Making Agile Stick
Wider Agile project success involves resolving external project factors across your organisation

Many organisations who have had individual project success with Agile try to expand the benefits across the organisation – often with mixed results. Why is it that where isolated Agile projects succeed, moving towards a wider adoption of the Agile delivery model hits difficulties?

Your success will be highly influenced by how well Agile fits across your wider organisation:

- The environment in which your Agile project operates is critical to project success

- Where an Agile team interacts with the rest of the organisation can cause most issues

- Individual projects can be treated as a 'special case' but this approach does not scale

- Most organisations have project portfolios designed to manage waterfall delivery with standards, processes and procedures to match

- To change to cater for Agile projects will require effort from other parts of the organisation not just an isolated area

- Every organisation is different and will present specific challenges to the way in which Agile can be successfully introduced.

There is great benefit to be delivered through an Agile project approach for many organisations but this wider project success will require a change in the way the organisation tackles projects not only in the project method but in it's people, processes and supporting tools.

So how can you get the rest of your organisation to support the Agile delivery model?

You need to take a change management approach to introducing Agile
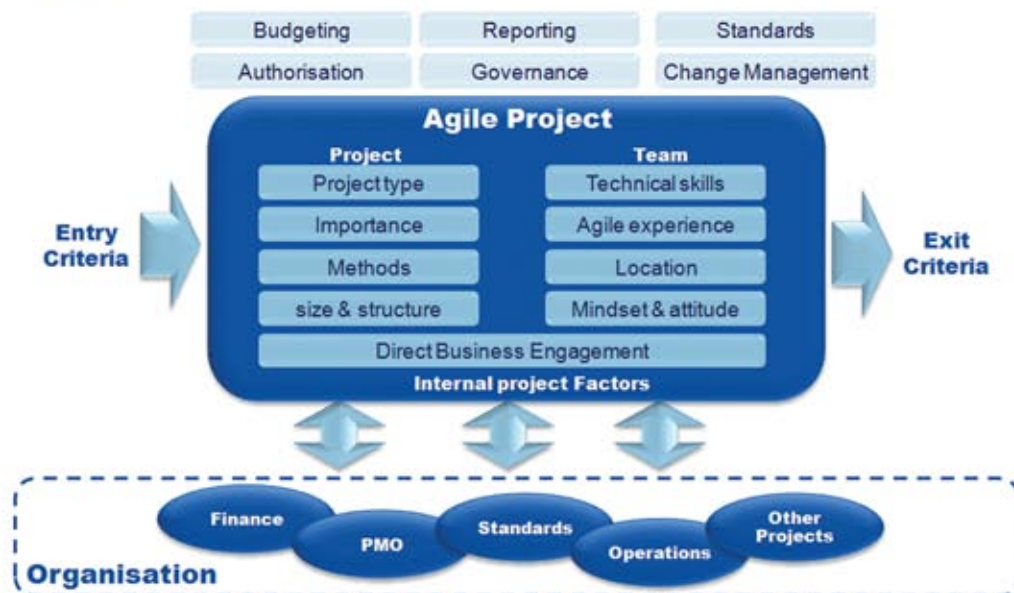
The introduction of Agile beyond a one-off project is a culture change to the organisation. You will need to:

Win the 'hearts and minds' of others in the organisation and show them the benefits Agile can bring. Think how you can explain to others in their terms about the benefits – show them how Agile works through inviting them to your work area or letting them experience how it feels through simulation exercises.

Understand the people and processes around your project as you will need to fit with them or help change them. You may need to 'dovetail' into existing processes without letting them undermine your agility. You can either prove through delivery or take a more radical approach if you have senior stakeholder buy-in.

Actively manage your external stakeholders as well as your direct business stakeholders. Agile is a culture change for many people outside of the direct project. These are the behaviours you will need to change and you will need senior stakeholders across the organisation on your side.

Be prepared for resistance as people react to the change and the unknown. It is a natural reaction as people are familiar with the traditional approach and comfortable in the processes built up over a long period of time.

If you are looking to gain the benefits of Agile across your organisation then why not talk to Wisereach about making Agile stick? Our experienced team can help you from advice on your approach, helping you implement the right Agile solution through to supporting a wider culture change.