Implementing...
AGILE IN AUTOMOTIVE
#AIA2024

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JLR'S JOURNEY TO ADOPTING A SCALED AGILE FRAMEWORK

> Aisling Finn shares the approach that JLR took to implementing a scaled Agile framework.

> **Plus!** Aisling shares her top tips on **how to successfully transform to Agile methods**.

Aisling Finn
Lead Agile Coach
JLR

JLR

FOREWORD FROM THE EDITOR

The automotive industry has a known history of striving for efficiency; however, in the last few years, with the rise of new challenges and increasing levels of complexity, driven by vehicle electrification, software development and autonomous driving, **companies are starting to realise that methodologies need to be reviewed and revolutionised.**

The industry is now in a position to **bring in an Agile mindset, be empowered by Agile methods** and leverage its widely recognised benefits, including but not limited to *producing more efficiency, reducing waste, implementing better R&D product development, accelerating speed to market, and combatting supply chain*

bottlenecks. But while Agile is a hot topic and process practitioners are applying for Agile certifications, for many in the industry, it is unclear **what Agile means, how to manage pushback** & penetrate an Agile mindset, and **find the right balance between Agile & Waterfall methodologies.**

With this in mind, Automotive IQ spoke with Aisling Finn, Lead Agile Coach at JLR, to get an understanding of the strategy that was in place for when JLR took on the paradigm shift to operating under Agile methodologies. Learn from Aisling who shares her top tips for implementing a scaled Agile framework and shares JLR's experiences in their transition period.

Steven Wicks
Editor
Automotive IQ

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WHAT IS AGILE?

Agile is a methodology that organisations are adopting, either for the whole business or just a number of its functions. The methodology helps organisations to adapt quickly to changing requirements, both from their customers or shifts within the market landscape. Being Agile requires self-organisation, maintaining a close relationship with customers and reacting quickly to their expectations, thereby cultivating a customer-centric ethos within the organisation. This closeness to market dynamics not only facilitates a deeper comprehension of customer demands but also serves as a catalyst for instilling a culture of continual learning within the company.

"The first mindset shift that needs supporting is that we are no longer in a traditional mechanical automotive industry – we are digital first organisation, with highly advanced technology that means we are competing across a multitude of industries. We need to adapt our game to the new pitch and use new tools and ways of working to stay competitive and give our clients what they desire and deserve."

JLR'S JOURNEY INTO SCALING AGILE

With JLR employing approximately 40,000 employees globally, the need for a strategy to begin the journey to scaling Agile was needed. How did JLR do this?

Starting with a 'pilot' approach to Agile within engineering

Soon after, the need to scale to respond to market movements took place

Then, building Agile into the whole organisation

"Optimising one part of the system would only give us minimum impact. To stay competitive, we had to scale and build agility into the organisation as a whole."

KEY TECHNIQUES EMPLOYED AT JLR

With JLR employing approximately 40,000 employees globally, the need for a strategy to begin the journey to scaling Agile was needed. How did JLR do this?

> **Employing support of external coaching suppliers, while building the internal coaching capacity**

⌄

> **The use of external coaching suppliers helped to jump the Agile transformation at scale**

⌄

> **Now, an internal Agile team at JLR supports the enterprise Agility.**

"To ensure efficiency across various teams and locations – the network of Scrum masters was essential. This was key."

JLR'S TAILORED SCALING METHOD

Taking best practices from SaFe and other frameworks

Creating a tailored scaling method from these frameworks

This was the key to create 'Agility Flow'

"In automotive we have various entities from engineering, manufacturing, finance and commercial, so it was important that we worked with a scaling approach that could be flexible to create 'Agility flow' across the business."

OVERCOMING THE CHALLENGES

With any transformation there are various challenges that have to be faced. One of the key challenges we faced is around the culture. Working in Agile at scale impacts how and who we interact we. This had to be supported throughout the organisation, working hand in hand with HR. It also meant a lot of bravery for senior leaders. They really were great to embrace and support changes and show their vulnerability through change. They were supported to grow into modern leaders.

Tooling is also a challenge, a tool that works on a pilot may not be set up to work at scale. It is important to review and analyse this as you grow. You also may need numerous different tools, in which case automated integration is key to avoid duplication of work and frustration of employees. It is also a challenge to estimate how much internal resources will be needed to support the tools. If people can't work with a tool they will disengage in new ways of working.

"Understanding the roles and responsibilities is a key challenge of any Agile Transformation no matter what framework you use. We had to ensure that key roles, for example Scrum masters, were defined clearly, understood and supported internally in their growth through continuous internal trainings and communities of Practice."

TAILORING THE SCALED AGILE FRAMEWORK FOR JLR AND ENSURING THIS WAS SUSTAINABLE

What did we actually need? We embraced Agile in a pilot approach and hence this question was crutial. We needed an approach that would work across various entities of the business. We needed roles that people could transition too with great ease. In order for it to be sustainable we grew it iteratively and adapted as we grew. We started with squads, nurturing them so that we could build with confidence. We are still reviewing and adapting different ceremonies and roles in order to maximise flow and we keep breaking down silos to build customer centricity into everything.

"Getting buy-in was key to ensuring the uptake. We were fortunate that our Agile Transformation was driven from the very top – our CEO.
Also, those working in squads were already experimenting with agile ways of working, so the timing was right. We were ready and we were supported with the right guidance and vision."

HOW AN AGILE FRAMEWORK CHANGES JLR'S STRUCTURE

PEOPLE

⌄

FACILITIES

⌄

TECHNOLOGY

"Our Reimagine strategy has seen an enormous transformation of our business – investment in people, facilities and technology, all of which is underpinned by putting our creators code, which aims to empower our people to collaborate and by promoting diversity of thought."

JLR'S CONSIDERATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING A SCALED AGILE FRAMEWORK

Key considerations when scaling across the entire organisation:

Does the tool give us scope to mature on our journey?

Can we get end to end visibility from our north star objective to a user story in a straightforward way?

What internal resources are needed to support this tool?

"It is very important to consider how scaling will impact HR and tooling. Working in scaled agile is not just about ceremonies and delivery, it's a huge culture change so HR support is key to its success. Tooling is also a key factor that is required. A tool that works with a few teams may not scale well."

AISLING'S TOP TIPS FOR ADOPTING A SCALED AGILE FRAMEWORK

KEEP IT SIMPLE!

ENGAGE WITH ALL LEVELS OF THE BUSINESS

LANGUAGE!
KEEP IT STRAIGHTFORWARD AND MAKE SURE EVERYONE IS USING THE SAME TERMINOLOGY

RELY ON AGILE PRINCIPLES TO SUPPORT PEOPLE IN THEIR CHANGE

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AISLING'S CLOSING WORDS OF WISDOM

Agile is the key to being successful. Modern leadership gives leaders a chance to review how they engage with their teams, how they can empower them and support them. This is a very positive leadership approach that really impacts the culture of the organisation.

I would also encourage others to persist in their agile growth as it really embraces diversity. Engaging and working hand in hand with different personalities and cultures enables diversity of thought. This is the backbone of our creator's code and delivers a dynamically different working experience for all JLR employees which has a direct impact on the delivery of our products.

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16th – 17th April, 2024 • **Berlin, Germany**

DON'T MISS AISLING'S PRESENTATIONS AT THE AGILE IN AUTOMOTIVE 2024 CONFERENCE!

Agile in Automotive - Day 1 - 16th April

9:40 **INTRODUCING AN AGILE MINDSET & CULTURE: KEYNOTE PANEL**
UNDERSTAND HOW TO MANAGE PUSHBACK & PENETRATE AN AGILE MINDSET IN
WHAT IS A TRADITIONALLY MECHANICAL AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Agile in Automotive - Day 1 - 16th April

11:30 **SAFe CASE STUDY**
HOW A LEADING OEM TAILORED THE COOKIE CUTTER SAFe FRAMEWORK TO GAIN
VALUE

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