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Agile Valuable For Control & Ownership

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ABSTRACT: "All day long we hear how great agile is that his, and how great agile is at that. **agile-agile, agile!"** That‟s what it‟s felt like in any IT organization for the past few years. The title of this paper reflects the issue of separation of ownership and control. In this article, we focused on a broad range of cornerstone issues and ways to improve with agile methodologies.

We have managed software teams and established organization governance as part of program life cycle implementation. The organization‟s open to new things, but very pragmatic, like most of you. If it shows value and potential improvement, we‟re in. If not, it goes into the back seat. Leading software implementation governance with keeping ownership and control means you have to do what‟s needed and don‟t have time for much else.

Keywords: *Agile Methods IT Governance; Agile Governance; Return on Investment;*

1. INTRODUCTION

The goal of Corporate IT governance is to institute chains of accountability, expert, and socialization to enable people in support of the overall IT enterprise goals and strategy. We do this by harmonizing risk versus ROI (Return on Investment) by establishing in place effective processes and practices, defining the direction and goals for the IT functions, and defining the roles which people play within and with the functions. Implementation governance is an important subprocess of Corporate IT governance, the limitation of which covers the directing of software and system development projects. The focus of this article is on practices which support agile development governance.

Traditional governance often focuses on command-and-control strategies which strive to manage and direct development project teams in an explicit manner. Although this is a valid and effective strategy in some situations, for many organizations this approach is akin to herding cats – you'll put a lot of work into the governance effort but achieve very little in practice. Lean governance focuses on collaborative strategies that strive to enable and motivate team members implicitly. For example, the traditional approach to coding guidelines would be to create them and then enforce their usage through formal inspections. The lean approach would be to write the guidelines collaboratively with your programmers, explain why it is important for everyone to adopt the guidelines, and then provide tooling and support to make it as easy as possible for developers to follow those guidelines. This lean governance approach is akin to leading cats; if you grab a piece of raw fish, cats will follow you wherever you want to go.

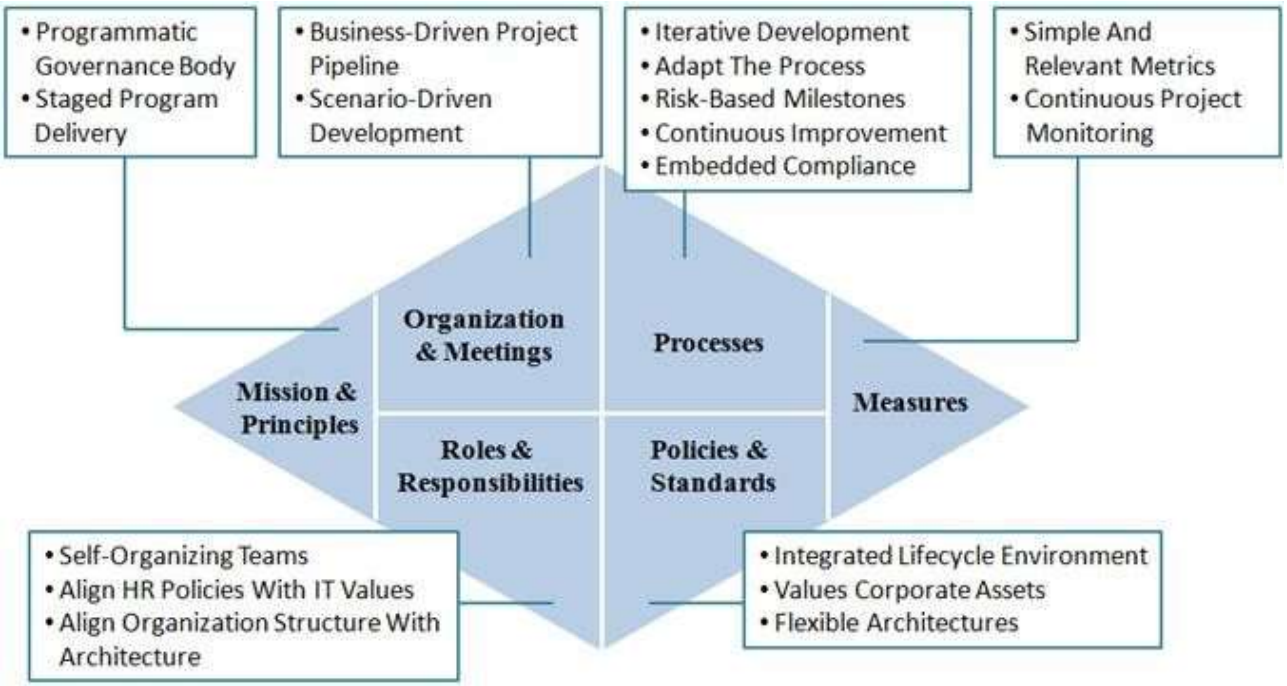

Fig 1: Characteristics of Lean approach

2. Motivation of the study

There are many great tools and practice that agile bringing to the table, but to us, was wondering what makes the significant difference in the „agile vs. tradition debate"? Here are top 5 picks to improve corporate governance with keeping an eye on ownership and controlling the overall big picture of the organization.

3. Review of Literature

Nick Robinson described the role in IT governance of functions such as value creation, value delivery, value preservation, resource management, performance management, and oversight. Asif Qumer highlighted the critical aspect of IT governance, with the objective of defining an unaddressed aspect of agile governance, by the application of an iterative, inductive, instantaneous analysis and emergent interpretation of appropriate data-grounded conceptual categories of IT governance. An effective agile governance approach will facilitate the achievement of desired discipline, rationale, business value, improved performance, monitoring, as well as control of large agile software development environments by aligning business goals and agile software development goals.

4. TOP 5 PICKS

4.1. Agile Delivers features sooner

As we can see in the picture below, the project using the waterfall method completes in December, when the business benefits start. With the agile approach, the benefits of working software are delivered iteratively, multiplying the benefit value in advance of December. If we have been in IT a while, its understands that projects get canceled, often before anything is delivered. In the agile world, using the picture below, at least the most important features are already in production and useful, even if the project is canceled halfway through.

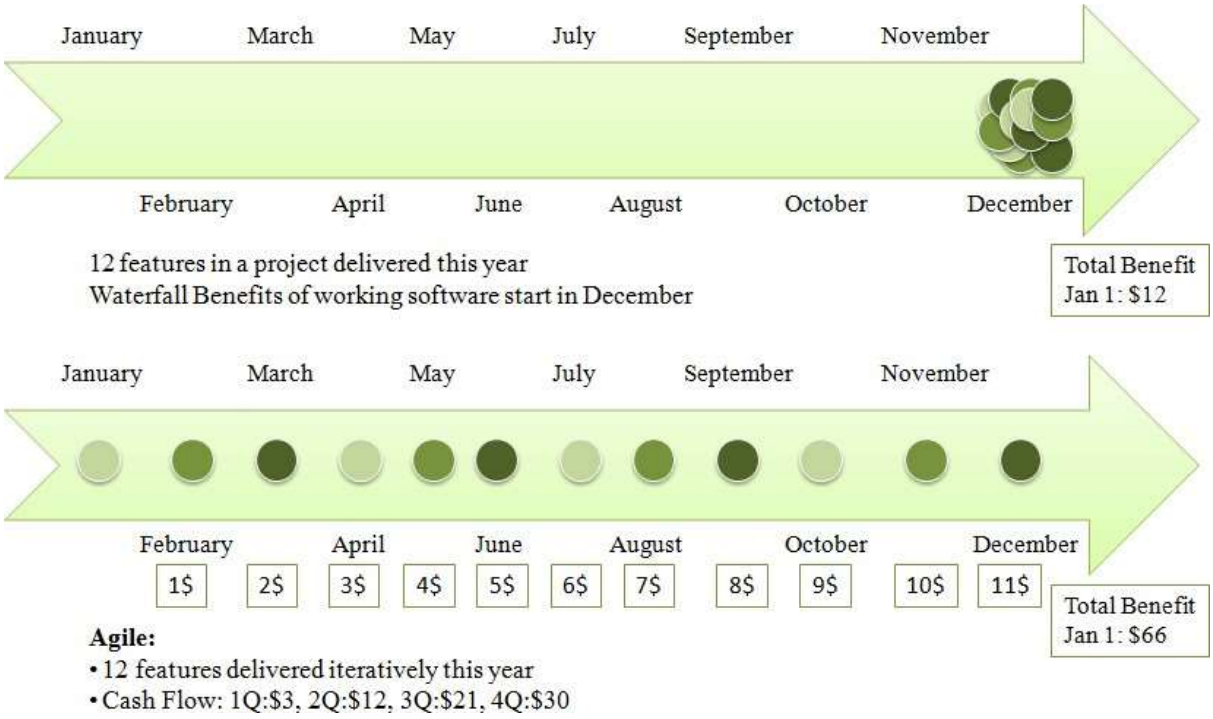

Fig 2: Total Benefit obtained implementing agile compared with waterfall

4.2. With Agile, team working on what's important, first and encouraging change.

Few of IT have come across a project that did not have any changes. Throughout an agile project, the business and IT groups work together to continuously „groom the Backlog" The Backlog is the main artifact which tracks all the features and deliverables of the project official list of user stories. "Grooming the Backlog" Refers continually reviewing and altering the Backlog of additions, cancelations, and re-prioritization. As time goes on in any software project, changes should be done, new ideas, features canceled, or priorities shift. With agile, we continuously reexamine the backlog for this. With this approach, in Waterfall, once you sign off on the RT, it can take a lot of extra effort for changes.

4.3. Predicting the future

Some of the best challenges in software development include sizing projects accurately and understanding how much can get done by when. With experience, leaders get better at this. Agile differentiates by using a simple point system for each user story, where we can capture how long features will take to complete. With agile reporting and a Burnup Chart, we can see the progress of the following:

- How much work is completed (solid red line)
- Future User story completion trend (dotted red line)
- Known Backlog (solid blue line, the point totals for all user stories)
- Expected Backlog growth, based on history (dotted blue line)

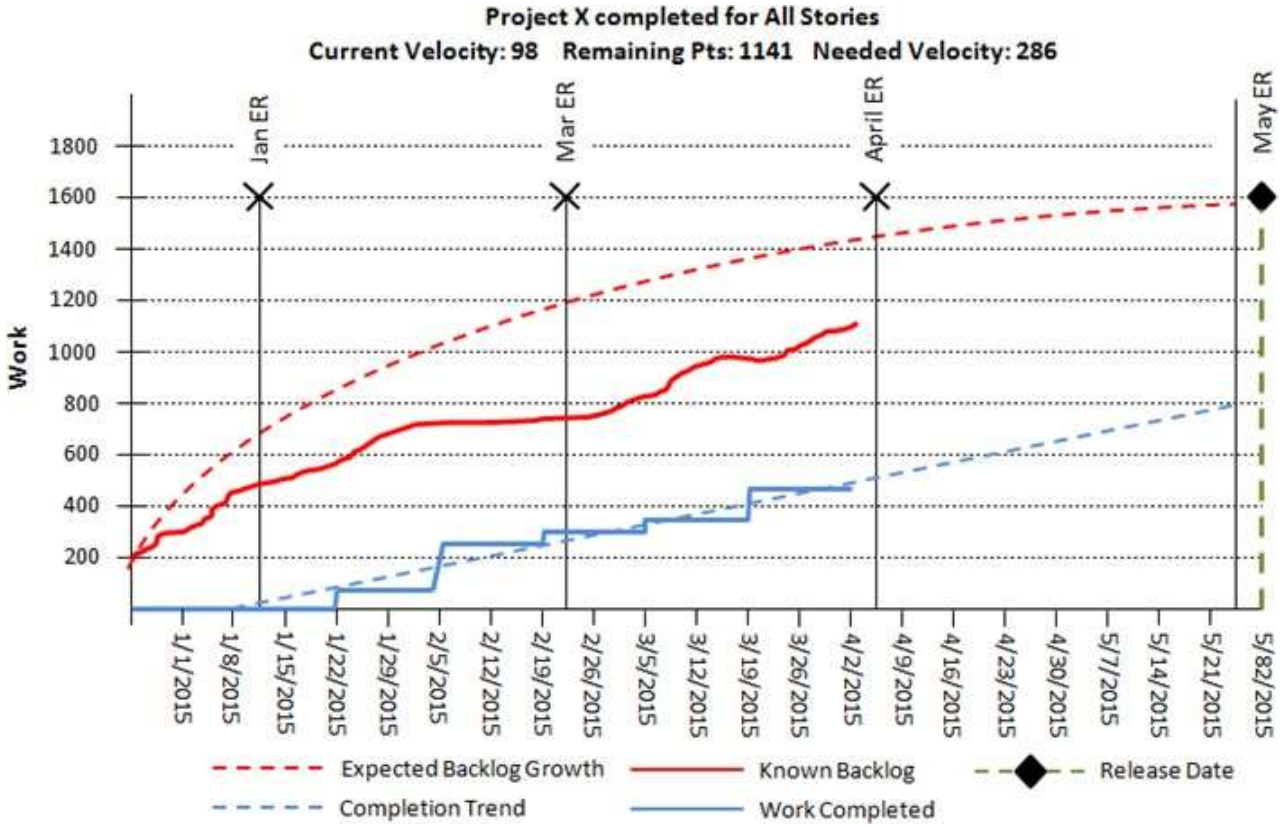

Fig 3: Project completed for User Stories

With this information, we can see how much work is expected to get completed in the future, at virtually any point in time. When is a date required, you can see how much work will be done by that day and understand which features will get completed. It also shows the impact of new ideas that come in over time. With the example chart below, if the project to be completed by the May 31 enterprises release (ER), we can see now there is a gap, but with this information, you have choices:

- If we stop adding new features now, we have a 200-point story gap?
- Are those last user stories important or can we live without those features?
- Do we need to drop other features?
- Can we add more help to the delivery Team or reduce other projects from key personnel?
- Can we add another release after May ER?

The reports give realistic, time-tested, data to support important decisions needed early and often during project lifecycles.

4.4. Increases Quality

With Agile, at the end of every 2 weeks" iteration, the delivery team provides a demo of what is done. This continuous feedback loop provides a quicker response to we will know it when we see it and enables early adjustments when required. Plus, this valuable feedback can have an impact on future work. This level of collaboration will deliver improved results than the business partners seeing during UAT on a waterfall project.

4.5. Better Morale

Companies and teams who have successfully adopted agile practices report dramatically improved morale. Employees describe pride in delivering software more often, with improved quality, as well as the changing nature of their role. More collaboration directly with the business leads to increased ownership. They appreciate perspective gained from working with cross-functional teams. Instead of a silo situation.as week as the notable progress each day and delivering business value demonstrated in every iteration.

5. CONCLUSION

Some projects won‟t be ideal for agile and changing a company to be more like the newer, smaller technology companies will take time. Many more examples tools and techniques are part of the agile practices. All in all, it seems pretty simple to me, though, agile show greater value.

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