Understanding Agile/Lean Adoption Risks: Readiness & Fit Analysis (RFA)

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Premises of RFA

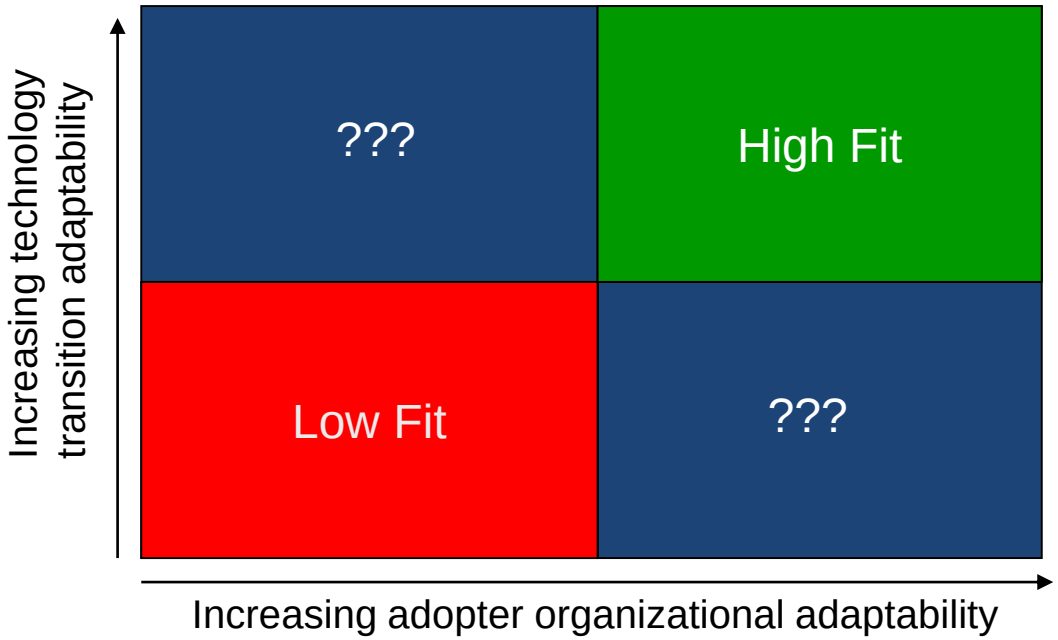
To achieve success in adopting new practices, more than the practices themselves need to be considered, including fit with business strategy & five other dimensions

Different audiences respond differently as they are introduced to new practices

Most organizations are very poor at transferring what they have learned from one adoption effort to another

Acceptance of a new set of practices does not happen in a linear, predictable fashion

Transition Fit Matrix: Mutual Adaptation is a Key



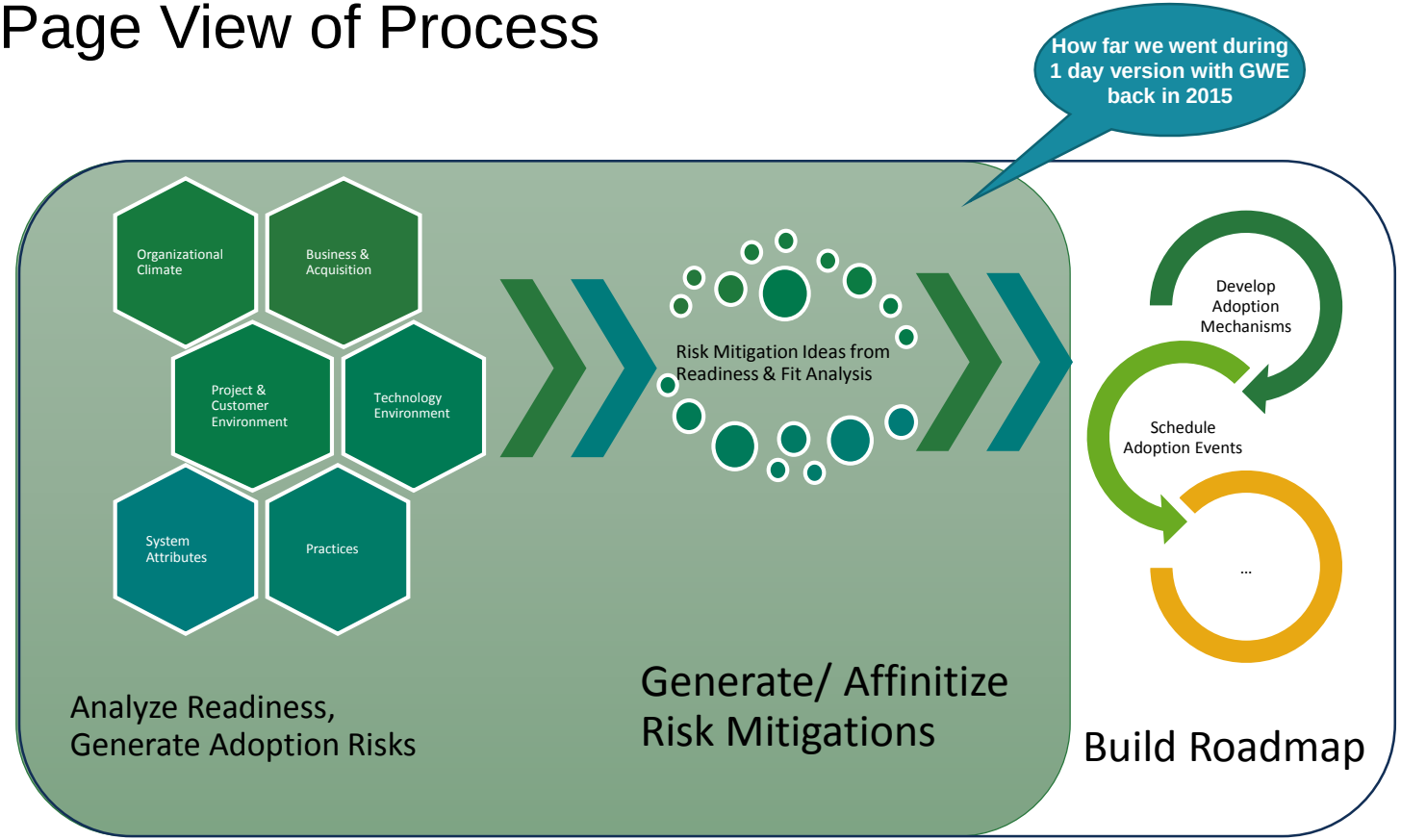
Objectives of RFA

Evaluate the transition fit between the proposed technology and the specified organization.

Specify adaptation requirements to improve the fit to the point where the transition can be managed.

- These adaptations may be on the technology OR the organizational side, depending on the business needs and the areas where fit is not so good

One Page View of Process



Readiness & Fit Analysis Process Overview

Step	Outcome
1. PREPARE • Establish scope for analysis and select participants	• Technology and scope of adoption determined • Relevant participants list defined
2. CREATE • Refine assumptions table relevant to the candidate Agile and/or DevSecOps approaches	• Updated technology assumptions table is available for use
3. CAPTURE • Identify and categorize adoption risk ratings and statements	• Profile of fit between technology and practitioners
4. ANALYZE • Determine fit strengths/ weaknesses for the six risk categories	• List of risks particular to the adoption situation
5. RECOMMEND • Develop risk mitigation strategies	• Prioritized list of risk mitigation strategies

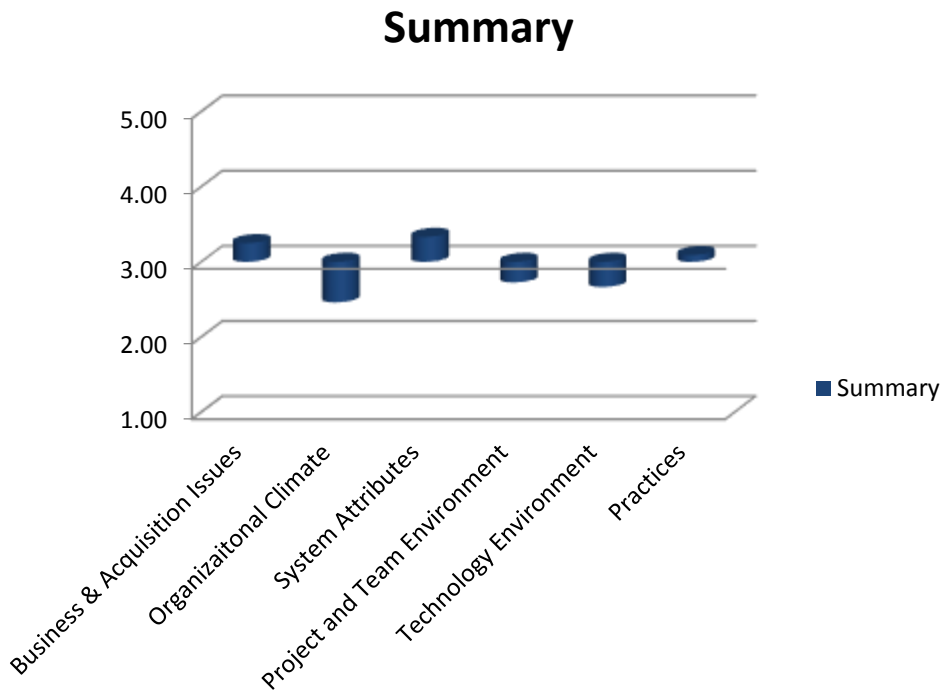
RFA Organizes Typical Adoption Mismatch Areas For You to Analyze/Deal With Explicitly

Readiness/Fit Analysis Categories include:

- Fit of technology with business strategy
- *Fit of technology with current work practices – in this case, typical Agile practices*
- Fit of technology with current organizational climate, system environment, technology and project/customer environments
- Prior history of technology adoption success/failure

A profile that shows the general “fit” of the technology to the organization can be generated by analyzing the technology’s implications for each factor against the organization’s current state

Example Summary of RFA Factors Ratings



Caution—This is a Heuristic, not a Validated Instrument!

The diagram provides a very rough picture of potential risk areas

It does not normalize the data in terms of weighting/relative importance of the risk areas

It does not provide judgment as to what an objectively “good” outcome would be

Greatest value comes in identifying the risks specific to your context, using the framework as a jumpstart for your thinking

The Dimensions of Fit

- Business and Contracting Environment
- *Work practices — Agile practices*
- Organizational Climate
- Project/Customer Environment
- Technology Environment
- System Attributes

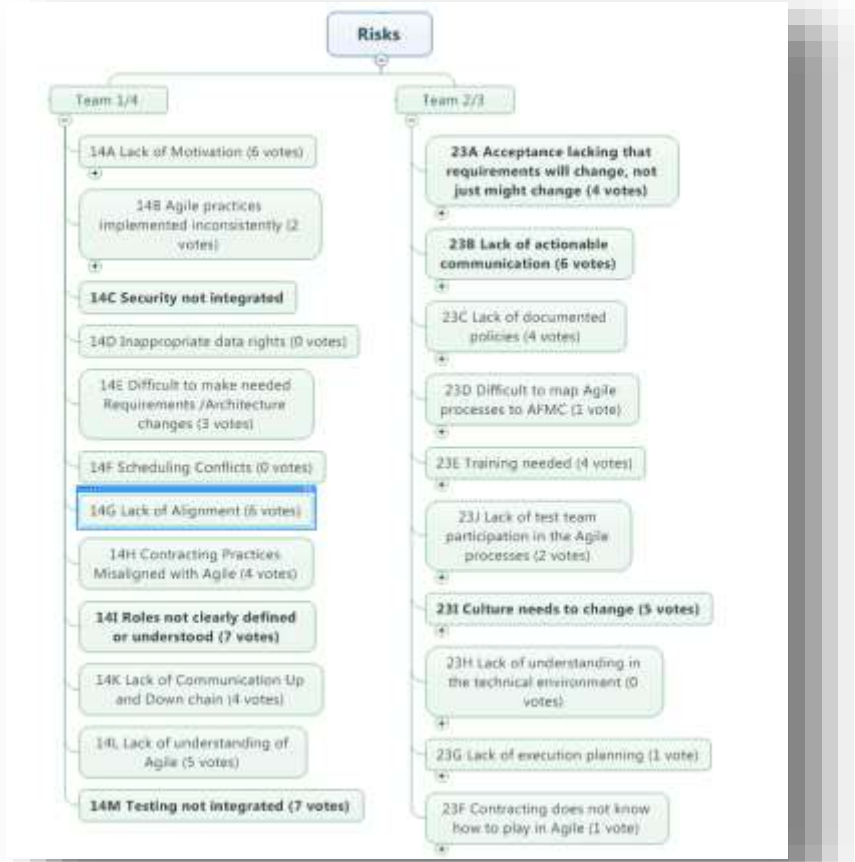
Technology Assumptions Table for Agile-1

Fit Dimension	Agile Assumptions
Business & Acquisition	• Program acquisition strategy and practices enable, or at least don't dis-able, differences in developing using Agile approaches
Organizational Climate	• Reward systems, values, skills, sponsorship explicitly support Agile & Lean values and principles
Project & Customer Environment	• Frequent collaboration between development team and customers/end users is actively supported • Program management practices respect team boundaries
System Attributes	• System architecture is loosely-coupled (interfaces are external vs internal among system components) • System solutions benefit from fast user/operational feedback

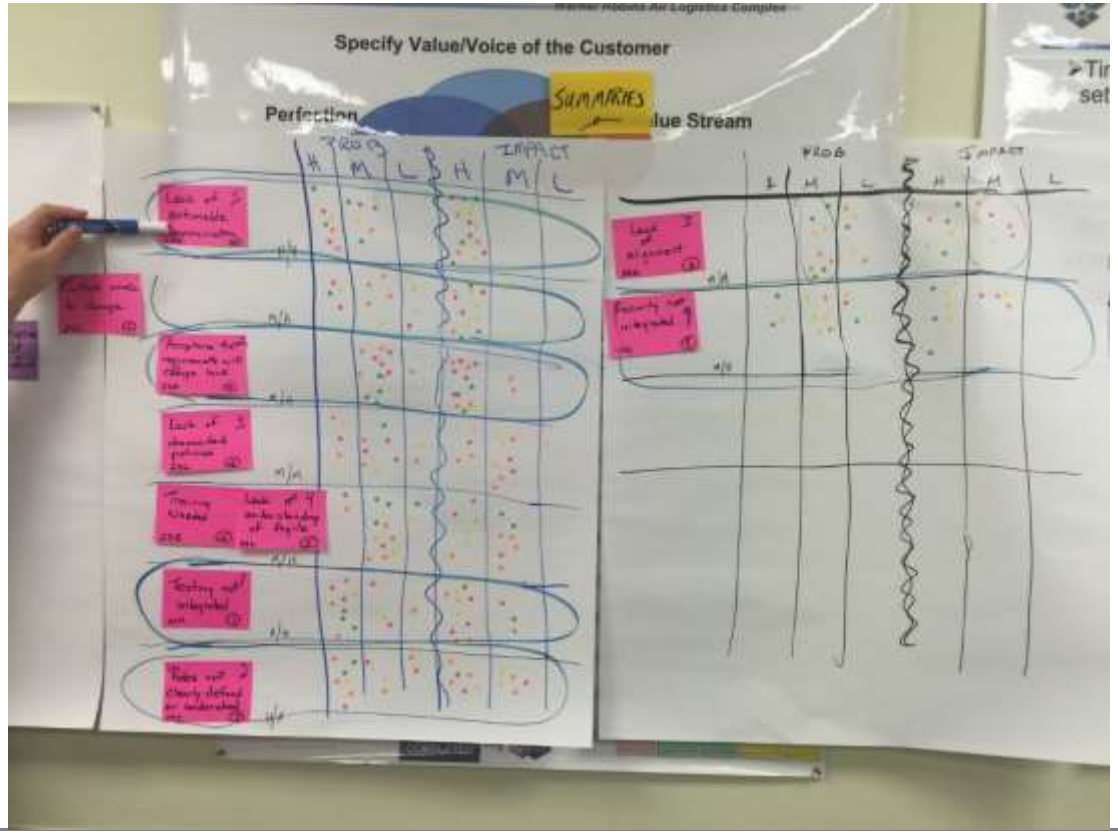
Technology Assumptions Table for Agile-2

Fit Dimension	Agile Assumptions
Technology Environment	• Technology support for automated testing and continuous integration are in place • Support for information radiators (either physical or electronic) is available
Team Technical Practices	• Technical practices that support high quality code production in small batches from a prioritized product backlog are in place
Team Management/ Coordination Practices	• Decentralized decision making that allows team members to self-organize their work are in place and supported • Team management practices that support short (2-4 week) time boxes are in place
Program Practices	• Synchronization of multiple teams is occurring • Practices that reinforce respecting team management and measurement boundaries are in place

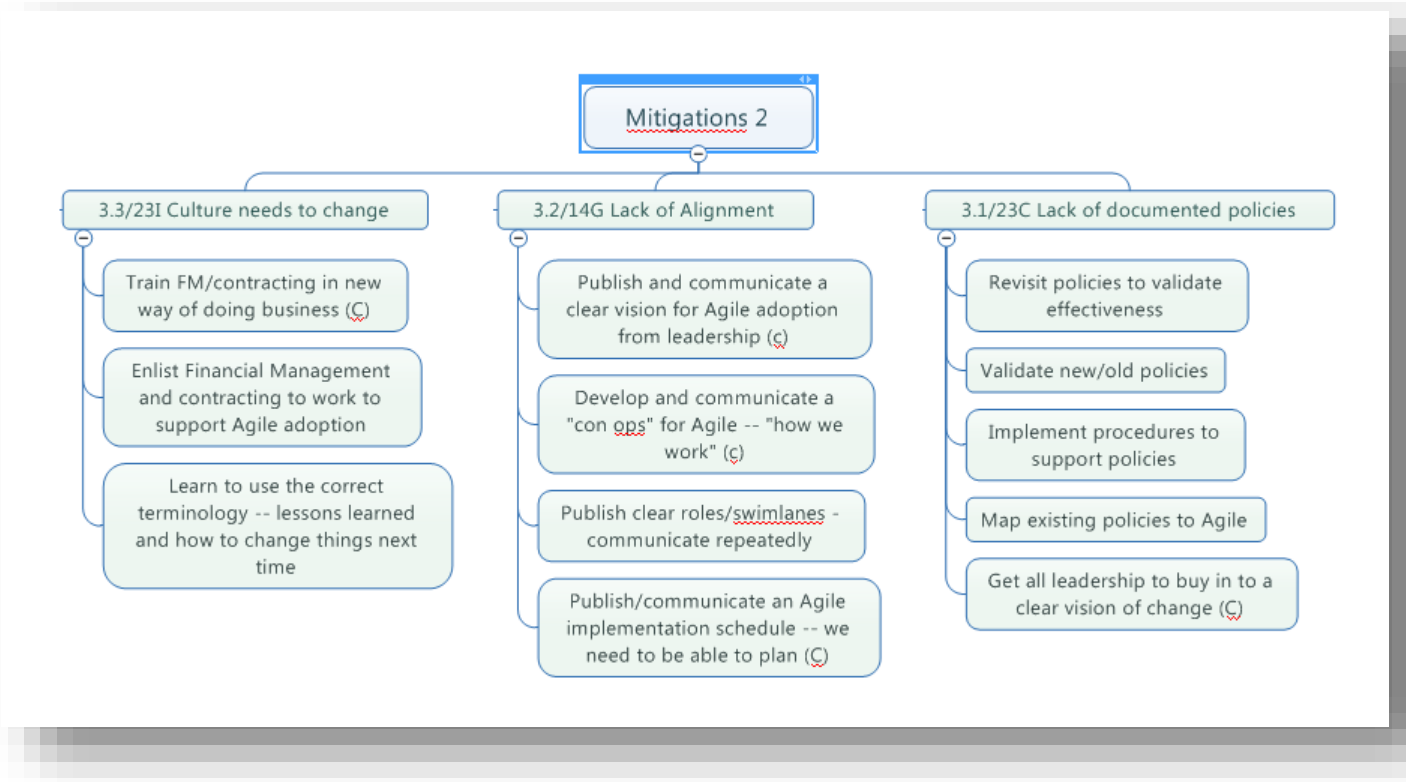
GWE: Risk Categories from Practitioner Workshop



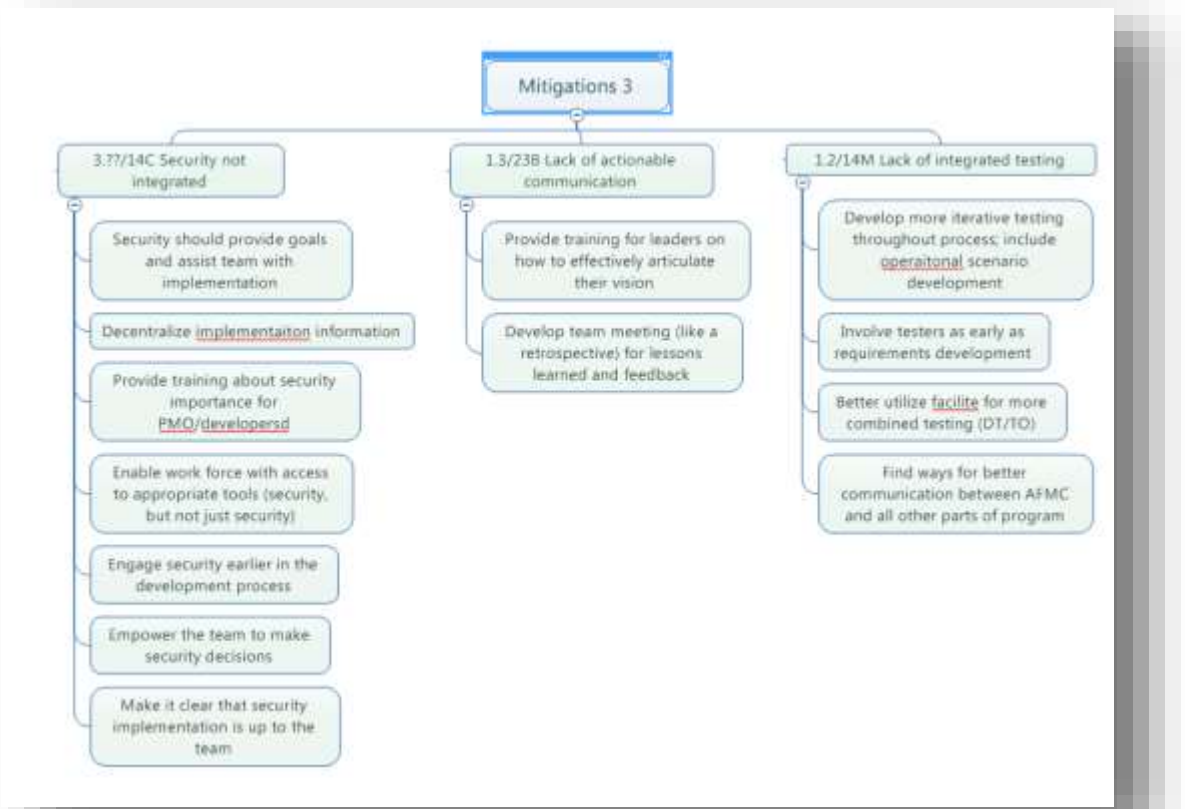
GWE: Prioritized Risk Themes from Practitioner Workshop



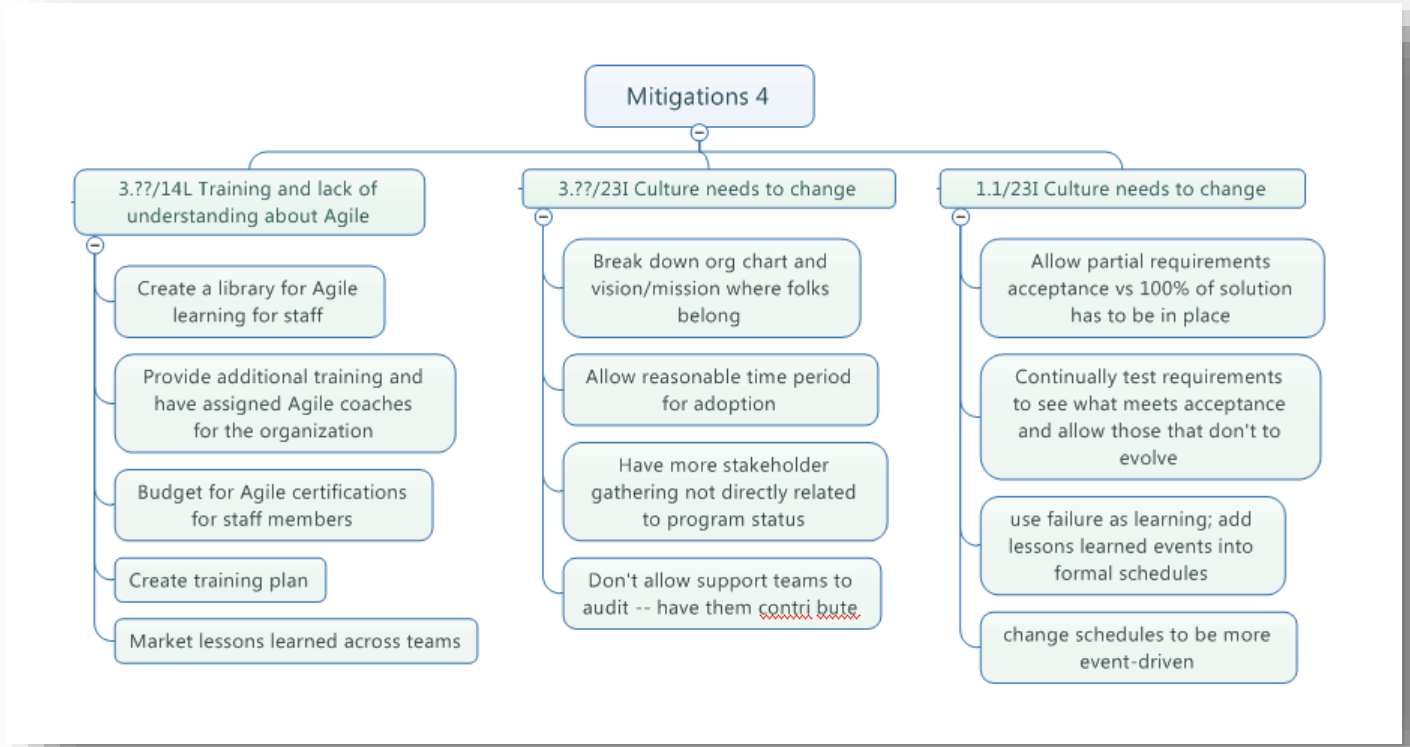
GWE: Suggested Risk Mitigations from Practitioner Workshop-2



GWE: Suggested Risk Mitigations from Practitioner Workshop-3



GWE: Suggested Risk Mitigations from Practitioner Workshop-4



Key Points

Treating Agile and Lean Practices as a technology allows consideration of Technology Adoption concepts to improve the chances of successful adoption

RFA helps to understand risk areas that are often ignored and may negatively affect adoption

Analysis is not enough – we must consider appropriate risk mitigation actions as well

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