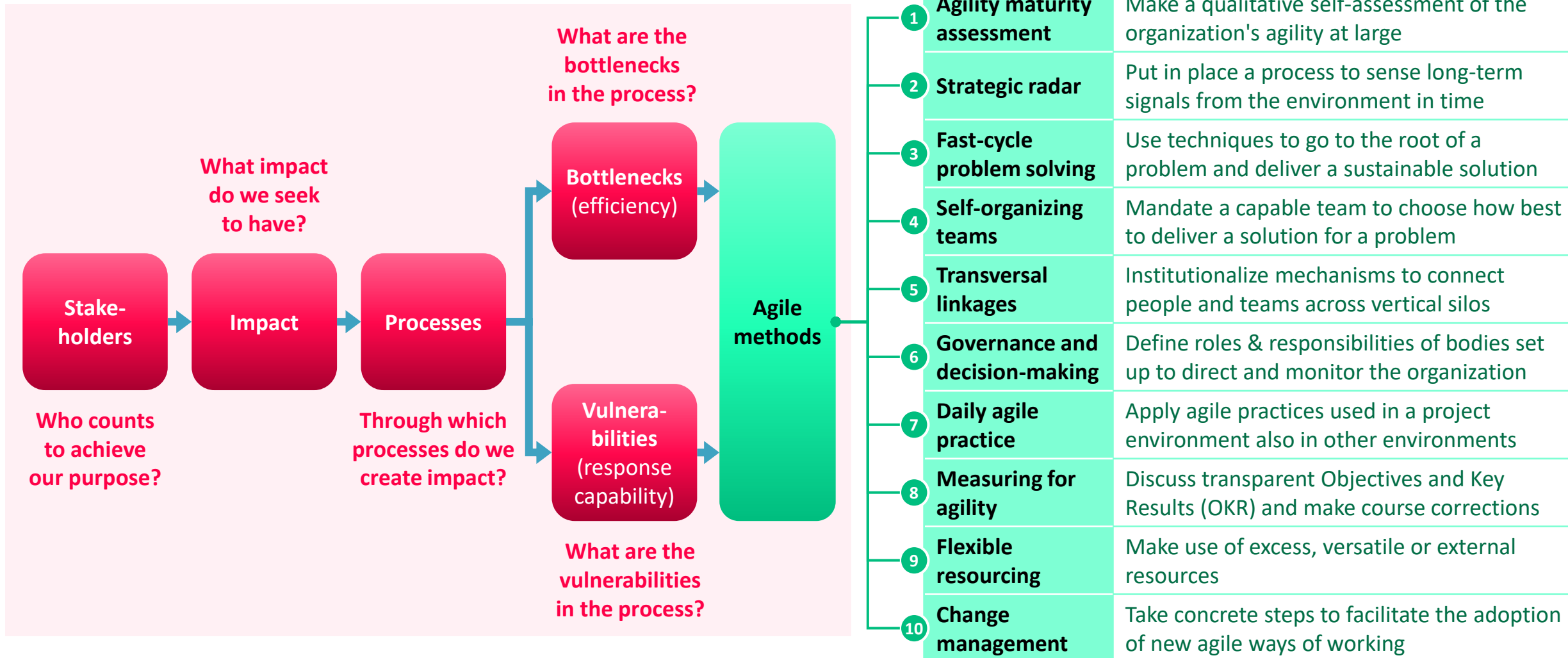


Adopt an agile method when it serves your organization's purpose



Non-exhaustive set of generic concepts applicable to a diverse range of ngo's without requiring a complete overhaul of the organization.

Make a qualitative self-assessment of the organization's agility at large

		Strongly disagree	Disagree more than agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree more than disagree	Strongly agree
Strategy	statement	O	O	O	O	O
Processes						
Structure						
People						
Technology						

Example of statement: “Our organization has a shared vision and common purpose meaningful to all parts of the organization.”

What is it

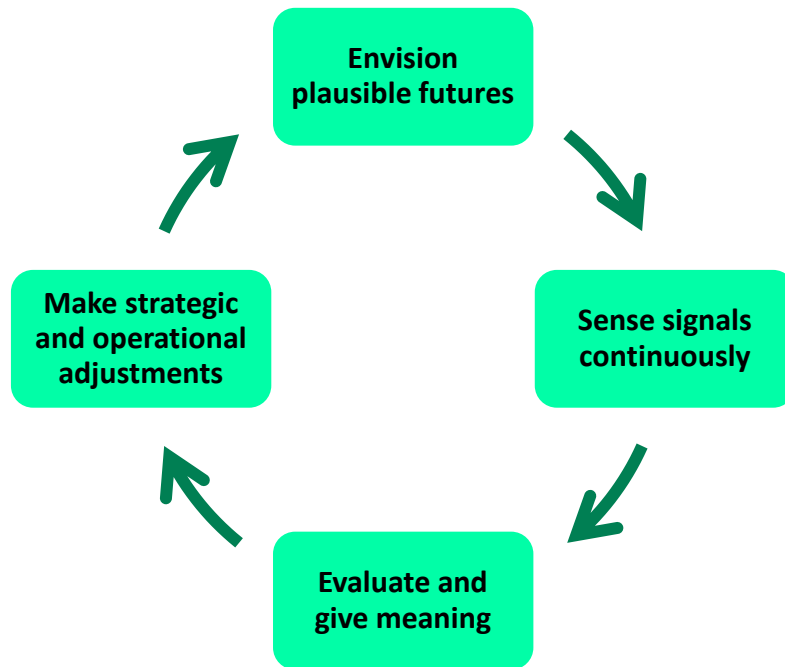
Various types of providers (often consulting firms) offer tools (often questionnaires) that enable an organization to assess its level of agility and monitor progress in its transformation or journey toward an agile organization. Most of those tools define agility in the broad sense, covering both strategy, processes, structure, people and technology.

How does it work

The questionnaire typically invites participants to indicate on a "strongly disagree" – "strongly agree" scale where their organization stands on aspects that are considered relevant for agility. Tools like these are surely helpful to initiate and structure a conversation within an organization but one should also be aware of their limitations. In many cases they are not solidly scientific.

For more information please see the full report.

Put in place a process to sense long-term signals from the environment in time



What is it

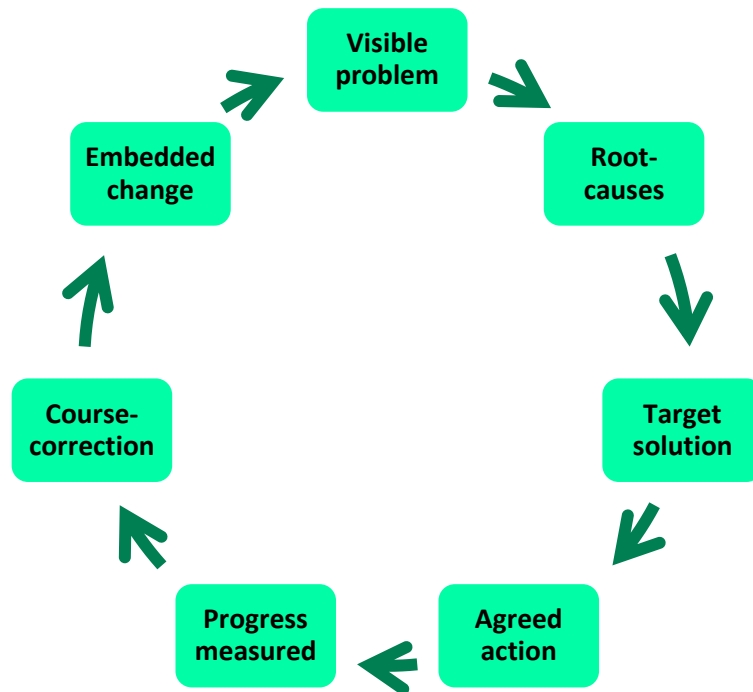
A strategic radar enables an organization, first, to register important signals from the external environment and, second, to trigger strategic and operational adjustments in response to these signals. The radar system is continuously fed by sensors that monitor known indicators and scans for unexpected signals. To know which indicators to use and where to scan, various methods are used, such as "scenario planning" and "horizon scanning". The latter refers to an early warning system set up to detect "weak signals" (early signs of possible but not confirmed changes) and "flex points" (critical indicators of key changes in the environment).

How does it work

A strategic radar is focused on the long-term maneuverability of the organization. By anticipating how the environment might possibly evolve, the organization is more ready to sense when and how the environment is really changing and is better prepared to trigger any needed adjustments to its strategy, i.e., be agile. To make that happen, the organization has to set up a systematic process: determine what should be monitored, identify internal and external sources, provide incentives to contribute, interpret the information, bring the intelligence to the attention of the right people, make decisions, and conduct periodic exercises to revise the approach as needed.

For more information please see the full report.

Use techniques to go to the root of a problem and deliver a sustainable solution



What is it

Fast-cycle problem solving refers to a suite of techniques that fundamentally have the same objective: define the problem to be solved, identify a course of action to solve the problem, measure the results of the actions taken, adjust the course as needed, consolidate the improvement, and start the problem-solution-action-measurement-adjustment cycle all over again. Examples are: plan-do-check-act (PDCA) and define-measure-analyze-improve-control (DMAIC), which can be linked to the total quality management, six sigma and lean movements.

How does it work

The techniques can be used to address problems both at the level of the organization as a whole (e.g., slow management decision-making), a team (e.g., continuous fire-fighting), a process (e.g., late closing of the accounting books) and a project (e.g., dissatisfied sponsors). Whatever the level, any effective problem-solving technique starts with a good understanding of the real problem and its root-causes, for which the Five Whys method and visualization as a fishbone (or Ishikawa) diagram can be used. Wherever possible and meaningful, the nature and magnitude of the problem and root-causes should be quantified.

For more information please see the full report.

Mandate a capable team to choose how best to deliver a solution for a problem

	Stable organization units	Self-organizing team
Type of work	Routine – well-defined tasks executed serially	Creative – ambiguous collaborative work
Driving force	Reliably fulfilling the roles assigned to the unit	Flexibly delivering a solution for a specific challenge
Members	Permanent staff of the units	Temporarily configured from various units
Cooperation	Via clear interfaces between people and units	Through intensive interaction within the team
Role of boss	Daily supervision of “what” and “how”	Define “what” + support stuck teams + build bridges
Role of team leader	Boss = team leader	Define “how” with the team + enable its members
Yardstick	Ongoing quality, productivity and motivation	Outcome of singular mission

What is it

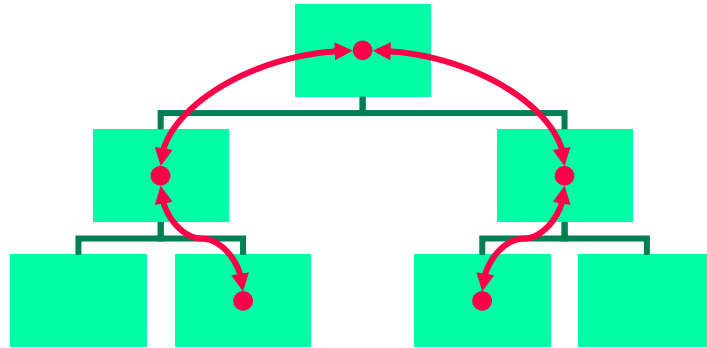
A self-organizing team is a small semi-autonomous self-regulated group of people whose members determine, plan and manage their day-to-day activities under reduced supervision in the pursuit of a specific outcome that has been defined by the organization.

How does it work

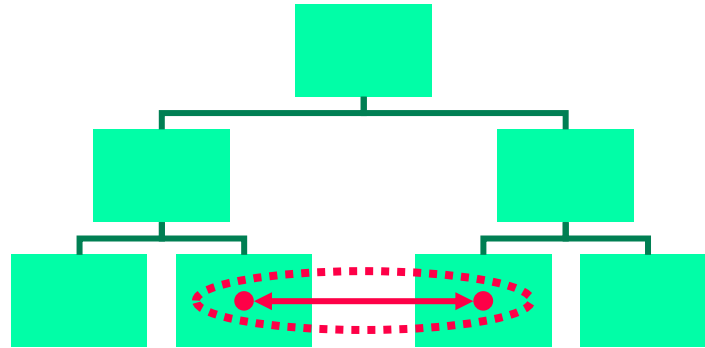
A group of willing and intelligent people with a good mix of relevant skills can be more motivated (jointly accountable for the outcome), creative (finding novel solutions), agile (adapting the plan to changing conditions) and efficient (deciding on next steps quickly) than a team whose members are constantly directed by someone outside. But an organization with self-organizing teams is not boss-less: the organization's leader has to define clear goals and ensure that all teams are aligned with the goals. Autonomy without alignment usually leads to chaos.

For more information please see the full report.

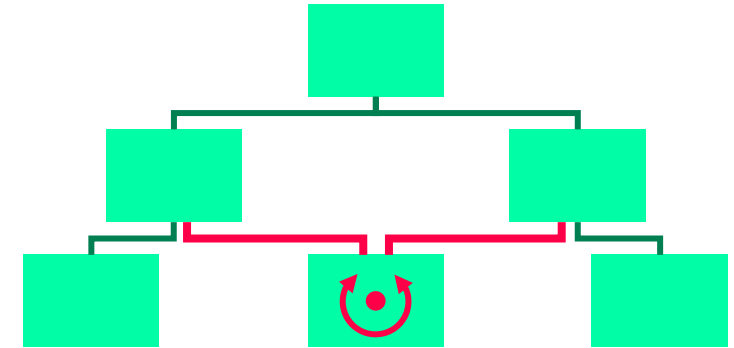
Institutionalize mechanisms to connect people and teams across vertical silos



No transversal linkage



Soft-wired linkage (e.g. network)



Hard-wired linkage (matrix)

What is it

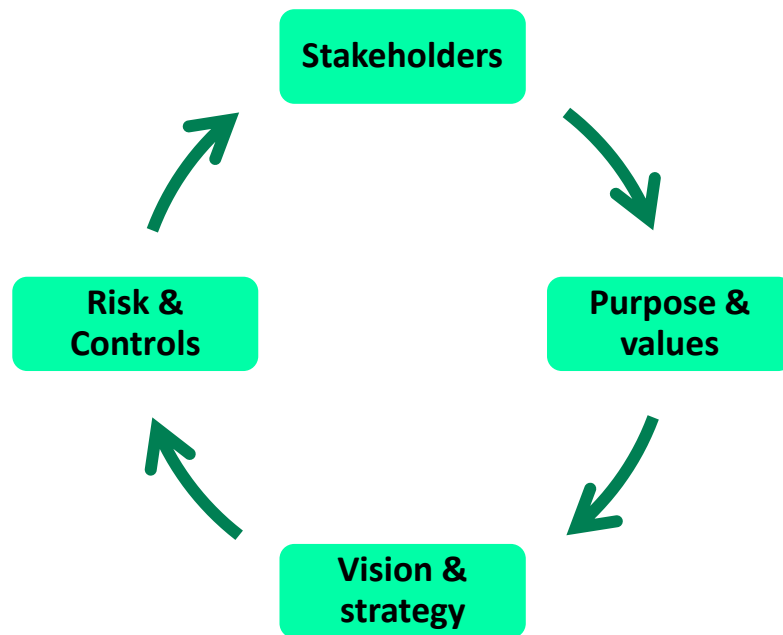
When an organization grows in size and scope, its management structure becomes more complex, often leading to vertical silos. Transversal mechanisms make it natural and easy for people across the verticals and at all levels to link with each other directly to coordinate work, share knowledge, etc. Not having to pass up and down the hierarchy enables a faster response to requests or needs from more distant parts of the organization.

For more information please see the full report.

How does it work

Transversal linkages can be achieved through soft-wiring or hard-wiring. Soft-wiring relies on mechanisms such as task forces, networks, a central coordination function, etc. that are light yet should be institutionalized, managed, measured and improved as needed. Hard-wiring refers to a matrix structure, where some managers have reporting lines to two bosses representing complementary dimensions. A matrix structure is complicated and should be used sparingly.

Define roles and responsibilities of bodies set up to direct and monitor the organization



What is it

By setting direction and boundaries governance bodies can help safeguard the long-term success of the organization and serve the interests of its stakeholders: define the organization's purpose; set a strategy to deliver it; and ensure that risks are properly managed and the required control and compliance mechanisms are in place. They can speed up things by contributing unique expertise, constructively challenging the organization's management, connecting with external networks, and enlisting the support of critical stakeholders. They may slow down things by being indecisive, meddlesome or otherworldly.

How does it work

The good functioning of a governance body depends on various factors including: the intrinsic quality and diversity of its members, clear roles and responsibilities vis-à-vis other bodies, and a fit-for-purpose meeting frequency. The distribution of formal roles and responsibilities should be documented in a decision matrix describing the delegation of authority on matters such as making financial expenditures, recruiting people, establishing partnerships, making public statements, starting legal proceedings, setting up branches, etc. The by-laws of a body describe the rules regarding its own functioning (e.g., voting procedures, records of meetings, ...).

For more information please see the full report.

Apply agile practices used in a project environment also in other environments

Term	What it is about	Traditional practice	Agile practice	Benefits
Sprint	Rhythm at which outputs are delivered	Driven by the department's fixed calendar	Driven by the needs of the various users	Effectively organized work and better-served users
Daily stand-up meeting	Ways in which progress is managed	Periodic formal sit-down reporting meetings	Daily short interactive review meetings in circle	Quick adjustments to potential obstacles
Big room	Ways in which relevant information is treated	Spread across individuals and hidden from sight	Visually shared and updated in one single place	Common understanding, memory and use

What is it

Agility practices are applied naturally in the context of project management and self-organizing teams. But some agile practices can be used equally well in the course of non-project activities performed by any department or team. Examples are: sprints, daily stand-up and big room.

How does it work

With a sprint the department plans its work according to the moments at which specific users of specific outputs would expect to receive it. With a daily stand-up meeting the department team meets briefly every morning to report on yesterday's progress along the sprints, the plans for the coming day and any obstacles that stand in the way. In a big room all relevant information for the functioning of the department is visually depicted on the walls in a single room (physical or virtual) accessible to all. It can include the sprint backlog, actions, issues and metrics. It is typically also where the stand-up takes place.

For more information please see the full report.

Discuss transparent Objectives and Key Results (OKR) and make course corrections

	Traditional practice	Agile practice
Frequency	Objective setting and review is an annual or quarterly ritual	Goals are discussed frequently as a function of progress
Transparency	Indicators and performance are kept private at individual level	Goals and current performance are made public for all people to see

What is it	How does it work
Even though people’s behavior is also influenced by their identification with the organization's purpose and values, people tend to behave according to the objectives they are given and evaluated upon. So, if an organization wants to be agile, it should set agility objectives. But setting the right performance indicators is tricky. For this, "Objectives and Key Results" (OKR) is a valuable concept. "Objectives" are short descriptions of what you want to achieve, and each objective includes a handful of "key results" (a specific output, achievement, etc.) that you anticipate will measure your progress toward that objective.	Within the context of agility, good OKRs have two characteristics: frequent and transparent. Goals should be discussed frequently so that progress can be reviewed, priorities can be adapted, resources can be re-allocated and feedback can be given. In other words, OKRs should be used to shape the work that needs to be done by an individual and/or a team. Goals should also be transparent: people should know what colleagues in other teams are working on so that they can align their activities across silos, show what level of performance is possible, and can locate colleagues who can provide advice on how they can do better.

For more information please see the full report.

Make use of excess, versatile or external resources

	What is it	The trade-off to be made	
		Potential disadvantage	Potential advantage
Slack resources (excess)	Excess capacity to meet peak demand	Extra direct cost	Lower opportunity cost
Versatile resources (multi-task)	Multi-task instead of task-specific resources	Insufficient specialist input for the work	Better capacity utilization
Contingent resources (external)	Use of external parties for skills and capacity	Dependence and loss of "institutional memory"	Flexibility with less long-term liability

What is it

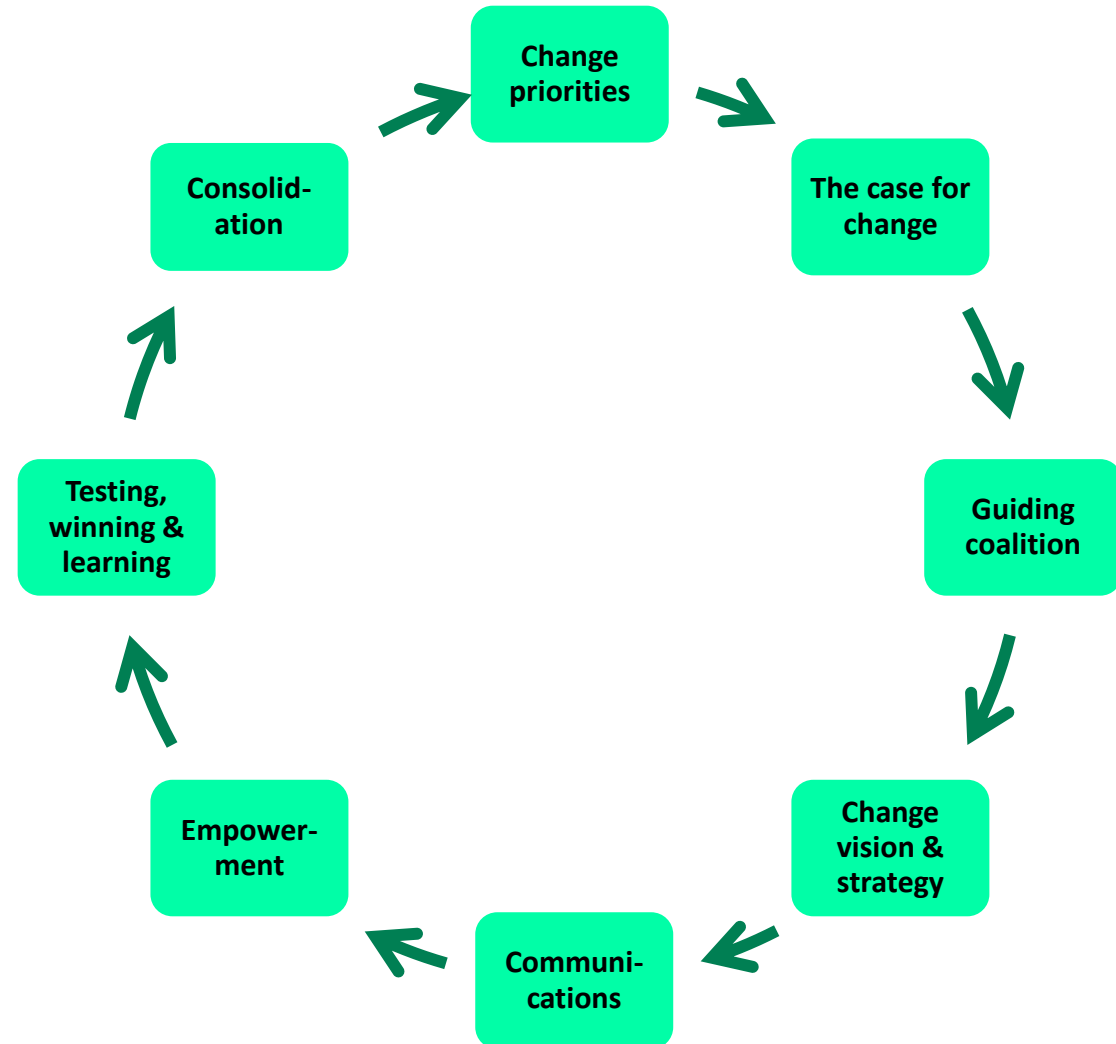
People fulfil a critical role in meeting the organization's purpose. But when it comes to agility, people may also be a constraining factor: the organization may not have the peak capacity or the specific skills required to respond smoothly to unexpected changes in its environment. Fortunately, there are ways to have a more flexible resource base.

How does it work

First, one can maintain excess resources and capacity, which carries an extra direct cost that has to be weighed against the opportunity cost of being insufficiently responsive. Second, one can have versatile instead of task-specific resources so that they can be re-assigned temporarily, even though versatile resources tend to be less good in a specialist task and/or more expensive. Third, one can rely on external resources via flexible arrangements such as framework agreements or contingent workforce platforms, despite the risk of dependence on third parties and loss of institutional memory.

For more information please see the full report.

Take concrete steps to facilitate the adoption of new agile ways of working



What is it

Becoming a more agile organization requires changes in the ways of working. But change doesn't come automatically. Change management is about ensuring that an organization transitions successfully from its current state to its targeted new state. As organizational change only happens when individuals change, the goal of change management is to engage employees: create awareness about the need for change, explain what's in it for them, give the skills and opportunities to change, and encourage not to revert to old habits.

How does it work

Change at the level of the organization requires the following: decide which change has to happen first, build a case for change and a sense of urgency, form a powerful and committed coalition for change, clarify the vision of the desired change and the strategy to realize it, communicate the vision and behave accordingly, empower teams and people to take action, look for short-term wins and learn from those, consolidate the changes and institutionalize the new approaches, and start the change cycle all over again.

For more information please see the full report.