

# Results over Reports

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# Lean Methods Exemplified in Case Study



## Streamlined Development Application Fund – SDAF

- Small development projects
  - Deck
  - Building a house
- Low density under 10 units

## Streamlined Development Application Process - SDAP

- Large development projects
  - Condos
- Commercial and industrial projects
- High density over 10 units

# Objective for Today:

Share how the City of Burlington and Lean Agility collaborated to **move the needle on improving the City's development application processes**, delivering quick results while building a Continuous Improvement movement.



Cutting review time **in half** for some review processes!



Elimination of 5 application types **saving 20h** of staff effort per file



**Reduction in 2 weeks** of work through improvement of file assignment step

## Results > Reports

Have you ever received a report with recommendations for change that never get executed?

Do you start strong on improvement efforts and lose momentum or can't sustain your change?

Do you ever feel like you never really "move the needle" on complex and recurring problems or pain points?

# The Results Formula:

$$R = I \times D \times E$$

Have you ever received a report with recommendations for change that never got executed?

R=

Sustained  
Results

I= 

Quality of Idea

D= 

Desire or Buy-In of the necessary people

E= 

Ability of the organization to Execute the improvement idea

# Quality of Idea

$$R = I \times D \times E$$

You can't make  
breakthrough  
change without  
questioning  
assumptions of  
the current state

# Create Tougher Thinking Challenges “Impossible Questions”

## Stretch Thinking – Ask Impossible Questions

How could we do this if...  
What would we have to do if...

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We wanted to process it 99% faster?

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We wanted it done right 100% of the time?

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We wanted to triple our throughput

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We wanted to eliminate 98% of the steps?

## Without (inappropriately)...

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- Reducing quality
- Working harder
- Spending money
- Adding technology
- Adding people
- Introducing unreasonable risk

## While also....

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- Increasing customer / citizen satisfaction
- Making the work charge our batteries (not drain them)



= a smaller number of more powerful solutions

# Examples of Impossible Questions

## Pre-Building Approval Process (Low Density Development)

What if we completed the pre-building permit review in 1 day

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What if the pre-building permit process took 95% less effort than it does today?

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What if the pre-building permit process was completely error proofed? No re-work, no errors, no missing information?

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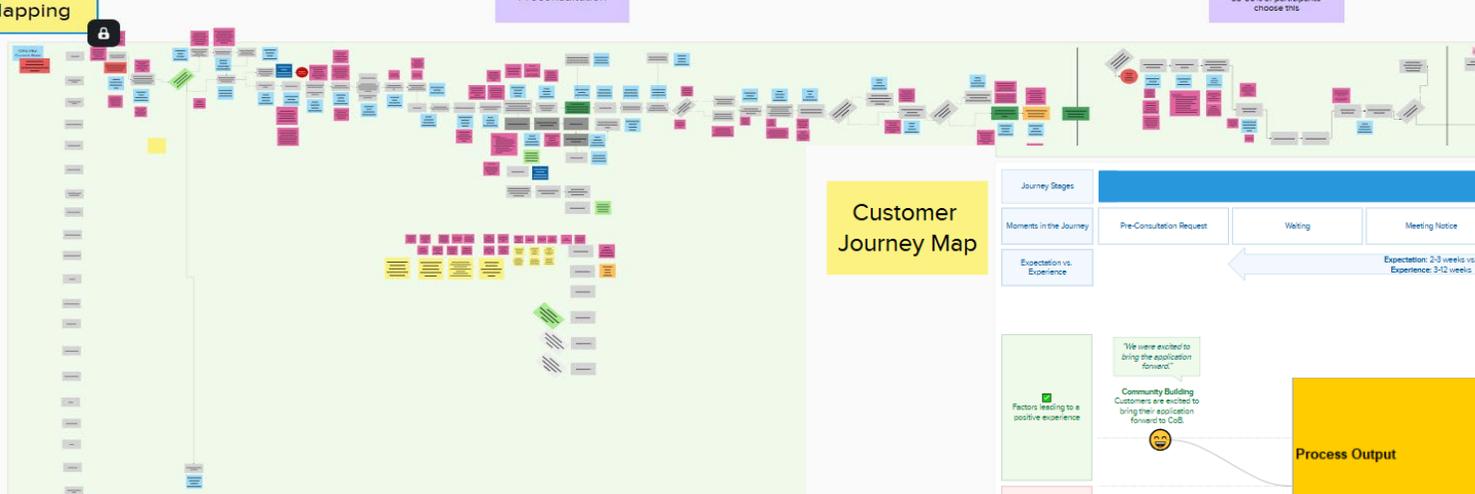
This means:

- One review cycle
  - No back and forth with the customer
  - High quality submissions the first time
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# Good Ideas Start with Good Analysis

## Solutions Should Always Start with the Root Cause

Mapping



Customer Journey Map

Role	Process Step, title of person performing the step	Processing Time (PT) hours	Elapsed Time (ET) hours	Complete & Accurate %	Failure Dama
	Zoning - Review	7	70	0%	request form only asks for high level information but zoning requires much more detail to make detailed comments - 100%
	External Agencies - Review	0			
	Policy Team - review	0			
	Cultural Heritage - review	2	91	90%	
Applicant	Answer questions from commentors	1	14	10%	Application is high level and details not always provided upfront - 30% Not clear what the next steps in the process will be, so don't know how to frame comments - 30%
	Reach out to applicant for any clarification required	0	14	10%	Application is high level and details not always provided upfront - 30%
	Answer questions/provide clarification	0	21	80%	
	Consolidate all comments into Word document	4	0	75%	Missing comments - 50% Comments if various formats - 100%
	Prepare terms of reference (what expecting for required reports) for external meeting and pre-con doc with	0	0	75%	Missing comments - 50% Content tailored on site specific way - 100%
	Complete internal meeting (Monday)	1	0	90%	

Process Output	Lack of standardization	Payment process/ online payment	No self serve options and info for applicant	Circulation management and tracking	No centralized document management & visibility - both staff and app	Content/ agenda items before meeting	Missing/ late comments	Incomplete content from the applicant	Duplication of effort	Can't meet the provincial timeline	Communications are lacking or slow	Pre-con comments not available before meeting	Unpredictable timelines	Total
Importance to Customer	9	3	9	1	1	9	1	9	3	9	9	9	9	
Process Step / Input	Correlation Scores													Total
Lack of standardization		9	3	3	9		3	3	9		9	9	9	447
Payment process/ online payment			3	3	3			3	3		3		3	123
No self serve options and info for applicant		3				9		3	3		9			183
Circulation					3				9		3		3	84
Workflow management and tracking							3	9			9	9	9	297
No centralized document management & visibility - both staff and app	9	3	9	3	9			9			9	3		345
Content/ agenda items before meeting (applicant)				3	1			3					3	48
Missing/ late comments			3	9	9	9	9	3	3		3	9	9	165
Incomplete content from the applicant		3		9	9		3		9			3	9	120
Duplication of effort		3			3							3	9	120
Can't meet the provincial timeline														0
Communications (staff and applicant) are lacking or slow	3	9		3	9		3	3	9	3			3	141
Pre-con comments not available before meeting				9	3		3	9	3		3		9	141
Unpredictable timelines					9		3							12
	1	5	4	5	11	4	2	4	3	11	0	7	6	8

Unclear Customer they'll have meeting project they'll get pre-con

It's a bit elaborate...also they ask when they get pre-con

Collaboration When customers feel like staff are doing everything they can and working collaboratively with them to resolve issues, their experience is more positive.

Unable to Get Answers to Questions Customer expect staff to be able to provide clear answers to direction for their questions, to perceive inexperience to be a barrier to this.

It's a lot of red questions we have res from from new anything 10, Province, Corporation that type thing where she is kind of area?

These meetings are resulting in future follow up to get the answer that you were hoping to get at the meeting, and I think that speaks to the comment about staff not really being able to provide an answer?

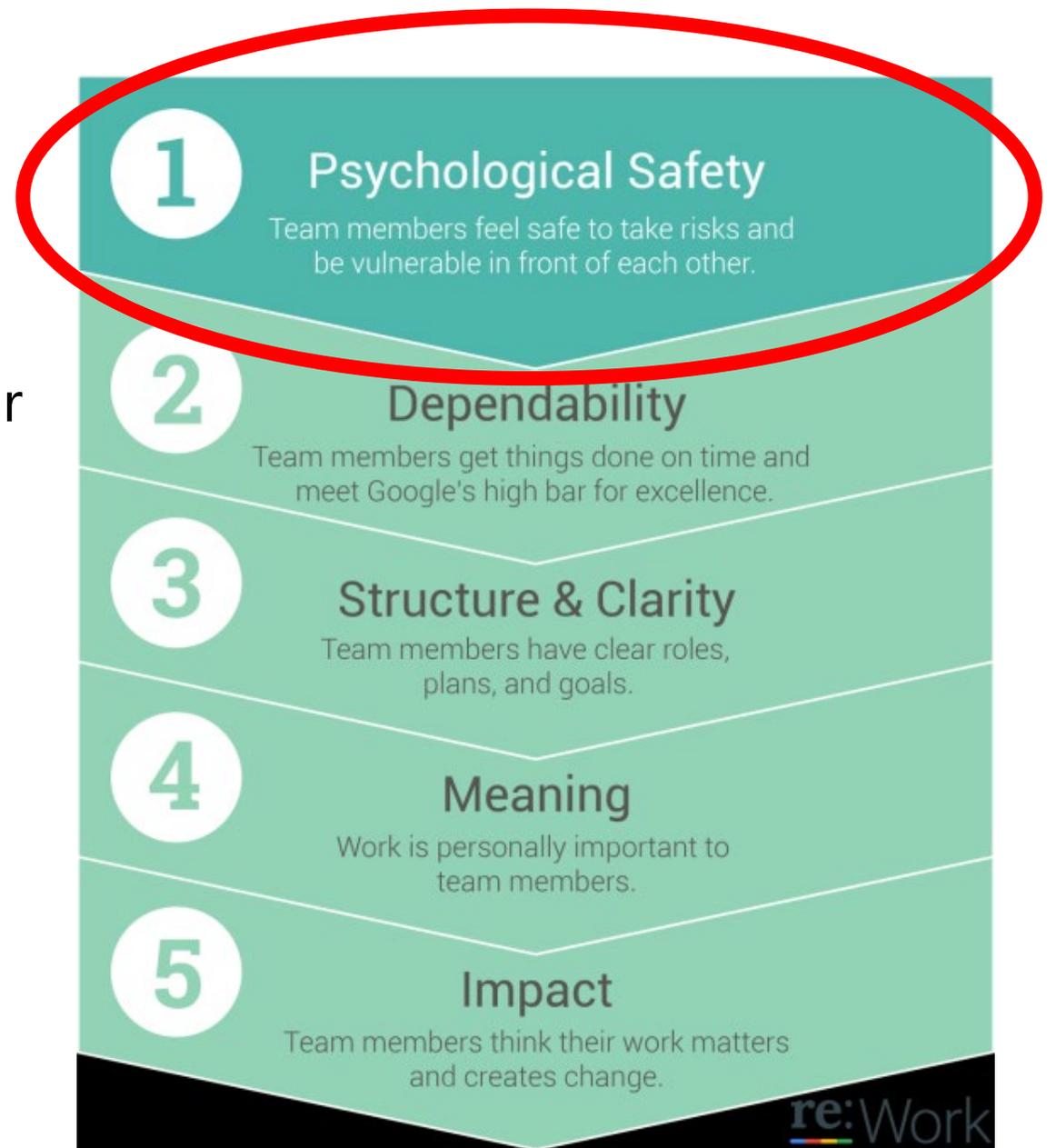
# Desire or Buy-In

$$R = I \times D \times E$$

Do you start strong on improvement efforts and lose momentum or can't sustain your change?

# Create Psychological Safety

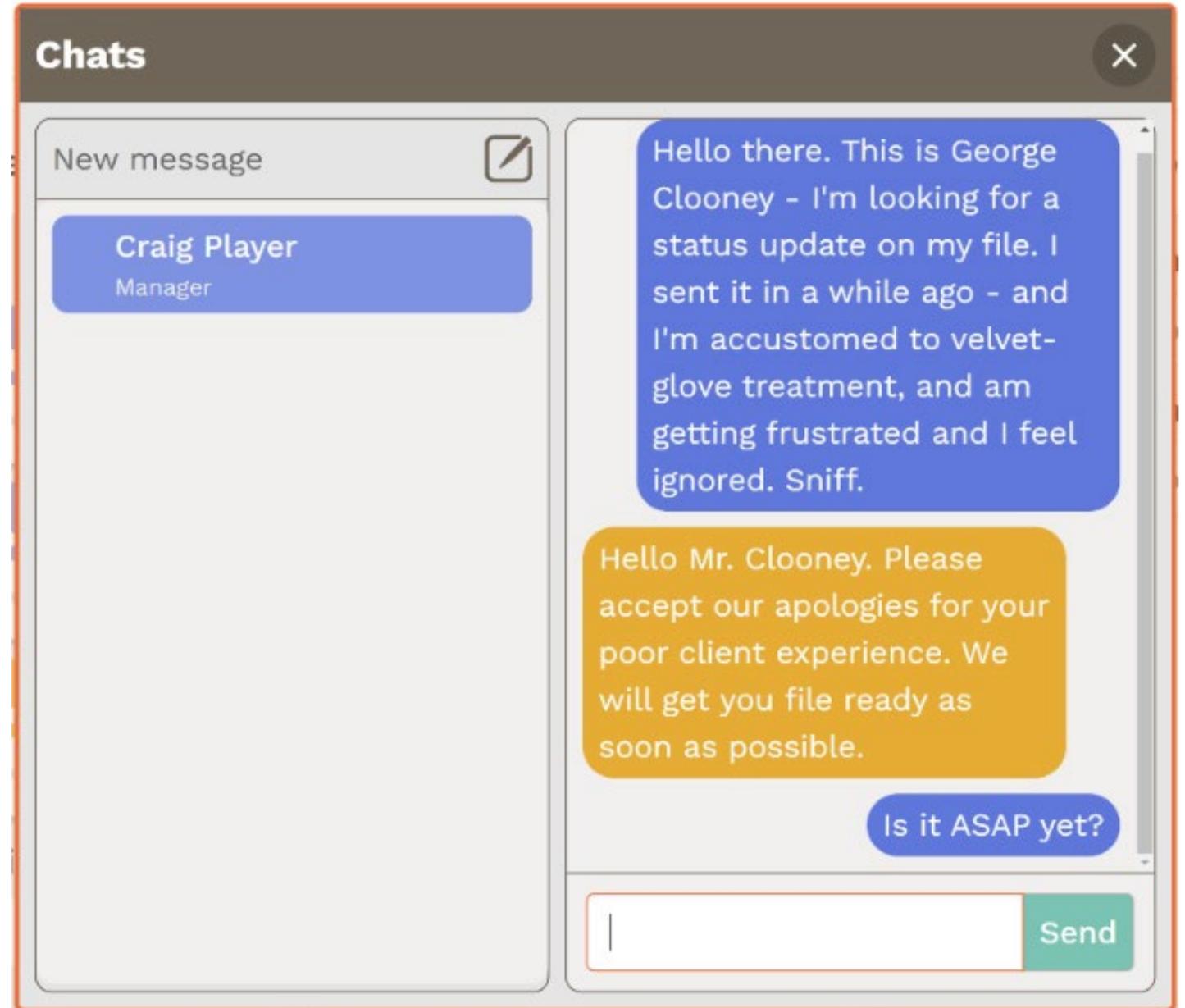
"The belief that one will not be punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns, or mistakes, and that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking" -Amy Edmondson, 1999



# Training

## Lean Yellow Belt (3 days)

- For all leaders AND team members
- Learn the approach and tools that will be used in the project
- Learn how to improve a simple end-to-end process



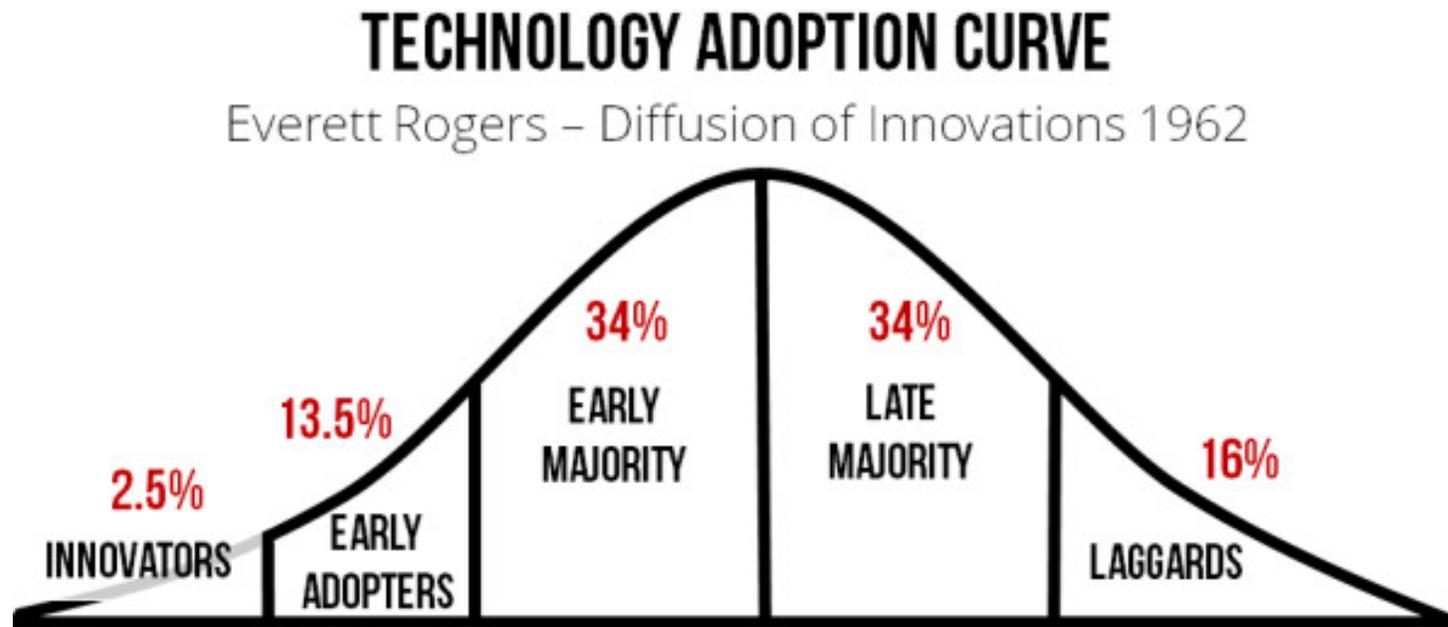


**“in the history of the world, no one has ever washed a rented car.”**

**-Larry Summers**



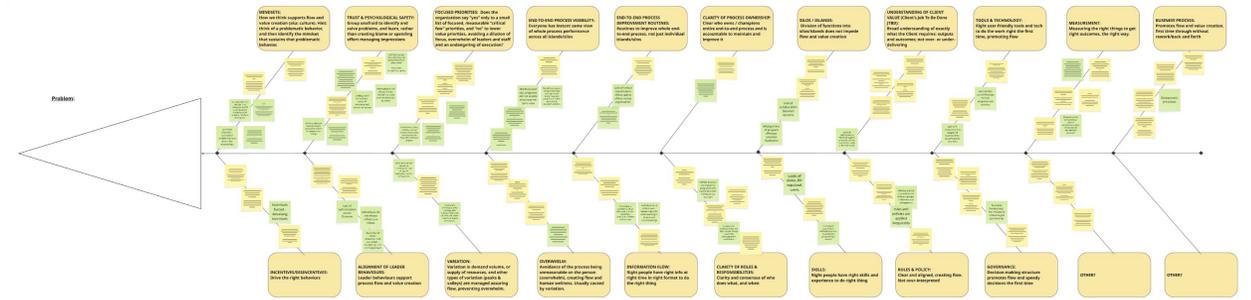
# Find and Nurture First Followers



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V74AxCqOTvg>

# Leader Engagement

- Leader homework – pre-mortem
  - What root causes may be holding the process back?
  - Sponsor checklist
- End of day 15 min check-ins with leaders



## Sponsor Questions to Ask During a Process Improvement Project

DEFINE Objectives, Problem Statement, Project Charter	MEASURE Map process, gather data	ANALYZE Analyze process, identify root causes that must be solved	IMPROVE Generate solutions, write up experiments, create implementation plan, conduct experiments, measure progress	CONTINUE TO IMPROVE Visual management, CI huddle meetings, Improvement is built into the work
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Did we choose the right process to improve? Would improving this process directly help the org meet its objectives? Make-work project?</li> <li>2. Problem statement, objectives quantified? Elevator pitch?</li> <li>3. Right team of influencers?</li> <li>4. Natural attractors (at different levels) well-communicated and understood?</li> <li>5. Project plan compressed, in calendars, team has time dedicated (not corner of desk)?</li> <li>6. Have I completed my "Invisible Causes only Sponsors can Address" homework?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is there adequate psychological safety in the team? Ok to identify problems? Ok to try experiments and fail, but learn?</li> <li>2. Is the process measured using credible numbers? E.g.: elapsed time, effort time, complete and accurate percentage?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is the team focusing on symptoms or root causes?</li> <li>2. Are there root causes that I as a leader should address?</li> <li>3. Are there wastes in the process that only I or the leadership group can address?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are identified solutions breakthroughs, or minimal, incremental? Should we be more ambitious?</li> <li>2. Are solutions over-scope, or "just right"?</li> <li>3. Does the new process create flow across all process sites, or only at certain points?</li> <li>4. Is each A3 experiment written up, specific, realistic and actionable?</li> <li>5. Is the project status board visible to me? Do I have check-ins booked in my calendar?</li> <li>6. Is enough time dedicated per week for team to implement experiments?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is the new process being used effectively and broadly?</li> <li>2. Is the process visible to all? Are we using the visible process/dashboard to manage the process?</li> <li>3. What is the risk that we will go back to the old way? What can we do to prevent this?</li> </ol>

At each phase: "What does the team need that I can provide?"

# Leveraging Leadership Effectively

**Its not just about being a Black Belt  
Mediating teams is equally important**

Job shadowing for empathy, credibility and buy in

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Not just a Sponsor, but a Sponsorship Coalition

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Shared goals and values to leverage in decision making

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Using a "Tie Breaker" role when consensus isn't possible

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Do you have dedicated resources for planning for and managing the people side of change?

Are your improvement practitioners trained in change management?



# Ability to Execute:

$$R = I \times D \times E$$

Do you ever feel like you never really “move the needle” on complex and recurring problems or pain points?

# The “Tax” of Slow-Moving Projects

What problems are likely to happen to a project that takes 12 months to finish

versus

the same project that takes 12 focused days to finish?

# Avoiding the “Tax” on Slow Moving Projects

## Prioritization & Focus



- ✓ Doing fewer things at one time
- ✓ Blocking calendars
- ✓ Project work focused over a short period of consecutive days

## Making Space for Improvement



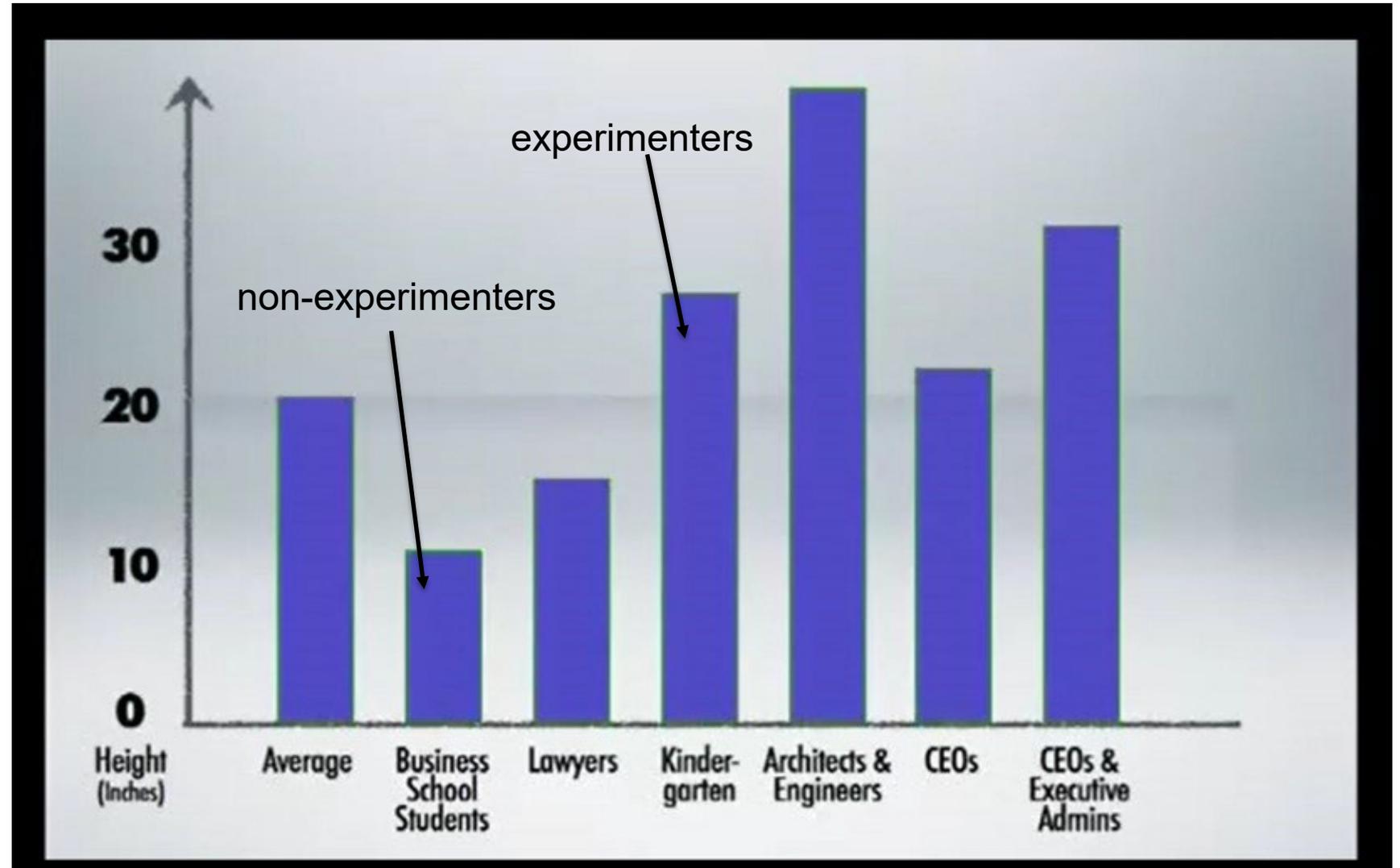
- ✓ Leaders act as a shield for project staff
- ✓ Acknowledge the backlog & address it
- ✓ “Slowing down to speed up”

## Dedicated Resources



- ✓ Stop assigning projects off the side of the desk
- ✓ Backfill staff for larger projects

# Prototyping and Experimentation: The Marshmallow Challenge



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H0\\_yKBitO8M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H0_yKBitO8M)

# Experiments Supported by Plan Do Check Act Cycles



Progress over Perfection



## Application Form

- 2-day experiment with live customers
- Accuracy of info increase from 20% to 80%



## Pre-Screen Design

- Half day meetings over 2 weeks
- Eliminated 3-week backlog
- Customer receives first response within 2-6 business days vs 41-108 days



## Pre-Consultation Design

- Started with simple standardization – ended with fully optimized design
- Proposed to **reduce 2 weeks** review time
- Anticipated **2-4 weeks** of review time saved for last minute issues

\*data is estimated and for a typical file\*

## How to find a safe sample

- File backlog
- Already completed files
- One willing customer
- Live with customers
- Feedback sessions with demos

## Using the PDCA Cycle

- Start where the team feels comfortable
- Document observations each cycle
- Make small improvements
- Measure the outcome (qualitative & quantitative)

# Concepts to Take With You...

- The finish line is a measurable, improved process with continuous improvement -- not a report.
- Success is 20% engineering and 80% psychology / sociology – be proactive on the human side.
- Invest in Execution!
- Prioritize what's most important
- Shield space for improvement and psychological safety
- Progress over perfection

**The Results Formula:**  
**R = I x D x E**

# Thank You!



**Results, Not Resistance**  
<https://leanagility.com/en/buy-in-and-execution>

## Don't Hesitate to Reach Out!



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