



Changing the Mindset to Lean-Agile Across Industries

Speaker: Joe Reese

Session Abstract:

Mindset change when introducing Lean-Agile to an organization brings on one of the most difficult challenges. That challenge is not oblivious to any industry where hierarchy organization utilizing top down decision making is coupled with waterfall development.

The commercial experience offered an additional challenge to the mindset change, a challenge within a challenge. The industry is product and revenue driven which imposed a fast and hard survival rhythm to the equation along with acceptance of accomplishing the same result in a different way. Ensuring the leadership recognizes the need for change along with accepting the new and different approach Lean-Agile offers requires a mindset change resulting in a gigantic step in the right direction.

Government industry in both NASA and DoD, which are traditional for structure and consistent discipline, revealed the mindset change challenge not unlike the commercial. Though the industry mission is different, I found the need to provide value on an incremental cadence to be quite similar. Getting leadership to recognize the need for a change, Lean-Agile offers a monumental step to moving forward.

Reflecting back over all three organizations revealed a trend, though reached in different approaches, that leadership recognition of a need for change along with a desire to accept a different way of working while delivering value on an incremental basis. These findings have revealed interesting and not unexpected results, thus far, that despite the industry and structures in place once leadership's clarity to move the organization forward is obtained that reveals the acceptance of what got you here will not get you there, wherever there may be.

Leadership engagement, preferably senior leadership, provides the permission to embark on the journey that will ultimately change the culture of the organization. This culture change opens the door to additional leadership embracing the new approach and accelerating the adoption of Lean-Agile.

Joe Reese, Program Director at the Department of Defense

Joe served as a DoD contractor in various leadership roles from Principle Software Lead to Sr. Program Manager where he developed and lead programs on spacelift range systems used to track space launches off the coasts of central Florida and central California. He launched his consulting firm with a focus on providing technical advice and recommendations to the DoD and NASA. Joe moved to GE where he lead Agile teams developing software for various products from auto-pilot of trains, fuel savings locomotives, big data collection and processing of locomotive engine functions to autonomous train technology. He held a project manager role as a contractor at NASA KSC where he coached and mentored Agile teams developing climate control modules for the Orion Multi-Purpose Crew Vehicle. Joe currently holds the position as Program Director at DoD where the teams are undergoing an Agile transformation forging into SAFe. Joe has a Master of Science degree in Business Management from Florida Tech and a Bachelors degree in Mathematics and Computer Science from Tennessee State University.