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An Introduction to SAFe Lean Portfolio Management

Your Guides:

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Part I:
Introduction

Introductions

- Take 5 Minutes

- Turn to a Person Near You

- Introduce Yourself

- Business Cards

Agenda

- Introduce Lean Portfolio Management
- Map out first steps to building a foundation for LPM
- Identify future improvement steps for implementing LPM in your strategic processes
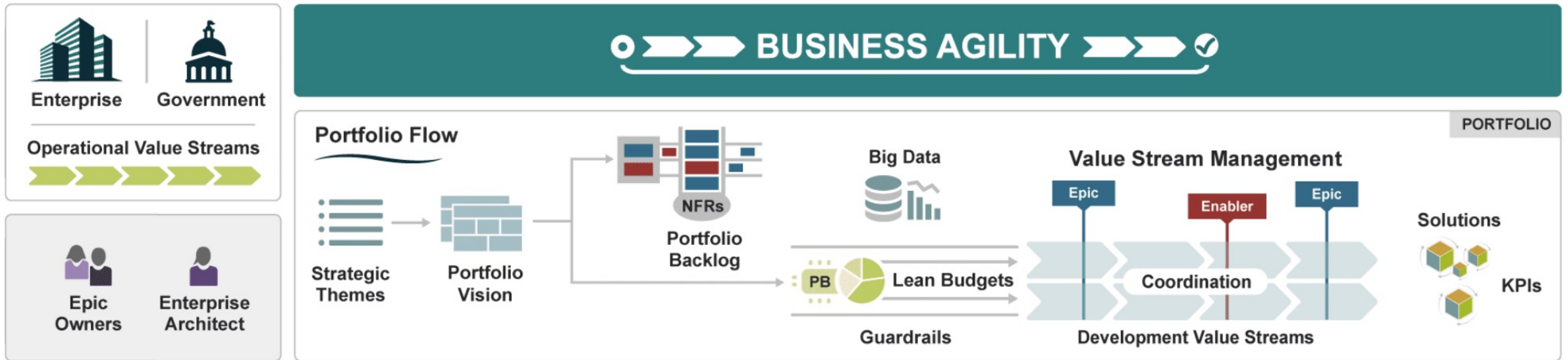
What is Lean Portfolio Management?

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Agile is an Organizational Change

• To get the best Agile conversion possible we must change not only the how the teams work, but also the entire organization. If we only change part of the organization, we will only get a small part of the value Agile promises.

The Portfolio Level of SAFe

Benefits of LPM

- Visibility into all work taking place in the Portfolio

- Transparency of status of all work, from User Stories to Epics

- Coordination of dependencies across the organization

- Key stakeholders verify planned work meets with company strategic direction

- Constant economic prioritization of work ensures that priority issues always move to the top

- Regular review and reprioritization of strategic work eliminates waste and improves enterprise agility

- Work intake is matched to capacity, thus increasing focus and speeding delivery of value

- Rolling wave planning enables the company to shift direction nimbly in an ever-shifting market

The First Steps to Implement LPM

Initial Steps to Implement LPM

The first steps we need to accomplish are:

- Set up the Lean-Agile Center of Excellence(LACE)
- Identify other leaders for the Portfolio
- Start communicating early and often
- Train the Portfolio leadership

Setting up the LACE

The role of the LACE is to identify and create alignment for realigning the organization to LPM. Without the members of the LACE working together to identify the most important areas for improvement and guiding the change, the Portfolio implementation will become disorganized and incoherent.

A critical component to the LACE is having an Enterprise Agile Coach who has been through the process before.

LACE Membership

The LACE should consist of:

- Enterprise Agile Coaches

- Senior Leaders

- Champions of the change process

LACE Member Traits:

- Invested in making the change happen

- Motivated to help

- Have a positive reputation in the organization

- Have a foundational understanding of SAFe

Identify Other LPM Leaders

Organizational change of this magnitude requires that many leaders work in concert to bring the Portfolio implementation to fruition. The LACE should work with senior executives to identify the critical roles that need filled:

- **Enterprise Architect** – responsible for overall technical guidance across the Portfolio

- **Business Owners** – the chief stakeholders for the Value Streams in the Portfolio

- **Senior Leaders** – any senior executives who have a strategic understanding of the Portfolio's operations

- **Solution Portfolio Manager** – the senior executive responsible for overseeing the Portfolio and acting as a guide for the LACE

Start Communication Early

- With a change of this magnitude, people will be apprehensive. The key to help minimize angst means communicating early and often. Be transparent in the process, let people know well in advance the plans, and repeat these communications frequently.

- Reassure people on the transparency of the process and that, as things change, communications will be sent. We want no surprises.

Let Rego be your guide.

Training Leaders

In order to understand the vision and scope of the work to be undertaken, the newly identified leaders should take SAFe training classes geared toward their role in the organization.

- **Enterprise Architect** – Leading SAFe and SAFe for Architects

- **Business Owners** – Leading SAFe

- **Senior Leaders** – Leading SAFe and/or Lean Portfolio Management

- **Solution Portfolio Manager** – Leading SAFe and Lean Portfolio Management

Next Steps

Now that the Foundations are in Place…

Identify the immediate and long-term needs of the organization currently and start writing these up as Epics and Features to start the transformation process. Create a Kanban for the LACE and start implementing the work. The LACE should operate as a Scrum team and use the same ceremonies as you would expect any team to operate.

Start Mapping Portfolios

• As part of the transformation, we need to move away from independently operating silos and move to portfolios of Value Streams. This will mean mapping the flow of value within the organization.
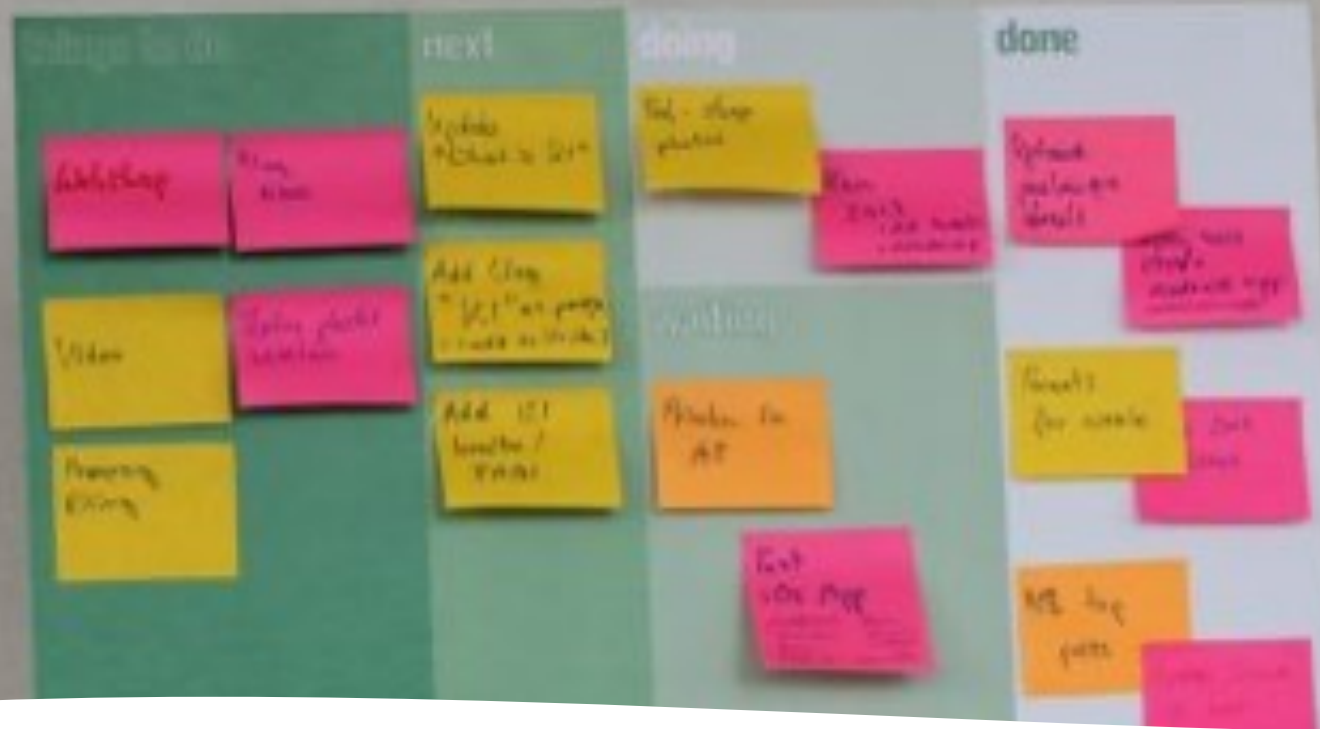
Create a Portfolio Kanban Board

• To visualize the work being completed, we need to create a Portfolio Kanban Board and then start reviewing the work we are doing currently and map it back to Epics that should be added to the Portfolio Kanban. Furthermore, meetings should be held with the stakeholders to review Epics and discuss status and whether or not to close them out.

Implementing Lean Budget Guardrails

To ensure we are getting the right balance of work in the Portfolio, we verify that we are performing exploratory work to examine ways to to stay ahead of our competition, identify new market trends, and create better customer experiences. We also balance the Portfolio work to validate that we are taking the time to build the infrastructure and do the research we need to perform to provide the best value to our customers. To perform these actions, we balance our work to include required support work, encourage innovation and risk taking, and plan for the future.

Moving to Rolling Wave Planning

• To create agility across the organization, we need to encourage realignment as the market shifts. This means moving away from a fixed annual budgeting process and shifting to Rolling Wave Planning. By focusing on funding products instead of projects, we speed the engagement of critical new work by no longer needing to get money to back it. Instead, we fund the entire product and then identify the most valuable work and push that to the top of the list. To do this, we meet twice a year to review and prioritize the Epics and realign our people based on what we identified is the immediate need for the next planning cycle

Questions?

Surveys

Please take a few moments to fill out the class survey.
Your feedback is extremely important for future events.

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