Helping Enterprise PMO and Agile Play Nice Together

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The Challenge

- Government PMO needs to make multiyear plans for strategy, budget, etc.
- Agile development runs 40-day Program Increments and has fallen behind in delivery
- The PMO is understaffed, inexperienced with SAFe; has difficulty to establish and maintain the alignment between the Program vision and Agile development
- Without the guard rails of a long range plan the agile release train may run off the track
- Without plans, communications up, down, across, and outside of the program tend to be ad hoc, time consuming, and inconsistent
- How to help the PMO to effectively utilize SAFe, at the same time minimize the burden on the limited resources?
A Solution – Integration and Implementation Planning* (IIP) Approach

- This approach provides synchronization and integration mechanisms for the PMO:
  - The Goals synchronize all elements of the approach
    - Determine what “done” looks like
  - The Action Plans integrate critical activities required to fulfill the goals
    - Identify the path to “done”
- The IIP approach:
  - Provides vetted objectives and goals to the SAFe Portfolio/program Level
  - Aligns PMO activities with Program Increment (PI) cadence
  - Focuses on useful artifacts (agile) maintained in a shared repository and is able to quickly collect them into a publishable document (PMO)
  - Provides a “process-lite” method to complete major elements of program planning

* An IIP focuses on the milestones the PMO is responsible for collecting, managing, and maintaining. These milestones can be used as a starting point for the development of the PMO’s detailed schedule.
The Line of Sight

- The key to success is how these elements are used individually and collectively.
- Goals are the linchpin. Everything is traced back to goals and goals are used to report progress.

Objectives
- Based on a 12 month period
- High-level description of what success looks like at the end of that period

Goals
- Should be SMART
- Cover major efforts for all parts of the organization required to achieve the Objective

Action Plans
- Last level of planning for the PMO
- High-level activities required to complete the goal; Includes roles and responsibility assignments
- Used to communicate status, conduct PI planning, etc.

Highest SAFe Level Implemented
- In our case it was the Program level
- The approach could also work at the Solution or Portfolio level
Examples of the Line of Sight PMO Elements

An objective is a succinct and clear description of what success looks like “New data dissemination platform is fully production ready and becomes the primary platform for structured data.”

A goal should be SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time bound:
“Develop strategy for disposition of the legacy data products by September”

Action Plan activities should be a high-level descriptions of the tasks necessary to accomplish the goal
1. Identify the legacy data products
2. Negotiate with the product owners
3. Document and brief the strategy
4. Update the Segment Architecture
Apply SAFe Requirement Model

Program Objective
Source: IIP

Program Goals
Source: IIP

Capability
Source: PMO

Capability Acceptance Criteria

Feature
Source: VT & PMO

Feature Acceptance Criteria

done when passes

Story
Source: PO / BA / Dev Team

Story Acceptance Criteria

done when passes

Sprint Demo

demoed at every 2 weeks

Task
Source: Dev Team

done when passes

demoed at every 8 weeks

realized by 0,1 1..*

realized by 0,1 1..*

realized by 0,1 1..*

realized by 0,1 1..*

Value Team

Product Owner

realized by 0,1 1..*

accepted by

accepted by
# Alignment with PI Cadence

Integration and Implementation Planning Align PMO and ART

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**ART** = Agile Release Train  
**PI** = Program Increment  
**PMO** = Program Management Office
Provides vetted Objectives/Goals to the Highest SAFe Level Implemented

This approach enables the **PMO** to effectively **utilize** SAFe as implemented in their organization by providing clear and vetted data to the top SAFe layer.

https://www.scaledagileframework.com/
Who benefits by using the Integration and Implementation Planning approach

- All participants in the SAFe program:
  - Program Management
  - Project Teams
  - Delivery Partners
  - Upper Management

The approach provides the line of sight from Strategy to real work, with a visibility that allow all parties to examine objectives and goals for suitability, applicability, and usability.
Summary

- The IIP approach provides synchronization and integration mechanisms for the PMO to manage the program:
  - The Goals synchronize all elements of the approach
    - Determine what “done” looks like for all participants (SAFe participants, governance, executives, stakeholders, delivery partners, team members, etc.) and key plans (Segment Architecture, Budget, etc.)
  - The Action Plans integrate critical activities required to fulfill the goals
    - Identify the path to “done” via the activities and associated role assignments

- The IIP approach:
  - Provides clear and vetted objectives and goals to the SAFe Portfolio Level by delivering a long range vision and SMART goals
  - Aligns PMO activities with Program Increment (PI) cadence by scheduling Action Plan updates prior to each PI planning day
  - Focuses on useful artifacts (agile: Goals, Action Plans, etc.) maintained in a shared repository and is able to quickly collect them into a publishable document (PMO: IIP, Segment Architecture, etc.)
  - Provides a “process-lite” method to complete major elements of program planning