7 things we do for our agile transformation at scale

A Pôle emploi case study, French government agency
Our journey through agility at scale
Bonjour!

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OUR PLAN OF THE DAY

- What is Pôle emploi?
- 7 things we do
- Results and Challenges
- One last thing...
- Conclusion
WHAT IS Pôle emploi?
French national employment agency

Public service, unemployment benefit payment, interdiation... and a long history leading to complex systems
36 billion euros
paid to our beneficiaries in 2017
6 billions
Viewed pages from our web site

41 millions
Calls processed by our call center

54,000
employees dedicated to our beneficiaries
1,600 employees in the IT division

+ IT external suppliers
IT division Geographical distribution

- 21% of IT staff in Paris
- Most developments are geographically distributed

A potential for a lot of silos...
The hierarchy in the IT division looks like this!

- 5 levels

**Management leaves some freedom to try new things**

Can result in alignment difficulties
7 things we do for our agile transformation at scale

Start with Vision

+ some management sponsorship
A reorg as a tipping point

- **2003**: Agile premises
- **2010**: Scrum and kanban
- **2012**: Lean early stages, First SAFe® big picture discarded
- **2014**: New CIO appointed, Phase 1 reorg
- **2015**: Early Phase 2 reorg, Strategic program launch
If this reorg goes through, we will have silos for the front and the back end. We need a framework to work across those silos!

Michel Levaslot, deputy HR director
Winter 2014
7 things we do for our agile transformation at scale

- Start with Vision
  - + some management sponsorship
  - Results to increase spreading
- Launch trains
Facing a challenge with NPDE strategic program...

4

Major inter-related multi-departments projects
And a couple of add-ons

“Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity“

Seneca

First train for the strategic program NPDE
Our very first PI planning in Aix en Provence, France

before PI planning

“One day will be plenty of time, everything has already been planned!

Anonymous manager

after PI planning

“I didn’t realize there was that many things left to organize… Next time we need the 2 days!

Same anonymous manager
“The train had 140 people on board for a budget of 20,000 man days and it met the business objectives on time.”

Pierre Barc, program manager
As staff started to endorse the practices brought by SAFe® …

... convincing moved up the ladder

... middle managers embraced the train concept
Within 6 months, we have 4 trains running!

Today, we have 9 trains, a history of 13 PIs, over 800 travelers and almost 100 PI planning hosted
7 things we do for our agile transformation at scale

- Train everyone
  - Time to understand the concepts
- Launch trains
  - Results to increase spreading
  - + some management sponsorship
- Start with Vision
Autumn 2015
For internal change agents and targeted early adopters

January 2016
First SAFe® SPC class held in France for the internal change agents

2016 onwards
Internal training delivery on Leading SAFe®, SAFe® PO/PM, and SAFe® DevOps
OUR APPROACH TO CERTIFICATION

- ~ 400 SAFe® certificates
- ~ 400 Scrum certificates
- Individual certification benefits:
  - Learning engagement
  - Challenge
  - Recognition

Today, over **2200 certificates** within IT department
3 days training for our labor union members:

- Understanding agile
- Scrum and Kanban
- Backlog management
- Understanding agile at scale and SAFe®

We only fear what we don’t understand.

Guy de Maupassant
SUPPLEMENT TRAINING WITH OUTREACH SESSIONS

Minimal necessary prep before a first PI Planning:
- 2h webinar on PI Planning instructions
- 2h webinar on the SAFe® Framework
EMBARK ALL MANAGEMENT

- We train managers to Management 3.0
- Leading SAFe® for managers involved in trains and beyond

“More than a trend, agility is a substantial evolution that is essential for all, and you play an important part in it”

Internal communication extract to our managers
ENCOURAGE CONTINUOUS LEARNING

- 200 attendees to external conferences
7 things we do for our agile transformation at scale

Communicate!!

- Train everyone
- Launch trains
- Start with Vision
- Time to understand the concepts
- Internal and external communication
- Results to increase spreading
- + some management sponsorship

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EARLY 2015...

“SAFe®, what the heck is that thing?"

Anonymous director within the IT division
FIRST FOCUS: INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Case studies

Bring in experience from outside

Select speakers for different levels, whether it is directors, managers or all employees
MAKE INFORMATION AVAILABLE INTERNALLY

Internal social network publications

- Share external case studies from all over the world
- Share early adopters feedback

PI planning tours

- 15’ guided tours for anyone
THEN START EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

PUBLISH YOUR CASE STUDY

First government based case study on the SAFe® web site, 6 months after the first train launch
WHY USE EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION?

- Internal legitimacy
- Attracting talents
- External influencing
- External reputation
Conferences

We started to attend conferences as speaker so we can give as well as take

First SAFe® event
Paris 2016

Conferences in Paris, Krakow, Cambridge, Frankfurt, Tunis and Washington DC
LinkedIn

We started communicating on inside events and sharing our experience
Since June 2017

Articles available on https://www.linkedin.com/in/michel-levaslot
Establish relationships with other companies

- PI Planning external guests
- "Le club SAFe® francophone"
- "Les RTE Francophones CORTEX"

28 guests  51 companies  11 sessions
TRUST THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT
7 things we do for our agile transformation at scale

- Start with Vision
  - Transformation needs coaching
  - + some management sponsorship
  - Results to increase spreading
- Train everyone
  - Time to understand the concepts
  - Internal and external communication
- Communicate!!
- Invest in LACE team
- Launch trains
WHY DO WE HAVE A LACE TEAM?

Top 5 Tips for Success with Scaling Agile

1. Too important to delegate
2. Better understanding of the culture
3. Continuity in the relationship
4. Cost effectiveness
5. 13th state of agile report from VersionOne

Respondent indicated the most valuable in helping them scale agile practices were:

1. INTERNAL AGILE COACHES
2. EXECUTIVE SPONSORSHIP
OUR LACE TEAM’S RESPONSIBILITIES

- Code quality practices
- SAFe® and agility coaching
- IBM RTC™ and other internal tools
PAIR COACHING

There is a lot to learn and discover. Pairing 2 internal coaches helped us learn faster.
THE MEERKATS’ ORGANIZATION TODAY

Quarterly planning
Plan our actions by combining Michel’s vision to emergent actions driven by trains’ progress

Kanban board
7 things we do for our agile transformation at scale

- Train everyone
- Communicate!!
- Invest in LACE team
- Leverage communities
- Launch trains
- Start with Vision
- Results to increase spreading
- Time to understand the concepts
- Internal and external communication
- Transformation needs coaching
- Knowledge sharing is a must
- + some management sponsorship

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LEVERAGE PROFESSION BASED COMMUNITIES

- Products and Services design
- Architecture
- Products and Services development
- Technical engineering
- Testing Services
- Management
- Support Functions
- Governance
- Project and Product management
- Customer Service
- Operations
RAISE AWARENESS CORPORATELY

- Webinars
- A day in the life of...
- Case studies
- Scrum café

750 participations on Agile topics
200 participations to SAFe® webinars

2018 data

“More than a trend, agility is a substantial evolution that is essential for all, and managers play an important part in it.”

Internal communication extract to our managers
Webinars

Examples of theory sharing using webinar presentations
ROLE BASED COMMUNITIES

2014
- Existing community around continuous integration and XP practices

2015
- Scrum masters and POs, then testers
- New practices presentations
- PO dojos

2016
- RTEs
- Bimonthly exchange forum
- Full day meeting twice a year since December 2017
7 things we do for our agile transformation at scale

Start with Vision

Launch trains

Communicate!!

Train everyone

Invest in LACE team

Results to increase spreading

Internal and external communication

Transformation needs coaching

Knowledge sharing is a must

Small steps improvements for scaling agility

+ some management sponsorship

Improve continuously

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Continuous movement?
CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT!
**PI Seasons**

Central calendar for synchronized sprints and PI duration
ADAPTING INSPECT AND ADAPT

- Standard SAFe® agenda for I&A is one of many choices

- Solution focus inspired I&A brings positive energy to the train 😊
Digitalizing the program board

From post-its on a whiteboard...

...to using generated post-its based on RTC

...to post-its and thread

...to the digital program board
Maturity evaluation

- Same maturity assessment for all 9 trains
- Benchmark with 93 other trains in France

Benchmark de nos pratiques par rapport aux entreprises utilisatrices de SAFe en France
7 things we do for our agile transformation at scale

1. Start with Vision
   - + some management sponsorship
2. Launch trains
   - Results to increase spreading
3. Train everyone
   - Time to understand the concepts
4. Communicate!!
5. Invest in LACE team
   - Transformation needs coaching
6. Leverage communities
   - Knowledge sharing is a must
7. Improve continuously
   - Small steps improvements for scaling agility
OUR SERVICES RESULTS

- **94.4%** of jobseekers received their benefits on time at end of 2017 (**+ 5.3 points** compared to 2014)

- **91%** of jobseekers were satisfied with Pôle emploi’s digital services (**+ 18.3 points** compared to 2014)

Independent national survey carried out by BVA
INTERNAL SURVEY RESULTS SPRING 2018

SAFe® leads to trust
- Oui à 57%
- Non à 20%

SAFe® increases responsiveness
- Oui à 54%
- Non à 32%

SAFe® increases transparency
- Oui à 72%
- Non à 16%

SAFe® fosters collaboration
- Oui à 91%
- Non à 4%

SAFe® fosters engagement
- Oui à 71%
- Non à 13%

SAFe® helps alignment
- Oui à 67%
- Non à 16%

SAFe® helps focus on value
- Oui à 52%
- Non à 26%

SAFe® improves quality
- Oui à 24%
- Non à 55%

Are you satisfied with our SAFe® implementation?
- Oui à 73%
- Non à 12%

SAFe® brings value to our IT?
- Oui à 77%
- Non à 11%

Should we abandon SAFe®?
- Non à 67%
- Oui à 5%

250 people surveyed
72% respondents
IT division

Top 5 benefits:

- Better collaboration (64%)
- Increased transparency (48%)
- Fosters engagement and manages changing priorities (44%)
- Increased trust (43%)

INTERNAL SURVEY RESULTS SPRING 2019

1,600 people surveyed

58% respondents

2/3 Agile practitioners

Everyone Agile teams

perceiving benefits

97%

91%
EXTERNAL RECOGNITION IN 2018

- CIO of the year
- ESSEC business school Award for transformation
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CIO level adoption

SAFe® is the chosen framework for all strategic programs since 2017

Trains operations work well
Trains scope tend to expand
OUR GREATEST CHALLENGES
Top level adoption

Bring agility at scale, to top level management

Be finished with the customer/supplier relationship
"I have a dream... that one day, we’ll have a portfolio kanban in our CIO’s board room"

Anonymous Meerkat team member
REFACTORING TRAINS

From this... Working with trains almost works too well Too many, too intertwined We need to refactor them ... to this!
Focus on value

Reduce TTM
ONE LAST THING...
DevOps, and ...

- **Mid 2015**
  - DevOps program launch

- **April 2018**
  - TMJ initiative launch

- **June 2018**
  - Frankfurt SAFe® Summit
  - 1st SAFe® DevOps certificate

- **July 2018**
  - First VSM sharing

- **September 2018**
  - SAFe® DevOps trainings
Work on the features life cycle
Result from several workshops
...Value

- Raise **awareness** - training built in-house
- New **UX** approach
- Get **inspired** with a book

And these are only examples from the IT division...
CONCLUSION
THANK YOU EVERYONE!!
MERCI!

Any questions?
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