

CASE STUDY

TRANSPARENT AGILE/LPM ASSESSMENTS: REALISTIC OUTCOMES OVER “GOING THROUGH THE MOTIONS”

CONTEXT

LSA Digital was engaged to support a Department of Defense (DoD) agency, responsible for designing and engineering cutting-edge munitions technology. The agency needed to assess and enhance its agile practices to improve overall efficiency, collaboration, and alignment with its strategic vision. LSA Digital conducted an agile assessment, focusing on identifying key areas of improvement and laying the groundwork for incremental enhancements in business, team, and technical agility.

CLIENT CHALLENGES

The agency faced several challenges that hindered its ability to effectively implement agile methodologies:

- **Strategic Alignment & Prioritization:** Teams struggled to see how their work fit into broader goals, leading to difficulties prioritizing initiatives and maintaining focus. Misaligned budgeting further complicated resource allocation.
- **Digital goal alignment:** Ongoing digital transformation efforts lacked clear alignment with strategic goals, resulting in an overemphasis on reporting without tangible progress toward objectives.
- **Process & Innovation:** Bloated processes stifled innovation and slowed product delivery.
- **Transparency & Accountability:** A lack of transparency and accountability made it difficult to track progress and hold teams responsible for results.

SNAPSHOT



Agility, Business Process
Mgmt, Frictionless BizOps



US Dept of Defense



PAIN POINTS

- Lack of digital goal alignment
- Difficulty prioritizing work
- Lack of real-time reporting data and actionable insights
- Process inefficiencies
- Lack of transparency and visibility of work

RESULTS

- Improved agile progress transparency
- Outcomes tracking focus, not just practices
- Faster corrective action / pivoting for more realistic outcome expectation

WHAT WE DID

LSA Digital facilitated the Scaled Agile (SAFe) assessments, using SAFe's 7 Core Competencies as a guide -- with a particular focus on lean portfolio management, team and technical agility, agile product delivery and fostering a continuous learning culture. Specifically, we:

- **Established a Baseline:** This baseline was the foundation for tracking progress over time and identifying areas where agile practices can be enhanced
- **Focused on Small Wins:** Starting small with incremental changes helped to avoid overwhelming the organization, and allowed for scaling up with each success
- **Built-in Transparency:** Dashboards were developed to show progress towards goals, leveraging the agency's ARIS Digital Process Transformation repository content with baseline, targets and KPI data (see our case study: [ARIS Platform Service](#))

RESULTS & BENEFITS

While the full impact of these efforts will be realized over time, the initial results of the assessments provided several key benefits:

- **Improved Agile Progress Transparency:** The established baselines allow dashboard-tracking progress against specific benchmarks, ensuring that future improvements are measurable and aligned with strategic digital goals (e.g., faster research & better decisions).
- **Delivered an outcome-oriented framework:** The assessment dashboards were designed to go beyond "going through the motions" of agile practices, and included actual outcomes tracked to practices - for example, in Team and Technical Agility, did micro-learning and tooling help improve faster outputs and feedback? (Read our case study: [Effective Agility: Starting Small and Scaling Up with Micro-Learning & Hands-on Tooling](#)).
- **Fast corrective action / pivoting:** The transparency helped shorten the learning cycle to understand "what's working" and "common blockage", helping to adjust targets for more realistic outcomes.

WORDS OF ADVICE

For organizations embarking on an agile transformation, it is crucial to begin with a clear understanding of the current state. Establishing a baseline through structured assessments has to be paired with transparency and feedback needed for course corrections -- helping to be more realistic to achieve incremental success. Starting small and focusing on incremental changes not only builds momentum, but also ensures that the transformation can scale effectively as the organization grows.