The Agile PMO

Inventor of the Agile PMO

His contribution emerges

How Napoleon Defeated the Prussians

Napoleon

- Centralized intent with decentralized execution
- Orders provide only enough detail to establish objective and purpose
- Subordinates, decide within their delegated freedom of action how best to achieve their missions.
- Promoted freedom and speed of action, and initiative, within defined constraints.

Became known as:

"Mission Control"

Defeated

The Prussian Army

- More heavily structured, centralized control
- Adherence to plan
- Chain of command
- Following orders

Often referred to as:

"Command and Control"

Fast Forward - Today's Military

From the US Military (Military Review" March-April 2013)

"Why Mission Control?"

- Command and Control (C2) and Battle Command (BC) are inadequate in describing the role of the commander and staff in today's fight.
- Reinforces the imperative of trust and collaboration with myriad partners over command and control.
- Enables a leader's ability to anticipate and effectively manage transitions.
- Creates an environment of disciplined initiative for more decentralized execution.
- Seeks adaptive teams capable of anticipating and managing transitions.
- Acknowledges that we must share risk across echelons to create opportunities."

Adopted by US Marines, 2009, and by other Elite Units, and NATO

(By the way, The Prussians, not Napolean, got the credit, because they documented it.)

What are they describing?

Running a large, multi-faceted, and dynamic situation using:

- Objectives and Purpose (definition of “Done” at the program level)
- Disciplined initiative within constraints
- Empowerment
- Collaboration and Trust
- Good information flow

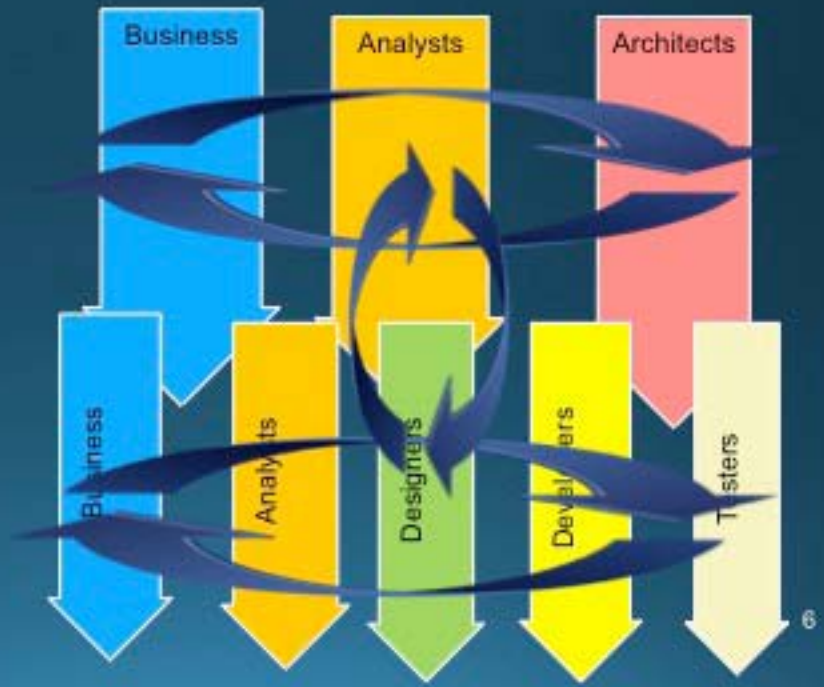
Yielding ability to adapt

- The Agile PMO

What Does this Mean for a System Delivery Program?

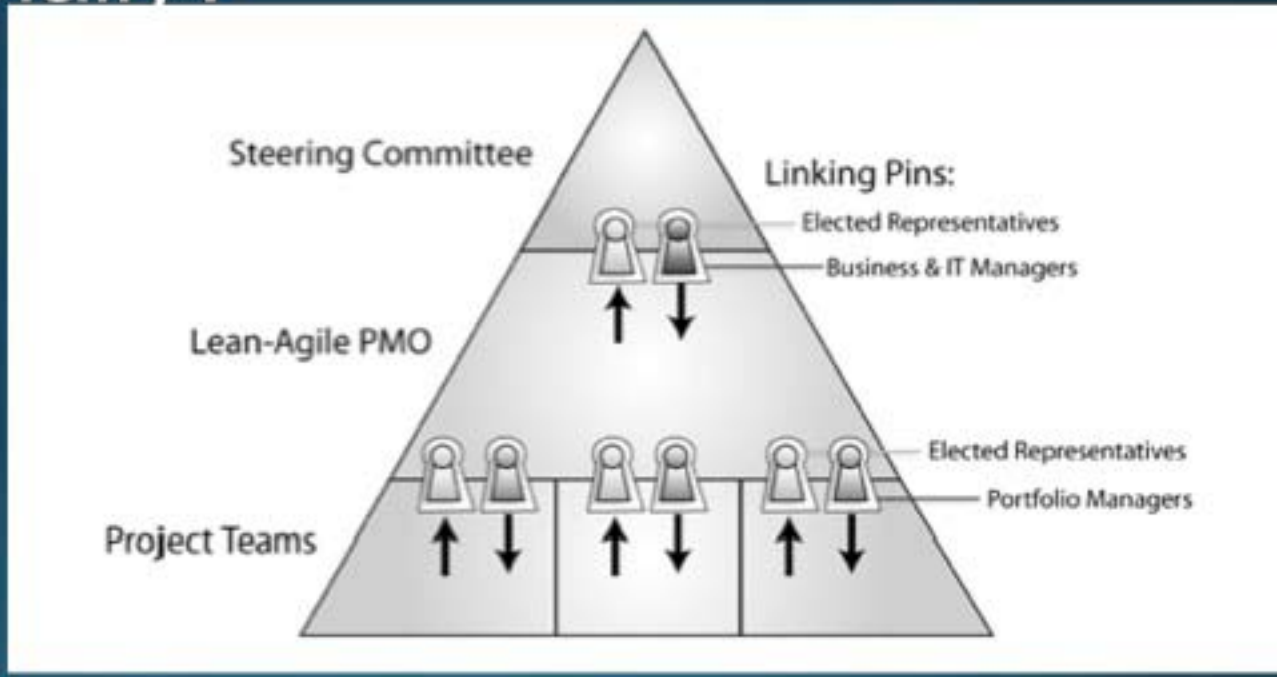
- Close Collaboration Horizontally
- And Vertically

"Information flow reflects culture… Cooperation and information flow both respond to trust." *[Westrum/Safety Science 67 (2014) 58-63*



What does that mean organizationally?

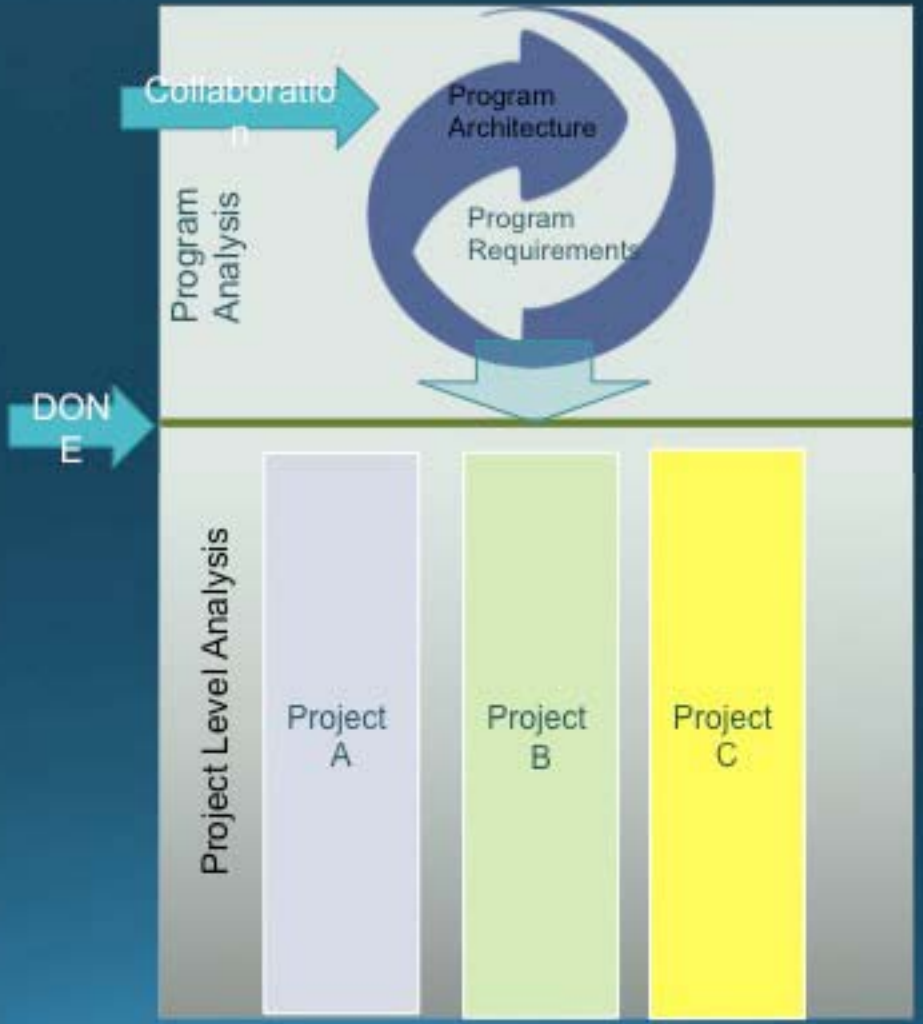
- Project leads actively participate in program analysis
- Program architects actively lead projects



Using Lean Thinking to Accelerate Agile Project Delivery, Augustine and Cueller, Cutter Consortium Agile Project Management Vol 7, Nbr 10

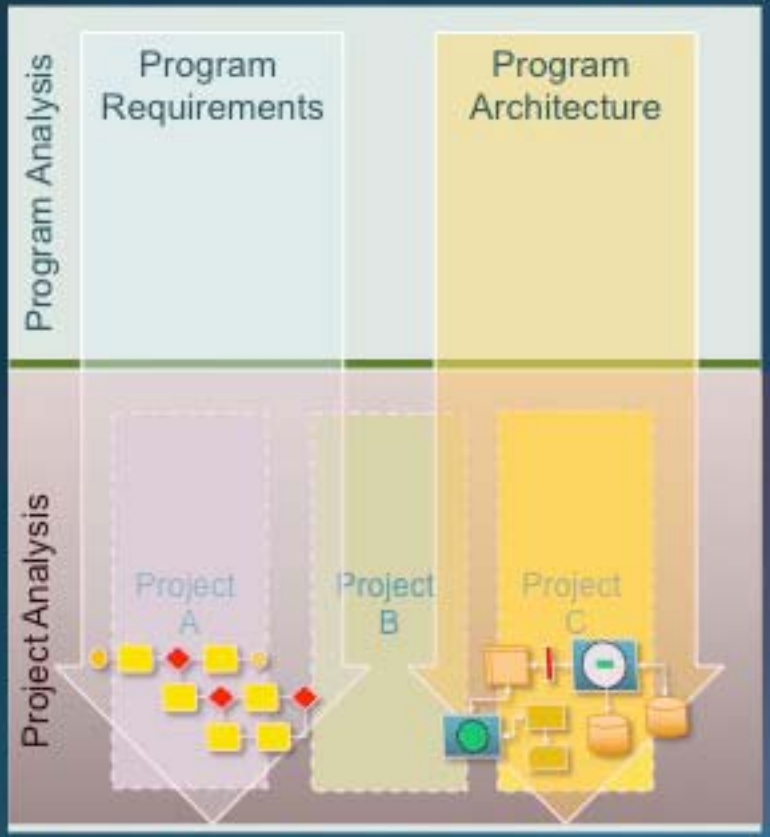
What does that mean Methodologically?

- A Clear Definition of DONE for program level Analysis
- An integrated approach to "just enough" program level requirements and architecture analysis (purpose and intent)



Not This

Going deep at the program level (Command and Control)



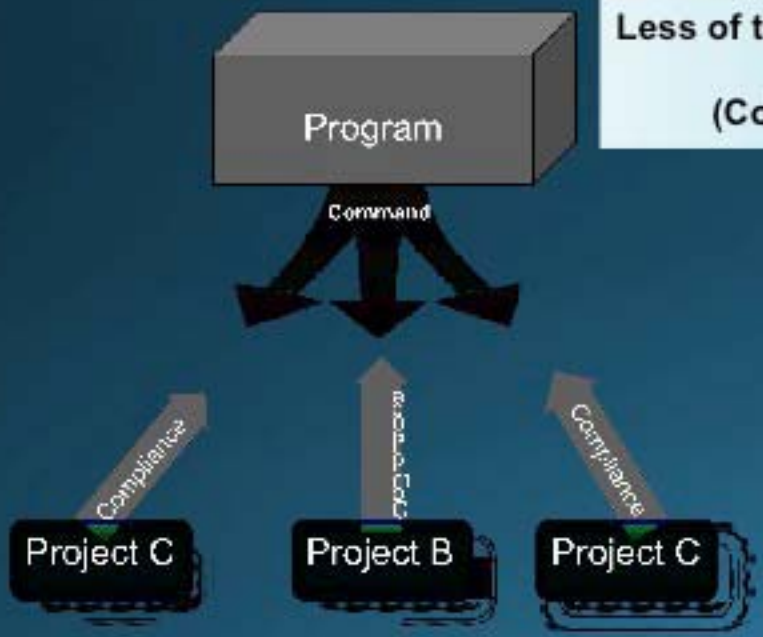
- Overlap
- Disconnects, Rework
- Inability to adapt rapidly
- Delays, Added time
- High Overhead, Added Cost
- Low Morale (lowering productivity)

Heavy, Costly Overhead, Arduous Change

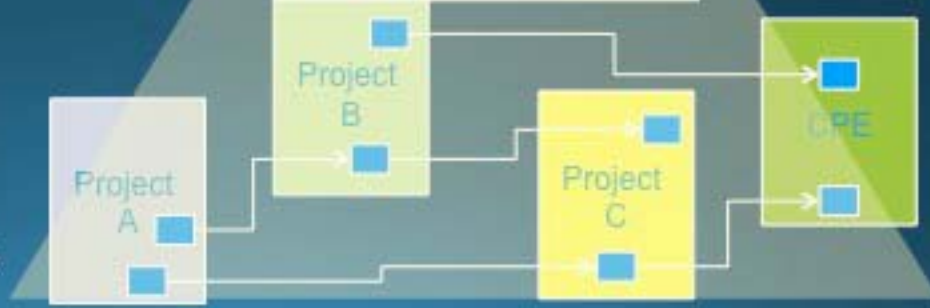
What does that mean functionally?

A PMO focused on Facilitating Value Delivery

A tool-enabled PMO that facilitates collaboration, dependency and progress tracking across its empowered projects



Less of this……to more of this (Collaboration)



Managing the Pipeline

- The flow of value (done work) is made visible and continuously monitored (war rooms, tools)
- Bottlenecks are addressed, dependencies made visible
- Priorities are reviewed regularly

Synchronizing Agile Projects

— A Cautionary Note

- Keeping projects in the program on a common sprint rhythm and monitoring progress and dependencies is good.
- But a cautionary note about setting explicit Program Sprint Goals…

Program defined sprints

- You need to make sure that defining program level goals for every sprint (e.g. monthly) doesn't push you back into deep dive program analysis and command and control under the guise of Scrum

Program monitoring and facilitation - An Alternative

- Each project's progress against <u>self-defined</u> sprints is monitored
- Dependencies are monitored
- Implementation of enterprise and program standards across sprints is monitored
- Project collaboration is facilitated
- Impediments are removed
- Common sprint rhythm is maintained

The Lean part of Lean/Agile PMOs

- We've focused on an Agile PMO facilitating delivery of an integrated program of functionality
- The same Agile PMO model can also be targeted at general IT portfolio management
  - To optimize throughput, value delivery
  - To optimize resource utilization
  - To minimize Work-in-Progress
  - To regularly review environment and current strategy
  - To detect and terminate sick or low value projects
  - To pursue continuous improvement

Requires dynamic governance and enterprise resource management to regularly review priorities, terminate projects and start new ones, shift resources to bottlenecks

So in brief, what does an Agile PMO do?

- **Sets direction (objective and purpose)**
- **Enable** and support the formation of sustainable empowered teams
- Manage demand through **facilitating** objective prioritization of work
- **Support and facilitate** decision-making at key points
- Identify and eliminate obstacles for delivery teams
- Track and **help** those teams resolve dependency conflicts that cut across the teams.
- Provide tool-enabled transparency / visibility – on demand
- Provide metrics and monitor value delivery
- Oh yes, and monitor standards compliance

"The Agile PMO role is to therefore enable, facilitate and foster this effective cooperation, collaboration and communication, but not to be the conduit, messenger or part of every conversation." (The Agile PMO – Emergn.com)

What do we need to achieve all this?

- Tools
  - For visibility, transparency, collaboration and real-time monitoring

and

- Training

But mostly we need the right mindset

A Lean/Agile System is Primarily a Human System

"[Adopting Agile] will require a mindset change for the PMO and other government entities (2012 Carnegie Mellon report for DoD)

Characteristics of Cultures*		
Pathological (power oriented)	**Bureaucratic (rule-oriented)**	**Generative (performance oriented)**
Low cooperation	Modest cooperation	High cooperation
Messengers shot	Messengers neglected	Messengers trained
Responsibilities shirked	Narrow responsibilities	Risks are shared
Bridging discouraged	Bridging tolerated	Bridging encouraged
Failure leads to scapegoating	Failure leads to justice	Failure leads to inquiry
Novelty crushed	Novelty leads to problems	Novelty implemented

* Westrum, R. (2014). "The Study of Information Flow: A Personal Journey." *Safety Science*, 67: 58-63

How do we get that??

- One of the best possible models to follow is the Kotter Change Model

From "Leading Change," *John P. Kotter*

(Recognized as one of the 25 most influential business texts of the 20th century)

Summary

"Agile is here to stay. PMOs are learning that they need to adapt to remain relevant, and Agile teams are learning that they need to see the bigger picture" (The *The PMO in An Agile World: Can't We all Just Get Along?*, Margo Visitacion; Forrester Research 2011)

- Move Agile Principles into the Program
  - Collaboration
    - Vertical & Horizontal Integration
  - Visibility / transparency
  - Frequent Inspection and Adaption
- From Cop to Value Facilitator
  - Empowered Projects
  - Transparent, real-time dependency monitoring
  - Throughput
  - Rapid governance

But mostly, it's about

Some Additional Resources

- *The Lean-Agile PMO: Using Lean Thinking to Accelerate Agile Project Delivery;* Augustine and Cuellar; Agile Project Management Vol. 7, No. 10, Cutter Consortium
- *The Agile PMO, Leading the Effective, Value driven, Project Management Office*; Michael Nir
- *PMO Best Practices Are No Longer Good Enough*; UMT360 White Paper, Aug, 2014
- *The State of the PMO in 2011;* Margo Visitacion; Forrester Research
- *The Agile PMO*; Kevin Thompson, cPrime, Inc.
- *The PMO in An Agile World: Can't We all Just Get Along?,* Margo Visitacion; Forrester Research 2011


Q&A