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NEWS BULLETIN

FUTURE READY AGILE

Our previous edition, explored the need to redesign operating models for a rapidly changing business environment.

In this issue, we move from why change is required to how that change takes shape in practice.

Agile is often introduced as a methodology. Yet, for many organisations, the real challenge lies not in adopting Agile practices, it is in enabling the organisation to operate differently — to make decisions faster, respond to change, and create value in real time.

This edition explores Agile as a business operating capability, where that capability is realised within the organisation.

IN THIS ISSUE

AGILE AS AN OPERATING MODEL

Reframing Agile as an organisational capability — enabling responsiveness, decision-making clarity, and continuous adaptation.

FEATURED INSIGHT - THE RISE OF MID TIER LEADERS

Exploring the critical role of the mid tier as the point where strategy, culture, and execution converge.

HUMAN EXPERIENCE (HX) THE ACTIVATION LAYER

From previous HX discussions, we examine how human experience enables the success of Agile operating models.

BRINGING IT ALTOGETHER

Why future-ready organisations require both structural redesign and human activation

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Agile as an Operating Model ~ Mark Bayley ~

From Practices to Organisational Capability

Through implementing Agile within a complex client environment, a number of patterns became clear.

Agile is often introduced with good intent — through frameworks, ceremonies, and delivery structures designed to improve speed and responsiveness.

Yet in practice, adopting Agile practices does not automatically lead to greater adaptability.

The reason is simple.

Agile is not something an organisation does.

It is something an organisation must be designed to support.

Moving Beyond Practices...

In traditional operating models, decision-making is often centralised, roles are fixed, and work moves through structured layers of approval. Value is placed on predictability, control, and scale.

Today's environment is different.

- Change is continuous, not periodic
- Information moves faster than hierarchy can respond
- Value is created closer to the customer, not at the centre

Introducing Agile practices into a system still designed for control creates tension rather than flow

Agile as a Business Capability

To move beyond this tension induced by control, Agile needs to be understood as an operating capability.

This includes:

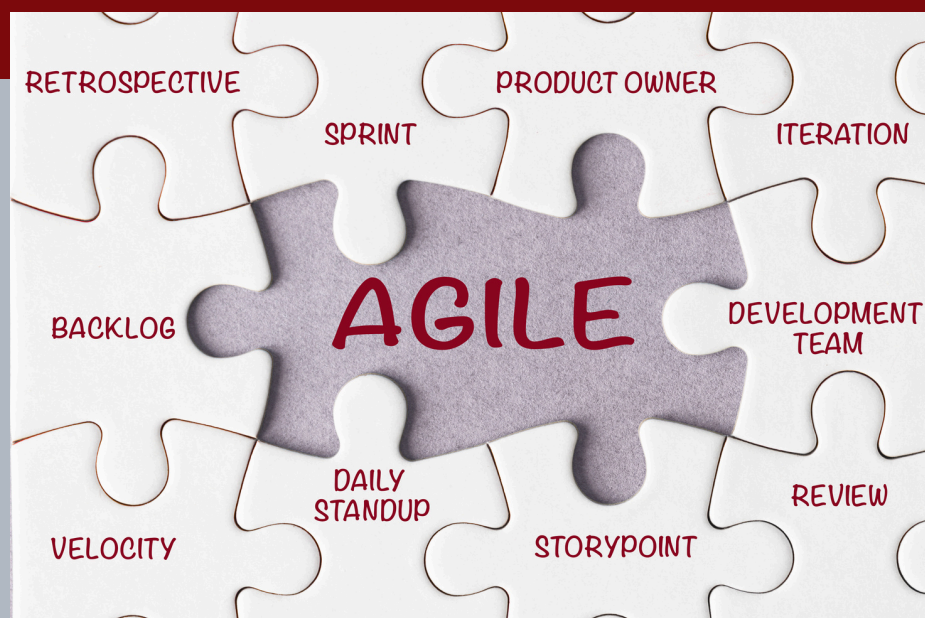
- Decision-making clarity — where decisions are made at the right level
- Flow of work
- Faster movement from insight to action
- Alignment and responsiveness
- Enabling teams to adapt without waiting for instruction
- Maintaining coherence without over-reliance on hierarchy

Agility, in this sense, is not about speed alone.

It is about the organisation's ability to sense, respond, and adapt in real time.

Yet even with the right structures in place, one question remains.

Where, inside the organisation, does this way of working actually take hold?



The Rise of Mid Tier Leaders ~ Angela Gail James

Where Agile Becomes Real



Work with middle managers at a major hotel group revealed a consistent pattern in how organisational change actually takes hold.

As organisations engage in dialogue around future adaptation to a changing business and operating model landscape, the language and role of Middle Management must evolve in line with these changes.

Change does not embed at the level of frameworks, operating models, or executive intent, but within what can be understood as the Mid Tier leadership layer.

Long before Agile became a common language, this same pattern of where change actually embeds has been visible across organisations — past and present.

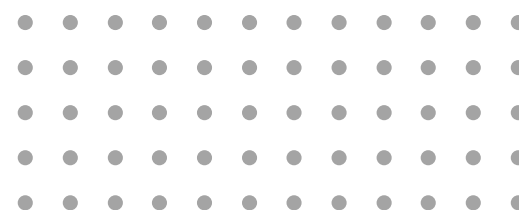
Previous bulletins have introduced both the rationale and the shift in reorientating from Middle Managers to Mid Tier Leaders.

In the context of Agile, this becomes even more critical as this group...

- holds context
- makes sense of ambiguity
- enables real-time response
- and carries both operational and human pressure within the organisation



It is therefore more accurate to understand that work is managed, and people are led.



Where It Shows Up in Practice



In Strategy Implementation, this layer sits at the intersection of:

- strategic intent
- operational delivery
- and the lived experience of teams

Here, priorities are translated, decisions are interpreted, and competing demands are reconciled in real time.

This is also where pressure accumulates.

When supported by clear executive intent and aligned structures, Mid Tier Leaders become enablers — allowing decisions to move, teams to respond, and work to flow. Without this support, this layer becomes a bottleneck - holding responsibility without the authority or the alignment required to act.

As a result, rather than leading their teams, individuals revert to what is familiar — managing the work.

Why This Matters in the Context of Agile

Whether an organisation is adopting Agile or operating within a more traditional model, the point of activation remains the same. Operating models define how work should flow.

When Mid Tier Leaders are enabled and aligned:

- decisions are made closer to the work
- teams respond with confidence
- and adaptability becomes possible

When Mid Tier Leaders are not:

- decisions stall
- autonomy becomes uncertain
- and new ways of working remain surface-level



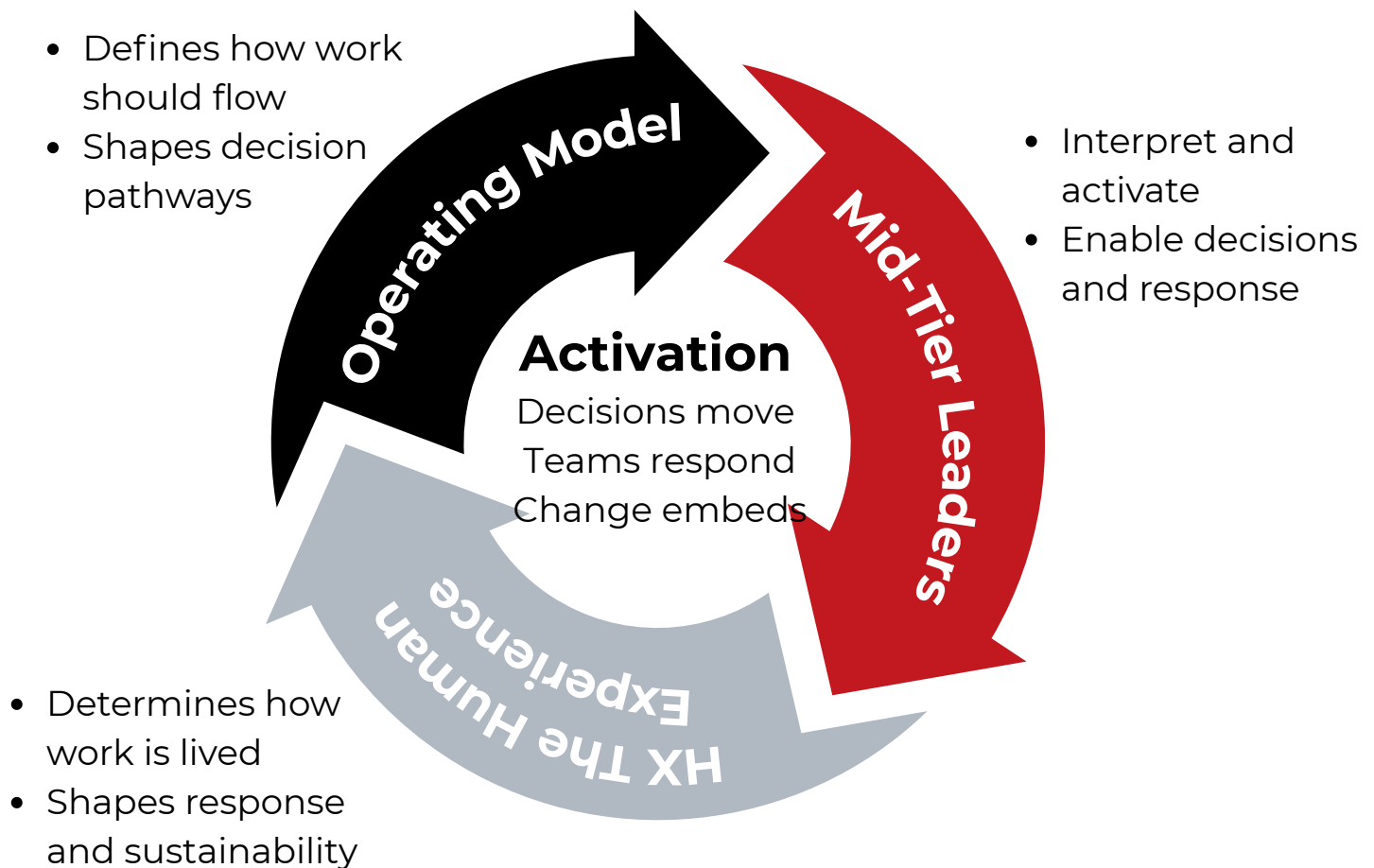
If Agile is the operating model, then the Mid Tier is where that model becomes real as structure meets experience; intent becomes action and change either embeds — or does not

Human Experience (HX) — The Activation Layer

Previous bulletins introduced Human Experience (HX) as a critical factor in how organisations move beyond structure and process.

In the context of Agile as an operating model, this becomes increasingly important.

Where Structure Meets Experience



The Human Demand of Agility

Agile requires individuals to:

- operate with greater autonomy
- respond in real time
- and navigate ongoing ambiguity

Enabling the Mid Tier

With The Human Experience (HX), Agile becomes sustainable in lived experience. as Mid Tier Leaders are supported in realising strategy. HX provides clarity in complexity; trust in decision-making and alignment without over-reliance on hierarchy

Bringing It Together

Agile, as an operating model, defines how organisations are structured to respond, adapt, and create value in real time. Structure alone does not create movement.

As explored in this bulletin, the point at which strategy becomes real sits within Mid Tier Leadership. Here decisions are interpreted, priorities are translated, and change is carried into day-to-day reality.

And here, Human Experience becomes critical.

Operating models define how work should flow.
Human Experience determines how that work is lived.

When these elements are aligned:

- decisions move
- teams respond
- and change embeds

When they are not:

- progress slows
- autonomy becomes uncertain
- and new ways of working remain surface-level



Future-ready organisations recognise that adaptability is not achieved through design alone.

It emerges through the continuous interaction between structure, leadership, and lived experience.

The ability to respond in real time defines what it means to be future-ready.

What follows is the question of sustainability — not only how organisations adapt, but how they sustain that adaptability over time in a way that supports performance, customer experience, and long-term value creation.

