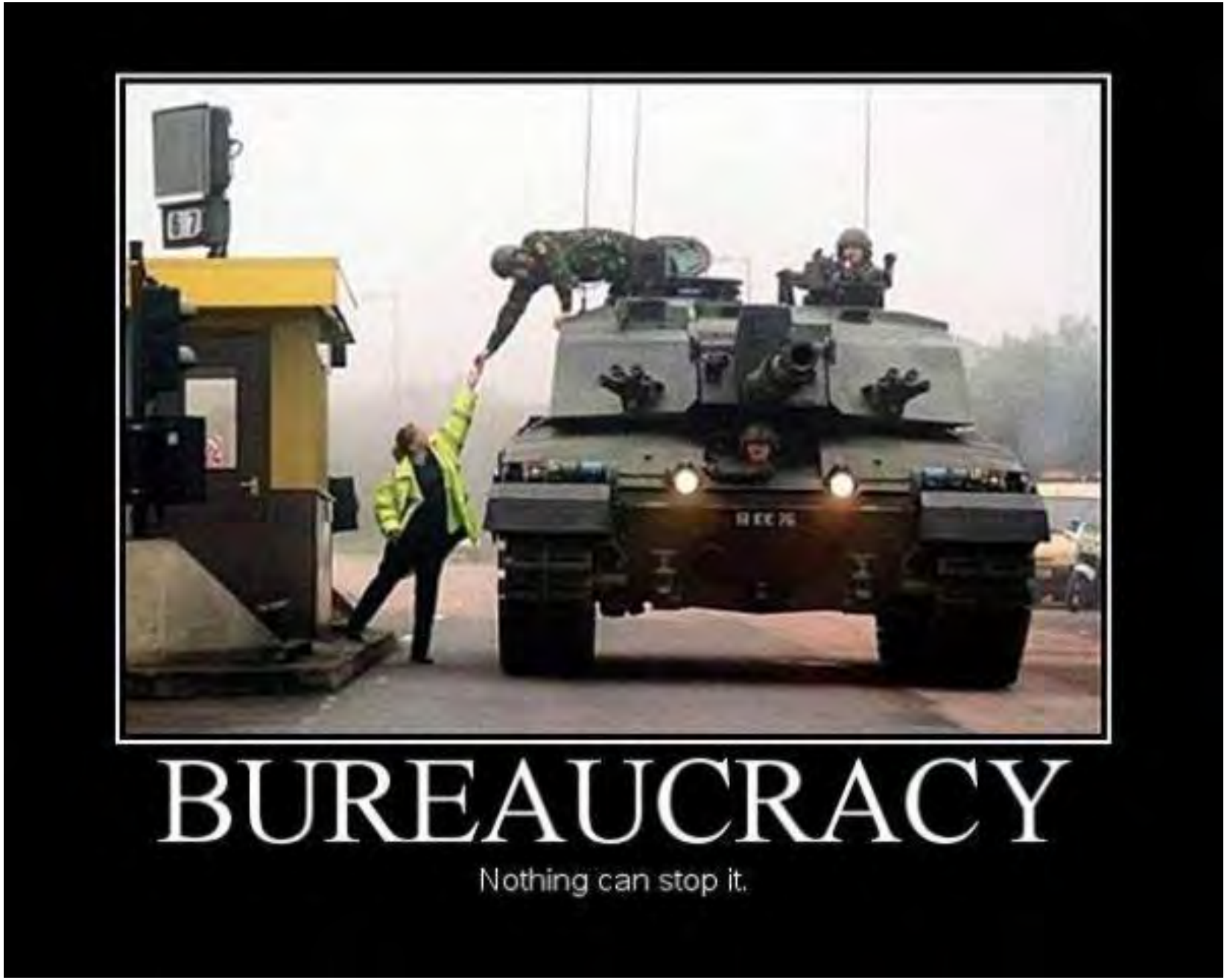
Lean agile governance: finding a new hope

Novavi
focused renewal

"Mere good governance is not enough; it has to be pro-people and pro-active. Good governance is putting people at the center of development process."

---- Narendra Modi ----



"The seven rules of bureaucracy"

Loyd S. Pettegrew and Carol A. Vance,
See
https://mises.org/library/seven-rules-bureaucracy

Bureaucracy is the epoxy that greases the wheels of progress.

James H. Boren, in *When in Doubt, Mumble : A Bureaucrat's Handbook* (1972)

Success factors

2 Approaches to governance

Consultative

"Spirit of the law" and Outcomes focussed
Institutional frame-setting focusing and driven from governance principles

Directive

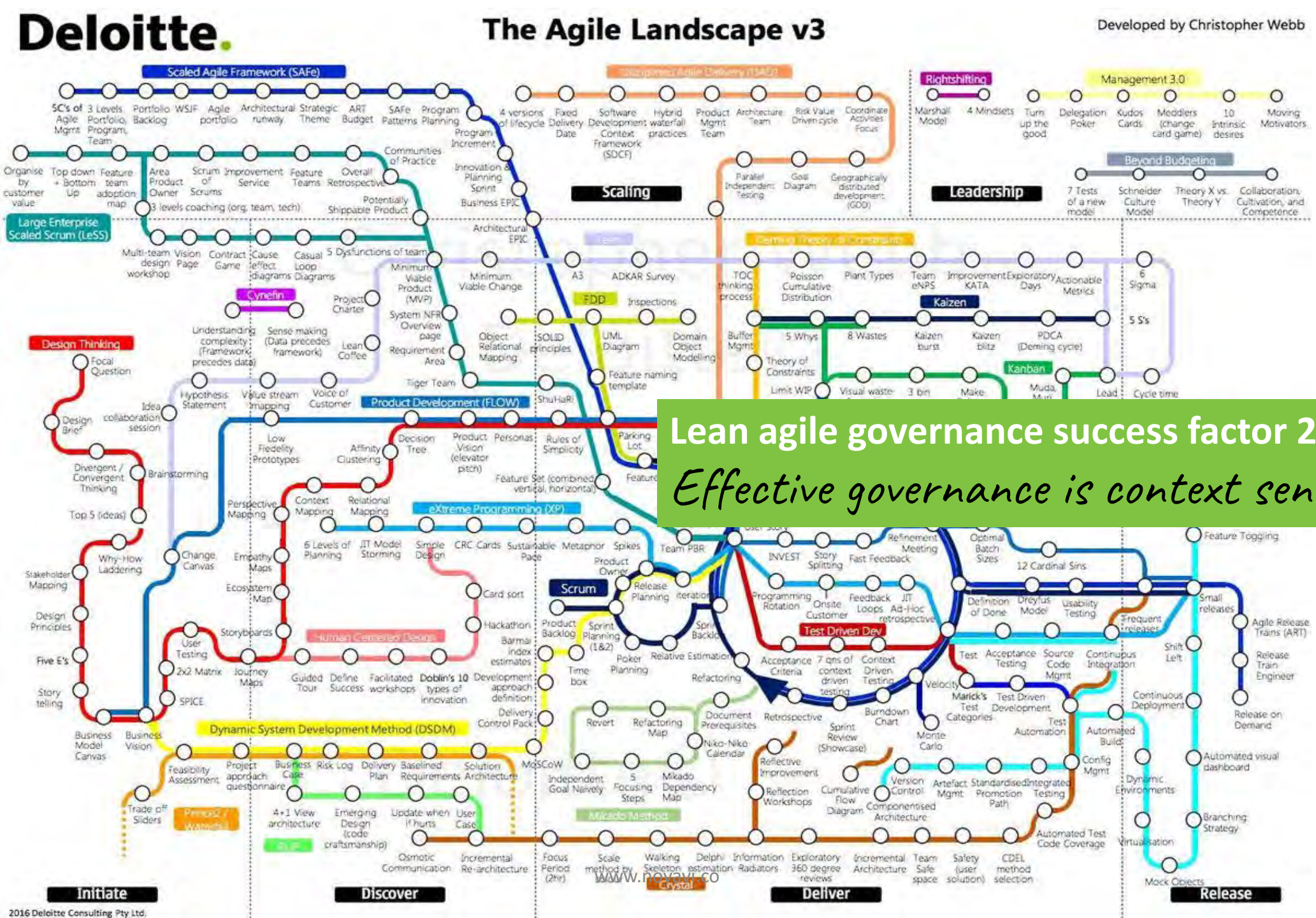
"Letter of the law" and Outputs focussed.
Traditional "Quality Assurance" guidelines through procedural aspects (excessive form = Bureaucracy)

Lean agile governance success factor 1:

There will always be governance required – It is happening

https://www.inqaahe.org/sites/default/files/pictures/2_Henard%20-%20Mitterle_Good%20governance%20guidelines%20and%20QA%20two%20drivers%20on%20one%20wheel.pdf and https://link.springer.com/article/10.1023/A:1011346403401

The "Agile Industrial Complex"



Lean agile governance success factor 2:

Effective governance is context sensitive

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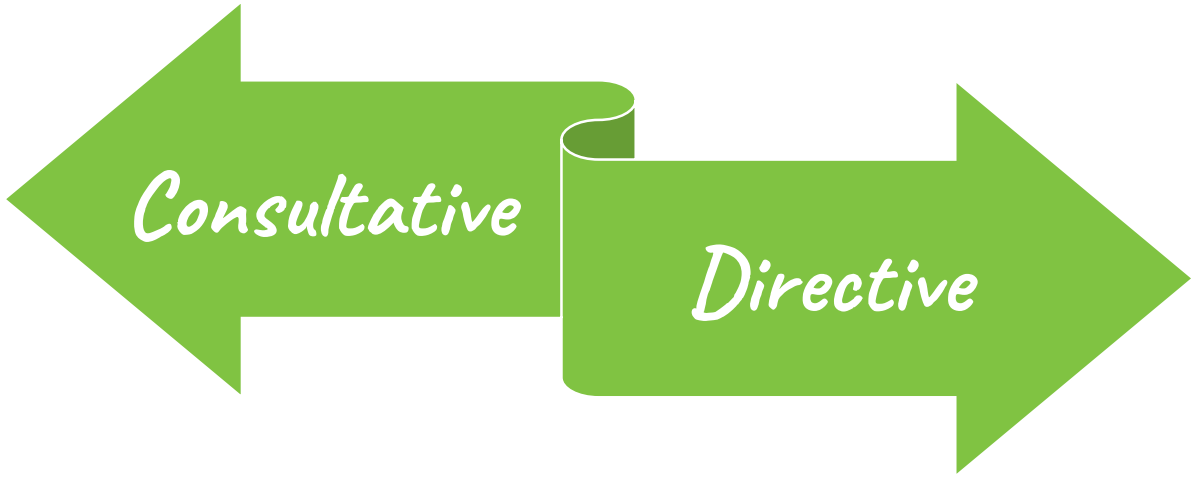
Which one?



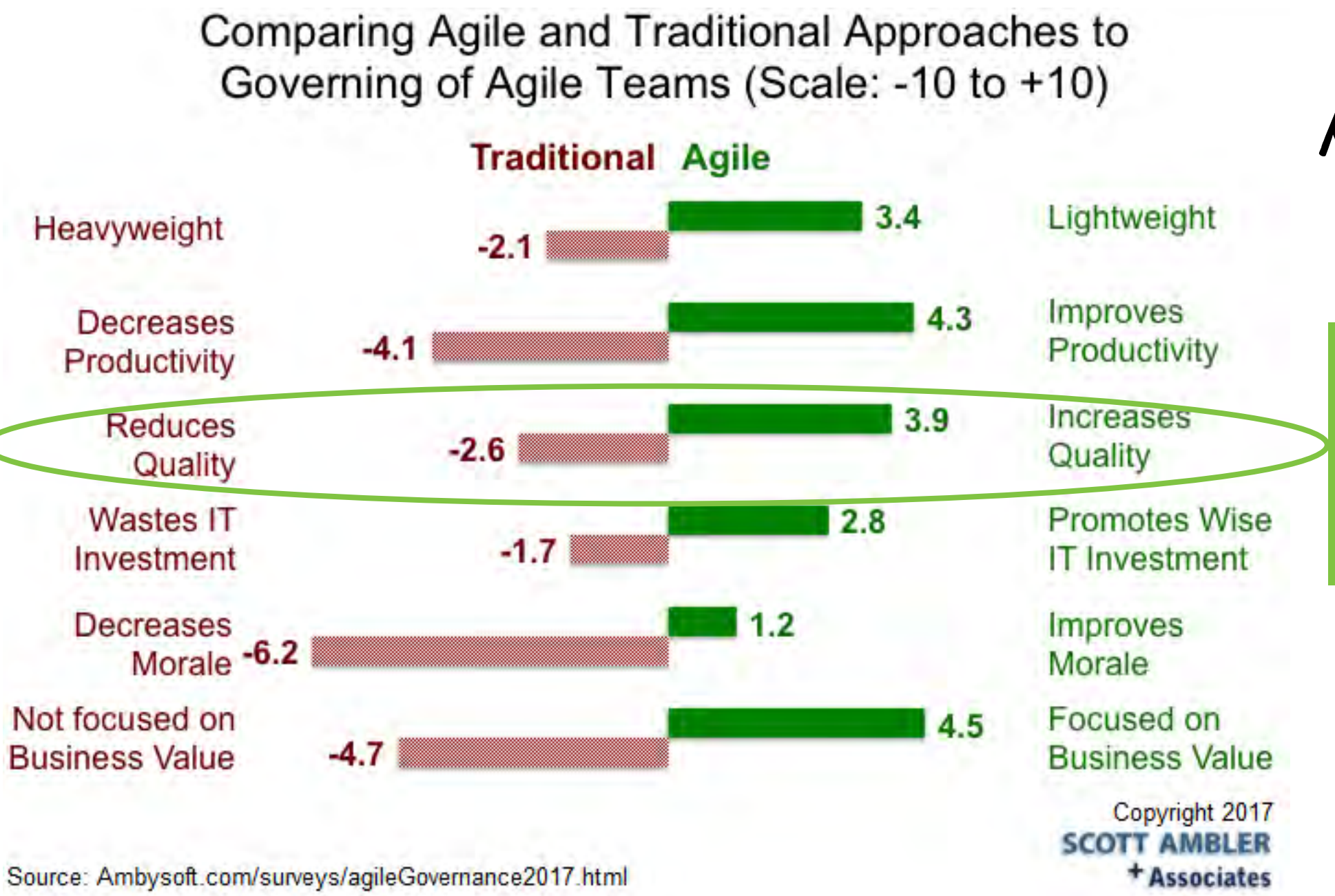
Lean agile governance success factor 3:

Goal and principle driven governance is more effective

Both make sense, but what is the right balance? Consider:

- Does governance exist to feed the bureaucracy?
- Does governance exist to enable better customer outcomes?
- Does your governance make things better for your teams?
- What are the goals and actual outcomes of your governance?

Research



The wrong type of governance can actively help to reduce quality!

Gartner's IT governance maturity model

Governance Maturity Model: Delivers Greater Business Benefits at Each Level

Maturity Level	Decision-Making Style	Business Outcomes	Strategic Planning Approach	Leadership Style	Risk Approach	Fiscal Approach
Level 1: None	Decision making is random rather than deliberate and coordinated	Enterprise is slow to react to competitive threats, weak resource management and poor transparency	Minimal to no strategic planning taking place	Follows practice or doctrine of noninterference with individuals or business units	Ignore/deny risks	Distribution of budget to individuals and groups with weak central controls
Level 2: Isolated Competency	Decision making is deliberate for high-risk efforts or crises only	Performance improves in distinct pockets of the enterprise only	Near-term focused and limited in scope to key initiatives	Focused on high-priority or high-stress activities and delegates other activities	Respond reactively to imminent risks only	Funds allocated parochially to a community or set of initiatives
Level 3: Risk Mitigation	Decisions driven by constrained resources or compliance issues	Reduced costs, and reduced waste of resources. Greater regulatory compliance	Longer-term focused, but created in response to specific events or immediate conditions	Control-oriented and deliberate, averse to delegating to others	Proactively identify and manage cost, compliance and security risks	Cost accounting and cost recovery focus with little variability or agility in budgets
Level 4: Benefit Optimization	Decisions are driven from the top down; based on a clearly articulated strategy and guiding principles	Predictable ROI and growth, and measurable operational improvements	Long-term focused, based on taking advantage of enterprise synergies and coordinated efforts	Devolved style with clear prioritization and guidance moving through enterprise layers	Accept and manage business risks based on an ROI model	IT portfolio managed at the run/grow/ transform level
Level 5: Competitive Innovation	Decisions are made dynamically and at high speed	Ability to innovate and deliver competitive advantages in spite of competition or environment	Strategy iterates rapidly in response to competitive opportunities and threats	Heavy focus on experimentation and problem-solving activities	Take calculated risks for competitive advantage	Venture capitalist approach to financial management

Source: Gartner

Does this not describe lean and agile?

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https://dancaringi.wordpress.com/2012/12/04/corporate-governance-maturity-model/

Improve Performance

Have a defined vision for the future of the company

Take a big picture view of the business separate from the operations

Ensure there is accountability and oversight of operations

Manage Risk

Find the right balance between making short-term gains and building long-term wealth

Helps with the establishment of a coherent culture of fit-for-purpose quality throughout the organisation

Supports effective decision making

What are the outcomes of effective governance?

Lean agile governance success factor 4:

Everyone deserves effective governance, not mindless bureaucracy

https://www.iod.org.nz/FirstBoards/What-is-governance and https://www.itproportal.com/features/how-to-create-a-culture-of-good-governance-through-qa/

Beware the cookie-cutter approach

Lean agile governance success factor 5:
Effective governance supports multiple and blended approaches

"Overregulation is not good governance. Good governance stems from a culture of appropriate core values within the institution. What constitutes good practices in governance **will vary according to the goals and objectives of a particular institution**"

(Australian National University, 2007)

https://www.inqaahe.org/sites/default/files/pictures/2_Henard%20-%20Mitterle_Good%20governance%20guidelines%20and%20QA%20two%20drivers%20on%20one%20wheel.pdf

Implications of an "agile mindset" in governance

- Lead by Example
- Be a "Host" and Servant Leader
- Motivation over management
- Enablement over audit
- Communicate clearly, honestly and in a timely manner
- Streamline Collaboration
- Trust but Verify
- Focus on Risk mitigation, not reviewing documents
- Learn continuously
- Consider both long and short term

Lean agile governance success factor 6:

Effective governance thrives on a lean agile mindset

Governance in an era of complexity (Complex Adaptive Systems)

Consider:

- What organisational layers are we governing?
- What is the scope of the governance required across each layer?
- Do we focus on optimizing the whole and not just the parts?

Lean agile governance success factor 7:

Effective governance is enterprise aware

Delegated authority is becoming the norm

Lean agile governance success factor 8:

Agile teams are most effective when governed in a lean agile manner

"In business today, effective processes for decision making are associated with words like speed, agility, and ambidexterity--characterized by **fewer filters through which decisions have to be processed and fewer people who have veto power over ideas**, good or bad**. Authority is delegated along with responsibility**. Everyone acts in the best interests of the organization, assuming knowledge of the objectives and acceptable ways of achieving them. Permission doesn't have to be granted. Rather, people act now and inform later, or else explain and examine what they did after the fact if things didn't go well."

James Heskett, Harvard Business School, See https://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/how-much-bureaucracy-is-a-good-thing-in-government-and-business

Recap: lean agile governance success factors

1. There will always be governance required – It is happening
2. Effective governance is context sensitive
3. Goal and principle driven governance is more effective
4. Everyone deserves effective governance, not mindless bureaucracy
5. Effective governance supports multiple and blended approaches
6. Effective governance thrives on a lean agile mindset
7. Effective governance is enterprise aware
8. Agile teams are most effective when governed in a lean agile manner

Lean agile governance ideas

…. Just a few of many….

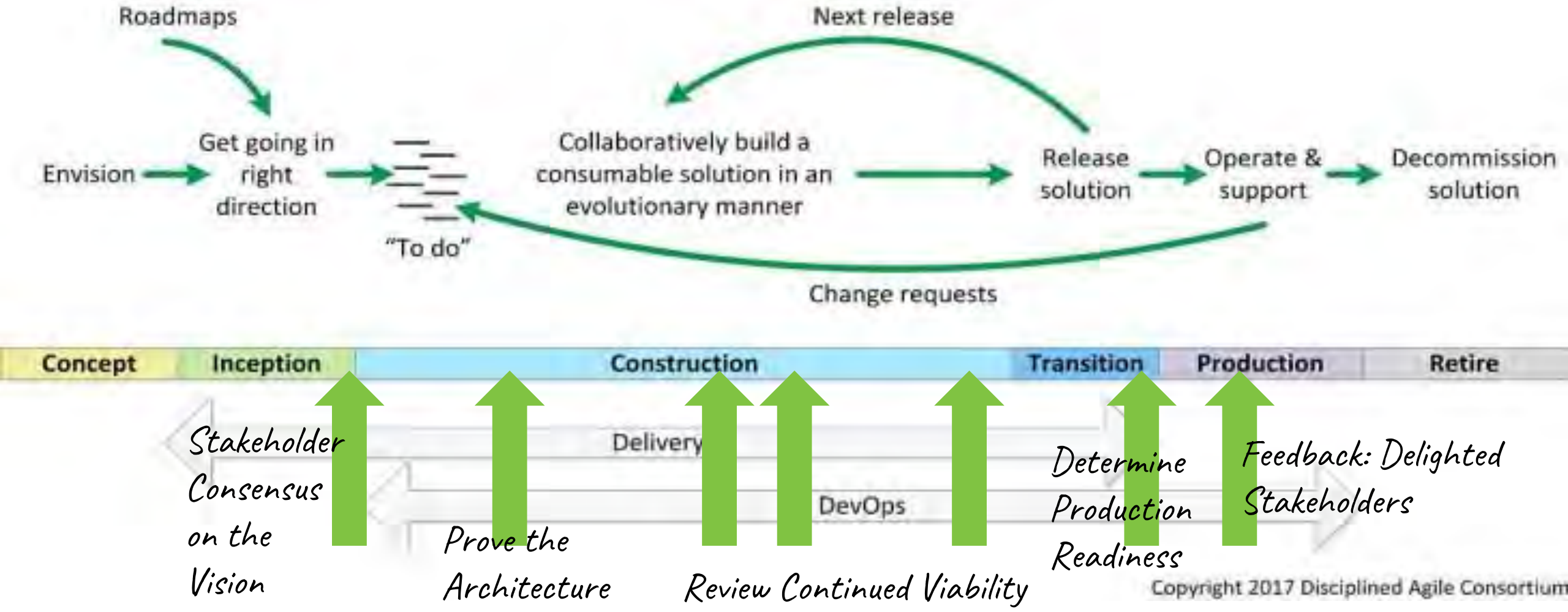
Agile principles

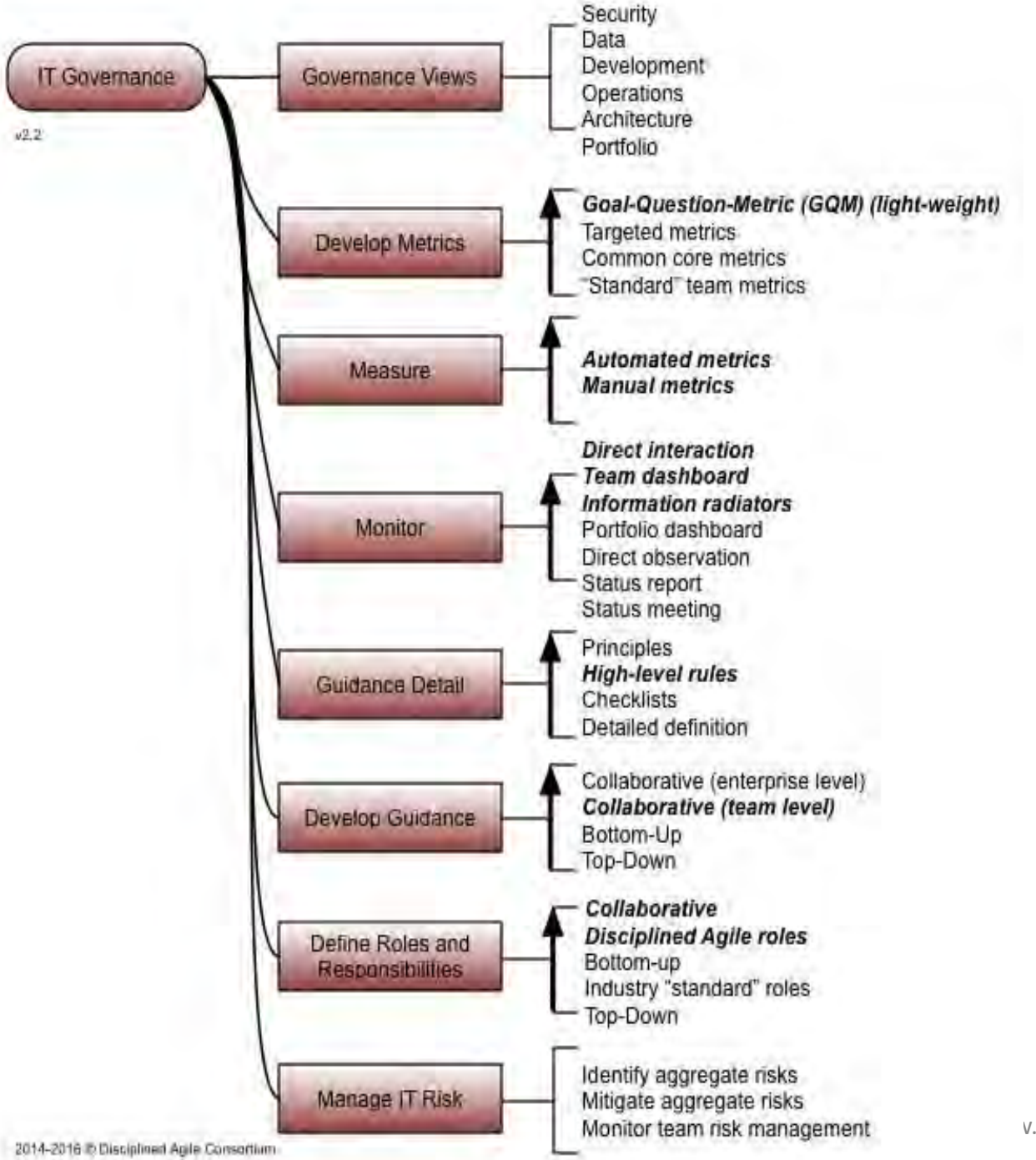
6. Effective governance thrives on a lean agile mindset

8. Agile teams are most effective when governed in a lean agile manner

Delivery lifecycle & lean agile governance

3. Goal and principle driven governance is more effective





IT governance

2. Effective governance is context sensitive

5. Effective governance supports multiple and blended approaches

7. Effective governance is enterprise aware

Delivery team governance

4. Everyone deserves effective governance, not mindless bureaucracy

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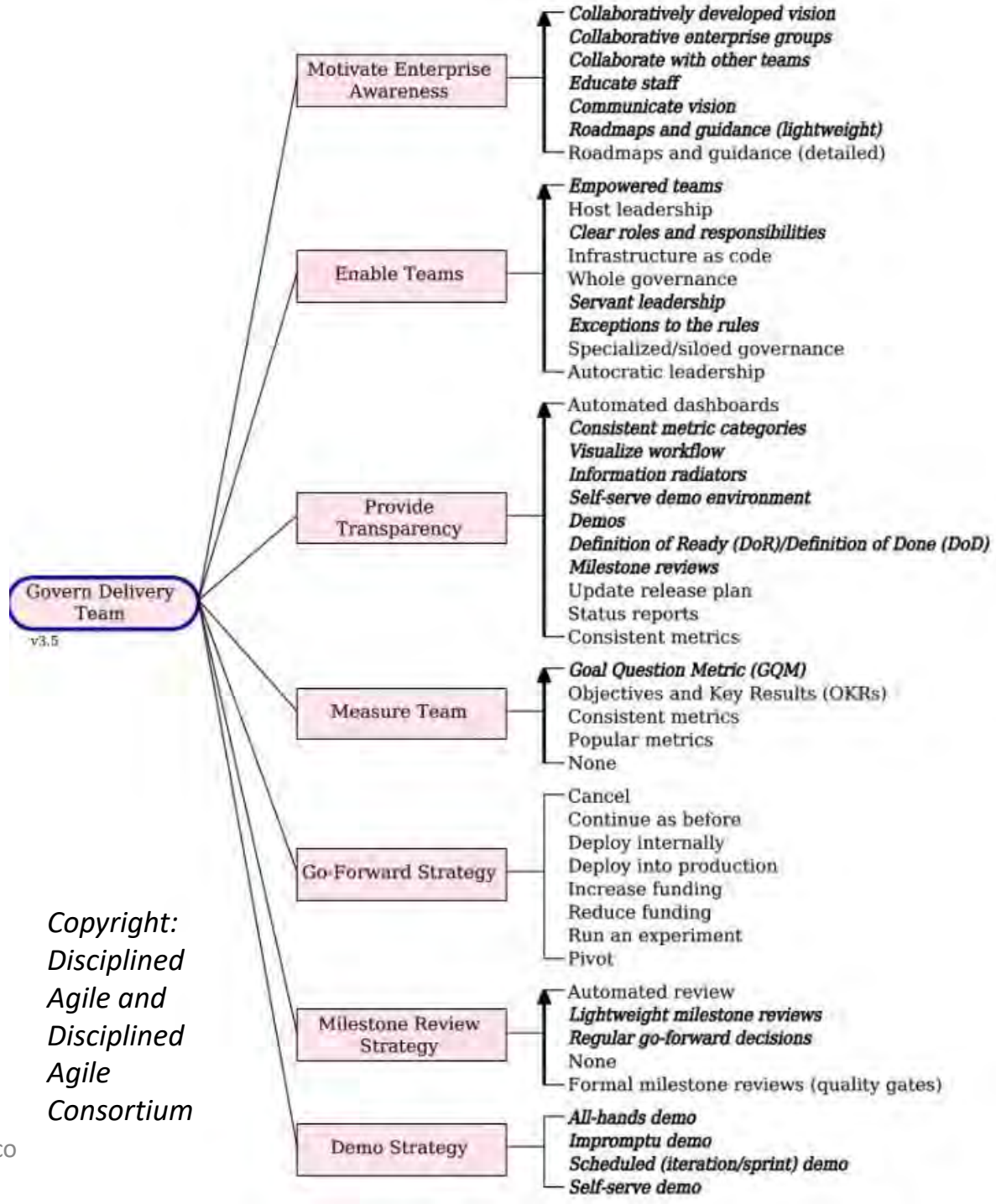

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Establish Clear Roles and Responsibilities

Funding Strategy

Develop Common Vision

Develop Test Strategy

Product/ Release planning

Alignment with Enterprise Direction

Stakeholder consensus milestone

Release Strategy

Production Ready milestone

Stakeholder Readiness Review

Delighted Stakeholders milestone

Technical Readiness Review

Release Validation

Rolling Wave Planning

DOR & DOD

Test-First Practices

Work visualisation: Task boards/ Information Radiators

Proven Architecture milestone

Continuous Improvement practices

Milestone reviews

Collaboration practices

Metrics and team measures via Automated team dashboards

Go-forward decision

Working Agreements

Project Viability milestone

Demos

CI/CD

Sufficient Functionality milestone

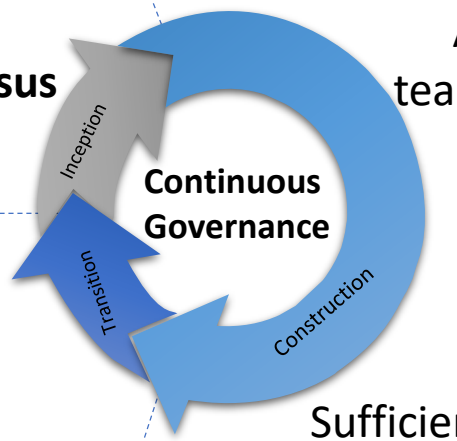
Coordination Meetings

Product Ownership

Modelling and Solution Design practices

Active stakeholder participation

Re-use Strategy



8. Agile teams are most effective when governed in a lean agile manner

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Final thoughts

Additional ideas for effective lean agile governance

Everyone is directly accountable to customers (Haier's "zero-distance" principle)

Include governance and quality considerations in service design

Refine the governance iteratively (as in a lean agile manner – start lightweight and improve incrementally)

Lean agile governance values:

- Collaboration over conformance
- Enabling teams to succeed over inspection of their work artefacts
- Continuous monitoring over quality gates
- Transparency over management reporting

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Thank you!

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