

Why Isn't Your Agile Transformation Delivering the Expected ROI?...

and how to change that!



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01

Lack of Real Business Goals

- Agile for the sake of agile isn't worth the investment. Your transformation should have tangible business goals.
- There are times with virtually all transformations where a unifying goal is needed to move the transformation past obstacles such as necessary culture change.
- Without business goals the glue that binds execution and strategy together is lost.



Try goals like this

Reduce Time to Market by

50%

Decrease Lead Time by

45%

Reduce Defects by

25%

Lack of Leadership Support & Engagement



- Culture change is typically driven by executives
- Transformations don't work without executive support, engagement, and a willingness to change your own practices
- Too often executives assign a transformation to someone and then disengage, asking for regular updates
- The execution layer sees this and reacts accordingly

Executives are asking execution to change the way they work

Execution folks are looking at the executive suite to see how important the initiative is..

Establish your commitment to a transformation goal early...make participation visible...provide public support at critical junctures

Be prepared to spend some political capital...if you want success

03

Agile as Dogma

- Too many agile transformation resources try to implement agile as a rigid framework that must be followed to the letter
- This is an indicator of inexperience and reflects a command and control project management mindset
- Rigid implementations alienate and frustrate execution folks...especially when they know a practice doesn't make sense for them



Understand that every organization and set of circumstances are unique. This demands flexibility and adjustments or tweaks. If someone is preaching the “agile bible” to you, “run like the wind”. It’s not going to work.

04 Big Bang Approach

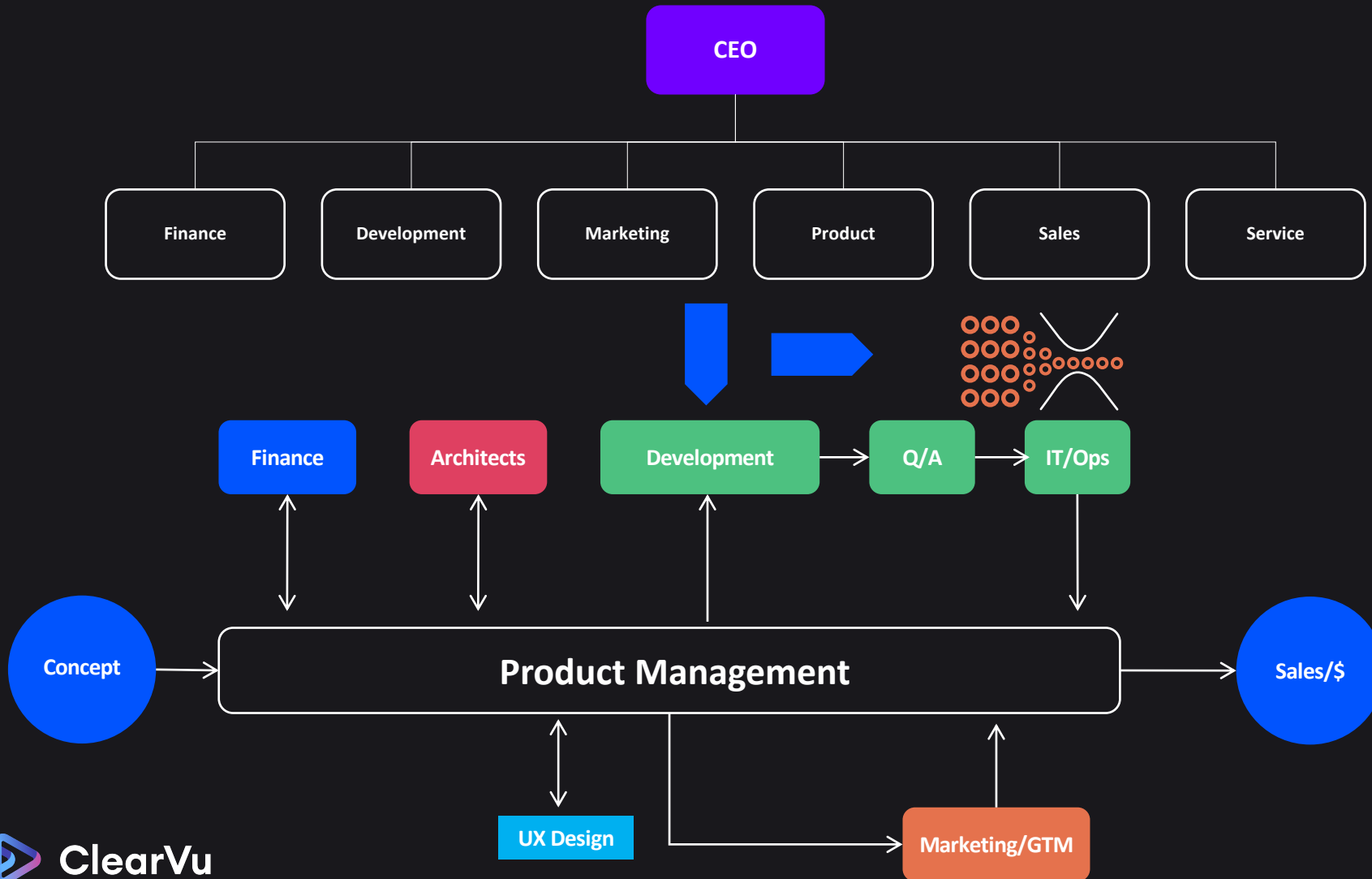
- Executives too often choose “big bang” approaches to transformations because it feels good & there’s lots of activity but...risk of failure is high
 - “Watermelon” projects
 - Too much work started
 - Lacks necessary depth -> high backslide risk
 - Missed opportunity to incorporate key learnings
 - Inefficient up front training
 - Over spending
 - Cultural decay



It is much more effective to start with pilots in key areas, learn, apply those learnings and expand.

Its much less expensive and way more effective.

Q5 Functional Transformations?



~~Implementing
agile process
segment or
functional
Development~~

More effective: An
E2E ecosystem
view...targeting
improvements at
bottlenecks

06

Relying on “Push” Strategies over “Pull”

- Using “Push Strategies” to gain acceptance (demanding, begging, convincing) have limited effectiveness
- Overemphasis on push strategies are a drain on resources
- Can cause resentment and impact culture



If you are truly committed to achieving your transformation goals:

- 1) Realign your incentives to elicit the behaviors needed (i.e. bonuses on Lead Time improvement or increased net income)
- 2) Connect your key executive stakeholders to the process by giving them on demand access to the key decision making summary data they need in a form factor they use already
- 3) Drive adoption via leveraging the momentum of early successes

07

Not Committing to Real Change

- Successful agile transformations mean real change
- Stand ups, chapters, guilds, 2 pizza teams, changing some job titles doesn't make your organization agile. It's "lipstick agile".
- Just doing these "easy bits" of agile and avoiding real change won't deliver the results you are seeking
- The more ambitious the goals, the greater the change that will be necessary



Communicate it up front and clearly that based on the goal(s), real change in how we work is going to occur.

Executives must publicly demonstrate that they are changing their behaviors as well. This is not "set & forget".

Ask questions and otherwise engage to the extent that execution sees you adjusting how you work.

08 Lack of Work Visibility

- Can you see the status, risks, and time compliance of the work across your organization...when you need it?
- What about your key decision making KPI's?
- How are you supposed to make key decisions in a reasonable timeframe if getting that information requires the organization to redirect scarce resources, pull the data, collate it, put in in report form and present it to you.



Smart executives want to see the status of work important to them without depending on an organization to redirect precious resources to collect, collate & present it. There are many options for this, not the least of which is a portfolio kanban view that supports execution but also your summary data needs.

09

Hiring Big Name Consultancies For Agile

- For agility, big name consultancies offer a name, great marketing, green implementation staff, cookie cutter training decks, expensive bills, and lots of bad advice.
- It's a model mismatch



Save yourself the pain and excess expense. Hire a agile transformation specialist. Someone who will be there when it gets difficult and who has actually driven real results.

10 Bad Story Writing

- How can we accurately size upcoming work without well written acceptance criteria that set scope?
- Good story writing is a key foundational component of successful agility and progress toward your improvement goal(s)
- If you haven't spent sufficient time training your folks on good story writing, you are leaving significant improvement potential behind



Understand that story writing is the grease for your processes...especially if you have a software component. Done correctly good stories speed up backlog refinement, captures more edge cases and previously missed use cases, create a “to-do” list for your developers (less rework), become the test plan for QA, and are the check off list for Demos/Showcases. Its also a great place to start a transformation...

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/story-points-stepping-lightly-abyss-scott-yankton-fgw1e/>

11 Bad Tool Sets

- Is your toolset limiting the progress you can make?
- Does it reinforce the same status quo that's the problem?
- If so, why fight replacing or augmenting it?



It's essential to be open to replacing, expanding, or integrating to tooling that addresses the gaps and ultimately facilitates transformation success. The key here is to ask yourself, is the tool limiting my ability to create a much more efficient and effective organization?



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