

CASE STUDY: Building a Sustainable Agile Foundation in a Global Engineering Division

Organization & Role Context

A global engineering group of approximately 2,000 staff wanted to embed agile more deeply across its platform teams. While previous years had seen agile goals and experiments, 2025 was positioned as a point when the organization would move towards more consistent, sustainable agile practices.

The Chief of Staff to the VP of Engineering helped coordinate this effort. His responsibilities span hiring, budgeting, and process improvement, and as scrum master for a newly formed leadership scrum team.

Challenges Before Training

Despite previous agile-related goals, the organization faced several challenges.

Inconsistent Adoption

The organization had made a number of efforts to introduce agile practices such as encouraging teams to create unified backlogs, size their work, and track metrics. Some teams embraced these ideas and began experimenting with new ways of working, but they weren't universally accepted. *"There were pockets of things happening... but some teams hadn't changed any process."*

Lack of Shared Understanding

Teams had freedom to define sizing and other practices, but this led to inconsistency and undermined the usefulness of the data. *"We allowed teams to define [sizing] however they wanted... there was no consistency."*

Burnout and Lack of Boundaries

Burnout showed up in employee surveys with engineers not always able to manage expectations and unable to present the data they needed to push back on growing business demands. *"It was very hard for engineers to say no... they would just keep bringing stuff and just say, 'yes'."*

Why Mountain Goat Software?



The team wanted to approach 2025 with more support for the agile adoption and a leadership decision was made to begin with foundational training, not just for delivery teams, but for directors and their managers.

The Chief of Staff, who had followed Mike Cohn's work for years, proposed bringing in Mountain Goat Software. *"If we can get these guys, that would be great. That would be the best."*

Mountain Goat Software was brought in to deliver Working on a Scrum Team and Agile for Leaders training across two sessions: a virtual course delivered to 40+ leaders, followed by an in-person leadership session.

Training Experience

"The training set a baseline of what Scrum is for the top-level management in the organization. That's where we wanted to get to a level set."

The Working on a Scrum Team course helped align directors and managers around a shared understanding of Scrum roles and responsibilities. Some attendees were already experienced with agile; others were new to it. The goal was to establish common ground.

A few weeks later, MGS returned to deliver *Agile for Leaders* in person which provided space for extended Q&A and exploration of team-specific challenges. The internal team then spent two days creating guidelines for how their teams would adopt Scrum over the course of the year.

Impact

The post-training rollout took a "guidelines, not mandates" approach: setting shared expectations while allowing some flexibility in how they were achieved. Guidelines included team size targets, sprint cadences, and the expectation that dedicated scrum masters and product owners would be hired (where not already in place).

The team is now laying the groundwork for what they hope will be a more sustainable and data-informed way of working: one that allows engineering to manage capacity, reduce burnout, and engage in realistic, respectful prioritization conversations with business stakeholders.

"Mountain Goat Software helped us set a shared baseline for agile practice across a wide range of experience levels. The training gave leaders a common language, space to ask real questions, and the confidence to begin planning their own adoption paths. It was a valuable step in supporting consistency across the organization, without losing flexibility or respect for local context." – Chief of Staff