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Sync All of Your Agile Gears
Achieve Enterprise Business Agility

For years, big companies have had the advantage in the marketplace. Sheer size meant reach and resources that smaller companies couldn't match. So big companies ate small companies. But then technology leveled the playing field and gave smaller companies the means to outpace and outperform larger companies. The laws of the competitive jungle were changing. Fast, agile, small companies could compete with or even eat big, lumbering companies. Agility had a lot to do with that.

Over the past decade, teams and departments within organizations have adopted the Agile model—including principles, processes and tools. Data shows that Agile software development teams are bringing products to market 30-75% faster—certainly qualifying as game changing speed.

But turning out products faster doesn't necessarily eliminate redundancy or waste. It doesn't guarantee the right outcome. It doesn't automatically align demand with capacity. And it doesn't account for feedback from customers, including downstream correction and recovery.

Teams can grow frustrated when they feel like they're working at an extremely high rate, but somehow, they're missing the mark—whatever "the mark" is.

In addition to software development teams, Agile principles have been adopted in other areas of the organization, such as:

1 Product Management and Marketing, which has played a key role in bringing the customer voice to DevOps

2 Functional areas like Legal, Finance, HR and Operations, which has enabled companies to harness important organizational knowledge

These Agile programs in different areas of the organization are not exactly siloed; some software development teams are cross-functional and multidisciplinary. But they're not truly coordinated and unified, either. This requires the next level in business agility: moving to Enterprise Business Agility.

The good news is that if your organization has adopted agility principles for any teams and departments, you already have an important foundation to move forward with Enterprise Business Agility. Each of these Agile teams is like a gear, creating momentum within its function. Synchronizing these gears is necessary to propel the whole organization forward. This is the goal of Enterprise Business Agility.

Moving to enterprise level agility requires that team-level agility must become more strategic. Let's look at two ways that your organization can move team-based agility in a more strategic direction.

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## 1   MOVING FROM COMMAND AND CONTROL TO SHARED VISION

An Agile team is synonymous with an intelligent workforce. It devalues the talents of an Agile team to treat them like simply executors of tasks. Which is why strategy shouldn't be mandated through a top-down command and control approach. At the team level, strategy must become a shared vision that helps inform decisions and action. Firmly establishing a sense of ownership in the corporate strategy creates what we call an uplifting mindset. This is vital to retaining and motivating an intelligent workforce.

2   FOCUSING DELIVERABLES FROM OUTPUT TO OUTCOMES

Today, team-level agility is focused on output, which may be more connected to volume (speed) than value. When strategy is incorporated into agility frameworks, then the delivery focus transitions from output to strategy-based outcomes. Regardless of your organization's particular strategy, there is an umbrella requirement in Enterprise Business Agility that everything starts with customer value and ties back to ensuring value delivery as the outcome.

It's not uncommon for teams to be given competing business priorities. If outcomes are in question, it leads to frustration and even censure. Leadership sees failure and may respond by changing strategies, without necessarily resolving the underlying problem of competing priorities. It's a vicious cycle that can offset gains in productivity from Agile processes.

The seven pillars of The Enterprise Agility Model help organizations address and correct these umbrella problems. Moving away from command and control to leadership and culture, which we discussed earlier, is actually one of the pillars. Here are a couple of other pillar examples:
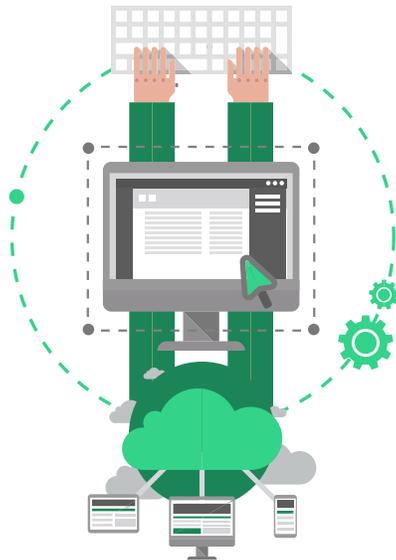
LEAN PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT:

This pillar addresses aligning demand—based on the enterprise-level strategy—with the capacity of your team. Too often, organizations don't have a good handle on the capacity required to develop products and move them into the marketplace for consumption. Lean Portfolio Management is focused on understanding the demand queue and what's required to meet that demand.

MAKING CHANGES STICK:

This pillar acknowledges that any and all changes can be transitory. The new behaviors introduced with Enterprise Business Agility need to be ingrained in the DNA of the organization. Some of this is the human element: keeping valued talent. Then there are process changes: building the internal mechanisms to continue to promote change that propels things forward.

There are many new concepts, processes and tools that come with Enterprise Business Agility. For example:

1 Value Stream Management, which links workflows in streams across pillars and also links associated toolchains; the result is a broader visibility and the ability to implement improvements in a coordinated manner

2 Value-Driven Measurement—particularly the use of real time surveys—guides you in adjusting your efforts; because in the agile model, anything that can't be measured, can't be changed

3 Using what we call "radars" to help assess where you are in the Business Agility journey—where you're weak or strong and where you should focus your efforts to keep moving forward; also, radars are used to help give you a precise picture on your ROI

Enterprise Business Agility is often visualized as a journey map with gears—because all of these gears need to move together in order to achieve these bigger picture results. We don't want to overemphasize the idea of a map, however. That suggests following a predetermined pattern. If anything, think of Enterprise Business Agility as a new part of the journey you've already been on with agility programs at the team level. When you look at the pillars, it's generally easy to see where you are today, and which pillars you need to focus on.

THE JOURNEY TO ENTERPRISE BUSINESS AGILITY

Team Agility
- Agile Adoption (Scrum, Kanban)
- Cross-Functional Teams
- Agile Tools and Workspace

Org Agility
- Lean Portfolio Mgmt.
- Value Stream Structure
- Lean Product Maturity

Enterprise Business Agility
- Anticipate Customer Needs
- Disrupt Before Being Disrupted
- Sustain a Learning Culture

Team of Teams Agility
- Scaling Agile
- Agile Product Delivery
- Value Stream Management
- Leadership & Culture

Talent Development, Innovation, & Operational Agility
- Customer Seat at the Table
- Talent Development, HR Transformation
- Ops, Finance, Legal, Audit, Sales/Mktg

Measure What Matters | Team Agility (Outcomes, Maturity & Performance) **| Enterprise Agility** (Flow, Value, Quality)
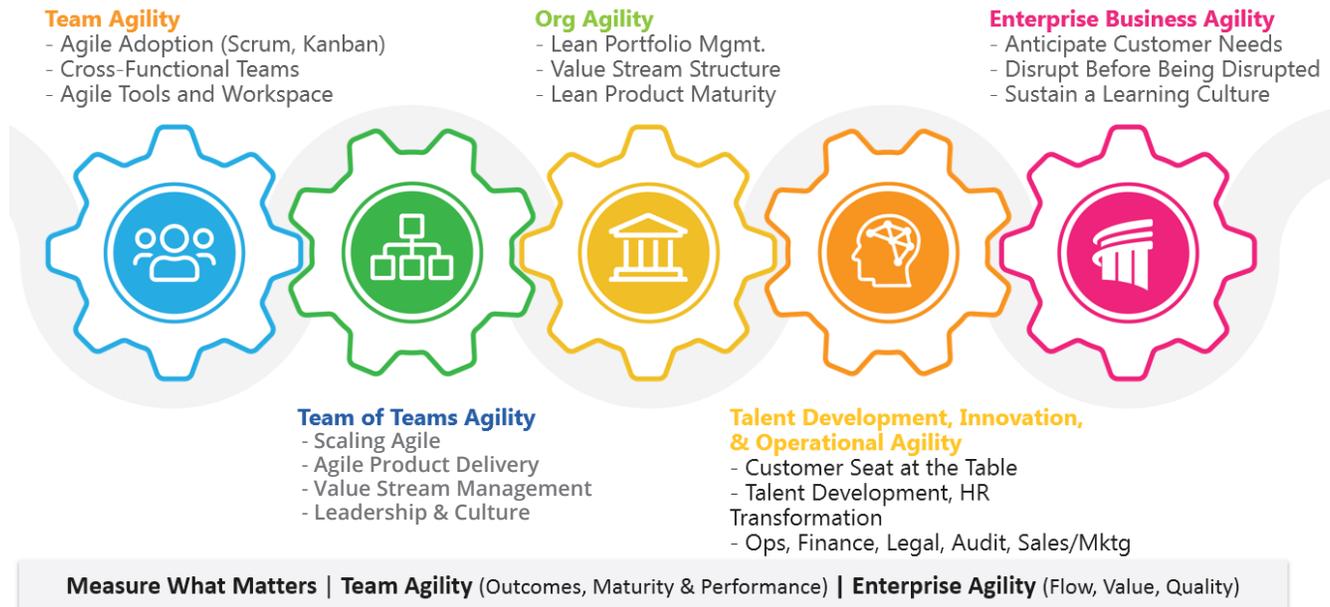
Figure 1. The enterprise business agility is an organizational journey that often starts with a team and builds from there. The principles of Agile provide the foundation that enables individuals and organizations to synch. Although it starts organically many times, scaling it to the Enterprise requires more structure, advanced tools, leadership, and expert guidance.

About Digital.ai

Digital.ai enables enterprises to focus on outcomes instead of outputs, create greater business value faster, and deliver secure digital experiences their customers trust. The Digital.ai Value Stream Platform seamlessly integrates all the disparate tools and processes across the various value streams, uses data and AI/ML to create connective tissue between them, and provides the real-time, contextual insights required to drive and sustain successful digital transformation. With Digital.ai, enterprises have the visibility they've been seeking to deliver value, drive growth, increase profitability, reduce security risk, and improve customer experience. **Learn more at digital.ai**