

[TheAgileMindsetBook.info](http://TheAgileMindsetBook.info)  
[OnTheWayToAgile.com](http://OnTheWayToAgile.com)

## **Being Agile: Having the Mind-Set that Delivers**

***Gil Broza***



“Two people are leaving the daily standup. One turns to the other and says, ‘Today’s meeting was ...’”

# Why this talk: 3 common problems

1. “We’re doing everything right, but the results are not quite there... Not sure why...”
  - Stalled implementations, lukewarm performance
2. “This change is bigger than we thought...”
  - Unintended casualties
  - Erosion in staff’s trust
  - Shoddy work
3. “This is Agile” ... “No it’s not!” ... “Sure it is!”
  - Rampant confusion
  - Adherence to form over function doesn’t always help
  - People don’t know how to succeed

The practices don't matter.  
What matters is how you **approach** them.

# What to expect in the next hour


- ❖ Understand the values, beliefs, and principles of the Agile approach (we will **define** the mind-set).
- ❖ Learn how to effectively choose your methods, process, and practices.
- ❖ Support mindful implementation and the necessary culture change.

# **Anchoring to your experience**

**Think about your latest  
project / initiative / undertaking.**

**Which of the following statements fits best?**

# Would you say this?




Working closely with our customers, we deliver valuable product frequently



Agile

# Or this?



We've adopted Agile practices,  
roles, tools, and artifacts,  
but the way we work  
doesn't feel particularly Agile  
to me



Going through  
the Agile **M**otions

# Or maybe this?

We produce big deliverables based on early commitments of time, budget, and scope

**Waterfall**

# Let's see who we have here

Put up a hand to indicate your letter:



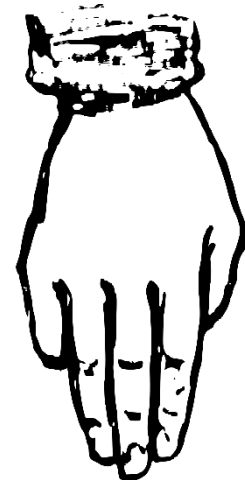
**A**

**Agile**



**W**

**Waterfall**

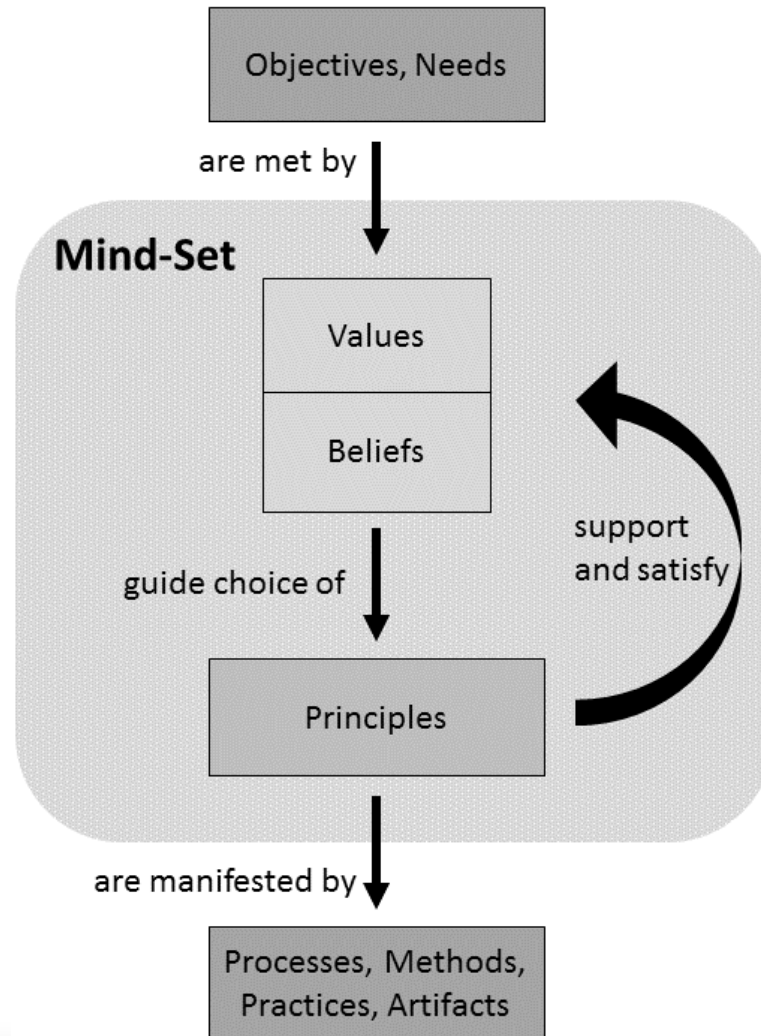


**M**

**Motions**

# Mind-set drives what you do

Your mind-set is how you think about acting in a given situation.



# Principles

Principle: A standard that guides your choices, decisions, and actions

Examples from popular approaches to work:

## **Agile**

**Collaboration**

**Get to "Done"**

## **Lean**

**Eliminate waste**

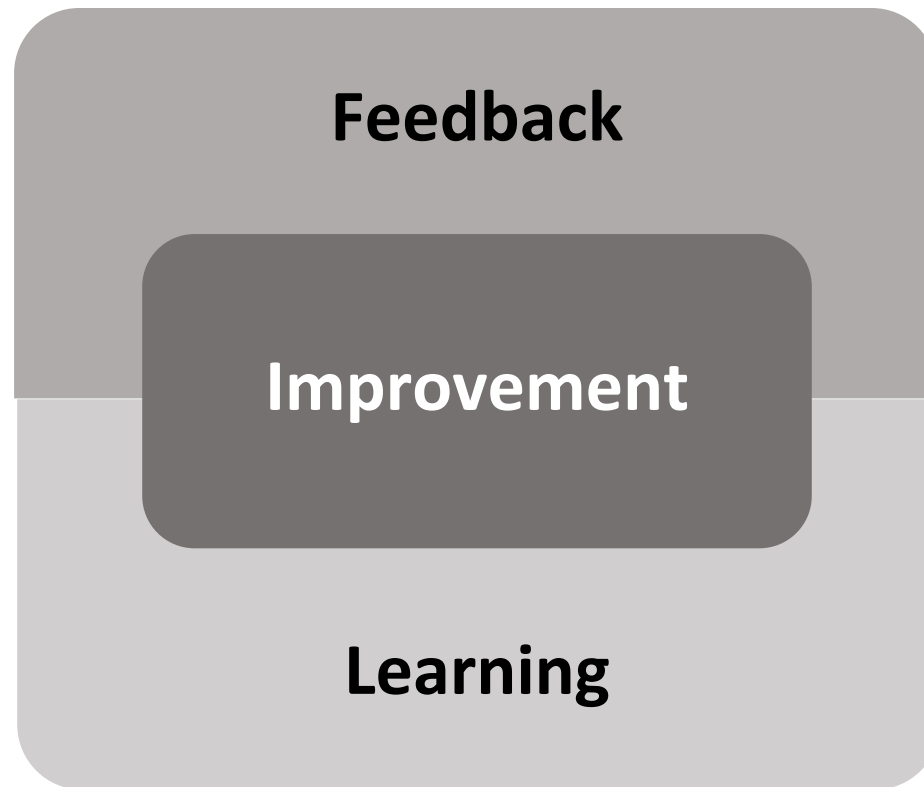
**Defer decisions to  
the last responsible  
moment**

## **Waterfall**

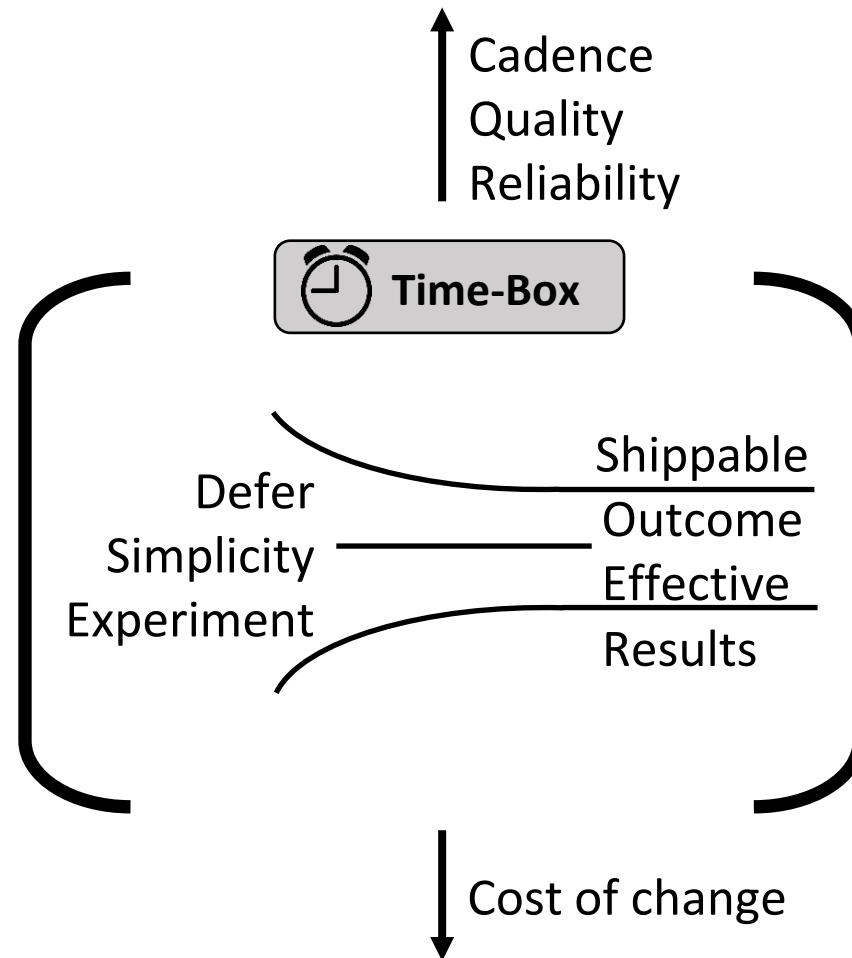
**Sign-off**

**Maximize utilization**

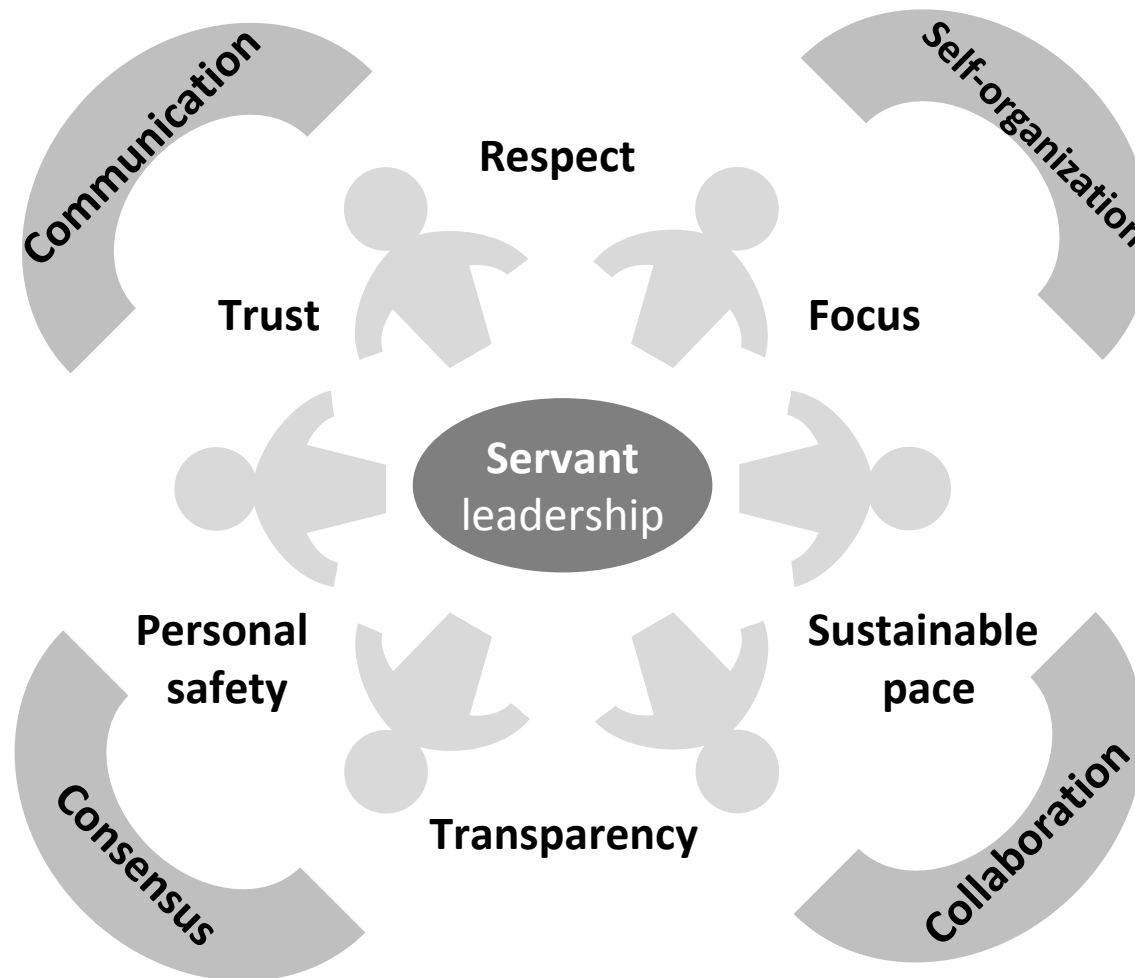
# The fundamental principles of Agile



# The Agile principles regarding work



# The Agile principles regarding people



# Beliefs

Belief: A conviction, something you hold to be true but haven't proven, and perhaps can't prove rigorously.

Examples in work contexts:

## Agile

Requirements get stale

Collaborative, self-organizing teams are great for mitigating human error

Change will happen, and responding to it can be a competitive advantage

## Waterfall

The customer knows what he wants

We can extract that reliably from the customer's head

People are interchangeable as long as they have the technical skills

## Misc

We need great people for great performance

People really care only for themselves

We only need to say something once

# Exercise: Beliefs

If you are here with colleagues, do this exercise together.  
Consider the people in charge of the project / the team.  
*(You might be one of them.)*

**Write down one thing that they *believed***  
about people, the work, or the customer.



# Values

Value: something you consider important and necessary for success.

Examples in work contexts:

## Agile

**Deliver value frequently**

**Be able to change priorities quickly**

**Collaborate with your customer**

**Put people first**

## Waterfall

**Get it right the first time**

**On time and on budget**

**Make early commitments**

**Standardized processes**

## Misc

**Innovate**

**Avoid disaster  
("Don't be in the news")**

**Keep auditors and regulators happy**

**Data quality/security**

# Exercise: Values

Reflect on the same people as before.

Consider:

- How they made difficult project/product/people decisions
- What worried them
- What they took a stand for

Write down, in a few words:

**What was important to them?**



(We're looking for values, not practices/processes/principles)

# Putting it all together

We choose our principles based on our values and beliefs.

## In Agile

**V:** Adaptation

**B:** Short feedback loops enable emergence and adaptation



**P:** Plan and execute in short time-boxes

## In Waterfall

**V:** Getting it right the first time

**B:** We can put together a useful plan for that



**P:** Plan the work and work the plan

# Practices don't matter, mind-set does

Practice/role/artifact	Was designed as	With a Waterfall mindset, it is
Daily standup	Regular check-in to maximize the team's value output	Daily status for maximizing work-the-plan
Product backlog	Prioritized list of valuable deliverables we might get to	Project plan
Pair programming	Collaboration to minimize the risk of employing humans	Under-utilization
ScrumMaster	Servant leader, helping the team succeed as a team	Project manager; process compliance officer
Sprint demo	Feedback – for effectiveness	Frequent deadline for sign-off (and keeping people busy)

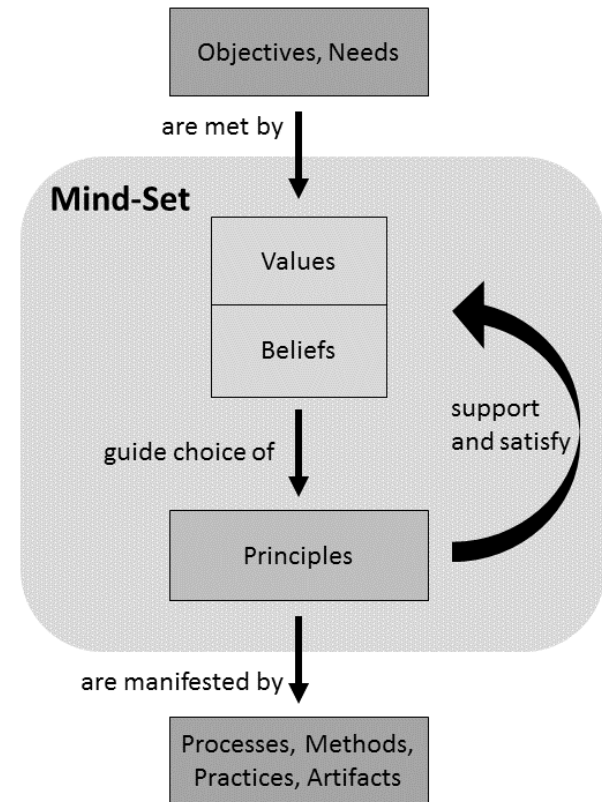
**In a given work situation,**

**before you ever**

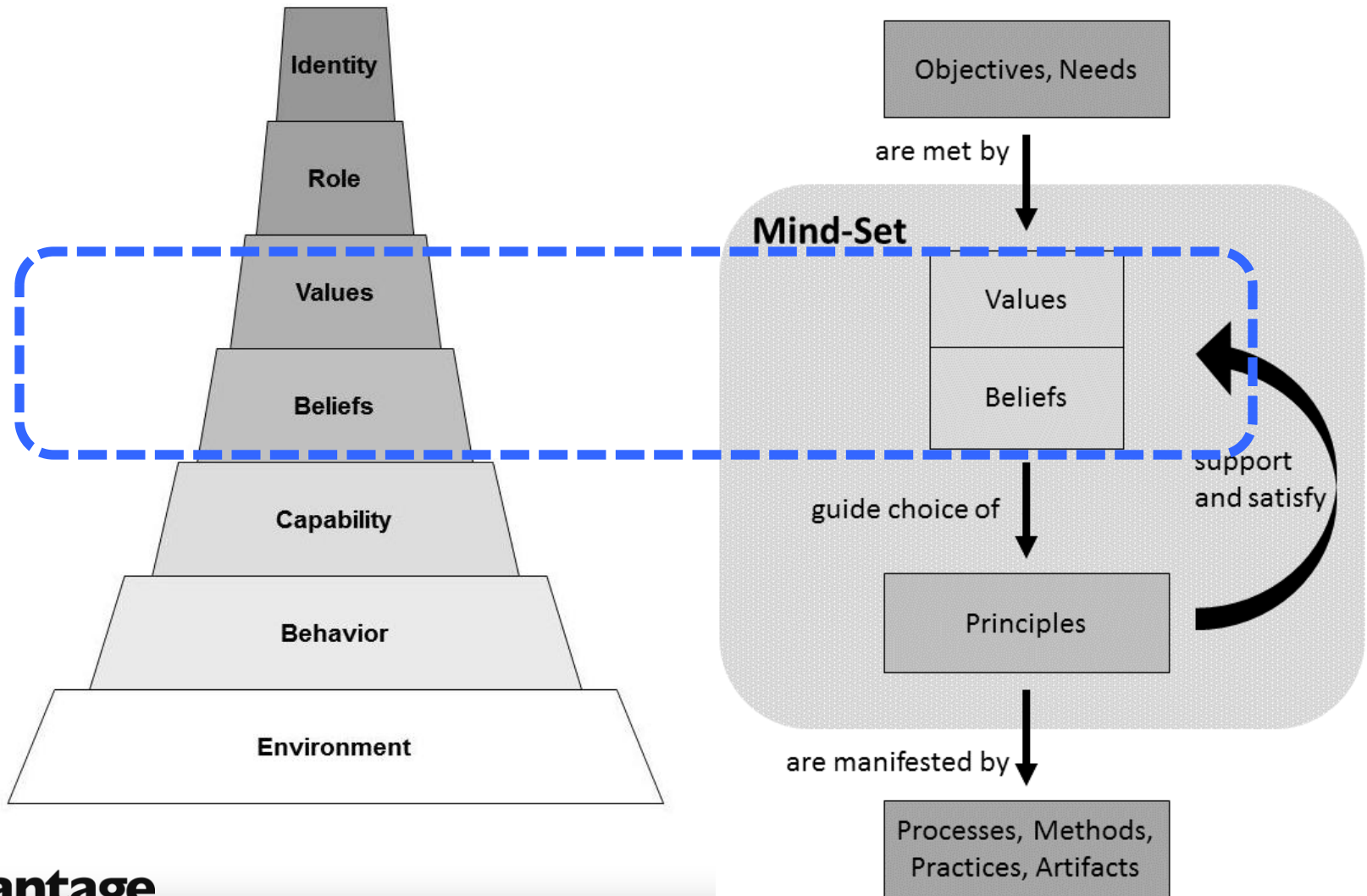
plan, commit, design,  
implement, improve,  
or otherwise

**do any work,**

**be explicit and deliberate about your mind-set**  
in order to increase your effectiveness



# A useful model for looking at change



# For Agile to take hold, there must be:

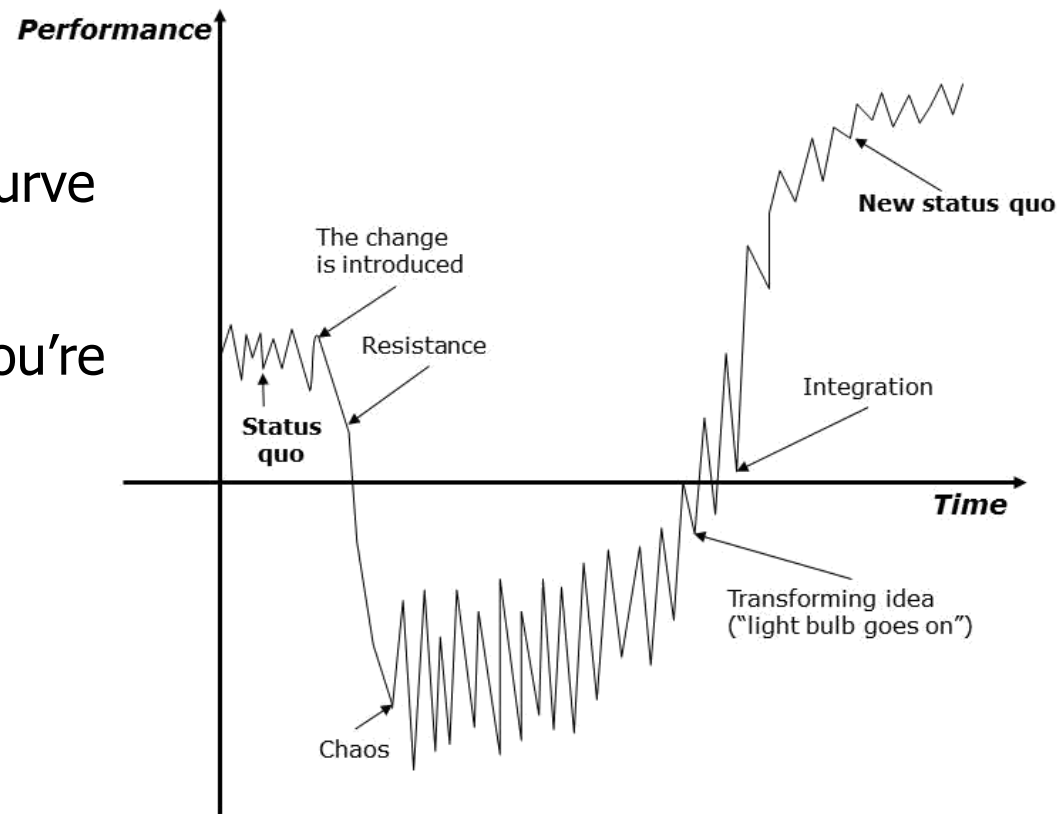
- Suitability of its values and beliefs to
  - the work
  - its objectives
  - the team and the customer
- Congruence of V & B among team, sponsor, customer
- Buy-in to the mind-set, not to processes or practices

# Adopting and sustaining Agile

- **Maximize clarity and alignment** on the V/B/P
- **Set the expectation** of acting with the Agile mind-set
- **Tie every move back** to the mind-set
  - Common anti-patterns: *Follow Prescription, Legacy Mind-Set, and Mix-and-Match*
- **Implement every principle** to the highest level you can sustain now
  - “One principle at a time” doesn’t work
  - Give extra attention to Feedback, Learning, and Improvement
- **Deal proactively** with forces that erode or impede Agility

# Getting there

- Start with an accepted framework only if you also agree with its values and principles
- Leadership, support, and patience for the change curve (expect tribulations)
- Want to know how well you're doing? Look for principled behavior, not process compliance or velocity



# Quick and easy help for you

## “Something Happened on the Way to Agile”

- ✓ How to foster product owner accountability
- ✓ Ways to balance commitments with support activities
- ✓ How to integrate code reviews effectively
- ✓ How much unit test coverage is enough (or too much)
- ✓ 8 tips for effective retrospectives
- ✓ What do managers do in Agile?
- ✓ 14 other popular issues

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