Aalto University
School of Science

Master's Programme in Computer, Communication and Information Sciences

Large-Scale Agile Implementation in the Financial Sector

A Case Study

Maija Pajumaa

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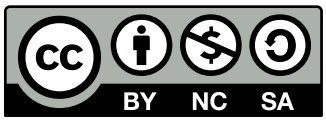

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Author Maija Pajumaa

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Advisor Kristian Hiljander, MSc

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Abstract

This thesis studies how a large financial company has implemented agility, despite operating in a non-agile environment. Using a case study with the chosen research methods of semi-structured interviews and a survey, I analysed the current state of agility in one organisational unit, called a tribe, of the company.

The results show that the state of agility is quite satisfactory, but with some clear deficiencies. The values of agility, such as continuous improvement, were deeply adopted, but at times the operating conditions caused challenges. The teams in the tribe seemed focused on creating value for customers and improving their own ways of working. The tribe worked in an iterative manner, and the continuous improvement was even apparent on the tribe-level. The implementation of agility varied between technical and non-technical teams. The tribe also had employees who worked individually, without being part of a team. Their agility was notably different from that of teams. As can be expected in a large organisation, the teams were highly entangled due to dependencies, and collaboration with others was crucial to them. The employees enjoyed meeting each other face-to-face, but also enjoyed the freedom of hybrid work.

The results also indicated that the agile transformation had successfully lessened bureaucracy, but tribes can still be siloed. In addition, the results showed that the self-organisation of the teams did not extend as far as it should; they were mainly able to organise within certain boundaries. They were unable to decide their goals for themselves, but were still able to organise they way in which they could work to achieve them. Some of the teams also seemed to struggle with gaining value from all of the agile ceremonies they were having. The results also indicated that the teams in the case tribe could improve their communication during collaboration with others. On the company-level, the suitability of the agile framework for certain difficult, but common, circumstances is something to take into further consideration.

The case organisation is presenting many of the characteristics of large-scale agile organisations as described in literature. However, many of the key issues of large-scale agility are also present in the organisation. Overall, the results are in accordance with those of previous studies.

Keywords large-scale agile, self-organisation, agile, agile principles , continuous improvement

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Tiivistelmä

Tässä opinnäytetyössä tutkitaan suuren rahoitusalan yrityksen laajamittaisen ketterän toimintamallin toteutusta. Rahoitusala tunnetaan alana, joka ei lähtökohtaisesti ole ketterä. Tutkimus toteutettiin tapaustutkimuksena, jonka tutkimusmenetelmiä olivat teemahaastattelut sekä kysely. Tapaustutkimuksen kohde oli rahoitusalan yrityksen toiminnallinen yksikkö, jota kutsutaan heimoksi.

Tutkimustulokset osoittavat ketteryyden olevan suhteellisen korkealla tasolla. Tutkimuksessa tuli kuitenkin esiin myös keskeisiä puutteita. Ketterät arvot olivat läsnä heimon jäsenten jokapäiväisessä työskentelyssä, mutta heimon toimintaympäristö hankaloitti sen toimintaa. Heimossa olevat tiimit työskentelivät hyvin asiakaskeskeisesti, parantaen toimintatapojaan jatkuvasti. Koko heimo työskenteli iteratiivisesti, ja myös heimotasolla jatkuva parantaminen oli osa arkea. Tiimien ketteryydessä oli eroja teknisten ja ei-teknisten tiimien välillä. Heimossa oli myös henkilöitä, jotka työskentelivät tiimien ulkopuolella. Heidän kohdallaan ketteryys oli huomattavan erilaista, kuin tiimeillä. Kuten suurissa organisaatioissa yleensäkin, tiimien välillä oli paljon riippuvuuksia. Siten, yhteistyön tekeminen oli keskeinen osa heidän työntekoaan. Heimon jäsenet tapasivat toisiaan mielellään kasvotusten, mutta arvostivat samalla hybridityön tuomaa vapautta.

Tulokset osoittavat myös, että vaikka ketteryys on onnistuneesti vähentänyt yrityksen byrokraattisuutta, on eri heimojen välillä edelleen siiloja. Lisäksi tulokset osoittavat tiimien itseorganisoituvuuden olevan puutteellista. Tiimit voivat organisoida omaa toimintaansa vain rajoitetusti. Heillä ei ollut päätösvaltaa omiin tavoitteisiin, vaan he pystyivät vain päättämään miten työskennellä heille annettujen tavoitteiden saavuttamiseksi. Osa tiimeistä ei kokenut hyötyvänsä ketteristä seremonioista. Tulokset osoittavat myös, että tiimit voisivat parantaa kommunikaatiota tehdessään yhteistyötä muiden kanssa. Yritystasolla tulisi ottaa huomioon, että nykyinen ketterä toimintamalli ei sovi tiettyihin hankaliin olosuhteisiin, jollaisissa useat tiimit joutuvat työskentelemään.

Heimossa on nähtävissä useita kirjallisuudessa kuvattuja laajamittaisen ketterän organisaation piirteitä. Lisäksi nähtävissä on kuitenkin myös useita laajamittaisen ketterän keskeisiä haasteita. Kaiken kaikkiaan, tulokset ovat pitkälti linjassa aiempien tutkimusten kanssa.

Avainsanat laajamittainen ketterä, itseorganisoituminen, ketterä, ketterät periaatteet , jatkuva parantaminen

Preface

First and foremost, want to express my sincere gratitude to Mr. Kristian Hiljander and Professor Casper Lassenius for all the support they provided in writing this thesis.

I also want to thank Mikko Lehtonen for his support, as well as everyone who kindly gave their time to be interviewed for this thesis. In addition, to my family, friends and coworkers, thank you for always being there to provide support and encouragement, as well as a listening ear.

Helsinki, 16 June 2025

Maija Pajumaa

Contents

1 Introduction

Adopting agile ways of working can be demanding in even the smallest IT organisations, working with the newest possible technologies and without much restrictions (Akif and Majeed 2012). When the same concerns a large banking and insurance corporation, the job becomes much more difficult. Not all teams work in IT, and the ones that do often depend on legacy systems and old technologies. They are also highly dependent on the work of each other. The worlds of banking and insurance are highly regulated, and this is often echoed in the bureaucratic natures of these companies. In this thesis, I study the state of agility in a suborganisation of a large financial corporation in Finland, five years after its own agile framework was first introduced.

1.1 Motivation

Agile methodologies became popular in the IT world of the 2020s, and large companies such as Apple (Denning 2012) and Microsoft (Denning 2015) have successfully implemented agility in their large workforces. Although the concept of agility was first developed by software engineers, its origins are in manufacturing (Rigby, Sutherland, and Takeuchi 2016). In the 1990s, there was already prominent discussion around iterative and incremental development (Larman and Basili 2003). The agile methodologies Scrum and Extreme Programming emerged around the same time, culminating in the creation of the Agile Manifesto (Beck et al. 2001) in the year 2001 (Rigby, Sutherland, and Takeuchi 2016).

Latterly, agility has also been gaining popularity in other fields of work, and on a notably larger scale. Applying the methodologies to other fields than software development can be difficult, but as the Agile Alliance highlights, the most important factor in successful agility is having an "agile mindset" (Agile Alliance 2024). The same is echoed by Putta, Paasivaara, and Lassenius (2024), in relation to adopting agile in large organisations. Putta, Paasivaara, and Lassenius describe how applying agile methods is not all there is to adopting agile; rather, the most important thing is to change the mindset within the company to be an agile one. In practice, this means that agility, and its values, must be embedded in the culture of the organisation. As is highlighted by Putta, Paasivaara, and Lassenius, agile is not a tool to be taken into use, it is a set of values to be integrated into the culture itself. Therefore, it is interesting to study how agile has been taken on in the case company, whether it is only used as a tool or if the values have become part of the organisation's culture.

Examples of successful agile transformations at non-tech companies exist. Barclays, a large global bank, announced their intent to adopt agile in 2015. This change stemmed from the realisation that customers' expectations had changed. They expected seamless and personalised services from their bank, which had so far been operating with very traditional, hierarchical and bureaucratic processes. In addition, the transition was made more difficult by the facts that banking is strongly regulated and Barclays offers services in numerous areas, such as personal and corporate banking as well as wealth management. Barclays already had some individual agile teams, but they started agile trainings on a larger scale, and by 2017 they had a thousand agile, self-organising

teams. What has made the transition special and successful, is its enforcement from both the management and the working levels. (Denning and Hamel 2018)

The subject of this case study, a large financial corporation in Finland, started their agile transition from conditions similar to those of Barclays': operating in a highly regulated domain and providing services and products in multiple areas, such as private and corporate banking and insurance. Further complexities are represented with the global distribution of some teams, the use of legacy technologies and a company-wide hybrid work practice. The difficult starting conditions, as well as the intricacies of their daily work, make the company an intriguing subject for studying.

Previous case studies into large-scale agile transformations, summarised by Dikert, Paasivaara, and Lassenius (2016), have found that challenges were presented by multiple factors. For example, one case study found that its case organisation displayed resistance to change as well as struggling with understanding agility. Functions outside of software development were found to be especially resistant to change. Similarly, another case study found that management often remained in waterfall mode. Finally, a third case study found that some teams struggled with self-organisation. In addition to the challenges, the case studies summarised by Dikert, Paasivaara, and Lassenius found that there were clear success factors. One study found that it must be made clear that the transformation is mandatory for all employees, coaching and change leadership must be provided, and the details of the transformation must be clearly and transparently communicated. In addition, one study found that the approach to agility should be customised so that it suits the organisation and its environment. With such clear challenges and success factors, there is motivation to understand whether these aspects are present in the case organisation of this study, and whether the effects are similar to those described by Dikert, Paasivaara, and Lassenius.

1.2 Research Questions

The aim of this study was to find answers to the following three questions, analysing the state of agility within the case organisation, which is a functional unit within a large financial company. The first research question looks at the current implementation, trying to see how it differs between parts of the organisation, and how people see the organisation's agility. The second research question focuses on the problematic parts of the agile implementation. Finally, the third research question introduces actions that the organisation could take to improve their agility.

- RQ1: How is agile implemented?
- RQ2: What are the biggest issues in implementing agile?
- RQ3: What could be done to improve?

1.3 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis starts with an introduction into the topic of agile methodologies and their usage in large organisations. The introduction also describes the research questions

and motivation behind this thesis.

In the second chapter, I introduce the case company and its background. In addition, I detail the company's own agile framework. Finally, I describe the target organisation and its functions within the case company, as these provide important insights for the results of the study.

The third chapter includes background information in the form of a literature review on relevant topics, such as agile methodologies, self-organisation, global software development, large-scale agile and hybrid work.

In the fourth chapter, I describe the chosen research methods: case studies, semi-structured interviews and surveys. The data analysis process is also described in detail. Finally, the fourth chapter includes information on the validity of the thesis and the limitations to it.

The fifth chapter exhibits the results from the research. It also includes tables and figures summarising the data gathered with the research methods introduced in chapter 4.

Next, the results are discussed in detail. Each research question is answered and the findings are analysed in relation to literature.

Finally, the thesis ends with a conclusion on the implementation of agility in the case organisation, the biggest challenges in regards to that and how they could be improved.

The appendices to this thesis contain the interview skeletons used in the semi-structured interviews, and the outline of the survey, as well as a summary of the codes used in the data analysis process.

2 Case Description

2.1 The Case Company

The company, which from now on will be referred to as Company X, is a Finnish large financial organisation. It consists of three business segments: retail banking, corporate banking and insurance, all operating mainly in Finland.

In addition to being a leading financial group, Company X is also one of the largest IT companies in Finland (Company X Internal Documentation). The company's IT capabilities are centralised underneath its central operations, and work in functional organisations to build the company's systems. Company X has approximately 14 000 employees (Company X Half-Year Report 2024), out of which approximately 2 000 are considered to be IT capabilities.

In 2019, Company X announced their intentions to transform towards a self-managed, agile way of working in all its sub-organisations. As for most other companies, the change was driven by the ever-changing world around us. For Company X, as a financial institution, the changes caused by digitalisation, regulation and customer behaviour were crucial (Company X Internal Documentation). Specifically, the three main goals of the transformation were:

- Improving employee satisfaction,
- improving productivity and
- improving customer satisfaction (Company X Internal Documentation)

The agile transformation was largely driven by the then-new CEO of Company X. To begin the transformation, he wanted to understand what the biggest issues were, and what made the group successful. In response to his queries, group employees reported a "siloed nature of businesses", "hierarchical and bureaucratic organisation" and "unclear decision-making" as some of the group's key weaknesses. The company's agile framework aims to close the silos between different businesses and clarify the decision-making process by decreasing the amount of hierarchy, instead creating a coaching-like leadership culture, where decisions can be made together as a team. (Company X Internal Documentation)

2.2 Agile Framework

This section gives a short introduction to the company's agile framework. It covers mainly the aims of the framework and the company's agile principles and practices.

2.2.1 Goals

As the agile framework aims to improve efficiency within the company, as well as customer and employee experiences, it was created in collaboration with employees. As many other agile frameworks, the company's agile framework highlights that it is

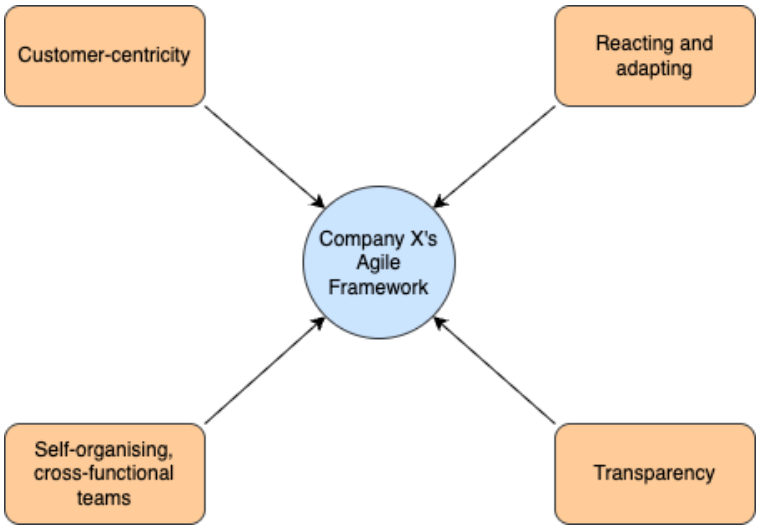

Figure 1: Principles of Company X's agile ways of working

not a strict set of rules that must be followed. Instead, it should be considered as a basis for applying agility to your team. (Company X Internal Documentation)

The framework introduces four principles of agile ways of working, which should guide everyone in the decisions they make. First, the most important principle within Company X is creating customer value. The customer must be in the centre of all decisions made within different teams. When establishing future goals, the value brought to the customer must be considered. Functional organisations are created around customer value, such as a specific area of products. (Company X Internal Documentation)

In an ever-changing environment, the company must be able to adapt and adjust according to the changes around it. Therefore, the second principle is to react and adapt to changes. Everyone in the company should be continuously improving their ways of working and asking for, as well as giving, feedback. (Company X Internal Documentation)

To counteract the siloed nature of the company, one principle is having self-organising, cross-functional teams. For the teams to be able to function in a self-organising manner, they should be able to make decisions by themselves, therefore also reducing bureaucracy. Although the teams function as separate entities, they all utilise similar ways of working and share the same values. (Company X Internal Documentation)

The final principle is transparency. The framework highlights the importance of clearly communicating about the decisions made, the reasons behind them and their consequences. All four principles are pictured in Figure 1.

2.2.2 Organisation

The agile structure has been built in such a manner that an employee's line and functional organisations are separate from each other. The line organisations provide

employees to functional organisations around the group, according to their needs. They are also responsible for employees' competence development. Tribes are functional organisations, consisting of a few teams. A tribe exists around a clearly defined area of business, usually answering to a specific customer need, forming an entity which is able to create value on its own. Tribes should be as self-sufficient as possible, with minimal dependencies to other tribes. Hence, the tribe, and the teams within it, must contain all the necessary competencies. However, it must be noted, that this does not eliminate the need to collaborate with other tribes and teams. Customer service and claims teams can provide meaningful insights for example in the case of improving an old service. Tribes are also supported by professionals from different centres of excellence, for example when they require assistance in compliance or legal matters. (Company X Internal Documentation)

All teams at Company X are multidisciplinary and self-organising. The team members together carry the skills to develop and maintain the products and services they are responsible for. Being self-organising, the team prioritises and plans their work based on the strategic goals of the tribe it is part of. This includes understanding who their stakeholders and dependency teams are, and coordinating with them accordingly. Each team should work in an agile manner, in accordance to the frames defined in Company X's agile framework. Development teams should follow the principles of DevOps (Bigelow, Courtemanche, and Gillis 2024), meaning that they not only develop the products and maintain them, but also provide support in the use of the product. (Company X Internal Documentation)

2.2.3 Agile Roles

Company X's agile framework includes multiple roles for supporting teams' agile functions. Some roles are similar to those of Scrum, such as Product Owners (PO) and Agile Masters (AM). Agile Master is a part-time role, taken on top of one's regular responsibilities, very similar to the role of Scrum Master in Scrum. Teams are also supported by Agile Coaches, who can provide coaching and facilitation to help the team. On a tribe-level, coaches can help develop the tribe's functioning, or facilitate collaboration with other organisations. (Company X Internal Documentation)

2.2.4 Agile Ceremonies

Agile ceremonies at the case company are largely based on those of Scrum. In addition to the traditional Scrum events, there are some tribe-level ceremonies. The tribe-level ceremonies include different QBR ceremonies, where the achievements of the previous quarter are exhibited, and the plans for the next one explained to the whole tribe. In addition, there are town hall meetings, which generally include status updates of company-wide initiatives and other matters which have an effect on the tribe.

2.2.5 Other Practices

Company X's agile framework is iterative and incremental. The aim is for all teams to work in sprints of two weeks, but like all other practices, sprints can be altered according to the needs of the team. (Company X Internal Documentation)

At Company X, all work is tracked and managed in JIRA[1]. Teams should have their backlog there, with all other teams being able to access it. Teams are also able to modify their boards to an extent to serve their specific needs. Practices for backlog usage in teams should be coordinated by the agile master. Agile Masters are also responsible for following the team's statistics in JIRA, intervening if it seems there is more work planned than the team's velocity allows, or the data suggests there are bottlenecks in their work. (Company X Internal Documentation)

In 2021, after the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Company X introduced hybrid work principles. The aim was to introduce the manner in which teams should be working in the future. The principles highlight how hybrid work should be directed by customer experience and business value, and how teams are in charge of planning their own work. The goal of hybrid work at Company X is to increase employees' wellbeing and motivation. This also means that they are trusted when working remotely. (Company X Internal Documentation)

Competence development is a central part of Company X's agile framework. To stay up to date with the changing world and maintain the company's ability to compete in the market, employees are encouraged to spend part of their working hours developing their skills or learning new ones. The company utilises a 70:20:10 model, where 10% of working time can be spent learning. 70% of time should be spent focusing on daily work, while the remaining 20% should be used to improve the teams' ways of working. Employees are responsible for their own competence development, although support is provided from the line organisation. The team is also an important factor in competence development, as in multi-disciplinary teams knowledge is easily shared between team members. Company X's agile framework also highlights the importance of feedback in learning: all employees should be both giving and receiving feedback. (Company X Internal Documentation)

2.3 The Case Tribe

The company's insurance functions operate under one subsidiary. The subsidiary is divided into functional organisations called tribes. The motor insurance tribe, established in 2019, focuses on the motor insurance products and services, pricing, underwriting, and sales channels for both the private and corporate customers. Figure 2 displays the organisational chart with the location of case tribe.

The tribe consists of approximately 60 employees, both internal and external. There are five different multi-disciplinary teams working with specific topics. Three of the teams are classified as DevOps teams, developing the services used to sell and manage motor insurances, while the two others are Business teams, developing the

[1] https://www.atlassian.com/software/jira

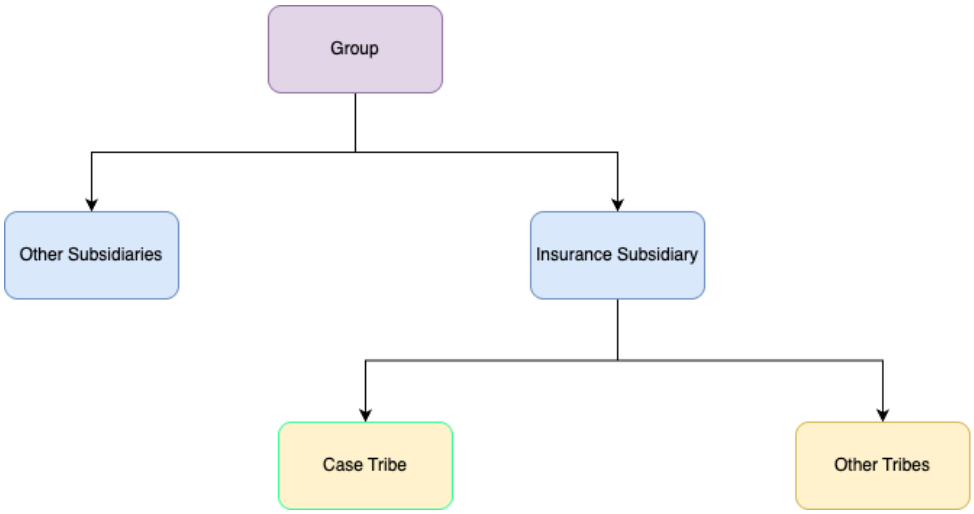

Figure 2: Organisational chart of Company X and the location of the case tribe within it

insurance business procedures. Part of the DevOps teams maintain legacy systems, while others focus on building systems and maintaining newer ones. While there is plenty of variation between the roles in Business and DevOps teams, the central agile roles are the same for both: all teams have a Product Owner and an Agile Master. The DevOps teams' other roles include, for example, software developers and test engineers. The business teams consist of roles such as business developers and product specialists.

The tribe is also supported by some roles shared between multiple tribes, such as the previously mentioned Agile Coach. In addition, there are some lead-level roles operating outside the team structure, but within the tribe. These include, for example, Business Leads, who are in charge of the profitability of a certain business segment within the tribe. They work with the teams in the tribe, but their responsibilities are mainly related to developing and running the business. The company's agile framework does not introduce any specific instructions for these people working outside the teams, despite all tribes having them. The structure of the tribe is detailed in Figure 3.

While most of the tribe is Finnish-speaking and based around Helsinki, approximately 10 of the external employees are based in India and Poland. They work for two of the DevOps teams. The company's agile framework emphasises the importance of treating both internal and external employees in the same manner. They together make up the team and all together follow the principles of agility.

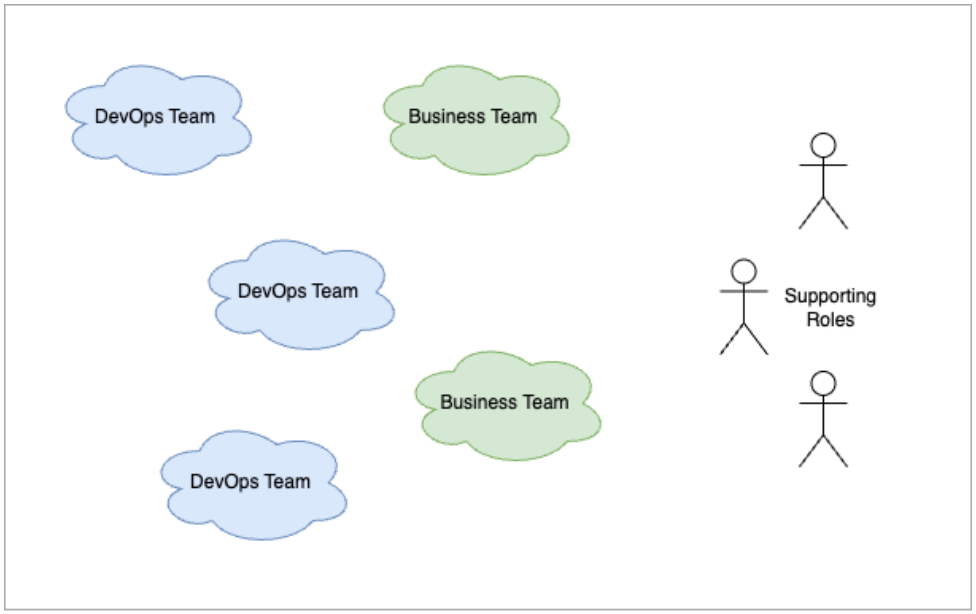

Figure 3: The structure of the tribe

3 Background

3.1 Agile Methodologies

While there are examples of iterative and incremental development from as early as the 1950s (Larman and Basili 2003), the majority of agile history seems to be set in the late 20th century. In the 1980s, multiple manufacturing companies such as Fuji-Xerox, Honda and Canon had teams developing products in a manner that is described in an article by Takeuchi and Nonaka (1986) as a "rugby" approach, "where a team tries to go the whole distance as a unit, passing the ball back and forth". Theirs was not the only article highlighting iterative and incremental development published within the decade. Larman and Basili (2003) describe how by the 1990s professionals' awareness of iterative and incremental development had notably increased, with even more articles promoting its benefits.

Also in the 1990s, Jeff Sutherland, hoping to maximise his team's productivity, with the help of Ken Schwaber, combined methods and ideas from multiple sources into a new way of working (Rigby, Sutherland, and Takeuchi 2016). Inspired by the rugby-imagery of Takeuchi and Nonaka's, Sutherland called his methodology Scrum. Other similar frameworks emerged around the same time, such as Extreme Programming, Adaptive Software Development and Feature-Driven Development. In 2001, the creators of these frameworks met up, emerging with the concept of agility, defined in a document called the Agile Manifesto (Rigby, Sutherland, and Takeuchi 2016).

Agile methods can also be said to have emerged as a response to the traditional software development methods (Abbas, Gravell, and Wills 2008). In an ever-changing business environment, traditional waterfall-esque methods did not produce expected results. The issue with those methods was that they assumed the ability to fully describe and plan the solution (Dybå, Dingsøyr, and Moe 2014). Thus, development projects were often costly and prone to failure, as they could not adjust to changes. Agility, in contrast to traditional methods, does not rely on strict processes in the face of change and complexity, but rather the creativity of people. Many software development professionals, frustrated with these traditional methods, came up with suggestions to improve their ways of working. In their ideas were present many aspects which are in today's world considered central to agility (Abbas, Gravell, and Wills 2008).

The new methods were not embraced immediately on a larger scale. They were mainly utilised by small, individual software development teams. Agility was not trusted, some arguing that any larger organisations adopting it would eventually mould back into their old ways, as it would not deliver the same results as traditional methods. Later on, when agile methods had become much more popular, there was still a lot of resistance to change, as companies would have to completely demolish their existing values and habits to adopt agile principles and methods. The advancement of agile methods is further accelerated by the advancement of technology: Software is becoming an increasingly significant part of many industries, introducing them to the world of agile. Nevertheless, not all of the new agile companies truly are agile.

They might seem to be doing agile, but are not actually being agile, their old manners persisting. (Denning and Hamel 2018)

3.2 Agile Ceremonies and Roles

In this section, I review agile ceremonies and roles to the extent to which they are apparent at the case company. While the case company's agile framework is not fully based on Scrum, the sprint ceremonies and roles are very similar to those of Scrum.

3.2.1 Sprint Planning

Each sprint starts with a planning event, called the Sprint Planning. The aim is for the team to agree what they can achieve during the iteration (Maximini 2018). After agreeing on the goal with the product owner, the team should plan how they are going to accomplish the goal.

3.2.2 Daily Meeting

Daily meetings have become a normal practice in software projects, with the aim to coordinate the progress of the team's work (Stray, Moe, and Aurum 2012). The exact implementation and goals of daily meetings depend on the agile framework used, but the overall idea is to communicate to others what each team member is working on, and bring up any impediments to their progressing. Stray, Moe, and Aurum studied the content of Scrum dailies in two companies, and found that the meetings were rarely, if ever, exactly as described in Scrum literature. Instead, most of the time was spent on discussing about, and solving problems. People found that communicating about impediments was more important than telling others what they were going to be working on next. They also found that the Scrum master facilitating the meeting had to steer conversations, when the team went off-topic or focused too much on one issue.

3.2.3 Sprint Retrospective

Retrospectives are a practice often used in agile methodologies as the means to reviewing and improving a team's working (Lehtinen, Itkonen, and Lassenius 2017). In agile, it is important to have these meetings regularly, most often at the end of each iteration. During the event, team members bring up their successes, but also issues, from the previous iteration. After discussing the items brought up by members, the team together decides on action points, which aim to fix the problems during the next iteration.

One of the key features of retrospectives is that they do not limit the topics to the "actual work", but also encourage discussion on the team dynamics and ways of working (Derby and Larsen 2006). Retrospectives can also help avoid conflict, as the team learns to discuss their shortcomings and find solutions for problems together. Derby and Larsen also describe the importance of facilitation, as it is something with a notable effect on the usefulness of the retrospective. For example, the facilitator

should encourage equal participation from team members, making sure that everyone has a chance to speak their mind. In addition, to keep the team engaged and motivated, Derby and Larsen recommend changing the activities regularly.

3.2.4 Sprint Review / Demo

In Scrum, the Sprint Review meeting takes place at the end of each iteration. The goal of the review is to show the team and its stakeholders the progress achieved during the sprint (Maximini 2018). Attendees have the possibility to give feedback to the team, or suggest future improvements to the product.

3.2.5 Product Owner

Product Owners (POs) in Scrum teams are in charge of making the decisions on the future of the product (Maximini 2018). This includes understanding the end users' requirements for the product and creating intelligible specifications based on them. A central part of the role is also communication. The team must understand what the goal for the product is, as well as the specifications for developing it. In practice, this means that the product owner is responsible for maintaining the product backlog, where development items are detailed and in a priority order.

Be that as it may, studies have shown that product owners' understanding of their responsibilities varies by organisation, and is rarely exactly as described in Scrum literature (Sverrisdottir, Ingason, and Jonasson 2014; Kadenic et al. 2023). Sverrisdottir, Ingason, and Jonasson describe how product owners' tasks and methods in different organisations can be quite disparate. Even within a single organisation, POs from separate teams can have differing perceptions of the role. They seem to adapt their role to fit the needs of the organisation. The same is recounted by Kadenic et al., who describe the role as including, in general, a wide range of skills and responsibilities, with the range being adapted by organisation. Thus, some parts of the role that are considered crucial to it in one organisation, may not be part of it at all in another. As the organisation is so influential when it comes to the role of the PO, it is unsurprising that the authors also describe them to be responsible for managing the organisational culture and politics for the team. According to Kadenic et al., the ability to manage the organisational context, can be the most crucial skill to have as a product owner.

Overall, Sverrisdottir, Ingason, and Jonasson found that despite there being varying perceptions of the product owner role, none of them seemed to be exactly as described in Scrum guides. This is not to say that the role was perceived to be something altogether different from that of Scrum. Rather, there were thought to be additional responsibilities to those described in Scrum literature. Likewise, Kadenic et al. emphasise the impact the organisation has on the role of the product owner, but also that of the product owner's individual characteristics. To successfully convey the product vision and requirements to the development team, product owners must have excellent communication skills. They are also required for maintaining stakeholder relations and other networks around the organisation, something described by Kadenic

et al. to be central to the role of the PO. In addition, communication skills are vital as product owners must be able to facilitate discussions within the team, constitute self-organisation, and resolve conflicts. Having strong networks to other teams and stakeholders helps the product owner's team collaborate with them.

3.2.6 Scrum Master

In Scrum teams, scrum masters are in charge of managing the team's Scrum process (Maximini 2018). They ensure the team members understand Scrum and follow it, and solve any issues related to it. Likewise, if any impediments arise in development, the scrum master is responsible for working to remove them. Scrum masters facilitate all events, such as retrospectives and dailies. They should also have enough knowledge of the framework to mentor other team members.

Despite the role officially being a full-time one, the reality is often different. According to Kristensen and Paasivaara (2021), many organisations implement the role as a part-time responsibility, which is held on top of "regular" duties. Naturally, they point out, this can lead to a decrease in the quality of the scrum master. Kristensen and Paasivaara studied scrum masters in a financial organisation, where the role was first held as a part-time role on a team-level, before being changed to a full-time role, shared by multiple teams. They found, that this change altered the role to being more of a coach to the teams. On the team-level, the scrum master helped the team build their team spirit and held an understanding of the bigger picture of the team's work. However, this had to be done while still managing their regular responsibilities. Then, when the role was changed so that one person was a full-time scrum master, it was found the change did not provide a solution for the tight schedules. The scrum master now had to facilitate the scrum events of many teams, taking up a large portion of their time. In addition, they now had to do all of the other scrum master work, such as resolving impediments, for multiple teams. They also had less time to spend with each team. Although the scrum master had other work when only working with one team, that work was done with the team. This meant, that the scrum master was still able to spend a lot of time observing the team. Nevertheless, the change also brought on many positives, such as knowledge sharing between the teams, and better alignment of them. Kristensen and Paasivaara concluded their study with the suggestion that a scrum master could be shared between two teams, but any more would be detrimental.

3.3 Self-Organising Teams

In self-organising teams, the team members themselves are responsible for many aspects of their work, such as decision-making and planning (Moe, Dingsøyr, and Dybå 2008). While the team members may work in different roles, they are united by a common goal. Self-organising teams are a focal part of agility. The authors of the Agile Manifesto (2001) state in the twelve principles behind the manifesto that *"The best architectures, requirements, and designs emerge from self-organizing teams."* The ever-changing, agile environment requires teams to be able to re-organise themselves when conditions change. To repeatedly adapt their ways of working, an

agile team must, according to Cockburn and Highsmith (2001), be able to withstand the uncertainty brought on by constant change. Cockburn and Highsmith highlight a shared focus towards the project goal, as well as respect and trust within the team, as characteristics crucial to agile teams.

Another concept central to agile is that of creativity, which benefits from self-organisation (Takeuchi and Nonaka 1986). The lack of commands from management means the team is free to explore new ideas. However, there should still be some control coming from top-down, to support the self-organisation of the teams. Takeuchi and Nonaka call this "subtle control", which helps avoid confusion within the team, without deterring creativity. Also supporting an agile team's creativity, is the absence of strict processes. Instead, the team's functioning revolves around the competencies within it (Cockburn and Highsmith 2001). Moe, Šmite, et al. (2021) describe the same sentiment as teams not having specific leaders who hold all of the leadership authority, but many team members who each can lead the team's functioning when they have the authority to do so based on their knowledge and abilities. An agile team's ability to collaborate is a huge factor in its level of creativity (Cockburn and Highsmith 2001). Good collaboration ensures the ideas stem from all the competence within the team. Brainstorming sessions, as explained by Cockburn and Highsmith (2001), are great examples of an agile team building ideas from the competencies within it, by utilising their ability to collaborate.

As Moe, Dingsøyr, and Dybå (2008) point out, while traditional software development teams could get by with team members managing themselves, agility expects self-organisation from not only each member but also the team as a whole. Moving from top-down management of the team towards self-management can be difficult. Moe et al. also highlight how this can present one of the biggest challenges for teams adopting agile. Some employees, Nuottila, Aaltonen, and Kujala (2016) describe, can struggle with the social requirements of agility. Self-organisation demands collaboration from the agile team (Cockburn and Highsmith 2001), and thus inadequate social skills may hinder the team's ability to organise themselves.

Self-organisation when adopting agile can also be problematic for middle management. Dikert, Paasivaara, and Lassenius (2016) describe how middle managers can struggle with easing control and letting the team self-organise. To succeed with agile transformations, Dikert et al. emphasise the significance of allowing teams full control of their functioning. Dikert et al. argue, that this helps the team institute agility within the team, and become more committed to persevering with it. Overall, they highlight how companies can help the transformation by giving teams the ownership of their agile methods and improving them. However, this does not mean the company should not have a shared agile interpretation. If all teams come up with their own agile interpretations, without any synchronised common ground between them, collaboration between teams can become difficult, explain Dikert et al.

3.4 Large-scale Agile

Although agile methods were initially mainly utilised by small teams in small IT companies, their benefits, such as increase in productivity and motivation, have also

intrigued larger companies (Putta, Paasivaara, and Lassenius 2024). However, adopting agile in a large organisation is not a straightforward process: It comes with high risks and costs. Nevertheless, companies remain hopeful that agility will bring a synchronised culture that is reflected in the solutions they develop (P. d. O. Santos and Carvalho 2022). A larger company size means that organisational change is more difficult to promote (Dikert, Paasivaara, and Lassenius 2016). Many of their characteristics also contradict those of small organisations, and agility as a whole. For example, Dikert, Paasivaara, and Lassenius explain how the dependencies between teams and a need for documentation in large organisations are inherently unagile. Reifer, Maurer, and Erdogmus (2003) highlight how applications in large organisations are interconnected, and developing them requires communication horizontally between teams.

As is the case with other large organisational changes, the reasons behind an agile transformation should be made clear to the whole of the organisation (P. d. O. Santos and Carvalho 2022). When there is a universal understanding of the goals and values of the transformation, conflicts, bound to come up throughout the change, become easier to resolve. Another crucial factor in adopting agile within a large organisation, is the scaling of agile methods (Putta, Paasivaara, and Lassenius 2024). Multiple frameworks for scaling agile have been introduced, aiming to help organisations find the practices that suit them. Examples of agile scaling frameworks include the Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe) and Large Scale Scrum (LeSS), with SAFe seeming to have gained the most popularity.

Dikert, Paasivaara, and Lassenius (2016) highlight the factors behind successful large-scale agile transformations. For example, the level of agile competence of management-level employees, and the support provided by them, has a notable effect on the success of the transformation. The teams adopting agile must also commit to the change, endorsing the mindset. The manner in which agility is customised for the organisation is also of importance. Teams should be given the autonomy to find the methods that suit them, instead of pushing a by-the-book manner of doing agile.

While Dikert, Paasivaara, and Lassenius described specific factors behind successful agile transformations, Denning and Hamel (2018) narrow them down to three key aspects. First of all, the organisations have allowed team sizes to stay small. Agile teams should be small, with the team members trusting each other and the team making decisions autonomously. Second, the teams should make up a network, interacting with each other, harbouring innovation, and sharing the same mindset. Finally, each employee of the organisation should be focused on creating customer value. This way, the small independent teams together are able to work on large and complex issues.

3.4.1 Challenges

Dikert, Paasivaara, and Lassenius (2016) also describe the challengers found in large-scale agile transformations. They found one of the most common issues to be the practical implementing of agile in the teams' daily work. They identified a similar issue that was also described by Putta, Paasivaara, and Lassenius (2024): implementing the agile methods was not enough, teams had to understand the reasons behind agility and

adopt the mindset as well as the methods. As project management is quite different in agile than traditional methods, it is not surprising that the new project management style lead to some challenges. As described by both Putta, Paasivaara, and Lassenius (2024) and Dikert, Paasivaara, and Lassenius (2016), when adopting agile in a large company, many project managers were moved to product owner or scrum master roles, which were very different from their previous responsibilities. They also had trouble understanding and implementing servant leadership as well as adjusting to agile ways of working.

There were also issues found in the collaboration between teams. They could have differing interpretations and implementations of agile (Dikert, Paasivaara, and Lassenius 2016). In some cases, the issue was that the agile transformation had only included development teams, which made their collaboration with non-agile, non-tech teams more difficult. Some of the other issues in agile transformations, as listed by Dikert, Paasivaara, and Lassenius, were resistance to change, remaining organisational boundaries, lack of training, and challenges in requirements engineering.

3.4.2 Benefits

Despite the many risks of adopting agile on a large scale, studies have found the benefits organisations were hoping for to be achievable. The shared commitment to agility, and the sense of trust and autonomy, characteristic of agile, were found to increase employees' well-being (P. d. O. Santos and Carvalho 2022). Putta, Paasivaara, and Lassenius (2024) describe how teams adopting agile became more able to turn their knowledge into valuable solutions and take ownership. Agile also brings clients closer to development teams, increasing their communication (P. d. O. Santos and Carvalho 2022). Therefore, business requirements are better understood by teams, and they are able to get more support and feedback from clients. Overall, there is more transparency and trust between the two entities, simplifying their work.

The multidisciplinary nature of agile teams, in addition to increased communication, speeds up delivery processes (Putta, Paasivaara, and Lassenius 2024). Also having clear, prioritised goals means that teams are able to adapt to changes, without the delivery time being prolonged. Even better, teams understood not only their own priorities, but also those of others', easing collaboration between them. Deliveries, while frequent, were also thought to be more valuable than before as a result of the prioritisation.

3.5 Spotify Model for Scaling Agile

The agile concept of tribes originates from the Swedish audio streaming company Spotify. In their 2012 article, Kniberg and Ivarsson describe Spotify's method of implementing agile on a large scale. A squad is, according to Kniberg and Ivarsson *"the basic unit of development at Spotify"*. Squads are multidisciplinary and highly autonomous; each one even has the choice of working either in Sprints or with Kanban. Squads work in a very specific area, focusing on a long-term goal. Each squad includes a product owner, who is responsible for prioritising their work and maintaining their

product backlog. Self-organisation of squads is highlighted by Linders (2016) as one the most important principles of the Spotify Model.

Another integral part of Spotify's agile is the concept of tribes. Consisting of multiple squads, but containing no more than around 100 people, tribes are formed around a specific area (Kniberg and Ivarsson 2012). They are lead by a tribe lead, who facilitates the collaboration between squads. Tribe-level meetings, where squads can showcase their work, are organised regularly. Similar roles, for example designers, within a tribe make up a chapter. The goal of a chapter is to provide employees with a platform to share their role-specific issues and successes, with hopefully others being able to help with or benefit from them. Guilds, on the other hand, are not limited to a certain tribe, or even certain roles; anyone interested in the topic can join. The model is pictured in Figure 4.

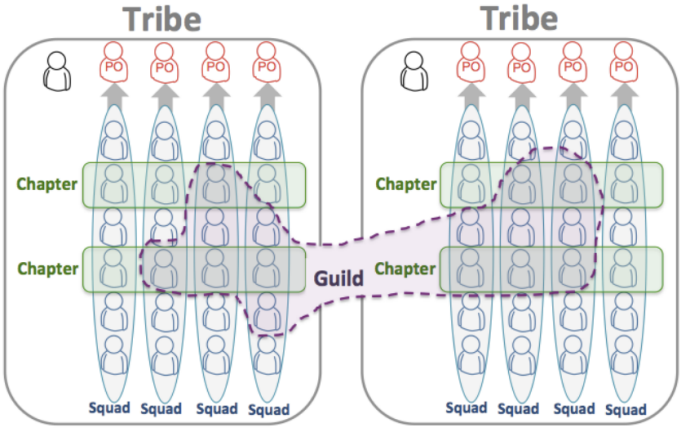

Figure 4: Spotify Model for Scaling Agile (Kniberg and Ivarsson 2012)

3.6 Agile in Non-Software Development

As previously stated, agile methods have increased in popularity even outside the field of software development. Gustavsson (2016) highlights the benefits faced by non-software agile teams, as well as the challenges faced by them.

The most prevalent benefits seemed to be better collaboration within the team, as well as increased and improved interaction with customers. Similarly to software development, agility also advanced non-software projects' productivity and made them more able to adapt to changes. Overall, Gustavsson's findings reflect many of the principles and processes central to agility: transparency, visibility, removing impediments, autonomy, quality, customer-centricity and collaboration. It seems, that even in completely dissimilar projects and environments, agility is able to provide similar benefits.

According to Gustavsson, in comparison to benefits, less challenges were presented when discussing non-software agile projects. The ones most often described were related to change resistance and lack of process visibility.

3.7 Agile Inter-Team Collaboration

As previously presented, large-scale agile poses challenges on a team-level. However, functions in a large organisation are also likely to require inter-team collaboration, which in itself poses further challenges. Therefore, it is necessary to set up inter-team collaboration practices, which, unfortunately, are not included in most agile methodologies (V. Santos, Goldman, and Souza 2015). To manage the dependencies between the teams and to facilitate collaboration, varying practices are used. Berntzen et al. (2023) studied different coordination practices and their effectiveness in the challenges of large-scale agile inter-team collaboration. They also constructed a taxonomy of the practices, dividing them into three categories: meetings, roles, and tools and artefacts. Each of them was further divided into two subcategories.

Meetings enabled information sharing and coordination by bringing together people from different teams. They were crucial in managing dependencies – both in knowledge and processes – as they made it possible for people to discuss in between and across different roles. In their taxonomy, Berntzen et al. divided meetings into two subcategories, scheduled and unscheduled. Scheduled meetings were preplanned, while unscheduled meetings included ad-hoc discussions held, for example, when meeting others at the office.

Inter-team coordination roles, on the other hand, are defined by Berntzen et al. as supporting roles outside of the teams coordinating. The two subcategories of roles were defined as individuals and teams. For example, the former are people working in lead, specialist and expert roles, and the latter whole teams of experts, such as platform teams. The authors emphasise the importance of the latter, as they support technological alignment within the organisation. Specialists, on the other hand, contribute with their advanced knowledge.

Finally, tools and artefacts for inter-team coordination, are divided into tangible and intangible ones. Tangible tools and artefacts can be things such as task boards and physical roadmaps. In today's world of hybrid work, the intangible or digital tools and artefacts hold more importance. They are many and varied, for example, digital communication and documentation tools, or the digital versions of tangible artefacts, such as roadmaps. Berntzen et al. highlight, that to best support agile inter-team collaboration, these tools and artefacts must be as adaptable as the agile process itself.

There are many other factors that influence inter-team collaboration. For example, V. Santos, Goldman, and Souza (2015) highlight how the physical workspaces offered by the company are an important factor, as they facilitate face-to-face discussions and other informal, ad-hoc collaboration. Another important factor in informal collaboration was the teams' awareness of the others' progress in their work. In addition, they found that having the same long-term strategy positively affects inter-team co-operation. Finally, their findings suggest that when inter-team collaboration brings together employees with different skills and backgrounds, the effects on quality, performance and innovation are notably positive.

3.8 Agile Culture

Agile culture is defined by Kuchel et al. (2023) as *"An Agile Culture reflects to the behaviour of people working in an organization using agile practices based on the underlying values and principles defined in the agile manifesto and the guidelines of agile methods."* Agile values and principles are likely to contradict the ones already prevalent in a company starting its agile transformation. Therefore, it is unsurprising that there shall be cultural challenges throughout the transformation to having an agile culture.

Transparency and trust are values central to agility, but are often the cause of challenges in adopting an agile culture, as described by Kuchel et al. (2023). To create an agile culture, companies and their leadership must make their own decisions and processes transparent, and trust their subordinates. The same goes for psychological safety. Kuchel et al. highlight issues such as not valuing feedback or experiments, and employees not being allowed to make mistakes. What makes agile transformations even more difficult, according to Kuchel et al., is that the culture can vary within an organisation.

In large-scale agile, the organisation's culture, as well as an agile team's own culture, have a notable effect on the teams' abilities and performance. Continuous improvement must be fostered on the organisational and inter-team level as well as within a single team, as must psychological safety. A high level of psychological safety promotes knowledge sharing and innovation. Open discussions and self-organisation are important to psychological safety, but self-organising teams are not inherently safe – they must build it with supportive leadership. Psychological safety is fostered by high-quality relationships between parties, characterised by shared goals and knowledge, as well as mutual respect for one another. These relationships also improve the information processing between them; something that is crucial to inter-team collaboration in large-scale agile. However, to maintain the level of quality, relationships require constant maintaining, as the goals and knowledge the parties share are prone to change often in agile environments. Psychological safety also acts as a basis for continuous improvement, encouraging learning from one's mistakes and discussing shortcomings. Continuous improvement, as one of the core agile values, improves the team's performance and adaptiveness. Together, continuous improvement and psychological safety also increase an organisation's reliability, by bringing up and then improving weaknesses in its processes. Overall, an organisation's performance, innovativeness, adaptability and reliability all seem to be improved by high-quality relationships, psychological safety and continuous improvement. (Ahmad 2025)

3.9 Global Software Development

Multiple factors are driving more companies towards Global software development (GSD), also known as distributed software development (GSD). For example, companies aim at lowering their development costs and making development more efficient (De Souza et al. 2023). Employees from other countries may have lower

salaries, longer working weeks and less mandatory vacation days a year. Moreover, the competencies required to build the product might not be available in the country where the company is located at, or the targeted end users might be elsewhere and local knowledge wants to be utilised. Modern communication solutions such as Microsoft Teams or Slack have made distributed software development feasible for an increasing number of companies (Papadopoulos 2015).

3.9.1 Challenges

While favoured by many companies, distributed software development is rarely easy for the team itself. Many challenges are caused by the dissimilarities between the team members' locations. These challenges, or rather the reasons behind them, are often divided into three categories: temporal distance, geographical distance and socio-cultural distance. According to Holmstrom et al. (2006), temporal distance is due to time zone differences and varying working patterns, which can affect the overlap in the team's working hours. Geographical distance, on the other hand, is associated with the effort required to visit the other part of the team. Finally, Holmstrom et al. describe socio-cultural distance as *"a measure of an actor's understanding of another actor's values and normative practices"*. It includes factors such as cultural and language differences.

Understanding these categories is important in studying the challenges of GSD, as most issues stem from unfit management and other social aspects, instead of technical ones (De Souza et al. 2023). Challenges in communication are very common, as is described by De Souza et al. and Holmstrom et al. According to De Souza et al., cultural and language differences can lead to deficient knowledge sharing. Socio-cultural differences between team members are also a source of misunderstandings and even conflicts. Another major issue, as described by Holmstrom et al., is that distributed teams struggle with not only official communication, but also informal discussions, despite them being considered critical for successful development. Communication issues can be further aggravated by the temporal distance within a team. According to Holmstrom et al., temporal distances can lead to delays in response, making discussions scattered and delaying their conclusion. Furthermore, this can also lead to employees losing track of progress, or even burning them out. Perhaps unsurprisingly then, considering all of these communication issues, the authors also found there to be a lack of team spirit in distributed teams. The lack of team spirit can also be a consequence of geographical distance. According to Holmstrom et al., when teams meet face-to-face, they are more likely to get to know each other and build trust between each other. The authors also highlight that by bringing the members together and eliminating the geographical distance, teams would also be able to counteract their temporal and socio-cultural distances.

3.9.2 Agile GSD

At the same time as companies are distributing their development teams, many are also adopting agile methods. However, Papadopoulos (2015) argues that the traditional

development methods might just fit distributed teams better than agile ones. According to him, the clearly structured development cycle and thorough documentation support distributed teams in working autonomously, minimising the need to communicate virtually. Scaling agile methods on a larger scale can be difficult on its own and distributed teams only add to the challenge. Lous, Kuhrmann, and Tell (2017) studied distributed teams, who had adopted Scrum. Finding that many of its core principles must be scaled and adjusted to fit distributed development, they conclude: *"Scrum as such represents a serious barrier for (globally) distributed projects"* (Lous, Kuhrmann, and Tell 2017). For example, they raise the issue of knowledge management in distributed agile teams. To ensure knowledge is shared and maintained, Lous, Kuhrmann, and Tell suggest methods such as virtual pair programming and regular meetups, to allow for face-to-face communication.

However, some studies also find crucial similarities between distributed and agile development. Camara et al. (2020) highlight that communication is central to both. Agile's ceremonies, such as sprint planning and daily meetings, support a globally distributed team in communicating about their work and sharing knowledge. However, they also acknowledged the need for documentation in distributed teams, suggesting that it would be beneficial as communication can at times be difficult. Stadler et al. (2019) also argue that agile methods suit distributed teams just as well as they do co-located ones. The iterative nature of agile, as well as the feedback culture, were deemed to assist distributed teams in coordinating their work, and counteracting management issues.

3.10 Hybrid Work

In 2020, companies and their employees had their work routines deranged, when the Covid-19 pandemic forced people to work from their homes. But then, after the pandemic, having adapted to it by necessity, employees still tended to favour remote work, for reasons such as saving time on commuting and being able to work without interruptions (Gratton 2021). Since then, companies have strived to create hybrid work models, which support their employees in working from their preferred place, while not compromising their business initiatives. To achieve this, Gratton emphasises the importance of considering individual employees' needs, instead of focusing merely on those of the company. The result would not only bring more flexibility to the employees, but also allow for more agility, satisfaction and productivity.

Gratton's (2021) model for creating a functioning hybrid work environment takes into account the following four aspects: jobs and tasks, employee preferences, projects and workflows, and finally inclusion and fairness. She argues that productivity for different tasks means different working conditions: for example, some work requires the possibility to work for hours undisturbed, while some other tasks require you to be in the same room as others, or have the possibility to easily communicate with them. Furthermore, employees' personal preferences also affect where they hope to work from. A long commute or family obligations can lead some employees to prefer remote work, while others prefer coming to the office as their home environments do not allow for focused working. Some people also prefer coming to the office with the hopes

of building connections to other employees, something that is less likely to happen online. When it comes to coordination between employees and teams, Gratton argues that hybrid work introduces a new challenge. When employees are scattered around a country, or in different countries altogether, coordinating their work is not an easy feat. While different technologies provide a solution, at least to an extent, there is also the possibility to re-evaluate existing workflows and needs for coordination. Hybrid work should not be created to mirror the old ways of working, but instead improve them where possible. Finally, Gratton highlights the importance of making these hybrid work practices company-wide, to avoid feelings of unfairness between teams. Overall, the process, according to Gratton, is about understanding the compromises made in hybrid work. Both remote and on-site work have their benefits and challenges, but the focus should be on leveraging the best from both to meet the needs of individual employees.

3.11 Kanban

Kanban is an agile methodology, originating from manufacturing. Its core concepts are limiting the amount of work-in-progress, visualising workflows, setting clear process policies, managing and measuring processes, and continuous improvement. Limiting work-in-progress ensures the team is not taking on too much work at once. Similarly to Scrum, in Kanban tasks are visualised on a board where they move from column to column, visualising their progress in the workflow. Clear process policies ensure the team has a common understanding what each phase in the workflow entails, and what the requirements are for being able to transit into the next phase. Also central to Kanban is the use of different diagrams and charts to measure and inspect the process itself. Finally, it is crucial to continuously improve the process. (Ahmad et al. 2018)

4 Methodology

The chosen method for conducting this research was a single case study, focusing on a clearly defined organisation, the case tribe. To build an understanding on the agile characteristic of the case tribe, I conducted multiple semi-structured interviews. The teams in the tribe have very different goals and functions, and therefore I wanted to interview at least one person from each team. The interview structure was mainly qualitative, but also included some quantitative "On a scale of 1-5..." -questions. In addition to interviewing team members, semi-structured interviews were conducted with some of the tribe members not belonging in any team. The structure for that interview was different. After the interviews, a survey was sent out to the team members who did not partake in an interview. The survey included the quantitative parts of the interview.

4.1 Overview of the Case Method

4.1.1 Case Study

A case study is defined as a research strategy, focusing on a certain phenomenon in its context. The context and phenomenon are not always distinguishable from one another, but the context may have notable effect on the phenomenon, which attracts researchers to study both of them. Case studies utilise various methods of research, collecting data from multiple sources. The research can consist of a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods, or only one of them. Case studies do not have predefined methods for data analysis, but the idea is to triangulate the data from different sources. The methods should be chosen and their usage defined in advance and followed throughout the implementation. The most suitable methods are highly dependent on the target of study and the aim of the research. Case studies are used when the research aims to take into consideration how the contextual factors affect the target phenomenon, instead of differentiating them from the surrounding environment, to create a laboratory environment. (Yin 2002)

4.2 Data Collection

4.2.1 Semi-structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews include both closed- and open-ended questions, making them less strict in format than structured interviews, which consist only of closed-ended questions. The format resembles a dialogue between the interviewer and the interviewee and allows questions to be asked on the spot, rather than adhering to a strict plan. (Adams 2015)

In this case study, semi-structured interviews were chosen as the main research method, as they allowed the interviewer to gain a deeper understanding of the interviewees' thoughts and experiences of agility. However, they require the interviewer to be quite familiar with the subject at hand and they can be especially time-consuming (Adams 2015). Despite the various drawbacks of semi-structured interviews, Adams

describes how they are well-suited for cases, where the interviewer must make further inquiries and ask follow-up questions to get a comprehensive answer.

In total, 12 semi-structured interviews were conducted. Out of those, 10 interviews targeted members of different teams in the tribe. The other two interviewees were some of the supporting roles of the tribe who are not part of any teams. All interviews are detailed in Table 1. During the team-member interviews, the focus was on the agility of the team, the interviewee's perception of that as well as the biggest issues regarding it. The contents of the interview skeleton for the team member interviews is found in Appendix A.

The non-team member interviews focused on understanding how the interviewees implemented agility without being part of a team. Another purpose was to understand whether they felt they were able to work in an agile manner, and if the company's agile framework provided them with support. The full contents of the interview skeleton can be viewed in Appendix B.

A central part of both types of interviews was to discern the interviewees' knowledge of the framework itself, and how well the three main goals of the agile transformation, as detailed in chapter 2.1, had been achieved. Both also included questions regarding the collaboration either the interviewees' teams or the interviewees themselves had with others.

The interviewees were chosen systematically, ensuring that there was at least one interviewee from each team, and that there were varying roles represented. It was also considered that there should be some interviewees who have been at the company for a long time, as well as newer employees. In the end, the average tenure was 11,3 years. Both internal and external employees were included in a ratio similar to the whole of the tribe. Four of the team member interviewees were agile masters. Non-team interviewees were chosen based on their roles. All interviews were conducted face-to-face, in English. They were recorded, and manually transcribed by the author.

Table 1: Interviews

#	Role	Date	Duration
1	Developer	15.1.2025	45 minutes
2	Developer	20.1.2025	35 minutes
3	Business Developer	22.1.2025	33 minutes
4	Lead Developer	29.1.2025	42 minutes
5	Product Owner	5.2.2025	36 minutes
6	Content Producer	6.2.2025	24 minutes
7	Solution Analyst	11.2.2025	36 minutes
8	Solution Analyst	19.2.2025	34 minutes
9	Product Owner	20.2.2025	30 minutes
10	Senior Data Analyst	26.2.2025	32 minutes
11	Business Lead	2.4.2025	27 minutes
12	Business Change Lead	3.4.2025	30 minutes

4.2.2 Surveys

In survey research, information is amassed from respondents' answers to a set of questions. The idea is, that this data gathered from the set of respondents, a sample, can be generalised to represent the views of the target of the study as a whole. The questions can be either close- or open-ended, and planning them carefully is of the utmost importance. There should not be too many questions, and the balance between closed- and open-ended questions should be considered. In addition, the order in which questions are presented has an effect on the success of the survey. The survey should start with easy questions, for example, about the respondent. The main body of the survey focuses on the main topic, and finally, there should be an opportunity to provide comments on the survey as a whole. The survey can be distributed either directly through an organisational actor, or indirectly via e.g. social media. (Egger and Beerli 2023)

In this study, the survey consisted of the same qualitative questions that were used in the interviews. The tool of choice for creating the survey was Microsoft Forms[2], as it was provided by the case company. The respondents could fill the survey in either Finnish or English. The survey started with voluntary questions regarding the role of the respondent. The main purpose was to gather more data to support the findings from the interviews. Finally, there was the possibility to provide open comments on any of the questions of the survey, or the topic in general. The full contents of the survey can be viewed in Appendix C.

The survey was aimed at and distributed directly within the team members of the tribe, who had not been interviewed. The division between teams was somewhat level within the respondents, apart from one team which was not represented at all. The respondents were also equally divided between the business and DevOps teams. Similarly to the interviews, the tenure of the respondents varied largely, with the average tenure being 13,1 years.

4.3 Data Analysis

The qualitative data from the interview recording transcripts was uploaded to Atlas.ti[3] for analysis. The analysis was conducted by coding the transcript files and creating relationships between the codes and interviews. The relationships were represented by links, visualised in networks. The codes were also split into subgroups, such as the characteristics of an agile ceremony. An exhaustive list of the codes applied can be viewed in Appendix D. The codes were analysed in relation to one another, as well as in relation to the transcript documents and groups created out of them. The documents were grouped by the characteristics of the interviewee, such as whether they were an agile master, or whether they belonged to a business or a DevOps team, or no team at all. Atlas.ti's analysis tools were utilised, for example, to show counts of codes by document, and to check for combined usage with other codes.

[2]https://www.microsoft.com/en-gb/microsoft-365/online-surveys-polls-quizzes
[3]https://atlasti.com/

The quantitative questions in the interviews used a scale of 1-5, but for the survey, a scale of 1-7 was preferred, so the answers given by the interviewees were converted to the seven-point scale. The quantitative data from the survey was compared to the data from the interviews, and the results were both compared, and analysed as a whole. They were also analysed and compared by teams, roles, and tenure, but little variation was present. Overall, the survey data complemented the data from the interviews.

4.4 Limitations and Validity

This study is largely based on the interviews conducted within the tribe. Out of its approximately 60 employees, only 12 were interviewed, and the interviewees were not equally distributed between teams. The survey had a further 11 respondents. The interviewees were all on-shore members of the tribe. It is not clear if any of the survey respondents were off-shore members. It is thus unclear, whether these findings represent their views as well. Overall, this study may not grasp the full extent of the implementation of agility in the tribe.

In addition, some limitations to the interviewees' responses may have been presented by the interviews having been held in their second language. Limitations to the credibility of this study may also be presented by the author's connections to the case organisation.

5 Results

In this chapter, I present the results from the different sources and the data analysis. The answers to each research question are divided into their own subsections.

5.1 RQ1: How is Agile Implemented?

In Section 2, I described the three aims of adopting agility at the case group: customer and employee experience, and efficiency. Throughout the interviews, it became clear that the interviewees were not aware of those reasons, when asked if they understood the benefits of agility and the reasons for choosing it within the company. Out of the 12 interviewees, four mentioned efficiency in their answer. In addition, one mentioned both efficiency and customer experience, while another brought up both customer and employee experiences. So, altogether, only half of the 12 interviewees were aware of at least one of the correct reasons, and not one was able to name all three.

However, despite being unable to quote the reasons when asked about the aims of agility, those three topics were often brought up when answering other questions. For example, customer experience was described as a fundamental factor behind many interviewees' work:

> *"I would say that we always think about the customer whatever we do."*
>
> — Developer

Overall, it seemed the teams in the tribe were fairly well focused on the customers and creating value for them. The distribution of all answers, when asked about their customer-centricity, is shown in Figure 5. For some interviewees, agile was a default way of working, meaning they had not given much consideration for the company-specific aims of agility. Nevertheless, it seems quite alarming that people are not aware of the aims of working in an agile manner.

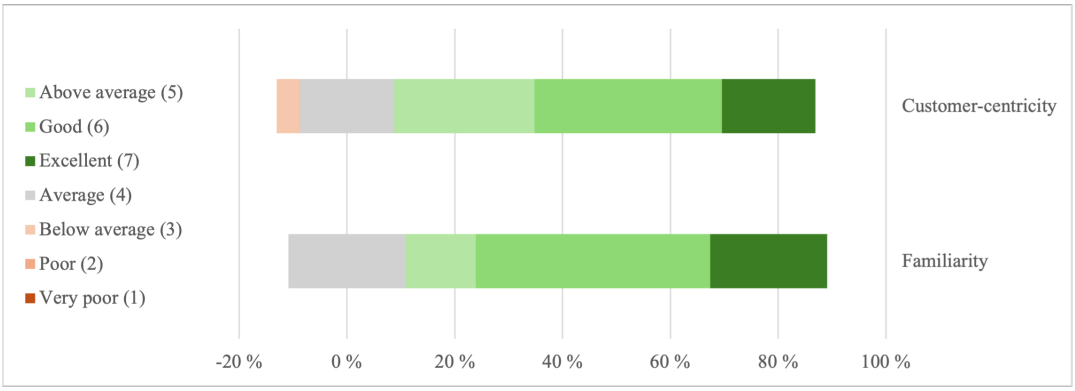

Figure 5: Interviewees' and survey respondents' customer-centricity and their familiarity with the company's agile framework.

Most interviewees and survey respondents described themselves as being familiar with the contents of the company's agile framework. This seemed to actually be the case, at least to some extent. They knew many of the values adhering to it, but, as

mentioned, did not know the specific aims of it. All of the answers to the familiarity are detailed in Figure 5.

When asked how the company's agile framework was visible in their day-to-day work, there was not much variation between the answers of the team-member interviewees. By far, the most frequent answer was ceremonies. For many interviewees, agility was also apparent in their use of Jira and the overall ways of working. It was also described as being a major factor behind all daily work:

> *"I would say it's the guiding principle of how we try and, and do our work."*
>
> — Solution Analyst

The non-team interviewees described quickened decision-making processes due to the decrease in bureaucracy within the organisation. One of them, who had previously worked as part of a team, described how different the experience was then:

> *"So back then I think it was part of everyday life kind of. We were planning together, we were having dailies too, like all those ceremonies together of course, but also I think that we had the feeling that we are like sharing the goal and doing things together within the team."*
>
> — Business Change Lead

In their new role outside the teams, they described being more in charge of leading themselves and doing things differently. While ceremonies were still a central way in which agility was visible, the focus was fully on the tribe-level ceremonies. All of the themes from the responses and their frequencies are detailed in Table 2.

Table 2: How is Agile Visible in Your Daily Work?

Concept	Frequency
Ceremonies	8
Ways of Working	5
Jira	4
Roles	2
Iterativeness	2
Communication	2
Continuous Improvement	1
Lessened bureaucracy	1

Many of the themes from Table 2 reflect the themes of the company's agile transition. The top five themes are such that are explicitly mentioned in the agile framework. The rest of the themes are a combination of principles and aims of the agile transformation. By this measure, the transformation has been a success, as it seems to suggest, that the functions and values of agility have become a part of the interviewees' daily work.

Most interviewees agreed that the effect of agility on their employee experience is positive. The reasons for that were numerous. Some described improved decision-making and self-organisation as the central factors, while for others it was due to the trust and freedom they were given. For some interviewees, the effects were neutral, as

they considered it to be the de-facto way of working, or they had not worked for the company before the transition and could not compare it to anything. One interviewee felt the effect was negative, due to the large gap between the line and functional organisations.

5.1.1 Sprints

At the beginning of the interviews, only two of the five teams worked in sprints. Throughout the interview process, one of them decided to switch to Kanban. The only team left working with sprints also does part of their development work in Kanban method, as they feel it suits the fast-evolving development process better. Nevertheless, those teams using Kanban did not describe using work-in-progress limits. The sprints that teams do have last three weeks, with all of the interviewees from that team agreeing that it is a good duration.

When it comes to the non-team interviewees, the work was not done in sprints. For them, iterativeness was present in other ways, and was highly dependent on the interviewee themselves. For example, when asked if they worked in an iterative manner, one non-team interviewee said:

> *"I have to say that it's something that is like very um, distinctive for me as a person. That's how I work in everyday life, no matter where I work, it's, it has nothing to do with this organisation. It's just my way of thinking about things, and I do that on a daily basis."* — Business Lead

Unlike with the team members, there are no structures, such as sprints or a team, to support them and encourage iteration. However, the non-team interviewees also described having some support from others, such as the agile coach, in this matter:

> *"Quite often we iterate or uh, kind of um, challenge ourselves and um, each other with the, for example with the presentations we have. And also when we're planning events or larger meetings, things like that."* — Solution Analyst

5.1.2 Roles

When it comes to roles, there is not much variety between teams. All teams have a product owner and an agile master. However, these agile roles do not concern the non-team employees, apart from the collaboration they do with the teams, which is discussed in Section 5.1.7.

Most teams felt happy with their product owner: they thought that the PO was successful in their responsibilities, and that the description fit the role well. Others mainly agreed, and overall, the product owners scored quite high in their fitting the official description, as can be seen from Figure 6. The product owners themselves also agreed that their responsibilities in the team were as described in the company's agile methodology. The most important duties were those related to prioritising and managing the work. In addition, interviewees often mentioned the role of the product owner in relation to communication with stakeholders. Many also agreed that their product owner understood the tribe's vision well and was implementing it in the team:

"I think our PO has a good vision of what we should do and how should we prioritise our tasks." — Business Developer

Agile masters' main responsibility in teams seemed to be related to the improvement of the team's ways of working. They were also described in some instances as team members, who had a responsibility in keeping up to date with everything happening in the team and the progress of work:

"Keeping track on what should be in the next production transfer and sort of keeping it all together." — Solution Analyst

Related to this, they also often help the team in removing any obstacles to their work. One interviewee also described their Agile Master as someone who adds to their team spirit by organising events outside of work.

Agile masters, compared to product owners, had a more negative perception of their own accomplishments. Others gave them very good scores, all of which can be seen in Figure 6. As being an agile master is a responsibility that is taken in addition to one's normal duties, it seemed that many of them did not think they had enough time to spend on the AM responsibilities. Therefore, they also scored themselves lower than others did. Nevertheless, others appreciated their effort, although some also noticed the lack of time and described the responsibility being divided between multiple people.

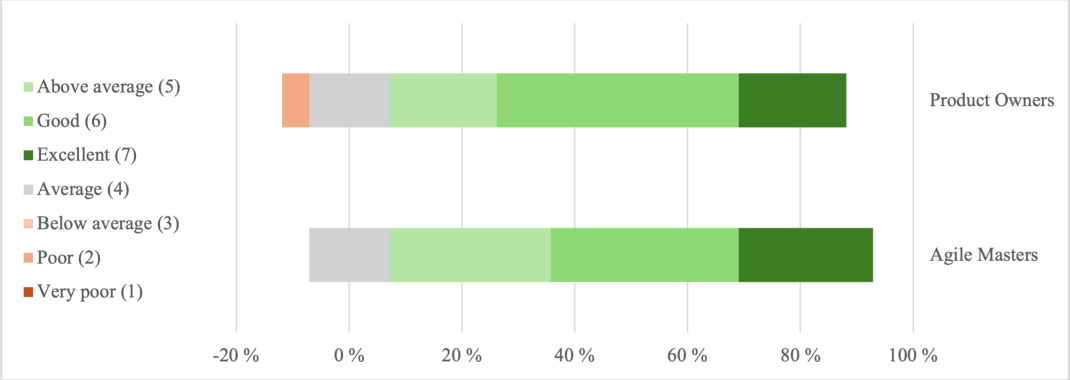

Figure 6: Interviewees' and respondents' opinions on how well the description of POs / AMs applies to those in their team / themselves

5.1.3 Ceremonies

In this section, I present the results for each ceremony. Figure 7 details the interviewees' and survey respondents' views on each of the ceremonies.

Sprint Planning

Before moving to kanban, the other team doing sprints did not greatly value the sprint planning ceremony. For some, it was of a very low priority, and was often passed up to attend other meetings, thought to be of more importance. Others, however, appreciated the opportunity it provided to be brought up to speed with what was happening in the team:

"We get to see what we are going to do and that is the best place where we see what other people are going to do." — Developer

The same sentiment was echoed in the interviews of the other team using sprints. They also appreciated being aware of what was happening in the team and what was going to be the focus for the next three weeks. Despite appreciating this aspect, they also described struggling with the length of the meeting. The sprint planning meeting was also recognised as being an integral part of the team's self-organisation, and a place for individual team members to have an influence on their priorities:

"You do have the option of then affecting what's actually going to be taken to the sprint so, you know, if someone asks you 'is this something that's relevant now, is this something you have time to work on' I think that's good." — Developer

Daily

All teams in the tribe held some sort of daily meetings, at least once a week. Overall, interviewees regarded dailies as very beneficial meetings. They were described as a ceremony where, once again, team members were kept up to date on what was happening in the team, but also as a platform for sharing knowledge. Knowledge was shared, for example, by the means of giving small demos as part of the dailies. Based on the interviews, daily calls in all teams were very interactive. Often, they were used to not only make others aware of impediments, but also to resolve them. In addition to impediments, other open questions could be discussed, as the relevant people for the discussion were all together:

"It's easy to discuss problems and find the solution as fast as possible and it's good that there are more people so if you actually don't know who to ask then you get the bigger audience." — Developer

In some cases, interviewees felt that dailies did not provide as much benefit as hoped, and instead felt forced; like they were only held for team members to report what they were doing. When teams had felt the dailies were not beneficial, they reduced them to fewer times a week. For some teams, dailies were also a place for socialisation in the era of hybrid work:

"Sometimes it's just chatting or sometimes it's actually working. It is beneficial, I guess both are beneficial." — Senior Data Analyst

The importance of daily meetings seemed to be emphasised in the teams that were geographically distributed. In them, daily meetings provided crucial assistance in keeping up with the progress of work and having a platform for discussion with people based in different countries.

Sprint Retrospective

Retrospectives divided opinion between the interviewees, and their regularity varied greatly between the teams. Some teams only held retrospectives a few times a year, while in others they were held monthly. In a few teams, there seemed to be a challenge of getting everyone to participate. In others, retrospectives with a specific theme or topic were preferred over broad and general ones. Many interviewees also

thought that the meetings were worthless for them, as they did not have much, if anything, to contribute to them.

Despite the various drawbacks, interviewees still appreciated retrospectives as a needed platform for reflecting on their ways of working:

> *"The best part of retros is that we at least discuss our ways of working regularly. It's always on our mind. If we wouldn't be doing that then it would probably fade away and that wouldn't be good. So it's good to always think what would be better and if there are issues."* — Developer

They were also perceived as places for celebrating their achievements, and having discussions that they wouldn't otherwise have:

> *"It's very important to have those retros, otherwise you wouldn't maybe talk about the things that are going well and that are not going so well, and yeah, how can you improve without those retros."* — Product Owner

Finally, although some interviewees described raising issues immediately when they arise instead of waiting for the retrospective, they also recognised that not everyone is comfortable doing that, and for those people the meetings provide a needed opportunity to bring up problems.

Sprint Demo

No teams in the tribe held demo sessions in regular intervals. In some cases, interviewees felt they would not have anything concrete and interesting to show regularly. Instead, demos were held when they were thought necessary. Many interviewees described having demos as part of other ceremonies, such as dailies. Nevertheless, when demos had taken place, they had been regarded as very beneficial by most interviewees. Demos were considered to be especially useful for knowledge transfer within the team. The best demos were described as showing something concrete, or being able to demonstrate even more complex topics in a simple manner.

Tribe-level Ceremonies

Tribe-level ceremonies also divided opinion. Most interviewees recognised them as a great opportunity to keep up to date with what was happening with other teams in the tribe, or in the company on a higher level:

> *"I find them beneficial, because that's a good way to see what's happening in the tribe, because you're all like, you're like somehow [team name] bubble in your work day so you don't like have the vision for the whole tribe."* — Solution Analyst

However, parts of the content was considered irrelevant by nearly all of the interviewees. Nevertheless, they still appreciated the content which they felt was relevant to their personal responsibilities. In fact, every interviewee mentioned that as a benefit of the tribe-level ceremonies. What was also appreciated was the discussion of the company-level strategic topics, such as future changes within the tribe or the company as a whole. Interviewees, both team and non-team, felt these were not discussed elsewhere, and that the tribe-level ceremonies were the correct place to do so:

"I think that we quite often talk about and present kind of a strategical level issues. And I think it's good to talk about those. Those are, uh, kind of topics and things that we don't talk about in our daily life. If I go to a team, we don't talk about like the strategical questions or anything like that and on the other hand I think it's quite important that we get to kind of talk about those as well." — Business Lead

In addition to the actual content of the ceremonies, interviewees seemed to appreciate the social side of them. They were considered to be an opportunity to meet others in the era of hybrid work and to promote the work culture within the tribe:

"I think it's important that we have those meetings just to catch up together and meet each other and I think it's important, at least I try to be in [the office] when we have those meetings so that I can meet people sometimes face-to-face."
— Business Change Lead

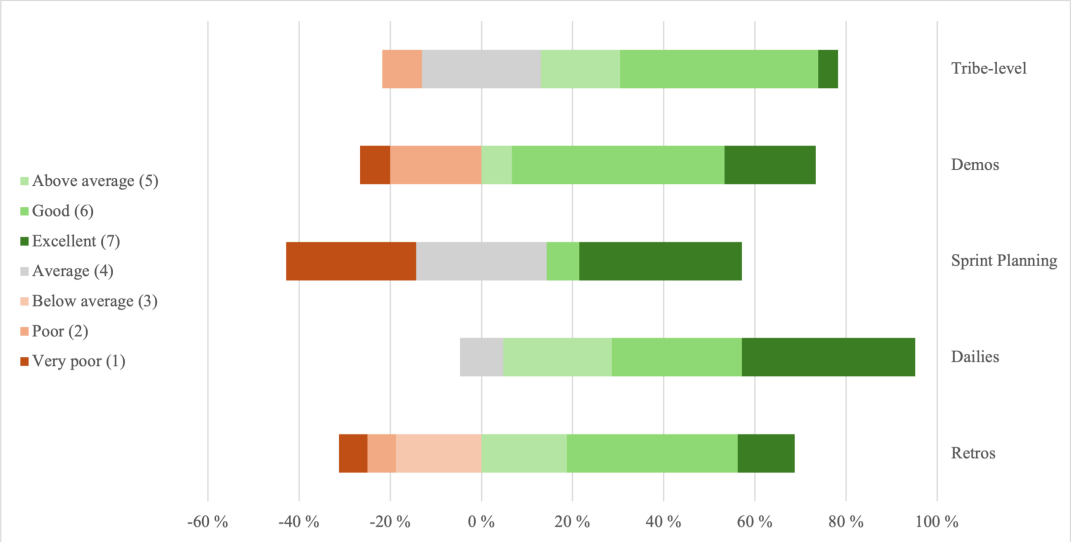

Figure 7: Interviewees' and survey respondents' opinions on the beneficialness of the different ceremonies.

5.1.4 Self-Organisation

When asked to evaluate their team's level of self-organisation, most interviewees gave a high grade, as can be seen from Figure 8. This was despite all of them also agreeing that most of their team's goals came from outside of the team. Most interviewees thought that within the goals that they were given, they had the possibility to organise their work as a team. It also became apparent from the interviews, that plans were discussed and modified as a team, with everyone being able to have their say on the plans. So, overall, the level of self-organisation was high, but within the boundaries of the goals given to the team from the outside.

Sprint planning meetings, which were not largely appreciated in the teams holding them, were nevertheless acknowledged as enablers of self-organisation. The same

sentiment was present in descriptions of product owners: A product owner could be either an enabler or a hinderer of self-organisation.

While generally the interviewees considered themselves well able to organise and lead their daily work, some issues were brought up regarding ad-hoc work. The priority of the ad-hoc work was at times unclear, and it could disturb any predefined plans. However, it was also acknowledged that ad-hoc work is a part of any job, and it's not something that causes particular problems:

> *"Of course sometimes there's ad-hoc work that's like needs to be done, but it's of course in every work, so I can't say it's something negative in our team."*
>
> — Lead Developer

> *"I do have some ad hoc work that just comes and changes my schedule, but it's not like a huge issue."*
>
> — Senior Data Analyst

When also taking into consideration the survey respondents' answers, it seems that the ability to organise one's own work is nevertheless very high. All responses can be seen from Figure 8.

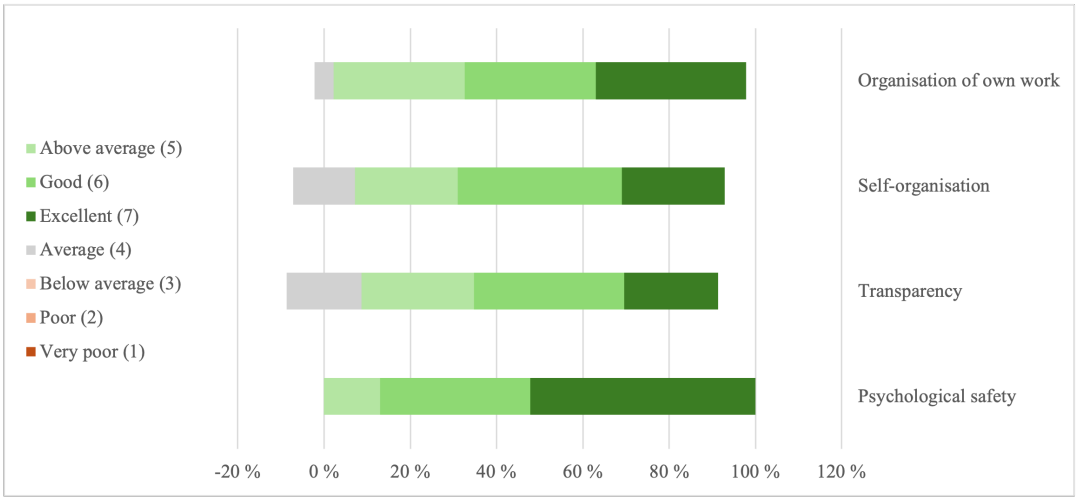

Figure 8: Interviewees' and survey respondents' views on their ability to organise their own work, team's self-organisation, goals' transparency, and team's psychological safety.

5.1.5 Transparency and Prioritisation

The interviewees were asked how transparent their (team's) goals were on a scale of 1-7. The division of the answers given is detailed in Figure 8. Overall, the interviewees were mostly content with their teams' levels of transparency. They described being able to understand why their team-level goals were chosen, and how they were expected to contribute to them. The data from the survey also supported this. When it comes to tools and practices, interviewees appreciated the impact of Jira and meetings. They promoted the transparency and visibility of work.

The prioritisation process differed little between teams. In general, it was largely affected by the fact that most goals were presented to the PO as must-haves. While the PO, according to literature, is in charge of the prioritisation, in some teams others were also consulted when creating, for example, a quarterly plan. Then, usually, the plan was presented to the whole team, and everyone else had the possibility to give their opinion on the goals, their priorities and their confidence in achieving them. One interviewee described their influence in the planning:

> *"The finer details are up to the team. So I feel like, yeah, we can have a say in things if there's a concrete reasons why we would need to have a say in things. Like, this isn't possible because there's a blocker or I have so much to work on on this other project."* — Developer

5.1.6 Psychological Safety and Hierarchy

The level of psychological safety described in the team member interviews was extremely high. In all teams, it seemed interviewees felt free to express their opinions and be their authentic selves:

> *"I think that in this team everyone's opinion is listened, if anyone has a suggestion, we go through it and I believe that's quite, something that works quite good in our team."* — Lead Developer

Based on the survey, others agreed. Overall, there was not much variation between the teams and their responses. The non-team interviewees also agreed that the tribe was very psychologically safe, but also described feeling less safe in certain situations outside the tribe, making it clear that the situation is not as good elsewhere as it is within the tribe itself. The interviewees' and survey respondents' answers to the level of psychological safety are detailed in Figure 8.

In many teams, team spirit was praised as well. This, in addition to their psychological safety, made it easy to join the teams:

> *"Many people have said that it's easy to come to the team and we have good team spirit."* — Lead Developer

There was also a culture of helping others and asking for help:

> *"And that's something that I think is quite nice to see, because since we are working in different countries, and still we have really good team spirit and the team is helping each other and they are like asking and helping out."* — Solution Analyst

One of the key goals of the agile transformation was to reduce hierarchy within the company. In the case organisation, where the level of psychological safety is high, no such issues came up throughout the interviews. One interviewee, who had worked in the company for a long time even before the agile transformation, described the transformation being a success from that point of view:

> *"It [agile] has kind of minimised the gap between leadership and employees."* — Solution Analyst

Interviewees also expressed gratitude over lessened bureaucracy. It was thought, both among the team and non-team interviewees, that decision-making processes had become simpler, increasing their efficiency:

> *"I guess the team has the power to make decisions by itself. So low hierarchy and that's one reason why I think we can be efficient."* — Business Developer

> *"It [agile] makes it more efficient, as I said, when I want to, or when we need to make decisions or, or kind of move quickly towards something new."* — Business Lead

5.1.7 Collaboration

Interviewees from all teams agreed that their work required considerable collaboration with other teams. Figure 9 details, on the whole, what interviewees responded to being asked how much collaboration their team does. There is not much variation between them in that respect.

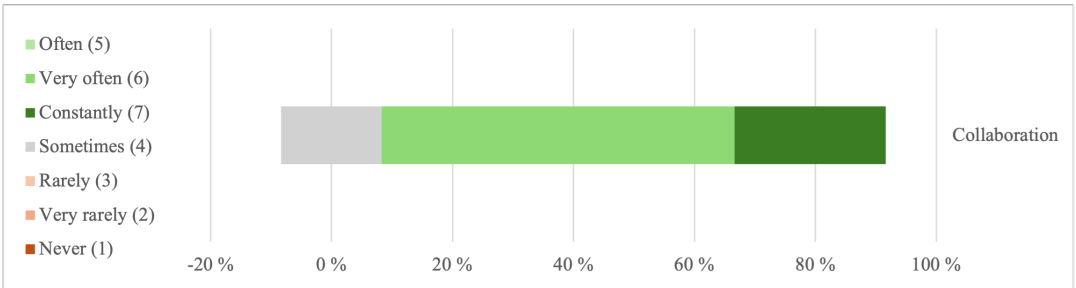

Figure 9: Interviewees' and survey respondents' opinions on the amount of collaboration they do.

The same goes for the practices used to support the collaboration. They were mainly limited to meetings of different sorts and Microsoft Teams chats and channels. All of the practices are detailed in Table 3. The meetings described in interviews were numerous. Some were held regularly between the members of two teams, while in some cases a few members from one team would attend the weekly meeting of another team.

Table 3: Collaboration Practices

Practice	# of Mentions
Regular Meetings	10
Microsoft Teams Channels / Chats	8
One-on-one Calls	2
Email	1

A notable need for collaboration was also apparent in the interviews of the non-team tribe members, but the nature of the collaboration was quite different for them. While they do attend teams' meetings, such as weeklies or specific collaboration meetings,

they did not partake in teams' dailies or retrospectives. The practices described by them are also included in Table 3. For them, the most important factor in successful collaboration seemed to be their own activeness:

> *"Well if I need to know other people's work and about how that is progressing, then I just need to call and ask, and it's like very much me being active and proactive and asking and trying to ask what's going on."* — Business Lead

Overall, the interviewees' perception of collaboration was positive. Other teams were described as being helpful and friendly:

> *"I think everyone wants things [to] get done. So the way of working, and it's really easy with them."* — Product Owner

The issues rather stemmed from scheduling issues:

> *"So yeah, it's never a problem getting help or collaborating. I would say it's, yeah, it's just more of a matter of getting all of the schedules to match."* — Solution Analyst

The common agile framework was mentioned by some to be a helping factor in the sense that it was easier to understand how other teams worked and how their schedules were structured. In addition, knowing and meeting the people in the tribe made it easier to work together with them. Here, the importance of having the tribe-level ceremonies provide a meeting place for its members, is highlighted.

5.1.8 Continuous Improvement

Not all teams in the tribe held regular retrospectives. Nevertheless, continuous improvement still seemed to be apparent in all teams, and was by no means restricted to retrospectives in the teams which held them regularly. Rather, it seemed, most of the improvement took place outside of the retrospectives, meaning the ceremonies themselves were deemed less beneficial:

> *"If I have something like an issue or something that I feel like needs to be improved, I don't typically wait for the retro. It's something that I just take up with people either online or on the anchor days and then by the time a retro comes it's typically not a problem any more. Or it's a problem that's already being handled."* — Developer

Aside from retrospectives, ways-of-working-workshops and demos were mentioned as ceremonies where continuous improvement took place.

Improvement to teams' ways of working also emerged when they faced notable incidents. For example, after facing an issue in production, one team looked back on what had gone wrong, and realised the main cause behind the issues was a lack of knowledge after some senior members had left the team. To ensure the same issue would not reoccur, the team worked together as a whole:

> *"That was a really nice example of where kind of the whole team took an initiative, so developers thought about how they do things and also updated documentation and and went through the documentation with the whole team."* — Solution Analyst

Some teams received support from the tribe's agile coach in improving their ways of working. Agile coaches provided support in matters such as managing ad-hoc work, planning and psychological safety. They could also help with facilitating different events, such as retrospectives or workshops, for the teams, as well as the tribe on the whole. The coach was able to help the teams achieve concrete improvement actions to recover the issues in their ways of working:

> *"We had a lot of ad-hoc work to the team coming from all, all types of other teams and tribes, so we were wondering how to manage the ad-hoc work and, and we collaborated with the agile coach and we had good improvement actions based on that."* — Product Owner

When asked about the improvement to their own behaviour, some team-member interviewees expressed not having enough time to do so, even though they would like to. Others said that it was something that was always on their minds:

> *"Yeah, well it's kind of like all the time when I'm doing something I'm thinking that is there some way to do it better, or in a more efficient way."* — Senior Data Analyst

Some interviewees also described easily slipping into old behaviour and having to work at improving themselves.

Non-team interviewees were alone in the improvement of their ways of working, both with others and by themselves. It was not supported by any structures, unlike in the teams, where the team itself supported it:

> *"I don't have any certain framework or process for that [continuous improvement], it comes more like, it comes always from the fact that I want to achieve something, and then I start to think how should I do this and what I've done before."*
> — Business Change Lead

Nevertheless, both non-team interviewees described being able to improve their ways of working, but it being the responsibility of the individual:

> *"I think that this is um, one of the greatest things in this job is that I get to develop myself all the time and that includes the ways of working as well."* — Business Lead

Improvement was also apparent in their collaboration with others: they often iterated and made improvements.

The tribe itself also received praise for having improved its ways of working. For example, many mentioned the tribe having shortened overly long meetings and tailored them to better benefit the tribe members. One manner in which the latter was done, was by spending time on reflecting back on the previous quarter, before turning the attention towards the next one:

> *"I think one of the major issues was that we were always just looking at the next quarter. We didn't really reflect on how the quarter that just ended, how that went, so I think that's also a really good improvement in the tribe to kind of look back."*
> — Solution Analyst

5.1.9 Hybrid Work

All teams in the tribe had mandatory anchor days, when they all gathered at the office. For most teams, these were held once a week, but some teams only had them once a month. In all teams there were some people, who also came to the office outside of their designated anchor days. Everyone recognised that it was important to meet people face-to-face and to have casual discussions with them. In one team, where anchor days had not previously been held regularly, there had been a lack of team spirit:

> *"I guess the biggest one [issue in ways of working] has been that we don't see each other very often. We have tried to improve that, like nowadays we use cameras when we have Teams, and also we try to meet every week."* — Senior Data Analyst

Despite seeing many benefits in anchor days, no interviewees thought there should be more mandatory ones. Instead, they hoped to coordinate with other team members on coming to the office a few more times a week, but not on a mandatory basis:

> *"I would like to see two or three days per week, but not maybe mandatory anchor days but just coming to office is great and if there is someone else it just helps."* — Developer

The non-team interviewees also worked from the office regularly, despite not having a designated team anchor day. For them, the benefits were still similar. They found it easier to collaborate with others. They also felt that sometimes working from home allowed them to be more productive.

All interviewees recognised both benefits and challenges in working from the office. Many described how they were able to have spontaneous conversations with multiple people at once, without having to organise a meeting:

> *"You can gather maybe the opinion of three or four people at once without needing to book a meeting."* — Developer

Therefore, solving problems became a more straightforward process:

> *"If I find the right people, I can fix many problems in one day."* — Business Developer

Overall, interviewees expressed that people were more active at the office.

On the other hand, all interviewees also said that they were able to work more efficiently when they worked remotely:

> *"sometimes I feel that I'm so busy and I want to get things done, many things done during the day, which leads me to stay home because I get to concentrate better and I think it's just better to stay there."* — Business Lead

They found there to be more distractions at the office. However, some interviewees highlighted that certain work was still better to do at the office. For example, workshops with multiple attendees or brainstorming sessions were preferable to do in person. There were also other factors, such as working with new people, that made the office more desirable:

"Sometimes I think that it's more efficient working online, even with people. But then if you have for example workshops or something where you really need to create new ideas or something like that, or if there's new people you don't know, then it's good to be on site and meet face-to-face." — Business Change Lead

In general, it seemed the interviewees were happy with having the possibility to divide their time between their home and the office:

"I think the current way of working in this hybrid way that we have these anchor days and we have those remote work days, I think this is a good mix. There are also benefits in working remotely, 'cause maybe then you can focus more on those things that require more focus, and then when you're at the office then you can be more social and do other things that you wouldn't do in the home office." — Product Owner

5.2 RQ2: What are the biggest issues in implementing agile?

Throughout the study, it became clear that a certain level of agility had been adopted and accepted within the tribe. However, some inklings of change resistance remained. For some, it was related to the type of work the did:

"Because we are [a business team] that's why we can't do the 'right' agile work." — Content Producer

For others, the resistance seemed to stem from having worked in the same environment for a long time before agility, having gotten used to a certain way of working.

In two teams especially, it became clear that the nature of the team was divided; it was not a single, cohesive unit. The first one was described to be a team of individuals, who did not share common tasks or goal:

"I feel like my work has like nothing to do with other people's work." — Senior Data Analyst

In the other, the issue stemmed from similar reasons: the team was large and divided into parts that worked on different things and did not share common tasks, and did not need to understand the others.

5.2.1 Sprints

There were multiple reasons for teams not working in sprints. For the devops teams, the root reason of many of the described reasons was the same: the system they were developing was not agile enough to be developed in strict iterations. The more relaxed Kanban development appeared to suit them better. This was the case for the teams developing an old base system. A key issue caused by the legacy systems was that the work could not be divided into small tasks:

"Like one of the major difficulties with all of the agile work in our team is that we have such an old uh, what what we're doing is old architecture, so we can't always do it in so small bits that it should really be according to the agile way." — Solution Analyst

Developing in large increments goes against the inherent nature of agility. The same issue was apparent in one business team, where they considered it unnecessary to force the work into unnaturally small tasks:

> *"A lot of the things we do, we don't finish them in two weeks, and it doesn't make sense to use a lot of time to think about tasks that you can finish in two weeks."*
>
> — Senior Data Analyst

Some interviewees also mentioned sprints being too long, while others considered them too short. In general, there was quite much variation in the reasons for not working in sprints. They are detailed in Table 4.

Table 4: Reasons for not Working in Sprints

Reason	Frequency
Sprints are too short	3
Tasks cannot be divided	3
Sprints are too time-consuming	1
Sprints are too long	1
System is unfit for agile	1
Preference	1

5.2.2 Roles

When it comes to agile masters, the biggest issue is clearly the lack of time to handle the responsibilities of an agile master. This was not the case for everyone, but for most agile masters. In one team, there had been confusion regarding the difference between the responsibilities of an agile master and a product owner:

> *"We didn't know what is the PO and what is the agile master work."*
>
> — Content Producer

In another, some of the responsibilities of the agile master had been taken on by the product owner, as the agile master was too busy. When it comes to the product owners, one interviewee called for more control from them:

> *"The PO owns the project and he should know that what does everybody want from us, better than us, hopefully."* — Developer

5.2.3 Ceremonies

All ceremonies had some issues regarding them, but overall the response was very positive. Criticism, across all of them, was mainly pointed towards them not always containing information that was valid for them, or beneficial to their work. The tribe-level and sprint planning ceremonies were criticised to at times be too long:

> *"There's lot of good information but sometimes I think we have quite much these happenings and it takes some time and it also takes some time to prepare for these ceremonies."* — Business Developer

Table 5: Reasons for Lack of Value of Ceremonies

Ceremony	Reasons Cited by Interviewees
Sprint Planning	Not valid information; Nothing to contribute; Too long
Daily	Feels forced; Not valid information
Sprint Demo	Not valid information; Not having demo topics in regular intervals
Sprint Retrospective	Not beneficial; Nothing to contribute
Tribe-level Ceremonies	Not valid information; Too long / too often

Some observed that they had been too long previously, but the tribe had acted to shorten them:

> *"Last year I think some of them were pretty long, time-wisely. But now I think they are like for one hour, and I think that looks like a good amount of time."*
>
> — Solution Analyst

The value of demos ceremonies seemed to be highly related to the contents of the demos. They were valuable, if the demo showed something concrete:

> *"[The] things that don't actually show anything concrete, if it's like showing some test results or something like that. That doesn't give any benefit, that is just something that someone has been doing and it's not for the customers or someone else to see."*
>
> — Developer

Dailies were criticised the least, but, for example, by some for being held out of habit, not out of need. The reasons cited for the lack of value for each ceremony are summarised in Table 5

5.2.4 Self-Organisation

By far, the most notable issue in regard to self-organisation is that most of the teams' goals come from someone outside the team itself. Therefore, each team's self-organisation is much limited, as one interviewee describes:

> *"It's quite difficult to be self-organising when it [goals] comes from the tribe. And pretty much they tell you what you need to do."* — Senior Data Analyst

Some interviewees seemed happier with the situation, and felt they still had the opportunity to provide insights and suggest actions:

> *"I would say that prioritisation comes from the PO, but how much we can and cannot do, there's a lot to say from team members."* — Lead Developer

Some did not feel like they even should have much input on the team's plans, and preferred the PO setting the plan for them:

> *"I think most of it comes from the PO and outside the team. I also think that's how it should go."* — Developer

Nevertheless, getting specific assignments or goals from the tribe does not accord with the company's agile framework. As described in Section 2, the tribe should provide teams with strategic goals, not functional assignments.

Interviewees from globally distributed teams described there to be a disparity in the level of self-organisation between the off-shore and Finnish team members. For example, there were described to be some discrepancies in proactivity and taking ownership of one's work; two central aspects of self-organisation. Both off-shore and Finnish employees were described to, in some cases, expect someone to tell them what to do, rather than being proactive in the matter. However, it was also noted that the off-shore employees could also be fully self-organising, when provided with enough instruction, and it was something that they had been improving. For the Finnish employees, this was deemed to be more down to their personal preferences than cultural differences:

> *"I think they don't want to [be proactive]. They expect someone to say what to do next."* — Product Owner

5.2.5 Transparency and Prioritisation

Multiple interviewees acknowledged tribe-level ceremonies as places, where company-level vision and goals were discussed. Despite this, many of them also felt they did not understand those goals, or how they were connected to their daily work. It was also thought the high-level goals could be discussed in more detail. At least one interviewee felt that the connection between the tribe-level goals and the team's sprint goals was not apparent to them:

> *"Maybe it's [the tribe's vision] not that clear always. Maybe there should be more, for example, the latest sprint planning we had, I don't see any connection to the tribe goals there."* — Developer

Others also wished for the higher-level goals to be discussed more often within teams. Understanding the higher-level goals was not an issue for the non-team interviewees, as they worked more with the goals and took part in crafting them.

When a lack of understanding of team-level goals was described, it was due to the large size of the interviewee's team. The interviewees felt it was not even necessary for them to understand some of the goals, because they did not have anything to do with their personal responsibilities:

> *"We have so many services, that there are goals that have nothing to do with the work I do, but then I also don't think I would need to understand exactly what the goals are."* — Developer

The prioritisation of team-level goals was considered by some to be difficult or unnecessary. One interviewee felt they had so many different sides to their work, that prioritising between them was complicated:

> *"That's kind of hard to prioritise things too, because there's so many sides to what we do."* — Product Owner

In another team, the members were working on such different things that they had decided to only prioritise their own work each:

"Each team member just puts their own tasks on the backlog and they kind of manage them themselves. So we don't really like prioritise in the team."

— Senior Data Analyst

5.2.6 Hierarchy

Despite being happy with the low hierarchy and low level of bureaucracy in agility, one interviewee also brought up the fact that at times it was not clear who had the authority to make certain decisions:

"We don't know who should make the decision, or who would be the owner of some matter." — Business Developer

In these cases, the lack of clear decision-making processes actually ended up slowing things down and making them more difficult.

5.2.7 Collaboration

Other challenges in collaboration seemed to stem from silos of different nature between the teams. For example, teams with different speciality areas could sometimes have trouble understanding each other. Other silos were more related to the distance between the teams, if collaboration had to be done with teams outside the tribe. Overall, it seems that collaboration within the tribe is quite easy and supported by the agile methodology, but the same does not extend to collaboration with teams outside of the tribe's limits.

Finally, some interviewees described getting a lot of requests for help and questions from other teams. These regular, but unpredictable, requests would often cause ad-hoc work that is difficult to manage.

5.2.8 Hybrid Work

Whereas teams have agreed-upon anchor days, non-team interviewees were left to decide by themselves on when to come to the office. During the interviews, it became apparent that the most notable issue regarding that was that there was no synchronisation with other people's office days, as they often work remotely:

"And when I come here, then I don't see everybody here because the other people or most of the people are working remotely I think, nowadays. So it's kind of a good luck if you get to meet familiar faces here." — Business Lead

This naturally leads to them gaining less benefit from coming to the office.

For some interviewees, the only issue regarding hybrid work was that the office did not provide the best environment for focused working. One interviewee described the developers in their team often facing this issue:

"Because developers do a lot of work by themselves, and they need to concentrate. So if they have to be in the office more, there should be a place where they can just be themselves actually and no noise and things like that." — Product Owner

5.2.9 Global Software Development

Two teams in the tribe have off-shore members. The interviewees from those teams described at times struggling with the cultural differences between the Finnish and off-shore team members. For example, one interviewee described being unsure of the off-shore members' perception of psychological safety in the team. Others highlighted that the self-organisation within the team differed greatly between them. Off-shore team members might require more instruction from the product owner and agile master, and taking ownership does not always come instinctively to them.

In addition to cultural differences, some interviewees perceived challenges in communication. Some seemed to be caused by the language difference, as neither the Finnish nor the off-shore team members were fluent in English. This was also suspected to lead to passiveness in meetings:

> *"I don't know if it's just that people don't want to talk or what the issue is. It's in English, but then again all our ceremonies are in English so it shouldn't be an issue, but it seems to be."* — Solution Analyst

As the off-shore tribe members also take part in tribe-level ceremonies, those are held in English as well. The same issue seemed to be apparent in those ceremonies, as noted by some.

Overall, it seemed the communication was at times difficult and there was less transparency between the Finnish and off-shore parts, than within them. Interviewees also brought up the fact that the two parts of the team rarely met face to face, and that made the communication all the more difficult:

> *"Maybe it's never gonna be that easy to get the communication to work with people who just aren't here."* — Developer

5.3 RQ3: What could be done to improve?

5.3.1 Roles

According to the company's agile framework, the holder of the agile master role should change regularly. Not one of the teams in the tribe did this, nor did they see any reason to do so. One interviewee described how there were so many responsibilities involved with the role that it would not be an easy thing to change:

> *"Maybe in a different setting, if there were less responsibilities involved it would make sense, but since [name of AM] does quite a lot, I'm not sure it would make much sense to keep it shifting all the time."* — Developer

In addition, it seemed the agile masters did not have sufficient time for their responsibilities, as they still had to ensure their regular work got done. Overall, it seems that the company should review and reconsider the setup of the agile master role.

5.3.2 Ceremonies

The most often mentioned improvement suggestion that arose from the interviews, concerning ceremonies, was that the tribe-level ceremonies should have more content

that was relevant to the current daily work of most tribe members. While the interviewees also acknowledged the importance of going through future initiatives, it seemed the balance between the two could have been better, or the focus should shift more towards the currently valid topics. When it came to sprint demos, the potential for improvement was seen in their content, as well. One interviewee described that the most benefit is gained with concrete content:

> *"[The demos are beneficial] if we are showing the actual applications and what they do; usually UI demos are the best."* — Developer

Otherwise, if the content was less concrete, the meeting could become much less beneficial.

5.3.3 Transparency and Prioritisation

Most of the issues regarding transparency were related to the higher-level goals. Many interviewees expressed wishing to discuss the high-level goals in further detail within their teams, to understand how their own goals related to those, and therefore promote transparency.

5.3.4 Collaboration

Improvement suggestions for collaboration emanated largely from the lack in syncing on the teams' progress after starting to collaborate. Interviewees expressed a desire to meet up more often with other teams to ensure it was progressing as expected, and to provide a platform for resolving any issues:

> *"We should improve on, kind of going through the work together more or something, and just making sure."* — Solution Analyst

> *"I think sometimes it has happened that some team has forgotten to inform something to the other team, and if we're more like working together then these mishaps wouldn't happen."* — Solution Analyst

Another interviewee described struggling with having to follow the other team's progress through Jira, instead of being able to discuss with the team directly. Overall, it seemed that direct communication was preferred.

Interviewees also suggested having inter-team anchor days, or just having more common meetings at the office, to be able to meet others face-to-face. Usually, it was the case that the teams both had anchor days, but they were on different days of the week, meaning they mainly met people from other teams during tribe ceremonies, if even then. It was also acknowledged, that this was made more difficult by the limited space reserved for the tribe at the office.

5.3.5 Hybrid Work

As people from different teams had different anchor days between them, and non-team interviewees did not have any synchronisation in their anchor days, one clear aspiration

from interviewees was to create meeting places for people online. While often having meetings together, they did not construct the same sort of spontaneous conversations that would happen when meeting by chance at the office:

> *"I think that we need to create new ways of also meeting online and maybe somehow find this similar feeling that you have when you meet someone at the coffee machine."*
> — Business Change Lead

Many interviewees also hoped to have more anchor days, but also acknowledged that others would not necessarily be happy with that. Altogether, it became clear that most people would like to meet face-to-face more often.

6 Discussion

This chapter aims to analyse the results presented in the previous chapter, in relation to other agile frameworks and literature, as well as the reality in other companies, as represented in research.

6.1 RQ1: How is Agile Implemented?

The case company has implemented agile on a large scale, including both technical DevOps teams and business teams. By also including the business teams in the transformation, the issues caused by varying ways of working between teams have been eluded. Dikert, Paasivaara, and Lassenius (2016) describe how collaboration between business and technical teams can be made more difficult, when only the technical teams are working with agile methods. Dikert, Paasivaara, and Lassenius also point out that large organisations inherently contradict the values of agility. Many such sentiments were seen in the interviews, especially in relation to the business teams and the old systems being developed by some DevOps teams.

For the most part, the transformation to agility seems to have been somewhat successful. No team was refusing to do agile or to work on their agility, but some change resistance was apparent in the business teams of the tribe. However, a notable defect in the current state is that employees, neither the newer ones or those that have been with the company since long before the transformation, knew the three main goals for the transformation. According to P. d. O. Santos and Carvalho (2022), a universal understanding of the goals should be ensured before a big transformation. Even now, years after the transformation started, it might be helpful for the teams if everyone knew what they were aiming at with their agility.

To support the implementation of agility, teams could receive assistance from the tribe's agile coach. According to Dikert, Paasivaara, and Lassenius (2016), providing assistance is crucial to having a successful agile transformation. In addition, they argue that management-level employees should also be agile, which they are in the case organisation.

Some interviewees were clearly being agile, instead of only doing agile, a metaphor introduced in the paper by Denning and Hamel (2018). Their interviews showcased them having adopted the values of agility, or naturally possessing them. For example, the habit of inspecting and improving their own behaviour was present in many interviewees. However, it did not become clear whether this extended beyond the individuals, and if whole teams were actually being agile. At least for some teams, it seemed the context within which they were operating (e.g. the system they were developing, or a lack of cohesion in the team) was inherently so un-agile, that they struggled with being agile.

Denning and Hamel (2018) also described three key aspects of successful agile transformations. Firstly, the teams should be small and self-organising. This is true in the case tribe, to an extent. Since some teams struggled with cohesion, it could be argued that the teams were too large. In addition, their self-organisation was limited. Secondly, teams should share the same mindset and make up a network

where they collaborate and innovate together. The findings of this study suggest that this is very much true in the tribe: all teams collaborated often, and worked towards the same high-level goals set by the tribe. Thirdly, the strongest focus of everyone should be on creating value for customers, proven to be the case in the tribe, by the customer-centricity of

6.1.1 Roles

The case company's official interpretation of the product owner role is somewhat dissimilar to that of Scrum. According to Maximini (2018), product owners make decisions on how to develop the product. In the case organisation, these decisions are more likely to come from the tribe. However, there are also clear resemblances, such as the importance of communication. In the case organisation, one of the most important responsibilities of a product owner was communicating the objectives given from above to the team, and ensuring their best ability to complete them.

It is not uncommon for organisations to tailor the product owner role to fit their purposes, as described by Sverrisdottir, Ingason, and Jonasson (2014). They also point out that even within an organisation, the role can be perceived and implemented in many ways. In this study, no evidence arose to suggest that the product owners in the tribe had varying views of their responsibilities, as they all felt it was quite similar to what the agile framework described it to be. However, it is possible that if compared to ones in other tribes of the company, product owners' responsibilities might differ. Kadenic et al. (2023) highlights the responsibility of the product owner as someone who manages the organisational context for the team. Consequently, the product owner must manage the effects of the organisation on the team. The findings of this study suggest that this could, for example, mean the limiting of the work given to the team, or raising larger issues to stakeholders, and ensuring the psychological safety and wellbeing of the team, no matter what the atmosphere of the tribe is.

For Agile Masters, it was clear the biggest issue was in regards to their ability to spend time on the duties. They had to somehow find the time for the agile master responsibilities while taking care of their normal work as well. The company's interpretation of the agile master role is somewhat conflicting with that of the Scrum Master in Scrum literature, such as Maximini (2018). There, the role is given much more emphasis and it is not a role taken in addition to one's regular duties. Instead, it is a full-time role with similar responsibilities.

While conflicting with literature, the case company is not alone in their method of implementing the role. Kristensen and Paasivaara (2021) studied another financial institution, where the role had been implemented similarly as a part-time role. The findings from interviews in this study complemented the ones by Kristensen and Paasivaara. For example, both found the master role to entail seeing the bigger picture of the team's work. Both also described the Scrum / Agile Master being the one who resolves impediments to the team's work, as is also described in Scrum literature.

6.1.2 Ceremonies

Only two of the teams held sprint plannings, and while they seemed to somewhat follow the agenda described in literature, there were also major differences. By being a central part of the team's ability to self-organise, the ceremonies were in accordance with literature. However, there did not seem to be much discussion on how to achieve the sprint goal, but rather what to actually include in the sprint.

All teams in the tribe held meetings called dailies at least once a week. However, the purpose of these ceremonies varied notably by team. For none of the teams, did the daily meeting follow the agenda described in agile methodology literature. Many agile methodologies say the meeting should focus on only the progress of the sprint and the actions to ensure the sprint goal is achieved. However, in other studies within agile organisations, similar findings have been made. Similarly to the finding of Stray, Moe, and Aurum (2012), the interviewees in this study described dailies taking on a format of problem solving. Some interviewees also brought up the fact that they did not find it necessary to know what others were working on, as did the the participants in Stray, Moe, and Aurum.

The problem solving ethos of dailies could also stem from the teams working in hybrid, while literature could often be written from the point of view of teams working face-to-face. Interviewees described one of the benefits of anchor days being that they could easily have quick discussions with others and solve many problems. Remote work does not offer the same possibilities for quickly discussing issues with the relevant people, which would make it natural to bring up these issues in daily meetings, when there are many people present.

Retrospectives in the tribe followed the agenda described in literature. They contained topics regarding the "actual work", as well as things such as the team's culture and spirit. Derby and Larsen (2006) highlight this as one of the key features of retrospectives. They also mention how important it is for the facilitator of the ceremony (usually the agile master in this case) to ensure equal participation; something that all teams in the tribe seemed to struggle with. In some teams, the team members' motivation towards retrospectives seemed low. Derby and Larsen suggest changing the theme of the retrospectives to avoid monotony. The findings from the interviews seem to suggest the same: many interviewees described most enjoying the retrospectives that focused on a specific topic or theme, rather than the generic ones.

The teams' Sprint Demos did not have as much value as they are described in literature to hold. Another interesting discrepancy was that in the interviews it became apparent that the demos could easily become forced and not valuable, while agile literature does not describe such issues. It is unclear if this is a common issue for agile teams within other organisations, or even the case company.

In Ahmad (2025), it is described that an organisation's performance and reliability are improved by the high-quality relationships and psychological safety within it. The tribe-level ceremonies provided an opportunity for knowledge sharing and socialisation, both drivers of high-quality relationships, which in turn promote psychological safety. It can be easily argued, that these ceremonies where knowledge is shared from top-down and across teams, are hugely important factors in the shared knowledge and

goals which are part of high-level relationships. The ceremonies were also utilised to discuss the company-level strategies and goals, enforcing the shared goals part of the relationships. Finally, mutual respect, the third factor of high-level relationships, can be heightened by meeting the people in the tribe and being able to socialise with them.

6.1.3 Transparency, Psychological Safety and Continuous Improvement

The Agile Manifesto (Beck et al. 2001) highlights trust and transparency in implementing agility. It was clear that the teams in the case tribe were trusted; there were no mentions of them being controlled excessively, or being unable to speak their minds. Instead, the level of psychological safety experienced was high. According to Kuchel et al. (2023), this is an important factor in creating a successful agile organisation. The same goes for continuous improvement: to improve, Kuchel et al. points out, teams must be allowed to trial things and learn from them, and an open feedback culture must be set up.

According to Kuchel et al. (2023), many organisations are not that trusting or transparent when they start their agile transformation, making it more difficult to adopt these values. It was not implicitly stated in the interviews what the culture was like before the transformation, but some of the interviewees did acknowledge how agility had increased trust in teams and improved their psychological safety. Overall, it seems that the case organisation has managed to adopt these agile values successfully.

6.1.4 Hybrid Work

Gratton (2021) describes the factors of successful hybrid work models, and the motivators behind both on-site and remote work. According to her, companies try to create models, which allow employees to choose their preferred place of work, thus making them more satisfied and productive, without compromising its own prosperity. The results of this study were highly in accordance with those of hers. For example, that some work is better achieved when everyone is in the same room, while other is easier one alone at home, is brought by Gratton as well as the interviewees in this study. Personal preference also appeared in both, with some of the interviewees attending the office many days a week, while others did so merely monthly. Gratton describes multiple reasons for these preferences, with long commutes and social promises in particular being mentioned in this study.

Coordination between teams and within them, Gratton argues, is more difficult when working remotely. The findings from the interviews suggest the same, as many of them brought up the fact that meeting others at the office is a great opportunity to sync on their work, or to get help in some matter. There were also suggestions of holding common anchor days for further assistance in inter-team coordination, as the remote practices were not always considered to be sufficient. Likewise, Gratton suggests that while technologies can be beneficial when coordinating remotely, they are not always adequate enough.t

Generally speaking, it seems the company has managed to form a hybrid work model which is successfully balancing between the needs of the employees and those

of the company itself. This is clear in the level of contentment expressed within the interviewees. Teams are able to set up their own practices, while respecting the wishes of the company. Considering the principles of hybrid work in the company, as described in Section **??**, which include employee wellbeing and teams' autonomy, it seems the hybrid work culture has been implemented according to them.

6.1.5 Collaboration

According to V. Santos, Goldman, and Souza (2015), most agile frameworks do not include practices for inter-team collaboration. This is also the situation in the case company: their agile framework introduces no practices to help the teams coordinate, within or between tribes. However, the company has provided physical spaces for collaboration, the importance of which was highlighted by V. Santos, Goldman, and Souza. Ad-hoc collaboration and coordination are helped by each tribe being assigned an area at the office, so that the teams all have the ability to sit nearby each other. However, it was pointed out during the interviews, that the amount of space was not always sufficient to allow for two teams to be there at the same time. Overall, the need for inter-team collaboration was extensive in the case tribe, as can be expected in large organisations, Reifer, Maurer, and Erdogmus (2003) points out.

In the case tribe, teams had varying practices in place for inter-team collaboration. Most often, teams collaborated by the means of meetings. According to Berntzen et al. (2023), meetings provide a beneficial opportunity to share information on the topic of collaboration or its progress. The taxonomy by Berntzen et al. divides meetings into scheduled and unscheduled meetings, both of which were present in the tribe. Especially for those working outside of the teams, unscheduled meetings seemed to be a central tool for coordinating with others. Berntzen et al. also describe other organisations utilising communities of practice in inter-team collaboration. In the case tribe, there were no active communities of practice, and collaboration seemed to take place across roles as well as within them. Out of three categories in the taxonomy of Berntzen et al., another which was use in the case tribe was tools and artefacts. The teams widely used Microsoft Teams channels and chats, and email for communication. These results are also in accordance with the findings of Berntzen et al., who describe them as important in communicating between teams, and found their target organisation to benefit from the use of specific messaging channels reserved for a certain topic. It did not become explicitly clear, if the roles, as described in the taxonomy, had an evident part in inter-team collaboration within the case tribe. However, it could be assumed that they do, as the case tribe holds roles similar to those described by Berntzen et al. as key roles in inter-team collaboration. Finally, as is highlighted by the interviewees, also Berntzen et al. brings up the importance of meeting others in person.

Dikert, Paasivaara, and Lassenius (2016) found that teams are likely to struggle with collaborating, if their agile implementations vary from each other greatly. In the case tribe, there were no indications of that issue. Rather, the agile framework assisted them in collaboration, highlighting the importance of having a shared agile interpretation within the organisation, as is argued by Dikert, Paasivaara, and Lassenius

to be crucial.

6.2 RQ2: What Are the Biggest Issues in Implementing Agile?

6.2.1 Self-Organisation

In the case organisation, despite being described as self-organising, teams were often given strict goals on a quarterly basis from top-down. Their self-organisation seemed to be limited to acting within the boundaries set by those goals. Takeuchi and Nonaka (1986) highlight how self-organising teams need some level of support from "ready-made" goals, but there should still be many possibilities for organising their work. By giving some objectives to the team, management can help them avoid confusion and lead them in the right direction, while still allowing them to self-organise and be creative with their work. While most goals for the case teams came from top-down, they still seemed mainly content with their level of self-organisation. However, it seemed that the objectives coming from the tribe to individual teams went further than the subtle control described by Takeuchi and Nonaka. Once again, it is unclear whether this situation spans to other tribes or even other companies. It could be, that in large companies, teams are so heavily integrated to the structure of the organisation, that true self-organisation is difficult to achieve.

According to Dikert, Paasivaara, and Lassenius (2016), middle management can typically struggle with adapting to agility and self-organisation. They might maintain the behaviour where they instruct teams with specific objectives, instead of letting them organise themselves. It did not become clear from the interviews, if this has been the case in the organisation ever since the beginning of the agile transformation, or if they have slipped back into the old ways of working more recently. However, all of this leads to the self-organisation of the teams being more of an illusion than reality. This also leads to some discrepancies in the roles. A product owner, whose one main responsibility is to plan and prioritise the team's work according to the tribe's vision, is unable to do so in these conditions. Instead, it seems the role of the product owner is to help the team organise in such a way that they can achieve the objectives that have been given to them.

Whenever teams had the opportunity, to make their own decisions and plans, the whole team was usually consulted in all teams. Moe, Šmite, et al. (2021) suggest, that the leader, or decision-maker, in a given situation, is the person in the team with appropriate knowledge on the topic. It seemed the teams were implementing this strategy, as interviewees often mentioned being asked for their opinion, no matter what their role in the team was.

On the whole, it could be summarised that the teams are able to self-organise in the sense that they decide how to achieve their goals, but that those goals they cannot decide themselves. Instead, they are given from the tribe.

6.2.2 Global Software Development

In general, it seems that the company's agile methods provided support for the globally distributed teams. In accordance with the findings of Camara et al. (2020), interviewees highlighted dailies as important factors in the success of distributed teams. Overall, the interviewees from those teams seemed to recognise a heightened need for communication, as did Camara et al. Communication, while extremely necessary, was deemed to be made more difficult by the fact that the two parts of the teams rarely met in person. According to Lous, Kuhrmann, and Tell (2017), communication is improved when the whole team has the opportunity to meet in person regularly.

Holmstrom et al. (2006) introduced three categories for the challenges often faced in global software development, out of which two were apparent in the case organisation: geographical and socio-cultural differences. The teams rarely met in person, as the geographical distance between the on-shore and off-shore parts of the teams was notable, and getting them to meet up would have required significant time, planning, and funds. Socio-cultural differences, on the other hand, seemed to be the cause of some other communication issues, such as the unwillingness to speak in meetings held in English. Another issue, stemming from socio-cultural distance, was the discrepancy in their levels of self-organisation. For part of the team, self-organisation and taking initiative came naturally, while others seemed to seek more acceptance and instruction from someone they considered to have more authority.

Finally, in accordance with the findings of De Souza et al. (2023), the challenges of global software development did not derive from technical issues, but social ones. However, it did not seem like these issues were that prominent. Teams still seemed to be able to function and were content with their situation. The issues had not escalated into conflicts, and the level of psychological safety remained high. The teams with off-shore members also described having good team spirit, despite it often being an issue with distributed teams, according to Holmstrom et al. (2006).

6.3 RQ3: What Could Be Done to Improve?

Overall, it seems that when the company's agile framework has been created, some, more difficult, circumstances have been neglected to consider. The framework at times neglects to consider, for example, the roles that work outside of the team structure, and should be able to provide more support for them. In addition, despite the company being dependent on legacy systems, the development process of which is very different from modern ones, those are not taken into any particular consideration in the agile framework.

Accordingly, the company as a whole could reconsider the agile framework, meet up with employees working outside of these modern systems and teams, and provide them with more support in their work. Similarly, the same could be done with business teams as well, if they do not see themselves as able to be agile in the same way that DevOps teams do. Nevertheless, this is not to say that the teams and singular employees themselves should not also be responsible in finding the ways of working that best suit them, or asking for help from the agile coaches or other personnel.

6.3.1 Sprints

Few teams in the tribe worked in sprints, as they felt the strict timeboxing of work did not suit them. They visualised their workflows with a Kanban board instead. However, it did not seem that their work was otherwise especially in accordance with Kanban's methods. The end product seemed to be a mix of different agile methodologies, tailored for the team's needs.

While this suits the teams themselves, the process could be assisted by the company's agile methodology. It is a well-known fact that financial institutions are likely to depend on legacy technology which is difficult to develop in small increments. Therefore, the company should provide more assistance with its agile methodology for those teams developing the legacy systems. However, it should also be taken into consideration, that these legacy systems are not necessarily similar in nature, meaning that developing them poses varying challenges to agility. Thus, there may not be a single solution that suits all legacy systems. This, in accordance with other topics discussed in this paper, prompts the need for more inter-team discussion on the teams' agile issues and improvements.

6.3.2 Roles

In an environment where teams are expected to be self-organising, but a lot of the input for short – or longer – term plans comes from outside of the team, the product owner must ensure the team isn't totally stripped of their ability to self-organise. When goals and priorities are handed to the PO from outside team, there is often a strict schedule or otherwise plenty of pressure put on the team. It is therefore crucial for the PO to act as a filter, limiting the amount of "ready-made" goals that the team can work on. Especially for DevOps teams, where there is, for example, the need to maintain services to limit the amount of technical debt, new development initiatives cannot be all they work on. Notably, the company's 70:20:10-model encourages this, but it is also something that can be easily forgotten under pressure, or in the whirl of new business actions. It is also important for the tribe as a whole to recognise this and provide the teams with support in prioritisation, if needed.

Agile Masters seemed to struggle with their time management, which could be improved similarly to what was described in Kristensen and Paasivaara (2021). The role could be expanded to at most two teams and be made full-time, as is suggested by Kristensen and Paasivaara. However, as they point out, this can make the role more like that of a coach, which is already present in the case company. Nevertheless, this could be trialled within the tribe, to see how it would affect the teams, Agile Masters, and Agile Coaches. Especially, when considering how much collaboration the teams have to do, it might be beneficial if the teams closest to each other shared an Agile Master. Some of them already held certain ceremonies together, and would benefit from having a shared, full-time Agile Master.

6.3.3 Ceremonies

To enforce continuous improvement and psychological safety in teams, it is crucial that their retrospectives are improved. To improve the participation, agile masters in the tribe could experiment with different facilitation techniques, such as having discussions in smaller groups and not always with the whole team together. This could make it participating easier for those who are, for example, fairly uncomfortable speaking in English in front of many people. For other teams, which are not geographically distributed, it could also be beneficial holding them on the anchor days.

When it comes to the tribe-level ceremonies, it was quite clear, that the tribe-members themselves appreciated their social side and the effect they had on the culture within the tribe. Therefore, it is crucial that the tribe and the organisers of these events acknowledge this, and maintain the ceremonies' status as a possibility for socialisation and building morale. It is also important to continue holding them as they currently are held: hybrid with the possibility for both face-to-face and remote participation, as the socialisation aspect is largely dependent on the former, while the latter allows for flexibility.

The most frequent complaint about the ceremonies, whether tribe- or team-level, was that they did not provide enough value to correspond to the time they consumed. Therefore, they could perhaps be improved by being more active in asking for feedback from attendees. Return on time invested (ROTI), is a metric used to measure the value delivered by a meeting, relative to the time spent on it. The content and frequency of the ceremonies should be discussed often, both on a team- and the tribe-level.

6.3.4 Self-Organisation

While the teams are mostly happy with their limited self-organisation abilities, it is still in conflict with the description in the company's agile framework. Either the description should be reconsidered, or the tribe should lessen the amount of ready-made goals they give to the teams.

6.3.5 Continuous Improvement

It became clear from the interviews that all teams were continuously improving their ways of working. Even the tribe itself was credited with improving its ways of working: When there had been complaints about unnecessary and overlong tribe-level ceremonies, they were renewed to become much more compact and valuable. As Kuchel et al. (2023) points out, this is central to promoting an organisation's agile culture. The improvements must be considered on all levels of the organisation, not just within the teams. Nevertheless, the tribe does not necessarily encourage continuous improvement in teams and between them, or give a platform for discussing it.

One of the core practices of the company's agile framework is the 70:20:10 -model, where 20% of working hours should be spent developing the team's ways of working. Therefore, to ensure the teams utilise and benefit of this 20% time, the tribe could give it its own platform. Each quarter ends with a tribe-level ceremony where teams

present their main achievements from the quarter. My suggestion is that all teams should also present something they as a team have improved during the quarter. This would not need to be more than a short description of what was improved and how, and what initiated the improvement. Based on the findings from this study, many teams faced similar issues in their ways of working, and this way the tribe would encourage conversation between the teams.

6.3.6 Transparency

The transparency of the higher-level goals was something that interviewees hoped would be improved; especially in relation the teams' goals. To do this, it could be suggested that the teams have the possibility to discuss their quarterly, or even smaller, goals with business leads or other management. As the management level works more closely with these high-level goals, they could shed a light on the motivations behind them, and how the objectives given to the team relate to them. The product owner may not always have all of the information on the complex goals and priorities, and the expertise of the management could provide important insights to the teams implementing the objectives.

7 Conclusion

This case study aimed to understand how agility has been implemented in a specfic tribe of Company X, a large financial institution in Finland. The tribe operates in the insurance domain, which introduces some constraints to their functioning. The company-wide agile framework was introduces in 2019, with the aim of improving customer experience, employee experience and efficiency. The research was conducted by the methods of semi-structured interviews and a survey.

The results indicate, that the tribe has been able to achieve agility to a satisfactory level. When it comes to the values of agile, such as transparency, continuous improvement and psychological safety, the results are excellent. All tribe members seem to have adopted these values, and they are being actively implemented in their daily work. The same goes for customer-centricity, one of the key values in the company in general, but also one of the central factors behind its agile transformation. While many similarities were present between teams, but their implementation were still quite different from each other. Some of them worked in sprints, while others did not, and not all teams held all of the agile ceremonies regularly. However, these differences were not to such an extent as to make their collaboration more difficult. Rather, they had tailored the agile framework to suit their own needs, but all still had similar objectives and schedules. The tribe also followed the company's general hybrid work principles, with nearly all teams and non-team employees having one anchor day a week. Overall, the members of the tribe were content with the hybrid work practices and appreciated the importance of meeting one's coworkers in person.

Despite the level of success, some clear shortcomings remain. The shortcomings in the tribe's agility emanated from various sources. The teams were not truly self-organising, as described in the official agile framework, but instead could only self-organise within the limits given from the tribe. In addition, some teams struggled with implementing agility in the specific context of their team, such as having legacy systems to maintain, or being a business team. The agile framework did not provide any insights on how to take these particular aspects into consideration. The same was true for the non-team members of the tribe, who were left to their own devices in their implementation of agility; the framework did not introduce any specific ideas for them. Finally, it was concerning that there was no common understanding on the goals meant to achieve with agility. The interviewees were not aware of the three reasons for adopting the agile way of working at the company.

Future research could go further into depth on these key issues. These findings raise questions regarding the authenticity of self-organisation in large, agile organisation. Therefore, he prevalence of these self-organisation challenges in large, agile organisations could be an implication for future research. The same goes for the non-technical teams in those organisations. There are numerous studies on software development teams in large-scale agile, but very few on the non-technical ones.

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A Interview for Team Members

Part 1 – Generic

- On a scale of 1-5, how familiar would you say you are with the company's agile framework?
- Do you understand the benefits of agility and the reasons for choosing it within the company?
- How is the company's agile framework visible in your daily work?
- Does the company's agile framework affect your team's working efficiency? How?
- Does the company's agile framework affect your employee experience?
- On a scale of 1-5, how customer-centric is your team? Why?
- Do you feel what you do provides value to customers?
- Do you feel your job is meaningful? Why?

Part 2 – Agile Ways of Working

- Do you work in sprints?
    - Why not?
    - How long is a sprint? Why?
- Do you have a backlog for tasks?
    - How actively do you use your backlog?
- What do you feel are the biggest issues in your team, regarding ways of working?
- Does your team actively consider and improve their ways of working?
    - Could you give a concrete example – what was the problem and how did your team fix it?
- Do you actively consider and improve your own ways of working?
- Do you have anchor days? Would you prefer to have more of them?
    - Do you find them beneficial?
- In your opinion, does your team work together better in person or remotely?

Part 3 – Ceremonies

- Do you have retrospectives in your team? Do you have them regularly?
    - If not, do you have other ways of continuously improving your ways of working? Why do you not have them?
    - On a scale of 1-5, how beneficial do you find them? Why?
    - Examples of positives and negatives, concrete benefits?
- How often do you have a daily meeting?
    - On a scale of 1-5, how beneficial do you find them? Why?
    - Examples of positives and negatives, concrete benefits?
- Do you have sprint plannings in your team?
    - On a scale of 1-5, how beneficial do you find them? Why?
    - Examples of positives and negatives, concrete benefits?
- How much influence does your team have in the planning, does most of the input come from the PO / outside the team?
- Do you have sprint demos in your team?
    - On a scale of 1-5, how beneficial do you find them? Why?
    - Examples of positives and negatives, concrete benefits?
- Do you have backlog refinement ceremonies in your team?
    - On a scale of 1-5, how beneficial do you find them? Why?
    - Examples of positives and negatives, concrete benefits?
- On a scale of 1–5, how beneficial do you find tribe-level ceremonies? Why?
    - Examples of positives and negatives, concrete benefits?

Part 4 – Team and Roles

- The company's agile framework defines psychological safety as "In psychologically safe working environments everyone feels welcome. They are able to show their vulnerabilities."
    - On a scale of 1-5, how psychologically safe is your team? Why?
- Do you feel you have a say in your team's priorities?
- Transparency in setting goals means that team members understand 1) what the goals are and 2) why and how they are expected to contribute to them.

    - On a scale of 1-5, how transparent do you think your team's goals are? Why?
    - For example, do you understand why the items in your QBR plan are there?

- A self-organising team is able to take responsibility for their goals and finds the ways to reach those goals. Team members take ownership of and commit to goals. They work transparently and responsibly towards those goals.
    - On a scale of 1-5, how self-organising is your team? Why?
- On a scale of 1-5, how able are you to organise and lead your daily work? Why?
- The company's agile framework describes agile masters as "a team member, who helps the team work according to agile principles and continuously improve their working".
    - On a scale of 1-5, how well does this apply to the agile master in your team? Why?
- Does the role of agile master transfer within your team?
- The company's agile framework describes product owners as someone who "understands customers' requirements and steers the team's functioning by maintaining and prioritising work based on the tribe's vision".
    - On a scale of 1-5, how well does this apply to the PO in your team? Why?
- Has your team collaborated with the tribe's agile coach?
    - Could you give a concrete example?

Part 5 – Collaboration With Other Teams Within the Tribe

- On a scale of 1-5, how much collaboration would you say you do with other teams in the tribe? Why?
- Does your team have any practices for collaboration?
    - Could you give a concrete example?
- What do you feel are the biggest issues when collaborating with other teams?
    - What is positive / negative in collaboration?

B Interview for Non-team Members

Part 1 – Generic

- On a scale of 1-5, how familiar would you say you are with the company's agile framework?
- Do you understand the benefits of agility and the reasons for choosing it within the company?
- How is the company's agile framework visible in your daily work?
- Do you think the company's agile framework is helpful / aimed at your role?
- Does the company's agile framework affect your working efficiency? How?
- Does the company's agile framework affect your employee experience?
- On a scale of 1-5, how customer-centric is your daily work? Why?
- Do you feel what you do provides value to customers?
- Do you feel your job is meaningful? Why?

Part 2 – Agile Ways of Working

- Do you think you work in an iterative manner? How?
- How do you manage, plan and prioritise your work?
- What do you feel are the biggest issues regarding your ways of working?
- Do you actively consider and improve your ways of working?
- Do you think you meet people face-to-face often enough?
- Is it easier working with people online or face-to-face?
- Do you have anchor days? Would you prefer to have more of them?
- Do you take part in any agile ceremonies?
- How do you coordinate the progress of your work to the relevant stakeholders?
- On a scale of 1–5, how beneficial do you find tribe-level ceremonies? Why?
    - Examples of positives and negatives, concrete benefits?
- The company's agile framework defines psychological safety as "In psychologically safe working environments everyone feels welcome. They are able to show their vulnerabilities."

    - On a scale of 1-5, how psychologically safe is your working environment? Why?

- Transparency in setting goals means that team members understand 1) what the goals are and 2) why and how they are expected to contribute to them.
    - On a scale of 1-5, how transparent do you think your goals are? Why?
- On a scale of 1-5, how able are you to organise and lead your daily work? Why?
- Have you collaborated with the tribe's agile coach?
    - Could you give a concrete example?

Part 3 – Collaboration With Others Within the Tribe

- On a scale of 1-5, how much collaboration would you say you do with other people/teams in the tribe? Why?
- Do you have any practices for collaboration?
    - Could you give a concrete example?
- What do you feel are the biggest issues when collaborating with other teams?
    - What is positive / negative in collaboration?

C Survey

The following pages contain a printout of the survey in Microsoft Forms. Some details, such as the team names, have been redacted.

Agile Survey

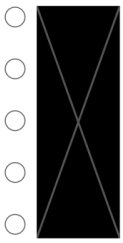
* Required

Taustatieto / Background

Vastaustasi käytetään vain diplomityössä. Kaipaisin kuitenkin sitä varten alkuun hieman taustatietoja, jotta pystyn paremmin analysoimaan tuloksia. Tämän osion kysymykset eivät kuitenkaan ole pakollisia.
Your answer is only used in my thesis. I would like to have some background information on you, to better be able to analyse the results. The questions in this section are not required to proceed.

1. Roolisi / Your role

2. Tiimisi / Your team



3. Kuinka monta vuotta olet työskennellyt yrityksessä? / How long have you worked at the company?

The value must be a number

Kysymyksiä ketteryydestä / Questions about agility

1 on "Ei lainkaan", 7 on "Erittäin". ETHÄN ANNA PUOLIKKAITA ARVOSANOJA, KIITOS!
1 stands for "Not at all" and 7 for "Very much". PLEASE DO NOT GIVE HALF GRADES, THANK YOU!

4. Asteikolla 1-7, kuinka tuttu yrityksen ketterä toimintatapa on sinulle? / On a scale of 1-7, how familiar would you say you are with the company's agile framework? *

Number must be between 1 ~ 7

5. Asteikolla 1-7, kuinka asiakaskeskeinen tiiminne on? / On a scale of 1-7, how customer-centric is your team? *

Number must be between 1 ~ 7

6. Asteikolla 1-7, kuinka hyödyllisiksi koet retrospektiivit? / On a scale of 1-7, how beneficial do you find retrospectives to be?

Vastaa kysymykseen vain, jos tiimissänne pidetään retroja säännöllisesti.
Only answer the question, if you have regular retros in your team.

Number must be between 1 ~ 7

7. Asteikolla 1-7, kuinka hyödyllisiksi koet dailyt? / On a scale of 1-7, how beneficial do you find dailys to be?

Vastaa kysymykseen vain, jos tiimissänne pidetään dailyja säännöllisesti.
Only answer the question, if you have regular dailys in your team.

Number must be between 1 ~ 7

8. Asteikolla 1-7, kuinka hyödyllisiksi koet sprinttisuunnittelut? / On a scale of 1-7, how beneficial do you find sprint plannings to be?

Vastaa kysymykseen vain, jos tiimissänne on sprinttisuunnitteluja.
Only answer the question, if you have regular sprint plannings in your team.

Number must be between 1 ~ 7

9. Asteikolla 1-7, kuinka hyödyllisiksi koet (sprintti) demot? / On a scale of 1-7, how beneficial do you find (sprint) demos to be?

Vastaa kysymykseen vain, jos tiimissänne on säännöllisiä demotilaisuuksia.
Only answer the question, if you have regular demo sessions in your team.

Number must be between 1 ~ 7

10. Asteikolla 1-7, kuinka hyödyllisiksi koet heimon seremoniat? / On a scale of 1-7, how beneficial do you find tribe-level ceremonies to be? *

    Heimon seremonioilla tarkoitetaan esim. town halleja, QBR-tilaisuuksia yms.
    Tribe-level ceremonies are e.g. town halls and QBR events

    Number must be between 1 ~ 7

11. Asteikolla 1-7, kuinka psykologisesti turvallinen tiiminne on? / On a scale of 1-7, how psychologically safe is your team? *

    Yrityksen ketterä toimintamalli määrittelee psykologisen turvallisuuden seuraavasti: "*Psykologisesti turvallisessa työyhteisössä jokainen kokee itsensä tervetulleeksi työyhteisöön, uskaltaa näyttää oman haavoittuvuutensa*".

    The company's agile framework defines psychological safety as "*In psychologically safe working environments everyone feels welcome. They are able to show their vulnerabilities*".

    Number must be between 1 ~ 7

12. Asteikolla 1-7, kuinka läpinäkyviä tiiminne tavoitteet ovat? / On a scale of 1-7, how transparent do you think your team's goals are? *

    Tavoitteiden läpinäkyvyys tarkoittaa, että tiimin jäsenet ymmärtävät 1) mitä tavoitteet ovat ja 2) miksi ja miten heidän odotetaan edistävän niitä.

    Transparency in setting goals means that team members understand 1) what the goals are and 2) why and how they are expected to contribute to them.

    Number must be between 1 ~ 7

13. Asteikolla 1-7, kuinka itseorganisoituva tiiminne on? / On a scale of 1-7, how self-organising is your team? *

    Itseorganisoituva tiimi ottaa vastuun tavoitteistaan ja löytää ratkaisut niiden saavuttamiseksi. Tiimin jäsenet omistautuvat tavoitteille. He työskentelevät läpinäkyvästi ja vastuullisesti saavuttaakseen tavoitteet.

    A self-organising team is able to take responsibility for their goals and finds the ways to reach those goals. Team members take ownership of and commit to goals. They work transparently and responsibly towards those goals.

    Number must be between 1 ~ 7

14. Asteikolla 1-7, kuinka hyvin pystyt organisoimaan ja johtamaan omaa työtäsi? / On a scale of 1-7, how able are you to organise and lead your own work? *

    Number must be between 1 ~ 7

15. Asteikolla 1-7, kuinka hyvin alla oleva kuvaus sopii tiiminne agile masteriin? / On a scale of 1-7, well does the below description apply to the agile master in your team? *

    Yrityksen ketterän toimintamallin mukaan agile master on "tiimin jäsen, joka auttaa tiimiä toimimaan ketterien periaatteiden mukaisesti jatkuvasti toimintaansa parantaen".

    The company's agile framework describes agile masters as "a team member, who helps the team work according to agile principles and continuously improve their working".

    Number must be between 1 ~ 7

16. Asteikolla 1-7, kuinka hyvin alla oleva kuvaus sopii tiiminne product owneriin? / On a scale of 1-7, well does the below description apply to the product owner in your team? *

    Yrityksen ketterän toimintamallin mukaan product ownerit "ymmärtävät asiakastarpeet ja ohjaa tiimin työskentelyä ylläpitämällä ja priorisoimalla työtä heimon visioon pohjalta".

    The company's agile framework describes product owners as someone who "understands customers' requirements and steers the team's functioning by maintaining and prioritising work based on the tribe's vision".

    Number must be between 1 ~ 7

17. Haluatko lisätä jotain? Anything you want to add?

D Codes

The following pages contain a report of codes printed from Atlas.ti, used in the data analysis.

ATLAS.ti Report

Large-Scale Agile Implementation in the Financial Sector

Codes

Report created by Maija Pajumaa on 13. Jun 2025

- **Ad-hoc work**

- **Agile Coach**

- **Agile Masters**

- **Agile Masters: Facilitation**

- **Agile Masters: Improving WoW**

- **Agile Masters: Keeping up with work**

- **Agile Masters: Not enough time**

- **Agile Masters: Removing Obstacles**

- **Agile Masters: Responsibilities**

- **Agile Mindset**

- **Agile's Three Reasons**

- **Agile's Three Reasons: Customer experience**

- **Agile's Three Reasons: Efficiency**

- **Agile's Three Reasons: Employee experience**

- **Anchor Days**
- **Anchor Days: Amount**
- **Change resistance**
- **Collaboration**
- **Collaboration Practices**
- **Collaboration Practices: Email**
- **Collaboration Practices: One-on-One Meetings**
- **Collaboration Practices: Regular Meetings**
- **Collaboration Practices: Teams Channels / Chats**
- **Collaboration: Communication**
- **Collaboration: Helpfulness**
- **Collaboration: Knowing the people**
- **Collaboration: Practices**
- **Collaboration: Schedules**
- **Collaboration: Silos**
- **Collaboration: Syncing**
- **Continuous Improvement**

- Customer-centricity
- Daily
- Daily: Demos as part of dailys etc.
- Daily: For part of the team
- Daily: Forced
- Daily: KT
- Daily: Problem-solving Daily
- Daily: Socialisation
- Decision-making
- Demos
- Demos: Concrete
- Demos: Demoability
- Demos: KT
- Demos: Mini Demos
- Demos: Not valuable
- Demos: When necessary
- Employee experience

- Equal participation
- Every team has their own ways of working
- Face-to-face
- Goals from outside the team
- GSD
- GSD: Communication
- GSD: Cultural differences
- GSD: Differences in self-organisation
- GSD: Language differences
- Hierarchy
- Hybrid work
- Improvement suggestions
- Improvement suggestions: Ceremonies
- Improvement suggestions: Collaboration
- Improvement suggestions: Hybrid work
- Improvement suggestions: Planning
- Improvement suggestions: Roles

- Improvement suggestions: Team size / number of projects
- Lack of value of ceremonies
- Lack of value of ceremonies: Irrelevant
- Lack of value of ceremonies: Time-consuming
- No sprints
- No sprints: Preference
- No sprints: Time-consuming
- No sprints: Too big tasks
- No sprints: Too long sprints
- No sprints: Too short sprints
- No sprints: Unfit system
- Places for cont. impr.
- Places for cont. impr.: Demos
- Places for cont. impr.: Retros
- Places for cont. impr.: TEAM
- Places for cont. impr.: Whenever
- Places for cont. impr.: WoW Workshops

- **Priorities**
- **Product Owners**
- **Product Owners: Enabling self-organisation**
- **Product Owners: Prioritisation**
- **Product Owners: Responsibilities**
- **Product Owners: Stakeholders**
- **Psychological Safety**
- **Retros**
- **Retros: Occurrence**
- **Retros: Passiveness**
- **Retros: Place for discussion**
- **Retros: Problems cannot be fixed**
- **Retros: Specific topic**
- **Self-improvement**
- **Self-organisation**
- **Sprint Planning**
- **Team**

- Team: Cohesiveness
- Team: Influence
- Team: Size
- Team: Spirit
- Team: Team work
- Transparency
- Tribe
- Tribe: Ceremonies
- Tribe: Goals
- Tribe: Keeping Up to Date
- Tribe: Meeting people
- Tribe: Planning
- Unfit for agile
- Visibility
- Visibility: Ceremonies
- Visibility: Communication
- Visibility: Continuous Improvement

- **Visibility: Iterativeness**
- **Visibility: Jira**
- **Visibility: Roles**
- **Visibility: Unbureaucratic**
- **Visibility: Ways of Working**
- **What's happening in the team**