The Executive Action Team
Leadership in an Agile Paradigm

Host: JJ Sutherland
Presenter: Jeff Sutherland
Scrum Inc. is the Agile leadership company of Dr. Jeff Sutherland, co-creator of Scrum. We are based at the MIT Cambridge Innovation Center, MA.

**CEO Jeff Sutherland** helps companies achieve the full benefits of Scrum leading our comprehensive suite of support services and leadership training:
- Scaling the methodology to an ever-expanding set of industries, processes and business challenges
- Training (Scrum Master, Product Owner, Agile Leadership, online courses, etc.)
- Consulting (linking Scrum and business strategy, customizing Scrum)
- Coaching (hands-on support to Scrum teams)

**Chief Product Owner JJ Sutherland** maintains the Scrum framework by:
- Capturing and codifying evolving best practices (Scrum Guide)
- Conducting original research on organizational behavior
- Publishing (3 books) and productizing ScrumLab

**President Scrum@Hardware Joe Justice** leads our hardware consulting practice:
- Worldwide consulting at leading hardware companies
- 700-800% performance improvement in hardware development
- Builds 100 mpg cars in his garage with help from 500 people in 32 countries

We run our company using Scrum as the primary management framework, making us a living laboratory on the cutting edge of “Enterprise Scrum”

Find out more at [www.scruminc.com](http://www.scruminc.com).
Why is the Saab Gripen the Best Fighter Aircraft in the World?

F-35 “Joint Strike Fighter” – Traditional Design

• $143 Billion over budget
• At least another 6 years late (final systems integration)
• Cost of Navy F-35C grew from $273 million in 2014 to $337 million by 2015

SAAB JAS 39E “Gripen” – Agile Design

• Best aircraft in the world - Aviation Week
• Cumulative program cost of $15 Billion
• New iteration of all systems released every 6 months
• $43M cost¹ (20% of F-35)

¹ According to Jane's Aviation Weekly, the Gripen is the world’s most cost-effective military aircraft
Because Their Enterprise Action Team Meets Every Morning at 8:30

• 8:30 Enterprise Action Team (= senior management)
• 8:15 Scrum of Scrums of Scrums of Scrums
• 8:00 Scrum of Scrums of Scrums
• 7:45 Scrum of Scrums
• 7:30 Daily Scrum

• Approximately $8 \times 8 \times 8 \times 8 = 4096$ people
Modular Framework for Scaling Scrum

Executive Action Team

Product Ownership Cycle

Backlog Prioritization

Backlog Decomposition & Refinement

Release Planning

Cross-Team Coordination

Continuous Improvement & Impediment Removal & Personnel Issues

Release Management

Team-Level Process

Scrum Master Cycle

Strategic Vision

Product & Release Feedback

Metrics & Transparency

Organization Level
- Enterprise
- Business Unit
- Team

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Scrum at Scale Modules are Defined by their Goals, Inputs and Outputs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Define what the module is intended to accomplish</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inputs</td>
<td>Describe the information or resources needed from other modules to accomplish those goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outputs</td>
<td>Outline what information or product this module generates that are needed by other modules</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ANY** specific practice that meets the module’s required Goals, Inputs and Outputs will work with all of the other Scrum at Scale modules...This is “Contract-First Design.”
Executive Action Team

Measures and interventions to remove waste and improve performance

Business Strategy and market trends

Other organizational development initiatives

Other organizational metrics to provide transparency

Identified impediments

Feedback on interventions

Output

Input

Vision & goals regarding organizational culture, structure, values, norms etc.

Information on transformation status and process in the organization

Status of organizational development

Organizational transformation strategy

Up-to-date Executive Action Backlog

Executive Action Team

Information on transformation status and process in the organization

Organizational development

Vision & goals regarding organizational culture, structure, values, norms etc.

Measures and interventions to remove waste and improve performance

Business Strategy and market trends

Other organizational development initiatives

Other organizational metrics to provide transparency

Identified impediments

Feedback on interventions

Output

Input
What If Senior Management Can’t Scrum?

• You need an Enterprise Action Team with Senior Management representation along with knowledgeable people that can Scrum
• Their backlog is the things that need to be done to make the organization more Agile
• They have the authority to change the organization
• They have the authority to delegate lower level stories in their backlog to middle management
• They meet regularly
You Will Not Win the War Without a Team of Teams

- **Executive Action Team** needs to be a team of teams to Scrum company impediments
- Scrum needs executive support for continuous improvement to be sustainable.
- Sometimes called Agile Transition Team or Strategy Scrum Team.
- **Resolves big impediments**
- Assigns impediments to middle managers
What is the Backlog for Agility

• The Enterprise Action Team needs to assure that management takes the responsibility for leading an Agile organization
• Their three top priorities are megaissues
  • Assure all products and projects are prioritized and every team has a clear product backlog
  • Assure all teams can continuously ship product
  • Remove organizational debt that blocks Agility
Assure Management Provides Agile Leadership

• Provide clear and challenging goals for the teams
• Eliminate organizational debt - identify and remove waste
  • Create a business plan that works
  • Provide all resources the teams need
• Identify and remove impediments for the teams
  • Know velocity of teams
  • Eliminate technical debt
• Hold Product Owners accountable for value delivered per point
• Hold Scrum Masters accountable for measurable process improvement, regular product delivery, and team happiness
• Hold Managers accountable for removing waste
MegaIssue #1 - Prioritization

• Every team has a clear, ordered backlog every sprint so they know exactly what they need to do and in what order.

• Teams are stable. No teams are raided for people to start new projects. Backlog flows to stable teams.

• Bad Symptoms
  • “We have multiple conflicting priorities.”
  • “Our teams are constantly disrupted by changes for new projects”
  • “Everything is number one priority.”
  • “We all work on five projects at once.”

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<tr>
<th>Major &amp; Impediments</th>
<th>Team Totally Blocked</th>
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Typical “Agile in Name Only” Team

Scrum Inc. Agile Capability Assessment: Summary Report

Summary report for: Fortune 100 Company before 1st visit

Overall Score

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Percent of Assessment completed

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>98%</th>
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<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team 1</td>
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Results Breakdown by Category

Top Levers for Improvement

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Lever</th>
<th>Team</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>XI TESTING PRACTICES</td>
<td>Testing within sprint</td>
<td>Team 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENGG PRACTICES</td>
<td>Continuous integration</td>
<td>Team 1</td>
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<td>TESTING PRACTICES</td>
<td>Automated testing</td>
<td>Team 1</td>
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<td>TESTING PRACTICES</td>
<td>Regression testing</td>
<td>Team 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>DAILY STANDUP MEETING</td>
<td>Impediments addressed</td>
<td>Team 1</td>
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Key Strengths to Maintain and Expand

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<th>Category</th>
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<tr>
<td>II SCRUMMASTER</td>
<td>Team empowerment</td>
<td>Team 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>TESTING PRACTICES</td>
<td>Performance Optimization</td>
<td>Team 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRODUCT OWNER</td>
<td>Non-interrupt</td>
<td>Team 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TESTING PRACTICES</td>
<td>Exploratory testing</td>
<td>Team 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCRUMMASTER</td>
<td>Active facilitation</td>
<td>Team 1</td>
</tr>
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Team After One Sprint with Aggressive Coach

Scrum Inc. Agile Capability Assessment: Summary Report

Summary report for: Fortune 100 company after first visit by coach

| Overall Score | 58% | D |

| Percent of Assessment completed |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Overall                       | 100%|
| Organization                  | 100%|
| Team 1                        | 0   | 100%|

Results Breakdown by Category

|---------------|----------------------|-----------------|-------------|------|-------|-----------|----------|---------|----------------|--------|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|

Top Levers for Improvement

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<td>Continuous integration</td>
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<td>X2. TESTING PRACTICES</td>
<td>Automated testing</td>
<td>Team 1</td>
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<td>X3. TESTING PRACTICES</td>
<td>Regression testing</td>
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<td>X4. TESTING PRACTICES</td>
<td>Testing within sprint</td>
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<td>X5. TESTING PRACTICES</td>
<td>Unit testing</td>
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<tr>
<td>VIII. SPRINT REVIEW AND RETROSPECTIVE</td>
<td>Kaizen identified</td>
<td>Team 1</td>
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<td>VI. SPRINT PLANNING MEETING</td>
<td>PO participation</td>
<td>Team 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>VII. SPRINT PLANNING MEETING</td>
<td>All stories estimated</td>
<td>Team 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>VII. DAILY STANDUP MEETING</td>
<td>Standing at board</td>
<td>Team 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>VIII. SPRINT REVIEW AND RETROSPECTIVE</td>
<td>Whole team participates</td>
<td>Team 1</td>
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Team After a Few Sprints

Good results from other teams as well
- 209% (The Avengers)
- 275% (The Warriors)
- 367% (The Chargers)
Teams Are Not Building the Right Features

80% of value typically resides in 20% of features

65% of features provide little to no value, are rarely used and/or aren’t actually desired by the customer

The rest are OK, but not as important

How can you tell ahead of time which features add value and which don’t?
Biggest Problem is Still Leadership

- Leadership has not prioritized the organization
- 1/3 of the people are doing things that are not in the interest of the business
- 65% of the remaining 2/3 is features that the user will never or rarely use

Solution:
- Build a Product Owner organization
- Every team has a Product Owner with a clear prioritized backlog every sprint
Scrum Master and Product Owner Functions Scale Coordination Differently

**Scrum Master**
- Share best practices
- Collectively solve problems & remove impediments
- Deliver early and often

**Product Owner**
- Maintain clear and consistent product vision
- Optimize business value
- Respond decisively to changing market
Prioritize Possible Epics by NPV/Point
Minimum Level Set by Current Rev/Point Run Rate

Available quarterly team capacity for Epics
(based on yesterday’s weather)
## Drive Roadmap Priorities With a MetaScrum

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<td>Chief Product Owner</td>
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**Responsible (R):** Owns the problem / project

**Accountable (A):** To whom "R" is Accountable - who must sign off (Approve) on work before it is effective

**Consulted (C):** To be Consulted - has information and/or capability necessary to complete the work

**Informed (I):** To be Informed - must be notified of results, but need not be consulted

The Meta Scrum: Scaling Aggressive Scrum

- A gathering of Key Stakeholders, Leadership, and Product Owners
- Run by Chief Product Owner
- Aligns enterprise around roadmap
- The forum for stakeholders to express preferences and remove blocks (they should not try to alter product vision between Meta Scrums)
- Can be held at regular intervals or on an ad-hoc basis
- Allows teams to progress efficiently down a single work path
Megaissue #2 - Continuous Delivery

• Incremental fully integrated builds can be done multiple times per day

• Automated acceptance tests are run with every build

• Teams have a potentially shippable increment of code at the end of a sprint (or more often)

• Bad Symptoms
  • We don’t know our velocity
  • Our velocity is flatlined
  • Done means coded not tested
  • We can’t do integration testing in a sprint

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What to Do If You Are “Agile in Name Only”

Pulling an Elephant Out of a Tarpit

Stas Zvinyatskovsky
@staszv

Ed Kraay
@ekraay

YAHOO!
Let’s all agree

We take pride in our work
We want to ship often
We want to ship with quality
We want to do work that matters

Source: Yahoo
“We Work Hard But We Don’t Know If We Are Making a Difference.”

Source: Yahoo
ROLLERCOASTER OF PAIN

Source: Yahoo
Solution Services

- Mandated continuous integration
- Trained managers and technical leaders
- Communities of practice
- Agile consultants
- Release planning sessions
- Scrum of Scrums
- **Metascrum**
- **Portfolio kanban**
- **Impediments clearing house**
- Agile council
- Agile tools

Source: Yahoo
Release Freely

Source: Yahoo

Decision  Leap  Strategy  Execution
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agile Attributes</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Less often than every 12 weeks</th>
<th>Every 8 to 12 weeks</th>
<th>Every 4 to 8 weeks</th>
<th>Every 3 to 4 weeks</th>
<th>Every 1 to 2 weeks</th>
<th>More often than once a week</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Our Development Team...</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Continually improves our development processes.</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivers tested, running, software each cycle.</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes my voice in decision making.</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>5.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Produces clean, high quality code.</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
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<td>Makes releasing new features easy.</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Incorporates user feedback to drive decisions.</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintains a high energy level.</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impediments to progress are effectively removed.</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.1</td>
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<td><strong>As a Broader Organization...</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Work is informed by effective feedback processes.</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>We insist on &quot;best-possible&quot; user experiences.</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Product decisions are based on evidence &amp; data.</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>We manage dependencies well with other groups.</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>We work on the highest priority product goals.</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>5.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Products are easy to launch.</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>4.9</td>
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Unweighted Mean Score: 4.5, 4.8, 4.9, 5.1, 5.2, 5.2

# of Respondents: 1,267, 51, 55, 120, 279, 573, 189

Notes:

- **7-Point Scale (1):** 1 = Rarely or Never and 7 = Nearly Always
- **7-Point Scale (2):** 1 = Strongly Disagree and 7 = Strongly Agree

Source: Yahoo
Megaissue #3 - Organization Refactoring

- There is an Enterprise Action Team that is removing organizational impediments on a weekly basis.

- Teams are easily refactored to optimize production.

- **Bad Symptoms**
  - “These people report to me”
  - “I can change their priorities”
  - “I’m bonused to build my empire”
  - I have five management initiatives and I’m working 80 hours a week”

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<tr>
<th>X</th>
<th>Major Impediments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team Totally Blocked</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Organizational Debt

Agile Enterprise Metrics - 2015 48th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences
Daniel R Greening, Senex Rex
dan@senexrex.com
Scaling Agile

Scaling Methods & Approaches

The majority of respondents use Scrum/Scrum of Scrums to help scale agile within their organizations.

*Respondents were able to make multiple selections.

1% Large-Scale Scrum (LeSS)
3% Disciplined Agile Delivery (DAD)
4% Agile Portfolio Management (APM)
9% Enterprise Scrum
10% Enterprise Agile
18% Lean management
19% Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe*)
25% Internally created methods
69% Scrum/Scrum of Scrums

Source: Version One 2015
Adding 4 People to a Six Person Team Will Delay the Project for Six Months

This is called “Brook’s Law”

Caused by deteriorating team communication saturation

Source: [http://www.qsm.com/process_01.html](http://www.qsm.com/process_01.html) (491 projects)
Dedicated Teams Can Double Productivity

The Impact of Agile Quantified. Rally Software Development Corp. 2015
Scrum of Scrums

- Scrum is an object-oriented organizational framework
- The organization will need to be refactored to maximize flow
- Small steps regularly
- Large changes periodically

Waterfall Comm Paths
\[ \frac{n(n-1)}{2} \]
for 120 people
\[ \frac{120(119)}{2} = 7140 \]

Communication Paths
\[ \frac{n(n-1)}{2} \] per team
\[ \frac{5(4)}{2} = 10 \]
24 teams(10) = 240
+ a few cross team
80% less comm
Scrum of Scrums as Release Team
Zero Defect Release

After failed product releases we adopted a program Scrum-Of-Scrums...

-Very uncomfortable for people in the beginning
-Huge impact on communications and problem resolution

“I was reluctant at first but the Daily Scrum of Scrums was the key reason this is the best launch in our history”

Adapted from Slides By Chris Sullivan

Manufacturing Manager
How one type of Executive Action Team Works

1. Identified impediments bubble up through successive Scrum of Scrums.

2. If impediments cannot be addressed at a lower level, they are added to Transition Team’s Impediment backlog.

3. Sponsor and cross-functional Transition Team charged with removing large impediments and communicating back to teams.

4. Transition Team works impediment backlog like a development team works its product backlog.
Agile Leadership understands:

- Product Backlog flows to stable teams
  - Not people to projects
- Measure production per sprint (velocity)
  - Not time to produce product that doesn’t work
- Update plan based on real data (velocity)
  - Not a GANNT chart
- Always deliver early
  - 80% of value is in 20% of features
- Having a problem is the most important thing to have
  - The Kaizen is always the top priority story
Scaling Velocity is Faster, Cooler and Cheaper than Scaling People
Implementing Aggressive Scrum

Source: Leading IT infrastructure company in Boston area
9 Teams, 10 3-Week Sprints

Engineering Scrum Adoption

Source: Stephen C. Daukas
Faster, Cooler, Cheaper

- **Aggressive Scrum** team is equivalent to 5 Scrum teams
- **Faster** - only takes a few sprints to boot up
- **Cooler**
  - Product Owner is removing technical debt
  - Points are allocated to innovation
  - Teams are more motivated to produce better product
- **Cheaper**
  - Product is produced at 20% of the cost of competitors products.
Bottom Line

• **To execute a scaled Scrum you need:**
  • An Executive Action Team that EATs impediments
  • A Meta-Scrum that drives company priorities
  • A Scrum of Scrums that escalates impediments to be EATen continuously

• **These simple mechanisms eliminate:**
  • All non-Scrum meetings
  • Release teams
  • Organizational debt
  • Technical debt

• **They focus the organization on:**
  • Driving value creation
  • Increasing revenue and shareholder value
The faster you go, the more resistance you get!