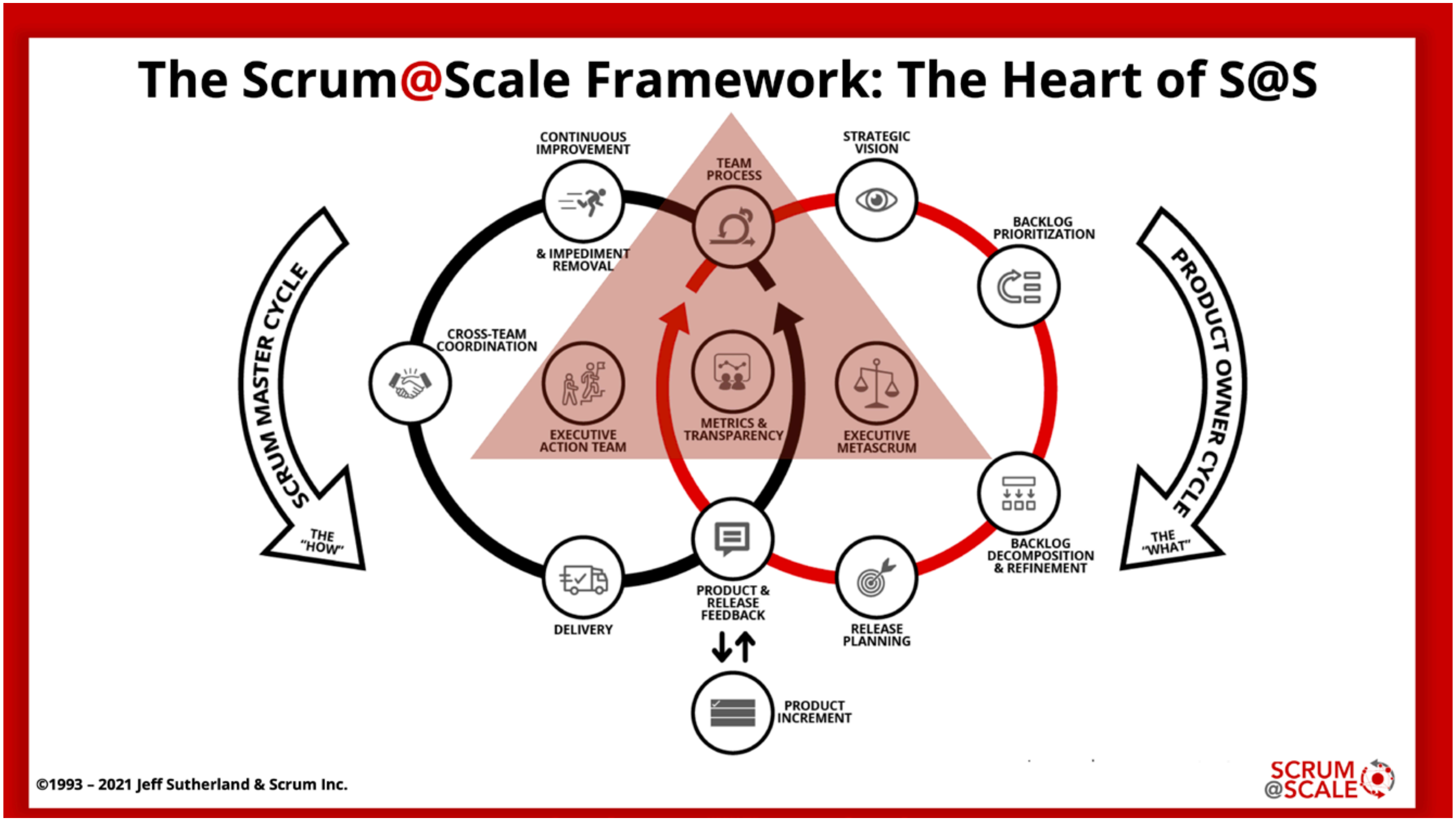
DAVE'S SCRUM@SCALE (S@S) SYNOPSIS ...



Caption. S@S is designed for routine work and looks like an Innovation model (but may be applied to innovation).

Analysis?

* I just completed a two-day Scrum at Scale (S@S) certification course.
* There were only four students plus the instructor which made it quite cozy.
* It was held 4am to 12pm ET on a weekend since the instructor was in the UK.
* I need weekend beauty sleep but saved money and helps with my current job.
* The instructor was surprisingly pleasant and not overbearing which is unusual.

* Unusually, he wasn't an extroverted Type-A know-it-all Kanban or Lean UX guru.
* Neo-classical Kanban zealots can't distinguish between lean, agile, and UX ideas.
* The five of us formed, stormed, normed, performed, and synergized very quickly.
* My goal was to get another certification on a scaling framework other than SAFe.
* Since I like Scrum a lot, I thought it was better to focus on S@S from Jeff Sutherland.
* S@S is a simple Scrum-based Scaling framework, so I thought I couldn't go too wrong.
* I'd read the S@S Guide in-advance, which is a bit abstract, but it didn't help very much.
* The materials were organized haphazardly, which confused me quite a bit in the course.
* I downloaded the training slides and restructured them in an orderly manner which helped.
* Then I reread the "Official S@S Guide" (adding some nuances not mentioned in the course).
* SAFe is a knockoff of XP and Scrum, so S@S re-riffed SAFe quite a lot which is very fair overall.
* S@S is posited as a generic business agility scaling model vs. software development like SAFe.
* However, most of S@S's early adopters applied S@S as an IT delivery model, but not all of them.
* S@S suggests all teams should apply Scrum events including oversight teams not just developers.
* Scrum and S@S do not specify popular add-on agile practices (but the S@S training is full of them).
* S@S training guide is chock full of key practices not found in the "Official S@S Guide" (unlike Scrum).
* S@S doesn't add much to the SAFe body of knowledge but does heavily rely upon it for key concepts.
* S@S tightly integrates product and process management that is both Scrum's and SAFe's Achilles heel.
* S@S's unique integration of product and process management is its overall strength (in the long haul).
* S@S and its training materials are devoid of any lean-thinking, Lean UX, or other Kanban terminology.
* S@S suggests it is linearly scalable, but not much more scalable than SAFe and suggests smaller groups.
* S@S's major weakness is that it is positioned as a delivery model vs. an innovation-thinking framework.
* S@S's language describes its domain like mass produced manufacturing vs. highly uncertain design teams.
* S@S needs to be better integrated and positioned as a Lean UX, Design Thinking, and Innovation approach.

Summary?

* S@S is designed for 45-person Agile Release Trains, 225-person Solution Trains, and 1,125-person portfolios.
* S@S is a classical assessment versus neo-classical practice-based approach (so its assessments were interesting).
* S@S focused on impediment removal and continuous improvement that are simultaneous strengths and weaknesses. ***
* S@S is not designed for IT streams obsessed with maximum load for voluminous requirements, designs, and schedules. ***
* S@S doesn't account for IT organizations allergic to bad news (impediments) and no time for continuous improvement. ***
* S@S isn't designed to thwart well-entrenched human resistance and immunity to change (fostering psychological safety). ***

* S@S also doesn't account for extremely high WIP induced cognitive IT blindness to systemic technological impediments. ***
* S@S structures and terms don't map to well-entrenched business models (optimized for large fungible offshore teams).
* S@S is not a Lean Startup, Lean UX, Discovery, or Business Experiment framework (but it can be applied for this purpose).
* S@S is also not designed for high-precision earned-value or manufacturing precision, reporting, accounting, and budgeting.
* S@S comes from Rugby comprised of ugly, brutal, bloody, unpredictable, imprecise, zigzagging, and gladiatorial Scrum teams.
* S@S's greatest weakness is that Scrum is OLD NEWS, S@S is LIPSTICK ON A PIG, and humans want provocative shiny new toys.
* S@S's greatest strength is that it's far superior to traditional fixed-scope integrated master schedule driven waterfall lifecycles.

*** We have met the enemy and the enemy is US—The failure of Continuous Improvement and Impediment removal is NOT in Scrum, SAFe, and S@S frameworks (which have codified continuous improvement principles, practices, and tools)—The failure is in OUR **unwillingness** to apply, engage, and implement continuous improvement and innovation by over-scoping our visions, strategies, plans, objectives and key results (OKRs), integrated master schedules, business requirements, architectures, backlogs, and agile lifecycle management systems with bottomless databases (so we don't have time to engage our failsafe continuous improvement mechanisms, iterative and incremental discovery, MVP, and delivery plans, or stone age risk management practices) ...

Bottom Line?

The future of business agility is not in risk-adverse fixed-scope high-precision manufacturing models which S@S wants to become, but in level-of-effort risk-tolerant, experimental, discovery, and Lean UX models which can be budgeted (that is, buyers and suppliers should budget for innovation key performance indicators vs. 19th century piece meal work such as requirements, user stories, or story points)—The only commitment in Scrum and SAFe are the Product and Sprint goals (user stories and story points are not in the Scrum or S@S guide, but they're certainly baked into agile lifecycle management tools)—**Oh, How the Mighty Have Fallen** (i.e., repurposing innovation frameworks due to failure of traditional frameworks as high-precision piece-meal tracking systems or using manufacturing practices like IMSs and EVM for bleeding edge innovation initiatives like most Modern IT initiatives) ...

Once again, S@S assumes basic Scrum is in-place and then uses classical organization change techniques for Scrum scaling (*whereas SAFe is a fast-track or quickstart practices-based Lean-Agile Scaling approach but not overly prescriptive as its detractors errantly claim*) ...

Buyer Beware?

S@S does NOT provide any TACTICAL implementation guidance or practices (like SAFe), so S@S will leave you completely IN-THE-DARK (unless you're a global agile guru and Jedi Knight who is strong in the Force and Midi-Chlorians who has internalized every possible agile practice, metric, and tool)—For instance, S@S says "**Do Release Planning**" (that's it)—S@S doesn't say what, how, when, how long, purpose, etc.—I don't like frameworks that leave EVERYTHING to the imagination (as ambiguity causes chaos) ...

Footnote?

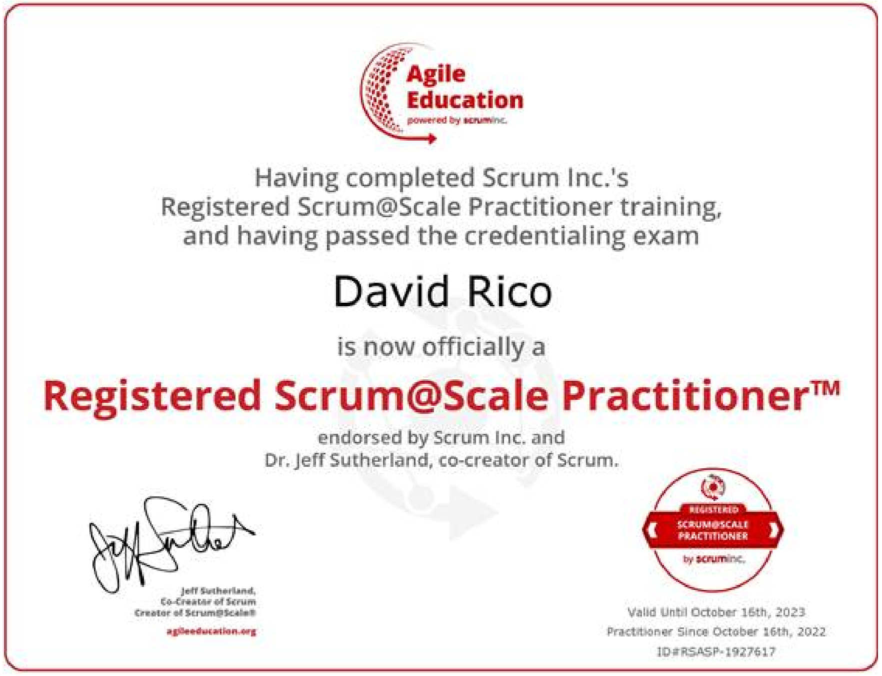
IT executives and organizations naturally gravitate towards newer and shinier objects than SAFe like S@S and Spotify which riffed S@S and devised exotic new terms (but SAFe is making a comeback in these areas because SAFe's toolkits and training are much more robust, extensive, reusable, and standardized)—Please remember to see my SAFe whitepaper (which explains the difference between lean, agile, and UX thinking) ...

Resources?

* S@S Website (Official)
* S@S Guide (Official)
* S@S Assessment (Good Eye Candy Graphics)

Certificate?

The S@S exam is an untimed, open-book 30-question test that is somewhat easy to pass on the first attempt (and most of the exam answers are EXTRA material in the training slides vs. "Official S@S Guide")—**Surprisingly, I got 30/30** (100%) **answers correct, because some were very abstract** (non-specific shots-in-the-dark)—My recertification exam was more challenging than expected ...



Agile Education
powered by scruminc.

Having completed Scrum Inc.'s
Registered Scrum@Scale Practitioner training,
and having passed the credentialing exam

David Rico

is now officially a

Registered Scrum@Scale Practitioner™

endorsed by Scrum Inc. and
Dr. Jeff Sutherland, co-creator of Scrum.

Jeff Sutherland,
Co-Creator of Scrum
Creator of Scrum@Scale®
agileeducation.org

REGISTERED
SCRUM@SCALE PRACTITIONER
by scruminc.

Valid Until October 16th, 2023
Practitioner Since October 16th, 2022
ID#RSASP-1927617