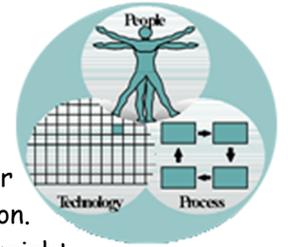


# AGILITY = People + Process + Technology



Organizational agility is the capacity to sense and respond better and faster than your customers' expectations and your competition capabilities ... at all levels in your organization.

Wow ... agility at all levels within your organization! Just sit back and imagine what that might really look and feel like? As you take your mental tour of your organization, which obstacles come to mind most often ... issues with people, issues with the business processes that define "how" you get stuff done or is it issues with your technology ... be that either the mechanical or informational variety or both.

Creating true and sustainable agility in organizations requires all three domains (**people, process and technology**) to be examined and addressed. You could have the "best" people and organization in your industry but if you don't have the right business processes and technology to support your people equation ... you cannot compete successfully in this fast-paced, rapidly changing environment. You can readily name many examples of organizations who excel in one or two of these domains ... few organizations have successfully addressed all three ... but the numbers are growing.

## The Agile Success Equation

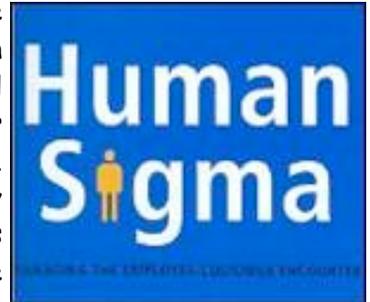
Success in our highly volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) world today comes to those organizations that find a way to bring all three key organizational domains (people, process and technology) into balance with focus, speed and flexibility to deliver on the enterprise strategic objectives. Simply stated ... why do we exist and how do we support that reason better and faster each day. Each domain is deserving of focused attention and evaluation to surface the obstacles and enablers to success. Below is an outline to stimulate your thinking within your own organization ... where do we need to get better if we are to improve?

## Keys to Building An Agile Enterprise

Agility Goals	People	Process	Technology
<b>Focused</b>	How do you insure your people understand and are focused on your key priorities? Is there a high coefficient of clarity within your leadership team?	Do you have clarity for who "owns" your mission critical processes and how well they meet customer requirements?	How well does your technology support critical processes and how does it compare with competition?
<b>Fast</b>	Does your organizational climate and your people operate with a sense of urgency in getting right stuff done and with speed of decision making?	Do your mission critical processes (e.g. hiring, product development, go to market, innovation, new customer acquisition, etc) provide you competitive advantage or represent obstacles to success?	Where does your technology provide you competitive speed advantages ... where does your technology cause you to be slower than your competition?
<b>Flexible</b>	Strategic agility begins with leadership agility and the capacity of your workforce to adapt to change. Is your organization Agile or Fragile?	Do your processes recognize the differences in your portfolio or is everything one size fits all? What is the scalability or capacity for plug and play?	What is the extent of user involvement in technology applications. Are we able to adapt technology solutions and approaches to gain greater flexibility?

## PEOPLE

During the past five years, we have seen reams of studies and data published about the definitive role and impact from high people engagement to drive superior results in organizations. The work of Gary Loveman and others in **The Service Profit Chain** as well as Fleming and Asplund's **Human Sigma**, clearly highlight that high engagement of your people can lead to as much as 3.4 times the productivity of average employee teams. Similar research has indicated that as much as 40% of employee productivity is actually "discretionary". Meaning there is a very large percentage of the average employee's productivity that is at their discretion to give or not. Organizations that are truly agile and "focused" on their people with authentic engagement opportunities, get the larger share of that discretionary effort.



## PROCESS

Processes are often the least understood or valued part of the Agile Enterprise equation ... not as interesting as engaging people or reinventing technology solutions. Yet it is your everyday business processes that define most of what gets done. Our rapidly changing climate requires a fresh look at business process engineering with some new biases and filters. Have we applied the disciplines in Lean Six Sigma to track the value creation in our core business processes? Have we been on search and destroy missions to find obsolete or non-value added processes? Often this can be the source of much "drag" in organizations ... conflicting, ambiguous or sometimes even paraplegic processes that have been patched and poorly bandaged over years of organization change. Much complexity and ambiguity exists in some organizations because lack of clarity in "decision rights" or accountability. A fresh assessment or process audit to identify priorities, owners and gaps help cleanse and even detox our "organi-zations" ... it can also be refreshing to internal customers.



## TECHNOLOGY

No domain has experienced more rapid and rampant change than the field of technology. Technology can provide organizational steroids to accelerate performance enhancement in some cases. There have been numerous examples of competitive "leapfrogging" via new technology capabilities ... Google, Skype and Amazon are some of the best known high-value cases. On smaller scales, it is happening every day. Customer expectations around speed, convenience, transparency and flexibility requires most organizations to continuously challenge their involvement with technology. Technology operates on every level in most organizational realms ... customer, supplier, employee, competitors, regulatory, shareholders. IBM's 2008 and 2010 studies about the "Enterprise of the Future" as well as their Smarter Planet series clearly signal that technology will continue to play an essential role in future success. Those organizations that understand that commitment can compete ... those that don't will not survive. The world of technology has been actively reinventing its own methodology and increasing adopting the core principles from the Agile Manifesto and promoted within the Agile Alliance. See more in our July newsletter about the Agile Alliance 2011 Conference in Salt Lake City.

