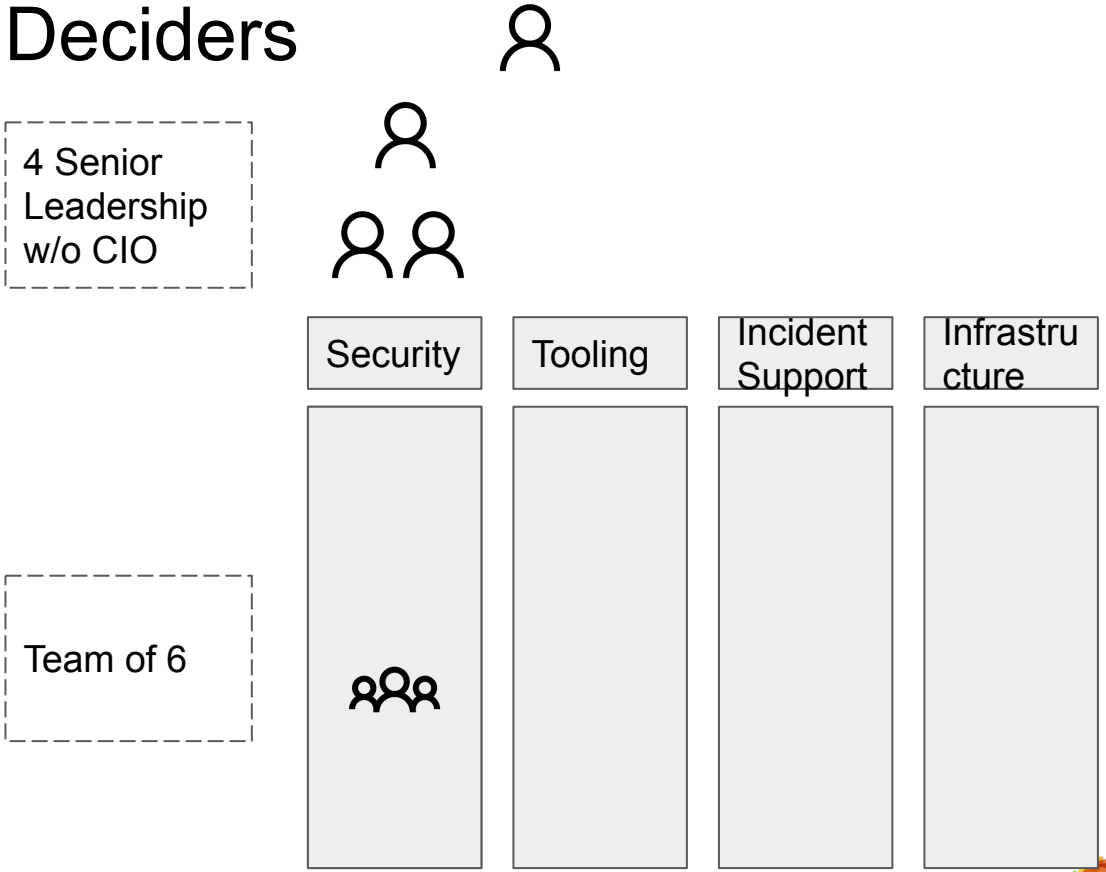
Work/Life Balance

After a month

No one showed up

This was for a session to agree on change

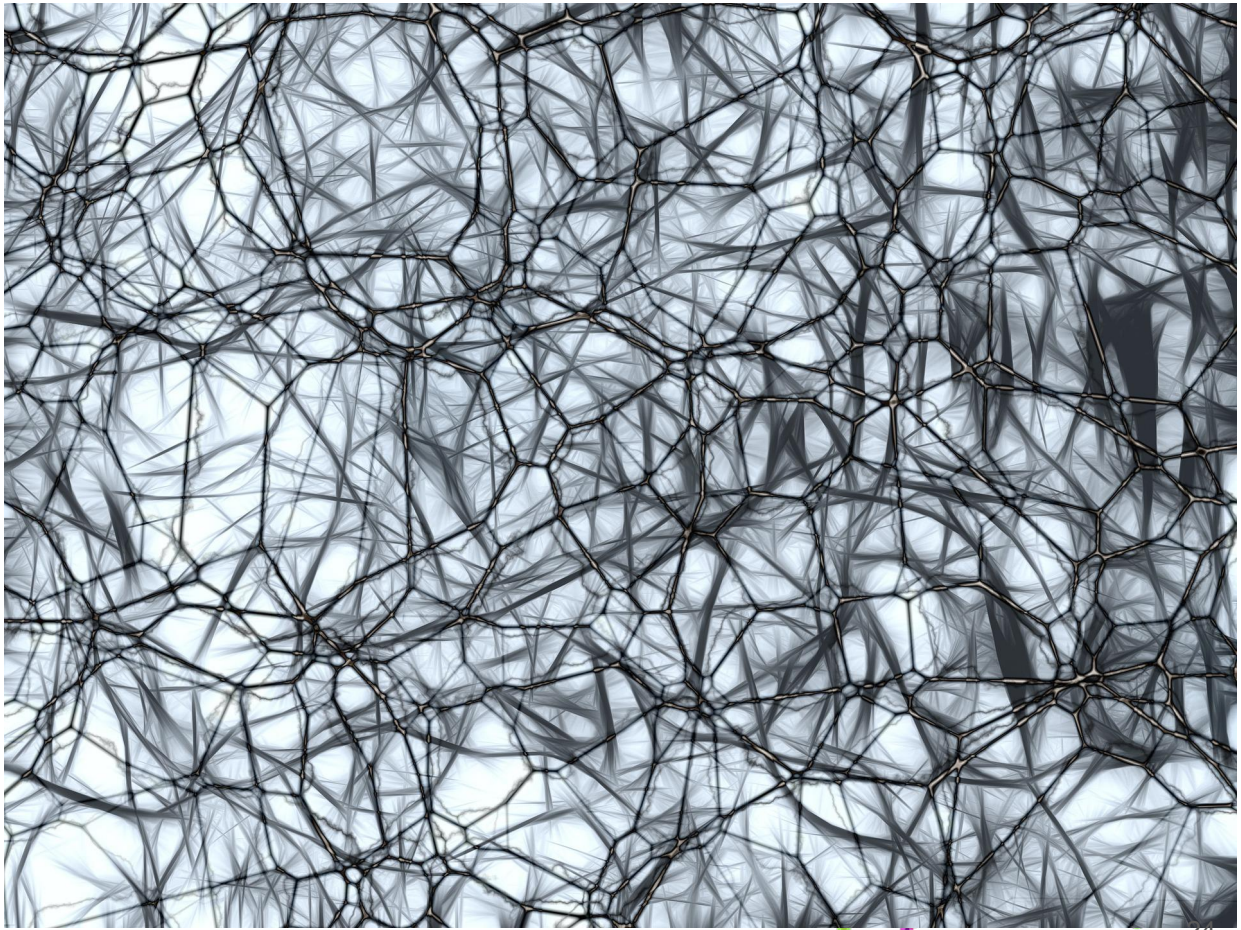
Doers v.s. Deciders



Decision Making

Complicated Decision Making

By people not doing the groundwork



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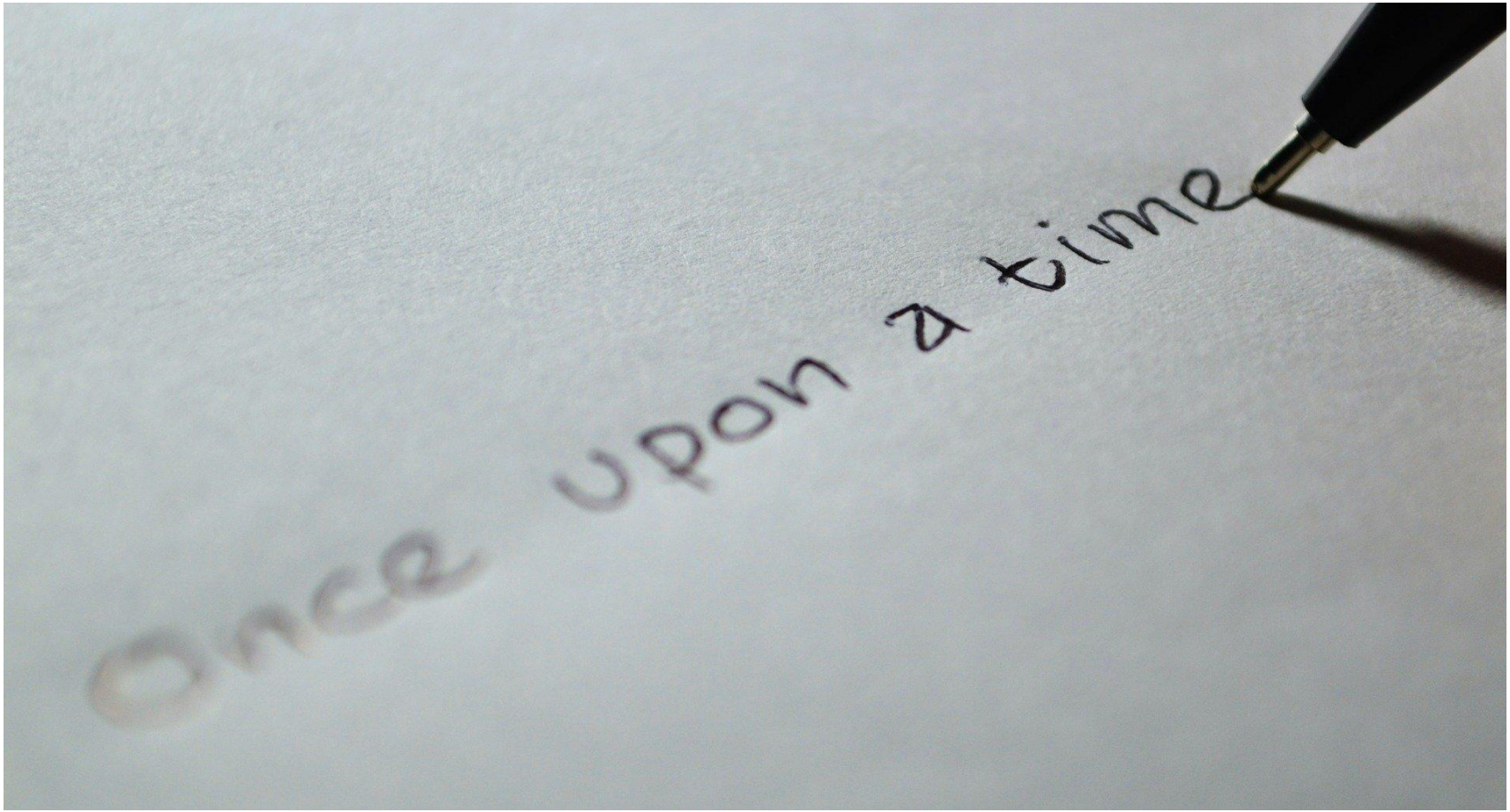
Kanban, Scrum, or Both? What's the Real Lesson?

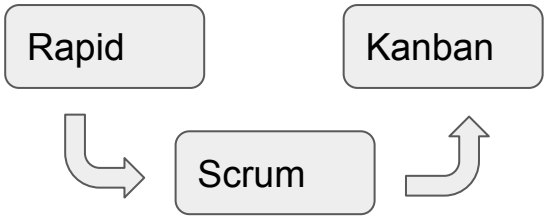
It doesn't matter what you pick!

It's all about The Change Onion
& Your Appetite for it

How would you take a bite out of it?


Once upon a time

Agile Transformation in a Big Bank



Biggest Bank in Canada
It has presence in US as well, and huge there too!
Agile Program Coach
For a multi-million dollar program expanding over multiple years
Few hundreds people program

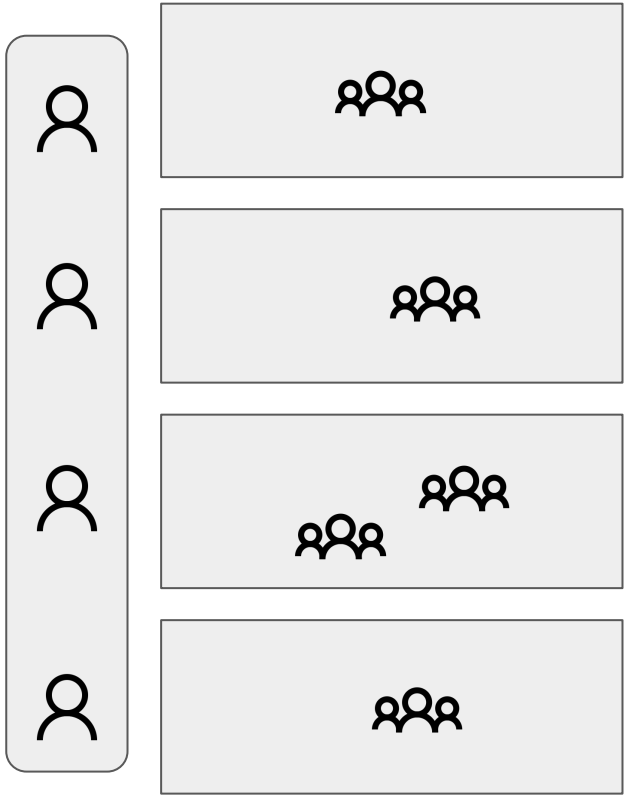
The Big Bank Story

My perception:

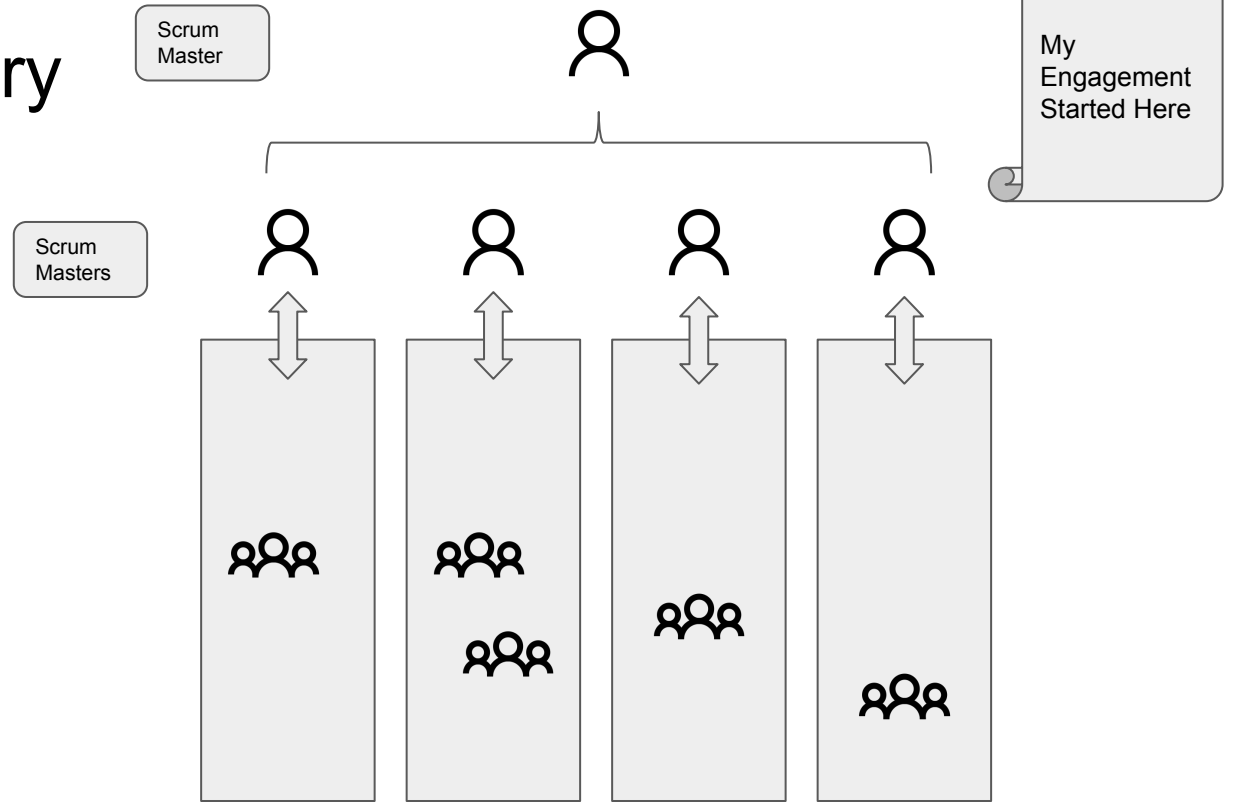
Transforming VPs and Directors and what they do

Teams are Agile for over 2 years (they are mature)

Value Streams, SoS, Product Owner ...



The Big Bank Story



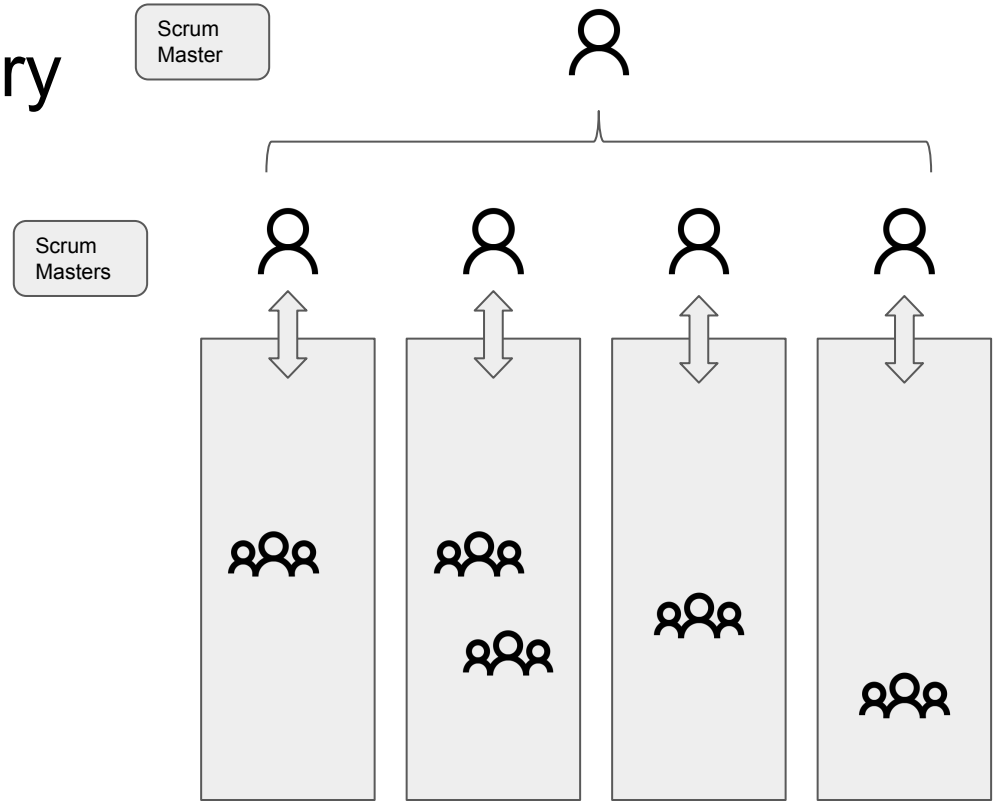
They had their own framework. Umbrella Level

It works for them I said!

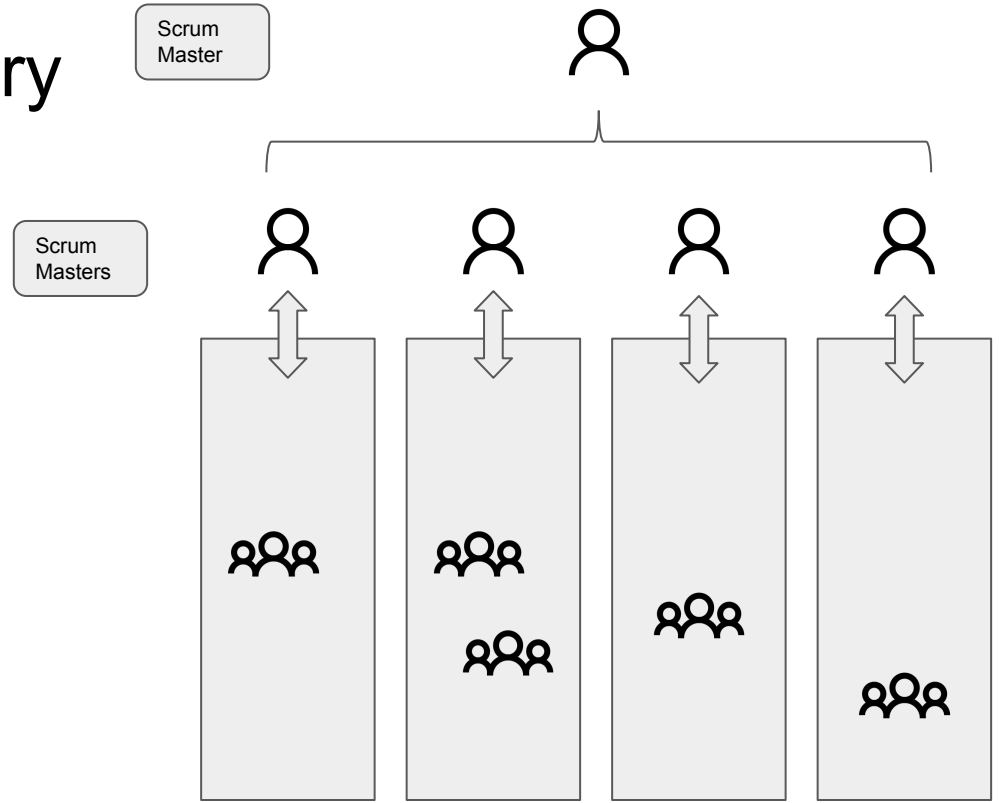
Top down

The Big Bank Story

Felt more like this!



The Big Bank Story

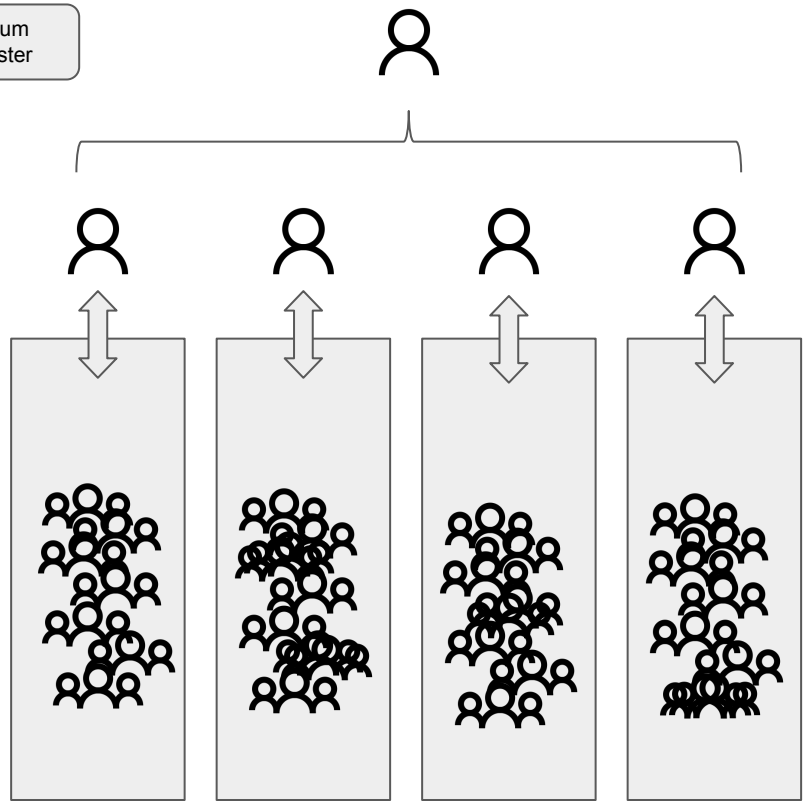


My Initial Understanding of the program.

More Vertical.
PM ⇒ SM

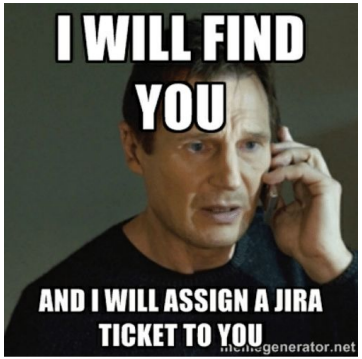
The Big Bank Story

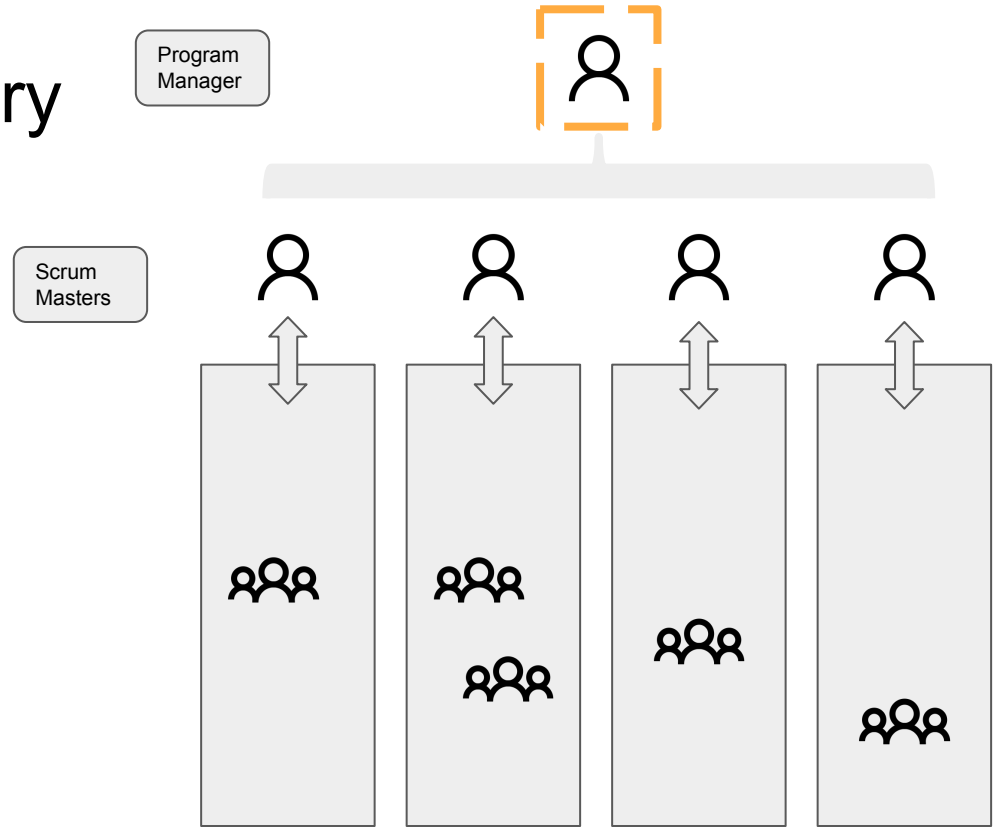
Two Pizza Rule!



The Big Bank Story

SoS run by Program Manager (Status update)





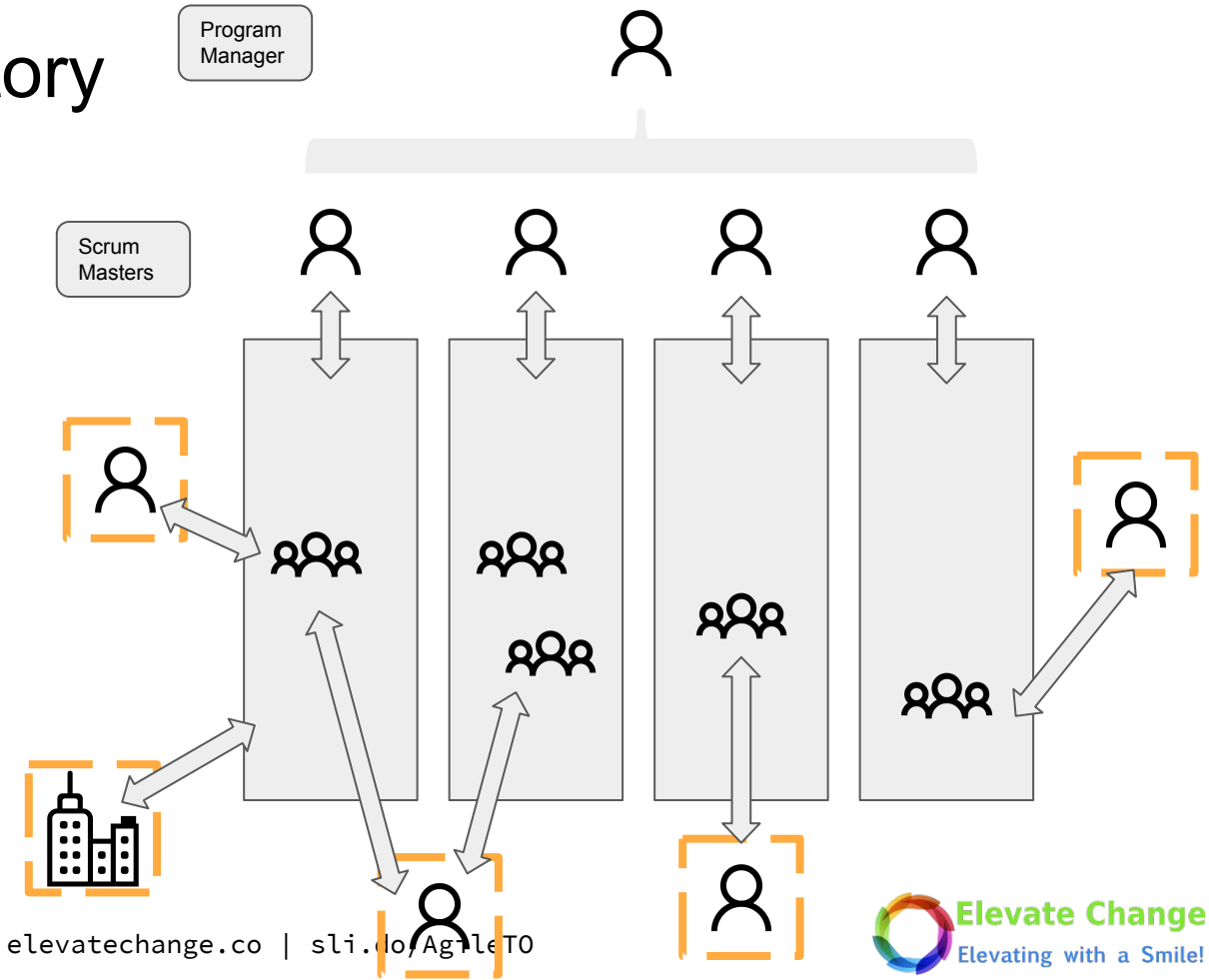
The Big Bank Story

Middle Managers heavily involved

Rely on Middle Managers a lot, not much self empowerment

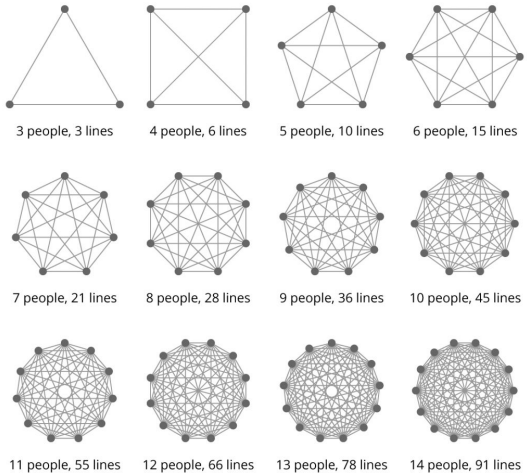
Middle Managers take part in Retro and take action items

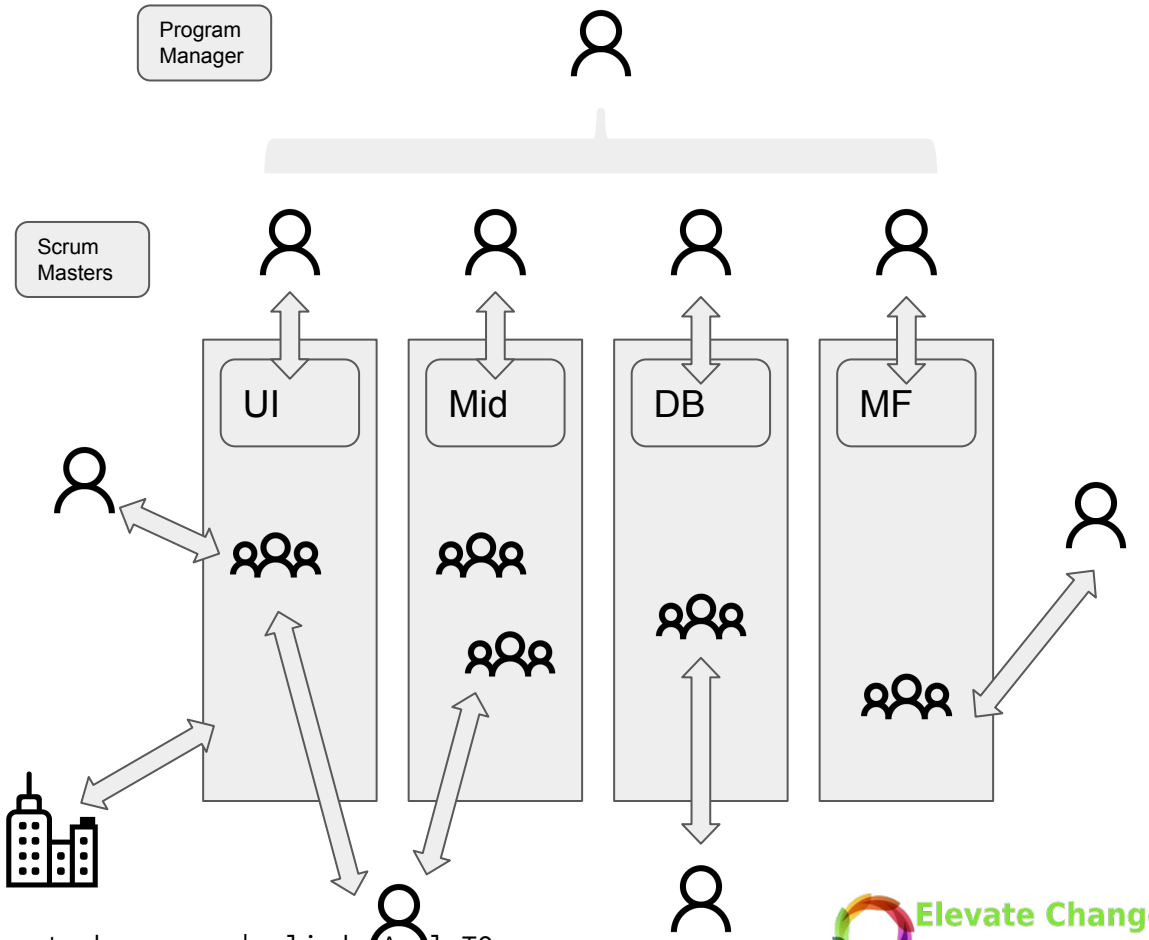
They tell what others have to improve on!



Communication

Complexity increases at the order of n^2 with any addition to the system.





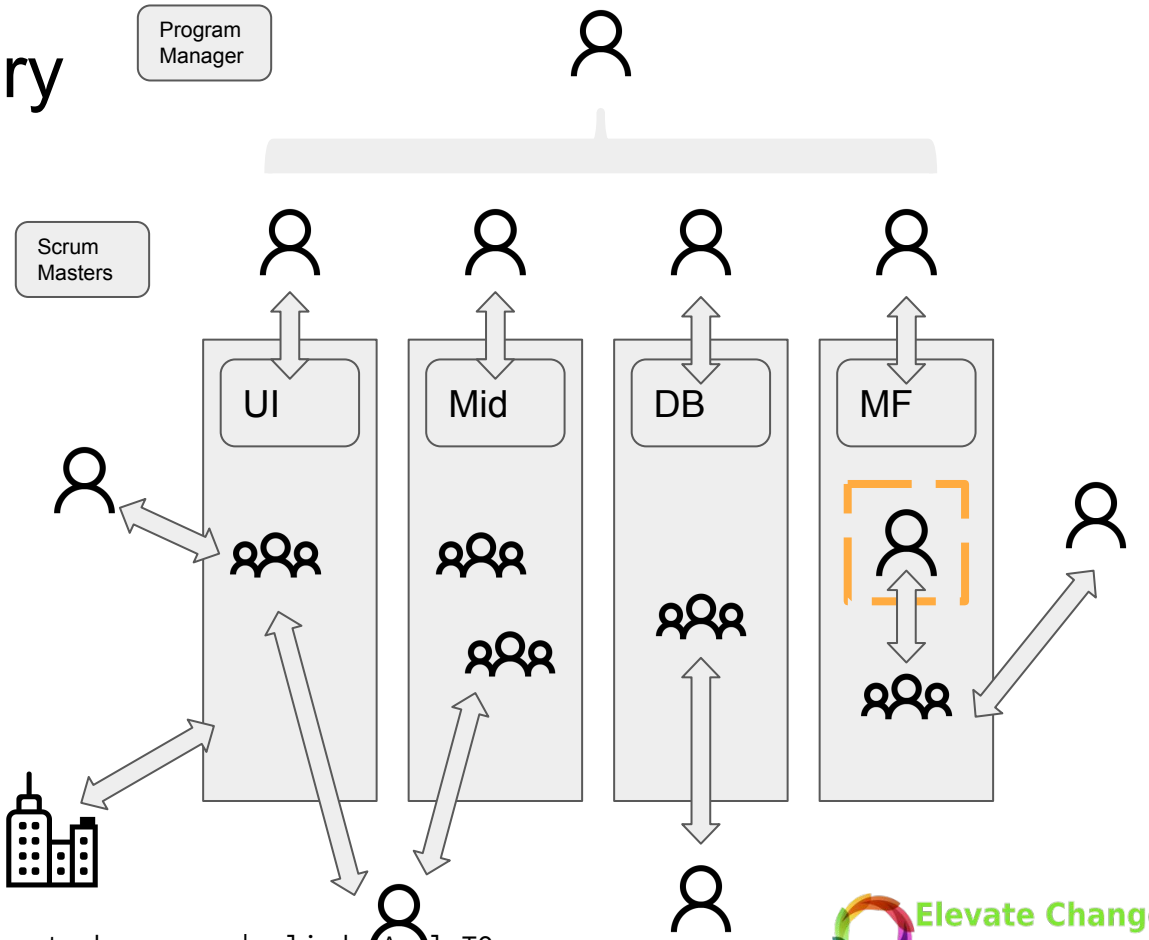
The Big Bank Story

Communication, it's not all that!

MainFrame One man Show

Agile in Budgeting land

Move to Product Model

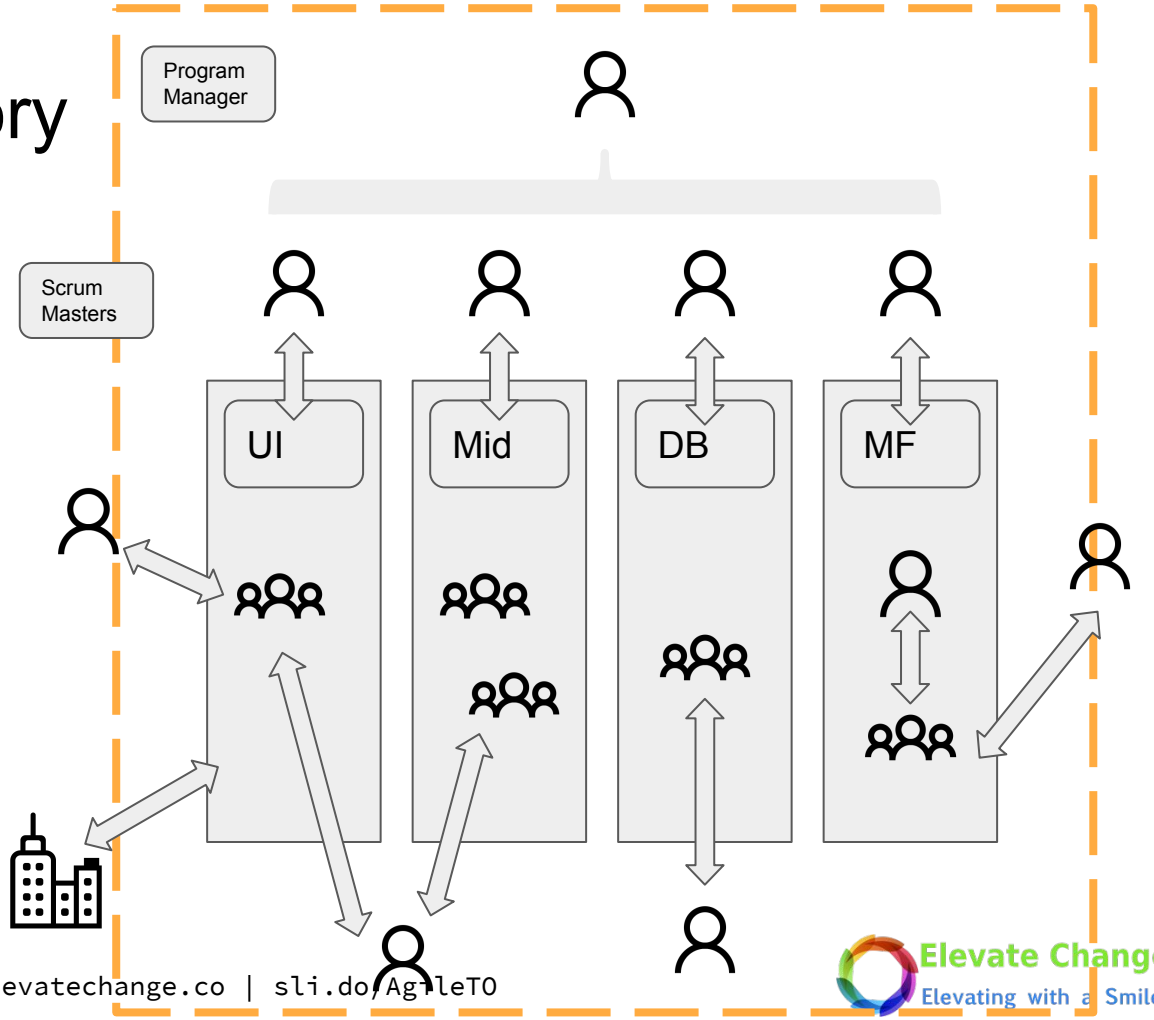


The Big Bank Story

Chief Product Owner, Duh!

Decides amongst the Product Owners

We never stop working on “things” it is a product after all



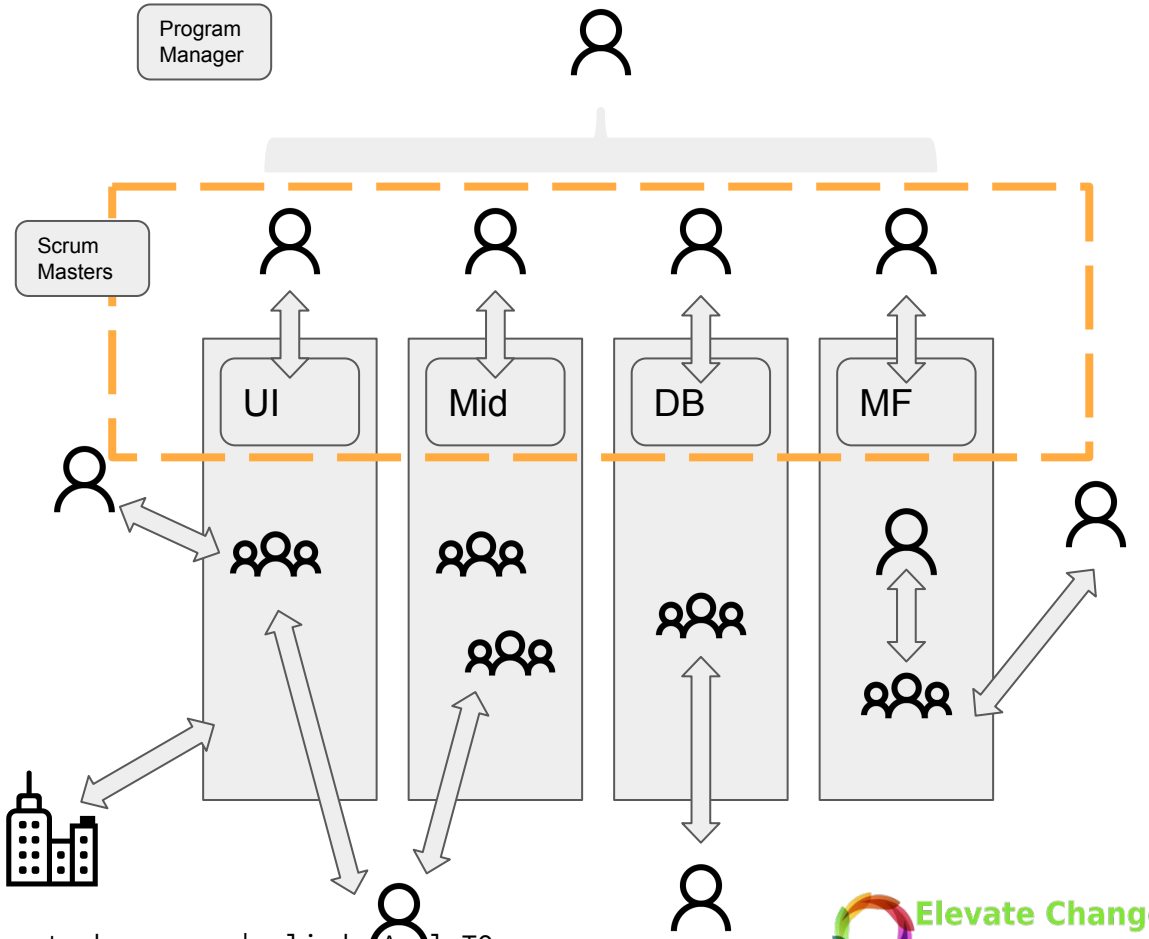
Let's do Kanban!

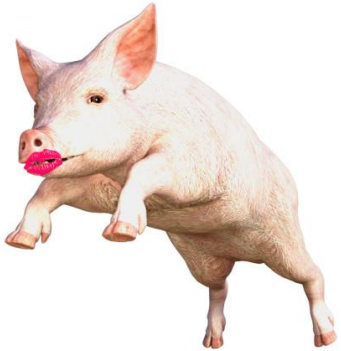
Give up, Kanban is a gentle approach to change

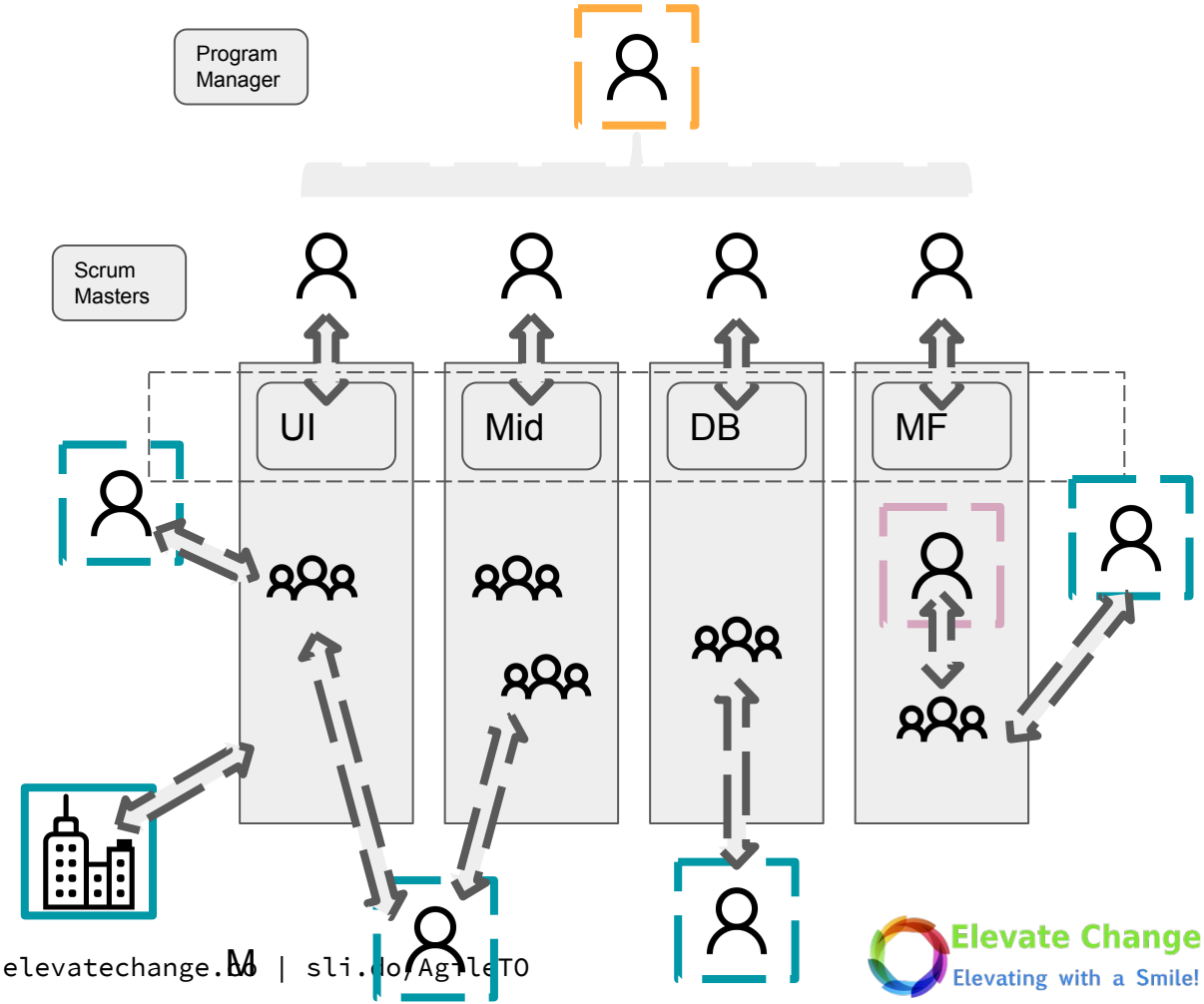
Start from where you are!

It's a flow, it's not fit for Scrum

Path of no resistance.



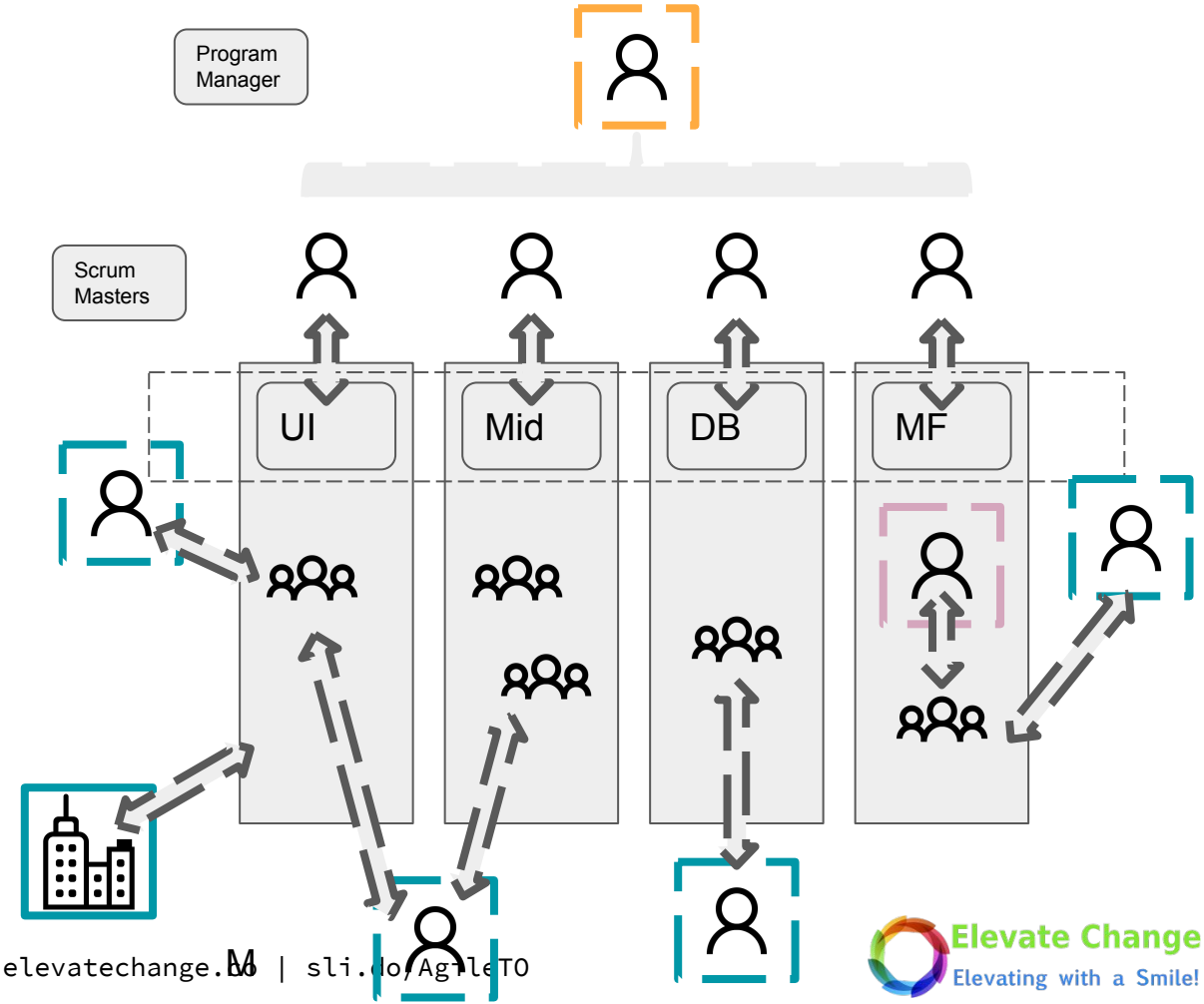



Program Manager
Scrum Masters
UI
Mid
DB
MF

Wait Still
...

Middle Managers still not agree need to change

Old habits from Scrum days (doesn't matter which framework)



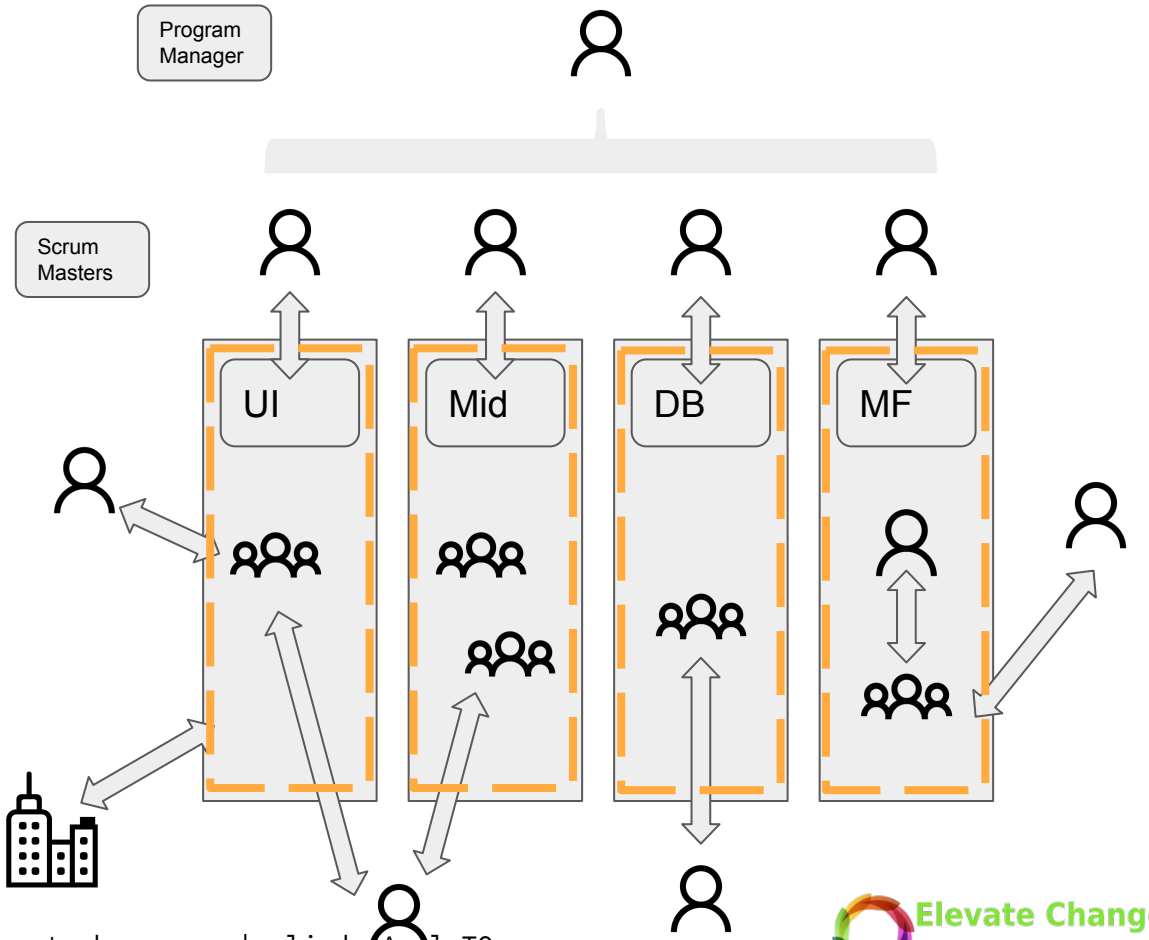
Result

Locally looking at the flows.

We're locally optimizing

Relying on middle managers.

Making it efficient rather than effective.



What Happened at Last?

No more transformations!

Was it the silos?

Was it the middle managers?

Was it the Scrum or Kanban for them?

No Transformation Director left!

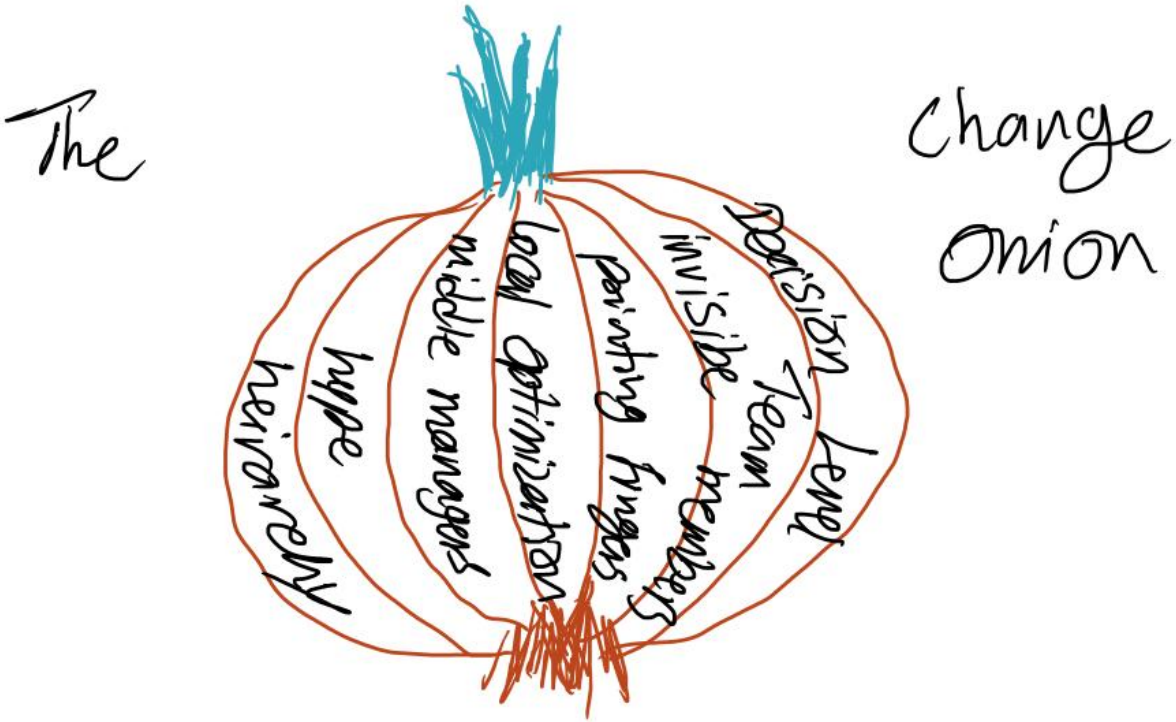
Many Lessons to Learn

Prioritize the followings over introducing Kanban or Scrum

- Becoming productive over following the hype
- Breaking the Silos
- Culture of Blame, Finger Pointing
- Locally Optimizing, thinking about your immediate gain v.s. the system
- Encourage Bravery
  - Willingness to address the root causes

Let's Talk about The Change Onion.

How Would you Take a Bite?



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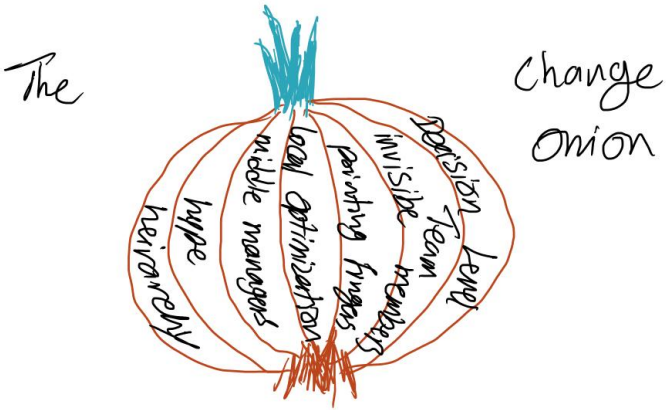
What Did We Talk About?

1. Experiences, observations and learning on Agile Transformations
2. Failures and Patterns
3. The Change Onion



Any Questions?

- **Will be glad to see you more!**
  a. **LinkedIn /in/sheidaei**
  b. **Twitter @sheidaei**
  c. **Website shahin.sheidaei.com**
  d. **Email shahin@sheidaei.com**

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Thanks

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