

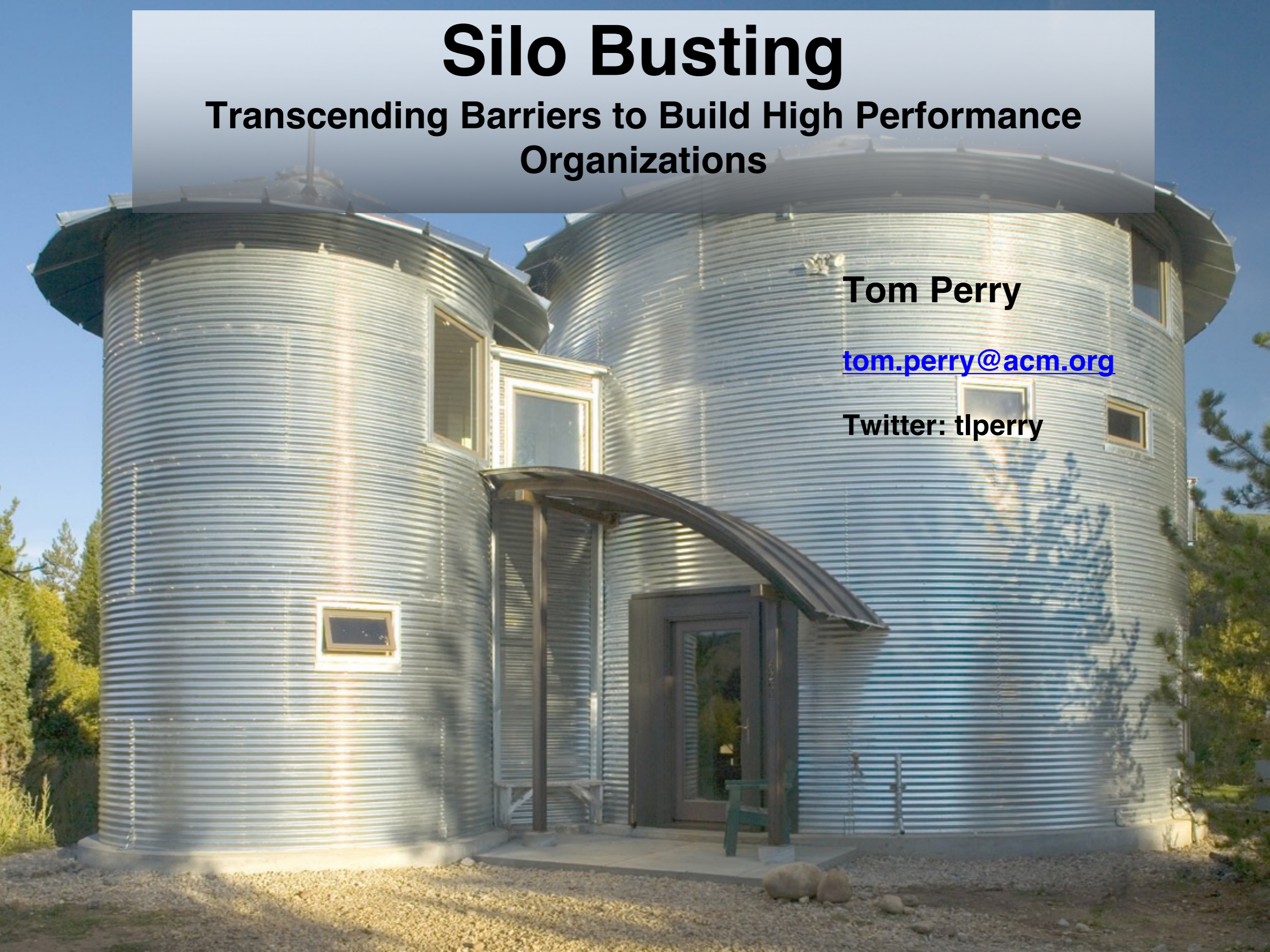
# Silo Busting

Transcending Barriers to Build High Performance Organizations

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# Welcome!

## Objectives

- Discuss the nature of silos – what they are and how they work
- Share some time tested strategies to mitigate the impact of silos

# The nature of Silos



# What Kinds of Silos are There?

- Write down one silo name on a sticky note
- Call the silo name out and put it in the center of the table
- 60 second time limit

# Types of Silos

- Knowledge
- Specialization
- Geography
- Education
- Authority
- Language/Culture

# Dunbar's Number

- What is the maximum size of a group that can support stable social relationships?



# Perspectives

# Tom Perry

Organizational silos are some of the most pernicious dysfunctions you can find within companies today.

- Some joker with a blog



# Patrick Lencioni

The invisible barriers that separate work teams, departments and divisions, causing people who are supposed to be on the same team to work against one another.

- Silos, Politics, and Turf Wars

# Venkat Rao

A silo is an organizational unit that is in a core position in the business, reliably adding measurable value, and offers essential services that satisfy demand from more than one mission critical process.

- blog: [www.ribbonfarm.com](http://www.ribbonfarm.com)

# Perspectives

- Tom Perry
- Patrick Lencioni
- Venkat Rao

# Silo Busting Case Study

Work with 3 other people and come up with a strategy for addressing the following situation:

- Product management is frustrated with delays on development projects. They have decided to outsource their software development to contracting organizations that have promised to deliver faster.
- Development is frustrated that Product Management is changing requirements and refusing to account for or negotiate scope or deadlines. They have implemented a restrictive change control process and are considering hiring analysts to write requirements for their projects.

**ROBBERS  
CAVE  
STATE PARK**

← CAMPS — LODGE

← RV CAMPING

CAFE — CAVE —

CAMPING →

EQUESTRIAN

RV — TRAIL

GROUP CAMP

← 1 1/2 MILES

CABIN  
FOOT  
TRAIL

# The Setup

- Twenty four 12 year old boys
- Robbers cave campground
- Oklahoma...

# 3 Phase Approach

1. Create Silos
2. Create Conflict/Tension
3. Resolve the conflict

# Phase I – Create the Silos

## Hypothesis

1. Hierarchies will form
2. Your place in the hierarchy affects assessment of performance
3. Members of groups will adopt norms of the group even in the face of conflicting evidence.



# The Evolution of the Eagles & Rattlers

- Separate camps
- Hierarchies
- Flags
- Tattoos

# Phase II – Create Conflict/Tension

## Hypothesis

1. Competition will increase team solidarity
2. Relationships between groups impact relationships within groups
3. Low status members of group are more likely to act out violently

# Competition between the Eagles and Rattlers

1. Tug of War
2. Tent Pitching Contest
3. Baseball Games
4. Football Games
5. Campsite Inspections

# Outcomes

- Fist fights
- Name calling
- Avoidance

LORD OF THE FLIES  
WILLIAM GOLDING



# Phase III – Resolve the conflict

## Hypothesis

1. Contact will not decrease tension
2. Groups will cooperate when there are superordinate goals that are not achievable by one team
3. There is a cumulative effect of pursuing superordinate goals

# Strategies

- Common Enemy
- Disintegrate & focus on Individuals
- Use “Leadership”
- Common Superordinate Goals
- Contact as Equals

# Examples of Superordinate goals

- Drinking water Problem
- Securing a Movie
- Camp out at Cedar Lake
  - Truck Break Down
  - Meal Prep
  - Tent Pitching



# What are Some Superordinate Goals In Your Organization?

- Working in groups of 3
- Identify 3 superordinate goals w/in your organization (one per Post-it)

# The Nature of Silos

- Examples
- Perspectives
- The Robbers Cave Experiment

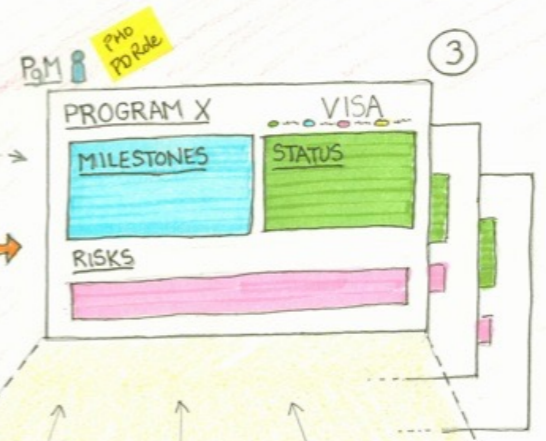
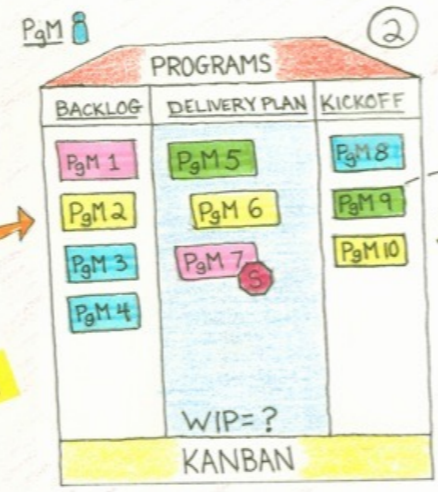
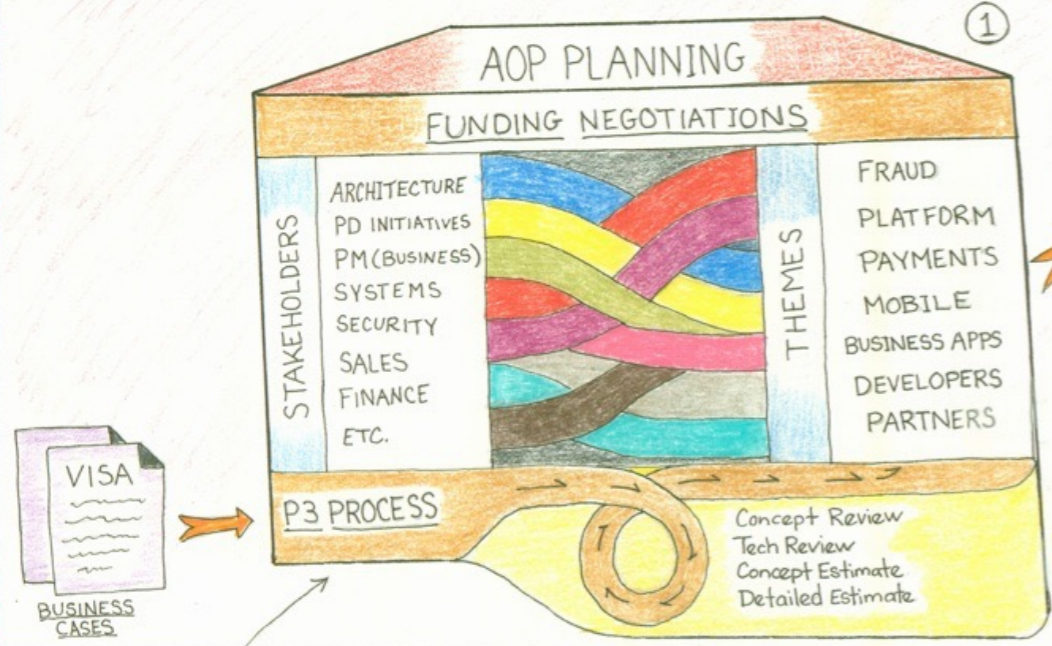
# Strategies



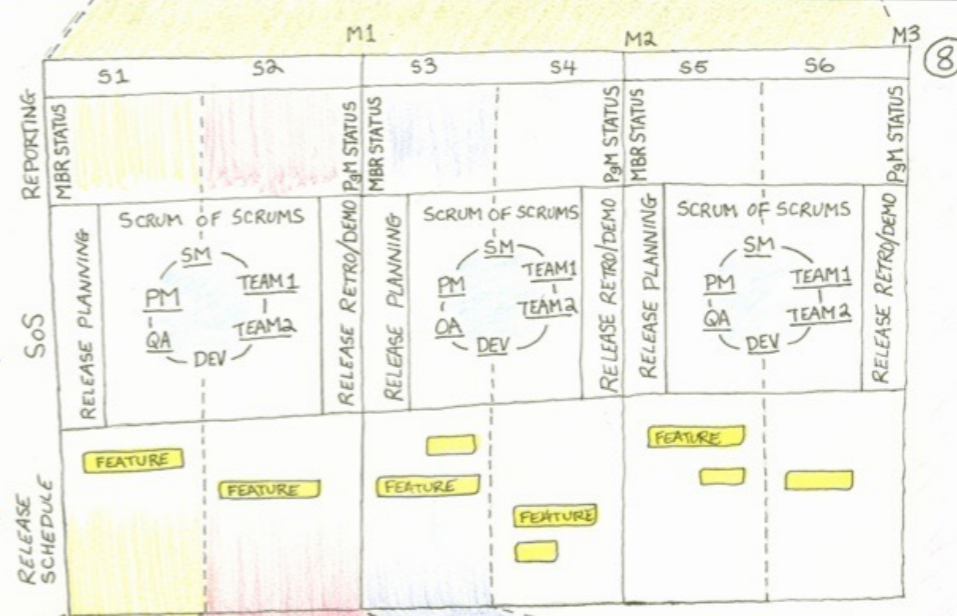
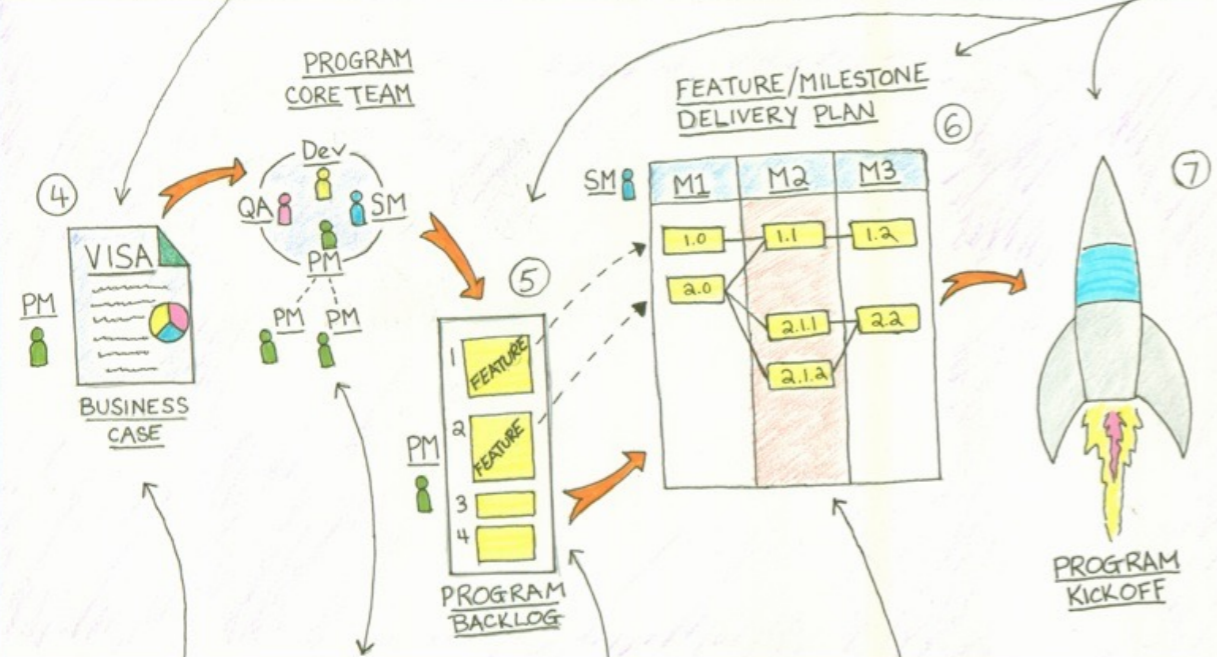
# See the Whole

- Get the big picture
- Use tools like systems thinking or value stream mapping to help make the relationships and the business value stream visible
- Identify possible superordinate goals

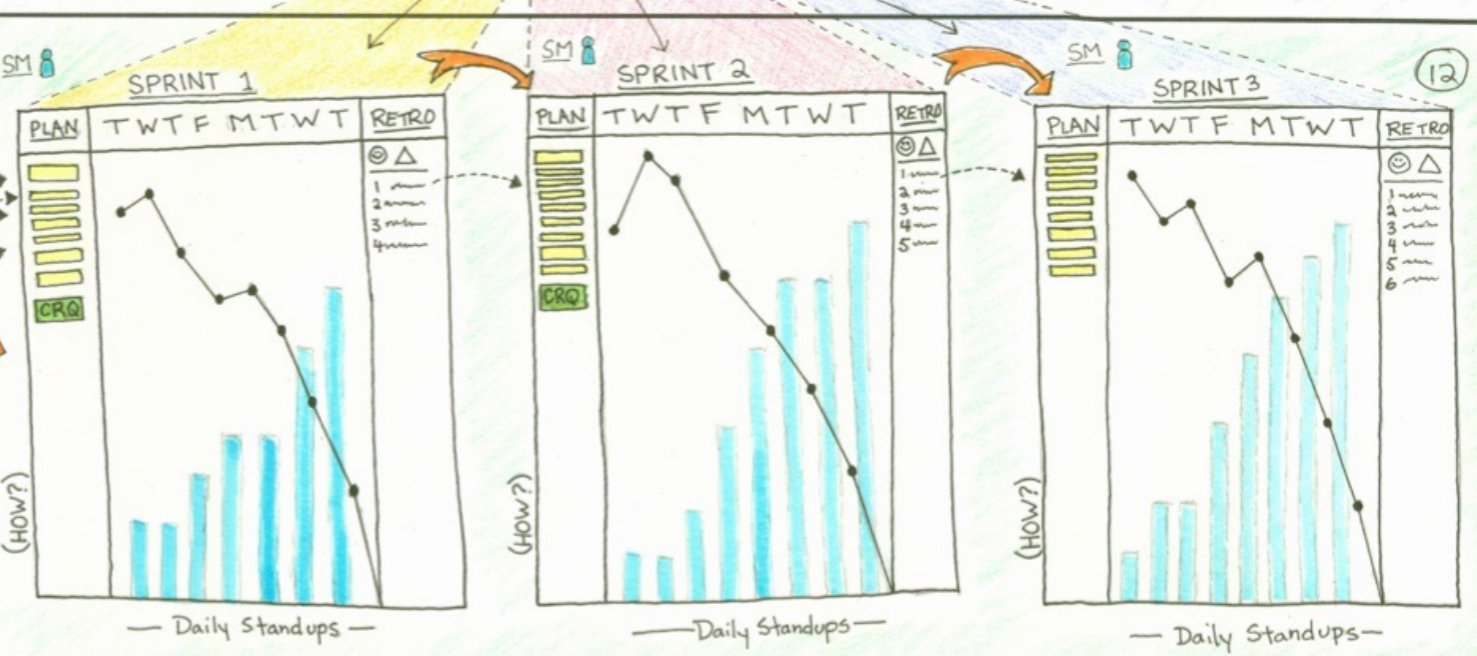
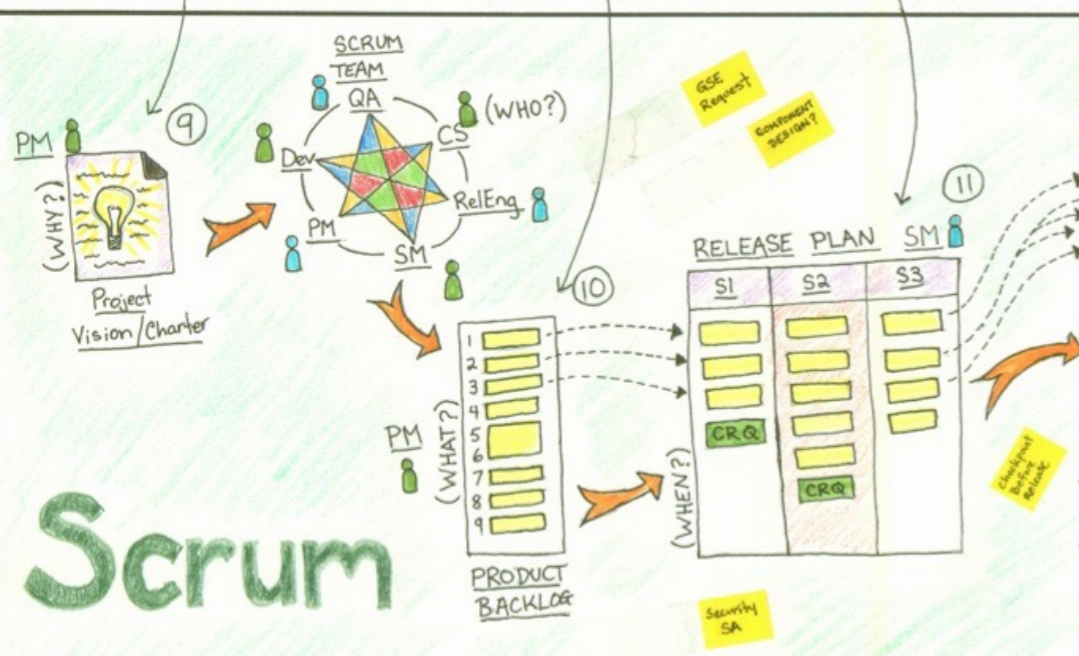
PORTFOLIO



PROGRAM



PROJECT



# Understand The Silos

- Understand their challenges, needs, and fears

# Eliminate The Fear

- Make it safe to work together

# Use the ambassador pattern

- Live, breathe and eat in their world
- Use cross training to your advantage



# Acknowledge their Presence

- Be careful to invite them to the table and acknowledge what they bring

# Manage through Executives

- Create alignment at the top first
- Define the superordinate goals

# Play!

- Um...you know...play?!?

# Attend, Befriend, Defend

- Make friends!

# Re-Organize

- Can the groups be reorganized toward product responsibilities?

# Use Crisis as an Opportunity to Redefine the Conversation

- Highlight the success/failure in overcoming/succumbing the crisis
- Start the conversation about how to make things better

# De-Categorize

- Involves getting people in groups focused on group membership and their common attributes as members of a group, to move their focus someplace else.

# Re-Categorize

- appeal to people to find cross cutting similarities in their group memberships.
- However unlike de-categorization, which tends to focus on the small things we may share in common, re-categorization focuses on higher order group membership.



# Dale Carnegie

- Begin with Praise and Honest Appreciation
- Make the problem seem easy to correct
- Talk about your own mistakes first

# Change the Goal

- Find the superordinate goal

# Change the Environment

- Create a new context

# Summary

- See the whole
- Understand the silos
- Eliminate the fear
- Use the ambassador pattern
- Acknowledge their presence
- Manage through executives
- Play!
- Attend, Befriend, Defend
- Re-Organize
- Use Crisis
- DC - How to Win Friends
- Change the goal
- Change the environment

# What Tools from the PMBOK can we use?

- Can we use the tools we already have?

# Project Charter

Goals! Goals! Goals!

# Team Building

- Build your own silo, but build it well...

# Understand your Org Structure

- Know your business, and the goals will follow



# What Are Your Silo Busting Strategies?

Work with 3 other people and come up with a strategy for addressing the following situation:

- Your company has been acquired by a competitor. Each company keeps their staff intact, but each uses different technology (Java vs. .Net) After 3 years each group is fiercely independent and development has come to a standstill on both platforms
- Each group has retained their own processes
- When asked what company individuals in each group identify with, they respond with the original company names

# Silo busting tips and tricks



# Use food

- Appeal to their stomachs!

# Get an Introduction

- Don't barge in

# Script Your Encounters

- Preparation works

# Use the Power of the Water Cooler

- Seek connections
- Use networking to your advantage

# Read “How to Win Friends and Influence People”

- Dale Carnegie was on to something



**Go Bust Some  
Silos!**



# References

- The Robbers Cave Experiment, Muzafer Sherif, et. Al.
- Silos, Politics, and Turf Wars, Patrick Lencioni
- Bust the Silos, Hunter Hastings
- Us and Them, David Berreby
- How to Win Friend and Influence People, Dale Carnegie

# The Little Book of Impediments

<https://www.facebook.com/ImpedimentsBook>  
<https://leanpub.com/ImpedimentsBook>

“[a] funny, engaging, gritty realistic take, mercifully devoid of fancy”

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