

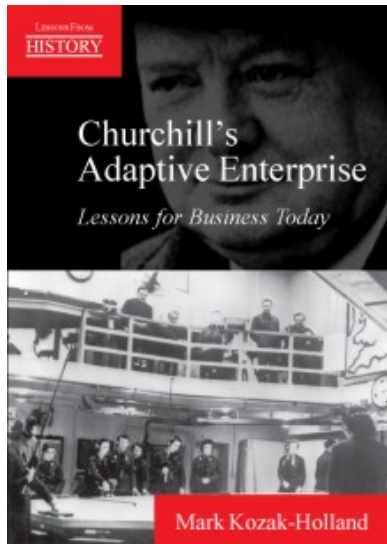
LESSONS FROM  
**HISTORY**

# Churchill the Agile PM

New publication



## Project Lessons in Agile Project Management



**PMI xxxx  
xxx xx, 2006  
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Senior Business Architect  
HP Services**



**“Lessons From the Past that Assist the Projects  
of Today to Shape the World of Tomorrow”**  
**[www.lessons-from-history.com](http://www.lessons-from-history.com)**

**This is the story of how one man inspired his nation to continue a fight thought lost.**

- § **In May 1940, the United Kingdom (UK) was facing a dire situation, an imminent invasion.**
- § **Churchill had to mobilize quickly and act with agility to assemble a defense.**
- § **Churchill had to transform the UK, restructure his organization and its processes.**
- § **Churchill had to make right investments, apply resources, and delivers an Adaptive Enterprise in short time.**
- § **Churchill turned a disastrous situation into an unexpected victory.**
- § **Example of an agile project in flight.**
- § **Please prepare questions for the end of the presentation.**

**“The short road to ruin is to emulate the methods of your adversary.”**

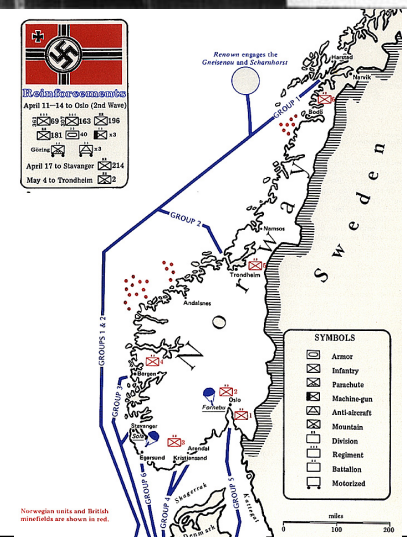
Winston Churchill

Prime Minister of the UK, May 1940

**Lessons In Agile Project Management**

# Of course Agile Project Management is nothing new. To further understand the concept we need to go back to May 1940 to a time of continuous change

- § UK faced a grim situation.
- § UK unprepared for war  
Chamberlain stalling for peace.
- § Chamberlain trying to manage his way out of a bad situation.
- § Audacious attack on Denmark and Norway and their occupation led to Chamberlains demise.
- § Campaign demonstrates major changes in warfare - mechanization & communication.
- § In the unpredictable environment Chamberlain is forced to resign.



**May 10<sup>th</sup>, 1940, in a desperate act, Churchill is swept into the Prime Minister's office to face insurmountable problems.**

- § Churchill only government member not ready to quit. Senior members leaning towards peace.
- § At Dunkirk British army loses 90% of equipment. 200 ships and 109 fighters are lost.
- § April/May RAF loses over 50% of fighters.
- § Threat only 21 miles away. Imminent invasion June/July.
- § Nation loses confidence, accepts possible occupation.
- § Last part of Western Europe free from invasion.
- § No potential Allies, Soviets, US remains staunchly neutral.



**Lessons for Agile PM – constant change is a fact of life**

The problems had to be prioritized as short and long term, and then addressed by solutions. Churchill is determined to fight on.  
*"I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat."* May 13

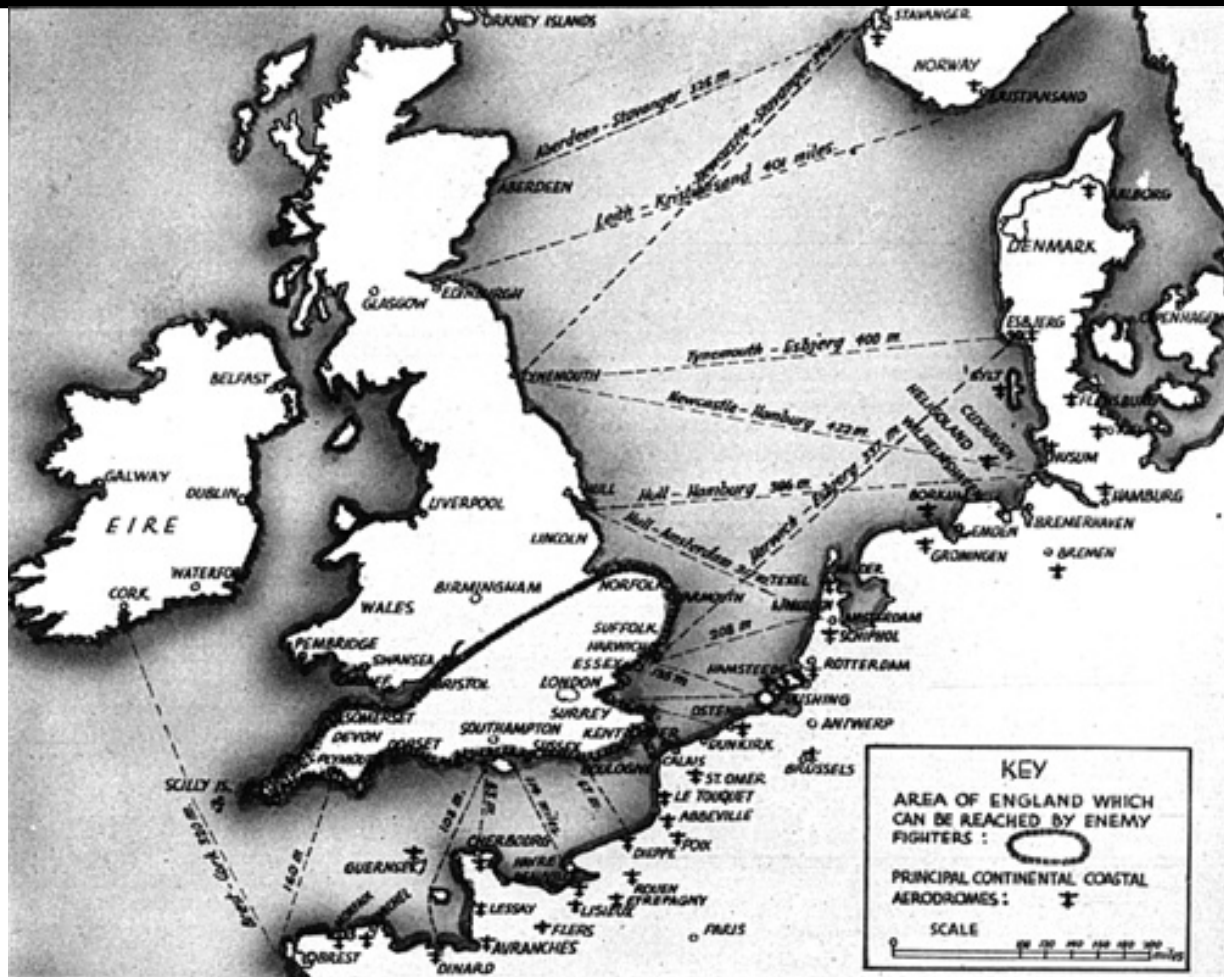
- § A government reluctant to fight on.
- § Small army with little equipment.
- § Undefended coast line, no defenses.
- § Economy on civilian, not war footing.
- § UK over populated vastly industrialized.
- § All raw materials imported (except coal).
- § 67% of food imported.



- § 675 RAF fighters, 50% below strength, faced estimated 3,500 aircraft (1100 fighters).
- § Fighter production very low (290 vs 500 Luftwaffe per month), 6 months behind schedule.
- § Pilot shortage, 60% below operational strength.

**Lessons for Agile PM – clearly state organizational challenges.**

Churchill's architects recognize that invasion is only possible with victory in the skies. RAF Fighter Command is one of several critical organizations.



§ Royal navy could only prevent sea invasion with massive air cover.

§ Override Air Ministry pressure to invest in bombers.

§ RAF would have to defend a very long coast line.

§ Raids into British air space in 10 minutes, over London in another 10 minutes.

**Lessons for Agile PM – determine which organizations play a lead role and what has the greatest value.**

**Churchill defines vision, and short and long term objectives that looked beyond the imminent air battle. However, could a project deliver the short term objectives in time? How?**

§ **Short term (2 months):**

- Convince cabinet, government, and people to fight on.
- Win the air battle and stall invasion till spring 1941.
- Restore nation's confidence in his government.

§ **Long term (5-7 years):**

- Move economy to war footing to sustain total economic warfare.
- Expand war through an alliance with U.S.
- Responsibilities to the free world and occupied Europe



**Lessons for Agile PM – Create guiding vision, clearly state short and long term organizational objectives.**

Churchill is presented a few rough “technology diamonds” to incorporate into a project, and integrate into a solution in the short term.

- § A modern and technically outstanding fighter in the Spitfire, but in small numbers (33%).
- § RAF Fighter Command - geographically distributed and networked installations (5 yrs old).
- § Bletchley Park shows great promise in breaking Enigma with machines.
- § Radar testing proves success of the technology.
- § A secure, blast proof, underground facility near Downing Street with good communications.



**Lessons for Agile PM – assess all emerging technology options.**

**Major problems faced by Churchill in May 1940 related not only to complexity and rate of change with new obstacles every day but confidence and overall priorities.**

- § Lack of confidence around him in government circles
- § No clear priorities on where to focus the fight
- § No single minister in charge of war prosecuting
- § Public unprepared for war
- § Focus primarily on the military (not economy)
- § The fight was in one theatre

§ *“He delegated freely but also probed and interfered continuously, regarding nothing as too large or too small for his attention.”*

– 2005 Encyclopædia Britannica



**Lessons for Agile PM – master the problem(s) before designing the solution, and prepare for lots of change and volatility.**

## Churchill's background and experience proves invaluable, and he brought it forward as PM.

- § 1901- Member of Parliament
- § 1905 – Cabinet Member
- § 1910-1911 – Home Secretary
- § 1911-1915 – First Lord of the Admiralty
- § 1915 – Member of the War Council
- § 1916 – Commanded 6th Royal Scots Fusiliers
- § 1917 – Minister of Munitions
- § 1919-1921 – Secretary of state for war and air
- § 1924-1929 – Chancellor of the Exchequer
- § 1929-1939 – Out of office



**Lessons for Agile PM – bring appropriate lessons learned forward from your career.**

## Churchill learnt many lessons from the First World War which guides his priorities in May 1940.

- § The lack of a central policy undermined resource coordination, and prolonged the UK's response.
- § The lack of good intelligence at Gallipoli crucified his career.
- § The horror of a static war as he fought in the trenches.
- § As Minister of Munitions responsible for tank production
  - lack of cooperation - military and industry.



**Lessons for Agile PM – leverage personal experience from other projects.**

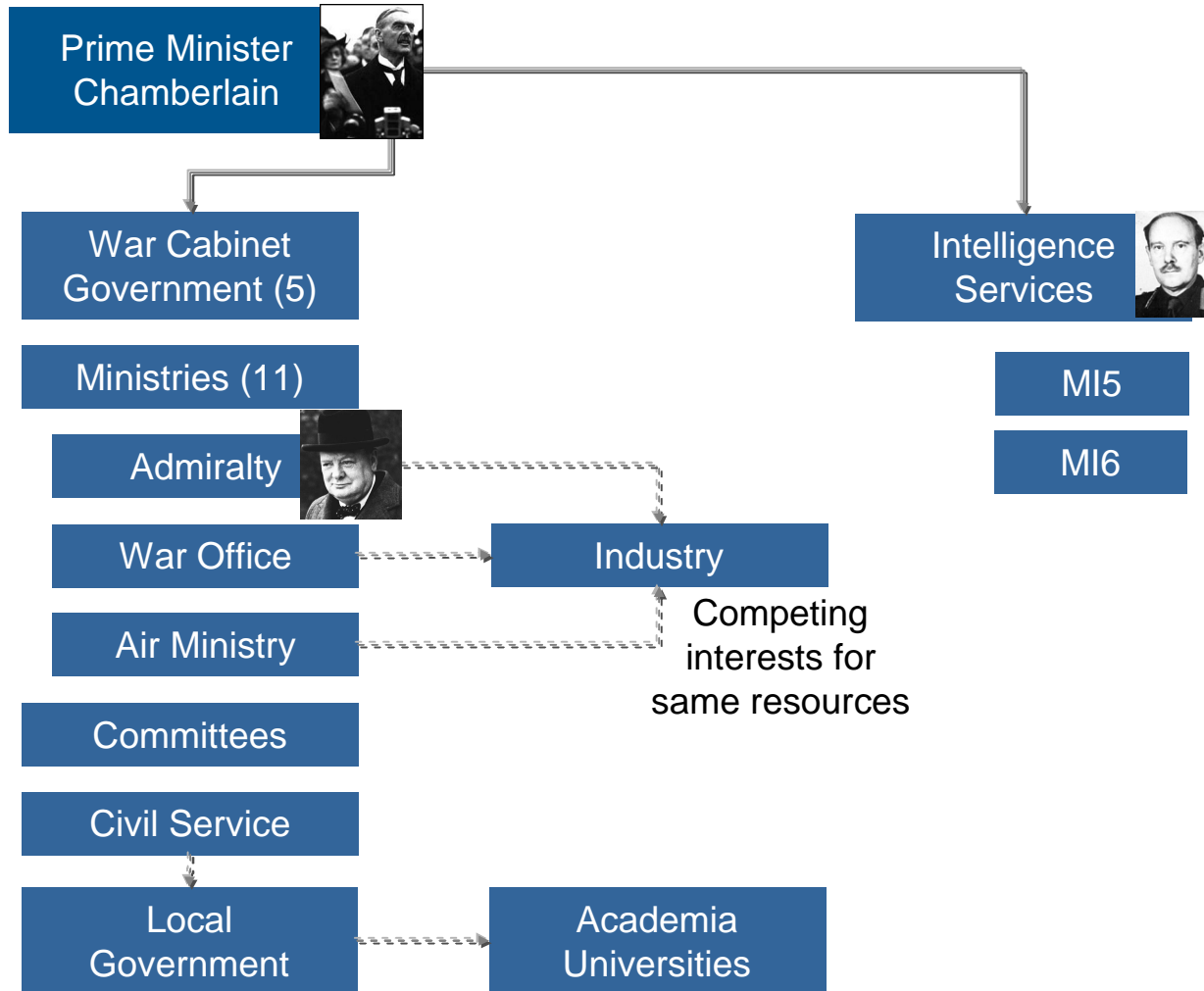
## Churchill breaks down barriers between vertical organizations/operations and reconstructs to work harmoniously through a governance framework.

- § Churchill had to resist pressures, politics, and prioritize the choices, and integrate these into a solution.
- § Disparate organizations (government, military, civilian) unique cultures, institutionalized, autonomous.
- § Armed forces evolved independently, no interaction, reluctant to cooperate, jockeyed for resources.
- § Churchill incorporates military structures into Storey's Gate, and forced to **share some resources/expertise**.
- § Transformation needed governance framework, and compliance.
- § Deal with adoption, sell nation, overcome barriers to lead to success.



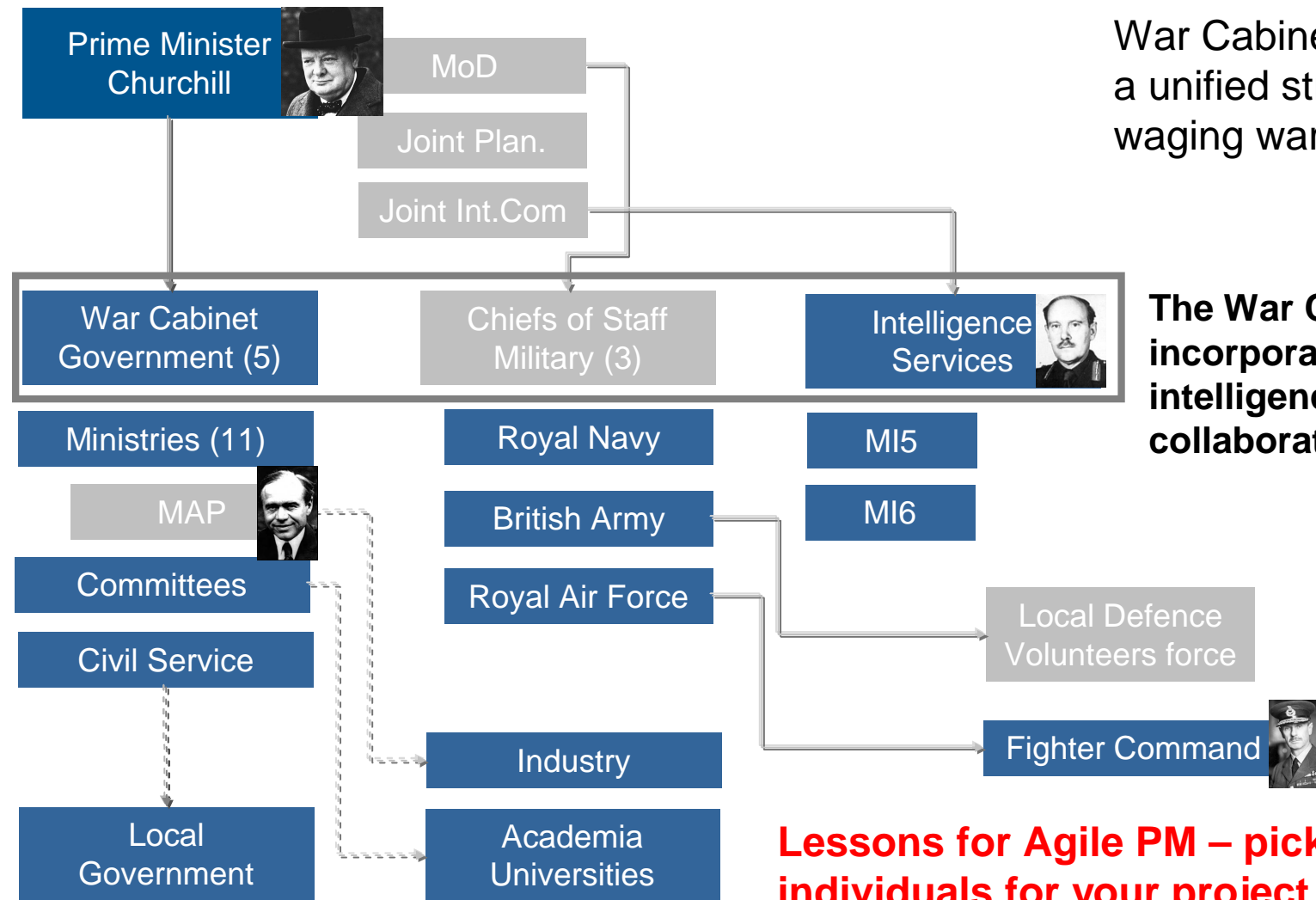
**Lessons for Agile PM – develop governance framework, create compliance, and lays out adoption, and communication plans.**

# Structure of Chamberlain's government before May 1940 followed traditional lines and hierarchical structure



The War Cabinet made up of just ministers

# Structure of Churchill's government after May 1940 focuses on one objective – Win the War.



War Cabinet goal to plan a unified strategy for waging war

**The War Cabinet incorporates military and intelligence, forced to collaborate**

**Lessons for Agile PM – pick motivated individuals for your project team.**

## Churchill takes the following actions to encourage collaboration in project team

- § Unifies his War Cabinet and kept in adversaries to strengthen national confidence.
- § Creates new Ministries:
  - Defense, Aircraft Production, Food Production, and Economic Warfare to look at all aspects of the war.
- § Becomes Minister of Defense forcing the Chiefs of Staff to consider all ideas put forward.
- § Builds close relationship with Chiefs of Staff through daily meetings.
- § Never overrules Chiefs of Staff, grand war strategy was run in rational and logical way.



**Lessons for Agile PM – unify your project team, encourage collaboration, and regularly reflect on how to become more effective, tune/adjust behavior accordingly.**

## Churchill takes actions to show determination to cause and instill confidence in his people.

- § Personally addresses the nation over the radio with a schedule of broadcasts.
- § Vision and realism are at the core of speeches.

*“we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender,...June 4th”*



- § Sends edict to all civil servants to avoid defeatist talk.
- § Stop evacuation of Royal Family to Canada.
- § Stops evacuation of children around the Empire.
- § Orders the disposition of great art works from the National Gallery into caves.



**Lessons for Agile PM – through communication plans ensure right messages are disseminated (propaganda).**

## Major problems faced by Beaverbrook in May 1940 relate to fighter materials and production problems

### § Fighter Production rates too low

- Per month 290 vs 500
- Complexity of Spitfire (elliptical wings)
- Shortage of labour
- Materials and resources not readily available (aluminum)
- Old manufacturing practices unchanged from WW1
- Reorganization of supply chain badly needed

### § Lord Beaverbrook – (Canadian Max Aitken) Churchill’s confidant, friend, industrialist and newspaper baron (no nonsense man)



**Lessons for Agile PM – pick a “go-to” person, highly motivated individual, for the toughest project activities, and to take a radical approach when needed.**

## Beaverbrook and his self organized team institutes a number of far reaching measures which change the social fabric of UK

- § Brought women into the workforce and encouraged women to take a greater role.
- § Recycling of old pots and pans for fighter production.
- § Encourages Organizations to purchase Spitfires.
- § Focus on considerably raising public morale by doing their bit.
- § Relationship with North American industrial giants (Ford, Pratt and Whitney)



**Lessons for Agile PM – look for initiatives that engage the target audience and help with adoption.**

## Beaverbrook lock-steps fighter production rate (supply with zero inventory) in response to daily demands from Bentley Prior.

### § Beaverbrook's Ministry responsible for:

- Managing supply-chain, procurement, manufacturing and inspection, distribution, defending factories.
- Civilian Repair Organization workshops retrieved/assessed/repared planes, or cannibalized parts.
- Encouraging innovation & improvement of production processes and sharing free flow of ideas.



### § Supported by:

- Scientific Units:
  - Advised on new improvements on shop floor.
- The Statistical Advisory Section.



**Lessons for Agile PM – synchronize supply to demand, and create an enterprise view.**

## Major problems faced by Colonel Stewart Menzies (head of British Intelligence)

- § Intelligence gathering within occupied Europe
- § Bletchley Park code breaking establishment:
  - Limited resources
  - Operation still done by hand
    - Early successes in Battle of France
  - Keeping source secret
    - Secure distribution
  - Enigma Codes changed daily, had to be cracked in window

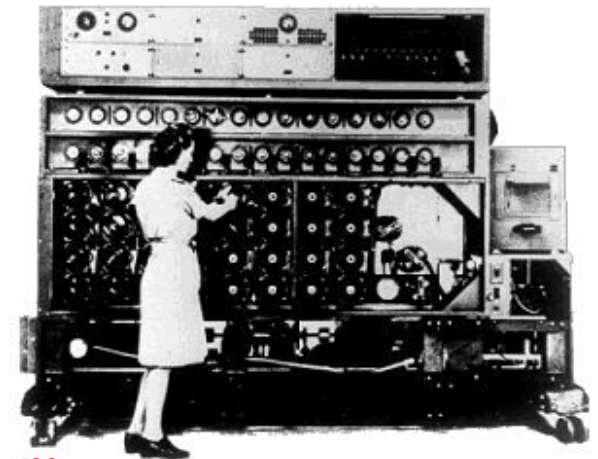
- § Churchill in daily contact with Menzies
- § Churchill referred to Bletchley Park as *"The goose that laid the golden eggs but never cackled."*



**Lessons for Agile PM – gain “intelligence” to act proactively and with agility.**

## Menzies's organization takes the following actions to enhance the intelligence situation

- § Expands intelligence gathering through occupied Europe.
- § Scales up & automates Bletchley Park's manual operation for real-time intelligence.
- § Gives Bletchley code name Ultra and shrouds it in secrecy.
- § Sets up deception plans for Ultra.
- § Gets military to recognize and trust Ultra
- § Limits distribution of Ultra (31 recipients).
  - Churchill's mandate *"wild scattering of seed must be curbed."*

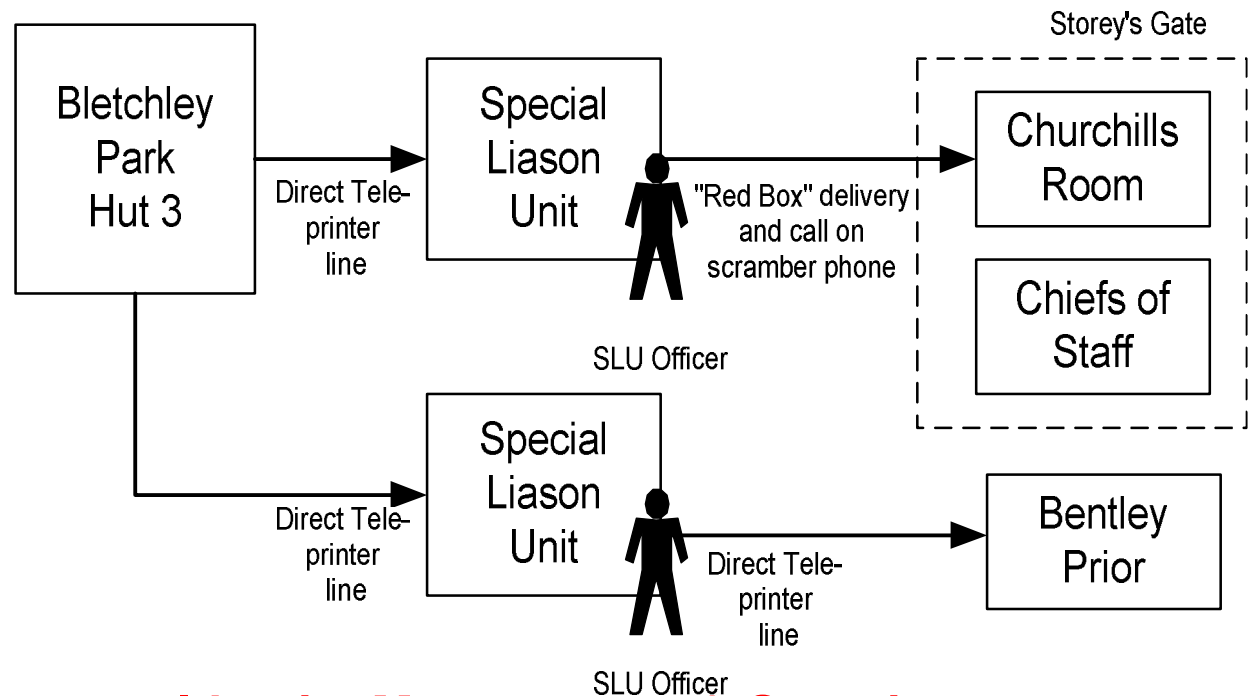


**Lessons for Agile PM – ensure project takes maximum advantage of all intelligence available.**

## HISTORY

Security of information flow to individuals is a major challenge because Ultra had to be kept secret.

- § For Storey' Gate very acute because of security implications.
- § SLUs created by RAF for secure distribution of information.
- § Cover story for Ultra at all times.
- § Churchill briefed daily



**Lessons for Agile PM – ensure Identity Management & Security, management of users and access rights.**

## Major problems faced by Air Marshall Sir Hugh Dowding in May 1940 relate to shortages

- § Luftwaffe 1700 bombers and 1100 fighters against 675 RAF fighters
- § Fighters below minimum strength
  - Mix of types
  - Pilot shortage
  - Shortage of men
- § Ability to preserve resources
- § Adjust tactics on the fly (agility)

- § Some wanted to remove Dowding, but Churchill told his Air Minister, "*I think he is one of the very best men you have got ... he has my full confidence.*"



## Dowding has invested wisely so is well prepared and organized for the battle

- § Stops further fighters being sent to France
- § Has elements of sense & respond system:
  - Radar (short/long range)
  - Network of aircraft observers
  - Large telephone network
  - Command headquarters
  - Dispersed airfields
  - Fuel and ammunition delivery and storage dumps
  - Ultra intelligence to answer questions on invader
- § Refuses to engage until over English coastline
- § Switches bomber pilots over



**Lessons for Agile PM – Leverage what is in place so you don't reinvent the wheel.**

## Operational problems faced by Churchill in May 1940 related to efficiency

### § Needed a command center

- Protected against air raid
- To House the war cabinet and Chiefs of Staff
- Major communications hub

### § Cabinet to become an agency of swift decisions



### § *“Winston is marvelous at picking up all the thread and giving them shape and form. Nothing too large or small for his attention.”*

- Eric Seal, Principal Private Secretary, 1940



**Lessons for Agile PM – create environment to update the project manager and other team members on progress and to raise any issues .**

## Churchill further augmented his own personal decision making by surrounding himself by professionals to interpret information from the executive dashboard

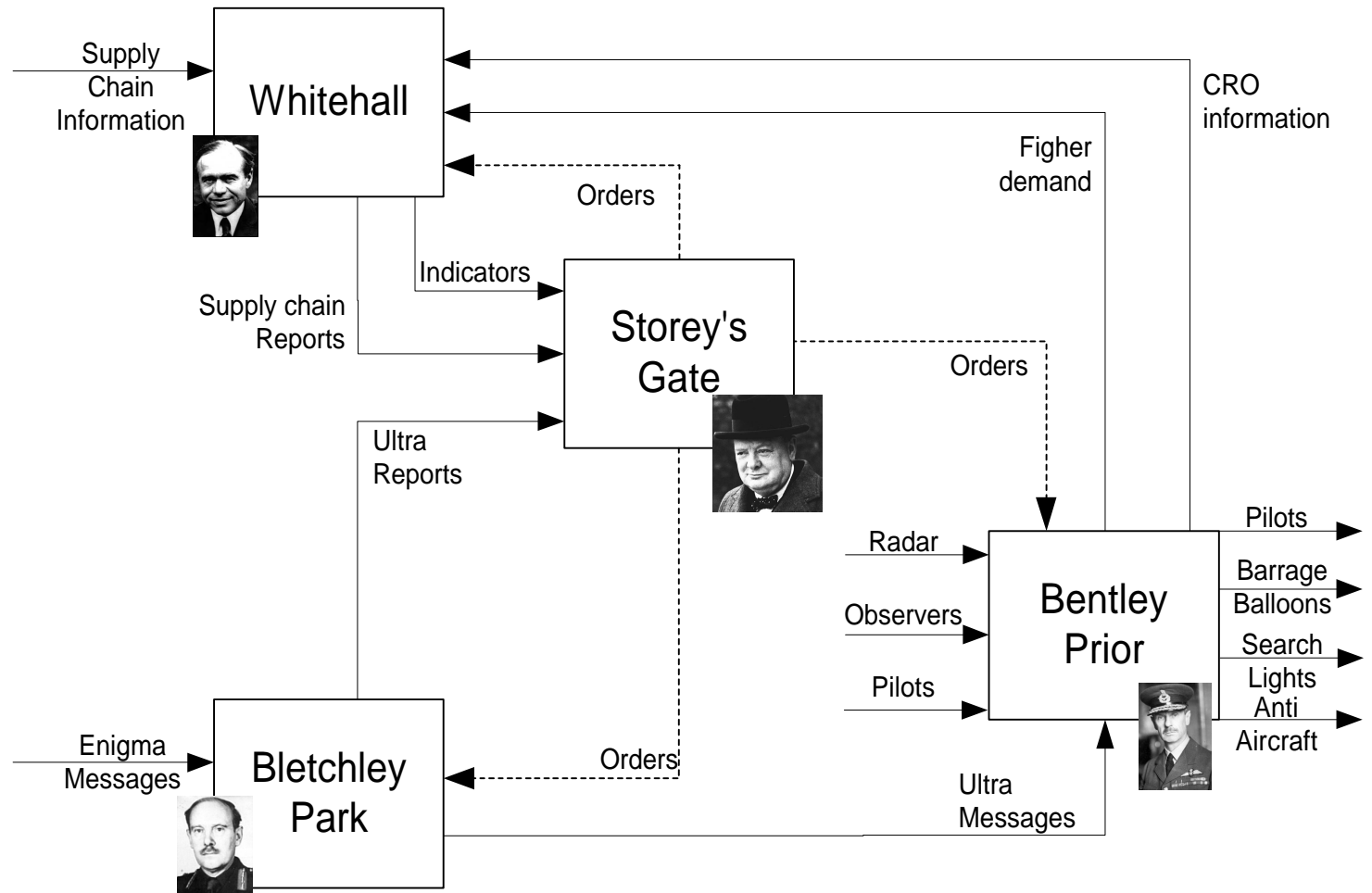
- § **Typists (3) – all thoughts and sayings recorded**
- § **Private Secretaries – 24 hours rota system**
- § **Daily contact with intelligence head**
- § **Access to experts, best possible professionals**
  - Professor Lindemann - statistical interpretation
- § **Personal “SLU” – daily Ultra brief greatly influenced strategy**
- § **System of “action this day”**
  - Famous stickers attached to his memos

**Lessons for Agile PM – improve your decision making by surrounding yourself with the best knowledge through people (experts) and solutions.**

For weeks the solution elements underwent incessant testing. This verified sense and respond, adaptability, supply and demand, and overall soundness.

§ **Testing:**

- unit,
- integration,
- everything.



**Lessons for Agile PM – At regular intervals build, test, and deliver the solution frequently, iteratively and incrementally (time-boxed).**

The first solution release was tested & deployed in a short time frame. Further releases were time-boxed & deployed incrementally based on geography & other priorities.

§ **Bentley Prior**

- Integrated and deployed in Group 11 first.

§ **Storey's Gate**

- Whitehall supply-chain indicators available.

§ **Satisfying executive sponsors**

- Determined how effective their decision making became.



**Lessons for Agile PM – promote sustainable development and deployment working continuously with sponsors.**



**June 1940 – Significant **events** deliver Churchill bad news of the imminent invasion and the poor state of readiness of the solution, lacking overall integration.**

§ **Frantic preparation to complete first release of Adaptive Enterprise.**



§ ***4<sup>th</sup> - Ultra indicates massive invasion preparation.***

– *Barges are made targets*

§ ***6<sup>th</sup> – Indicators show shortfall in production***

– *Household goods banned*

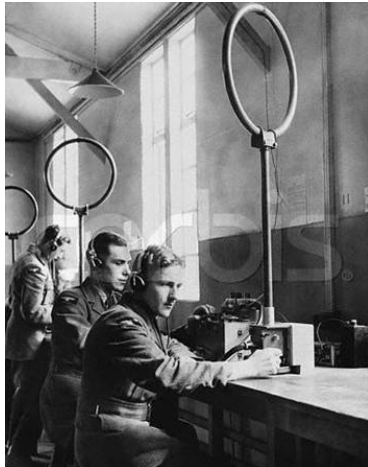
§ ***30<sup>th</sup> Beaverbrook raises fighter production***

– *From 292 to 446*

**Lessons for Agile PM – recognize significant events and react with agility, and accordingly.**

**July 1940 - Churchill recognizes potential of the solution and skillfully buys time to complete a solution “Just-in-Time” as air battle commences.**

§ Churchill has to convince the nation to fight on.



§ **1<sup>st</sup> - A “traveling” map room becomes operational for Churchill.**

§ **3<sup>rd</sup> - Destruction of the French Fleet at Oran**

§ **16<sup>th</sup> - Ultra reveals scale of Operation Sea Lion.**

– 200 decoded messages a day passed to Bentley Prior

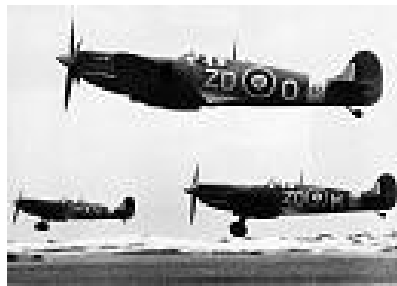
§ **31<sup>st</sup> - Beaverbrook learns of spare aircraft part storage.**

– Gains control and moves to zero inventory

**Lessons for Agile PM – communicate vision, leverage information mobility, act decisively.**

## August 1940 (1 of 2) - Air battle intensifies but RAF holds its own. True potential of the solution starts to become very apparent.

§ Both sides sustain heavy fighter losses.



§ 9<sup>th</sup> – *Ultra repeatedly warns of “Eagle day” massive attack*

– *Tactics to avoid battle of attrition*

§ 16<sup>th</sup> – *Accurate heavy fighter losses reported.*

– *Tactics adjusted Spitfire vs. Hurricane*

§ 19<sup>th</sup> - *Fighter production-rate shortfall.*

– *CRO adopts third shift (24 hour operation)*

**Lessons for Agile PM – Focus on end goal but adjust tactics continuously to meet it.**

## August 1940 (2 of 2) - Air battle reaches turning point, RAF is 24 hours from defeat, but Churchill's decisive action help to take the pressure off.

- § Switch in tactics onto London, in retaliation to Churchill.



- § **22<sup>nd</sup> - Worsening situation in Middle East.**

- Churchill dispatches a convoy 50% of tanks.

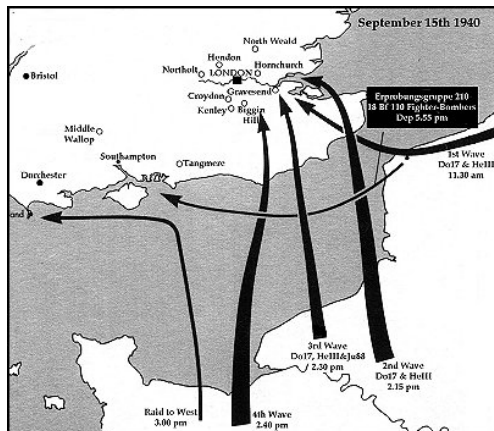
- § **24<sup>th</sup> - Churchill learns of attack on London.**

- Reprisal raid on Berlin.
- Pressure off air fields.

**Lessons for Agile PM – Take a holistic view to enhance decision making, and to drive change.**

## September 1940 - Last part of the battle almost results in defeat as the RAF is overwhelmed.

- § The all out battle of Sept.15<sup>th</sup>, 80% of entire fighter strength sent across channel.



- § 7<sup>th</sup> - Storey's Gate issues "invasion imminent and probable in 12 hours."

– Churchill orders attack on ports crammed with 1,000 barges.

- § 16<sup>th</sup> - massive attack of 328 bombers and 769 fighters.

– RAF destroy 187 planes to break the offensive

– Luftwaffe pilots shocked at RAF's fighter strength

– Morale saps

**Lessons for Agile PM – Trust the intelligence, once proven, be decisive make bold moves.**

## October 1940 - Churchill weathers the storm and turns the corner meeting all short and long term objectives.

- § RAF had prior warning of about 80% of air raids on London.
- § RAF intact to repel raids.
- § Supply-chain adequately supported RAF to sustain prolonged air battle.
- § Switch to night time attacks.
- § Churchill defiant, full of confidence
  - Implement longer term strategies.

Month	Planned	Achieved	Overall Available
February	171	141	
March	203	177	
April	231	256	
May	261	325	
June	292	446	600
July	329	496	644
August	282	476	708
September			746
October			734



**Lessons for Agile PM – Build projects around motivated individuals. Give them the environment & support they need, and trust them to get the job done.**

# So how did Churchill do it? In 10 steps Churchill transformed the UK so it could “adapt to change”



**Lessons for Agile PM – with clear vision move quickly, iteratively and incrementally in agile approach.**

## Questions



**This presentation will be available on-line**

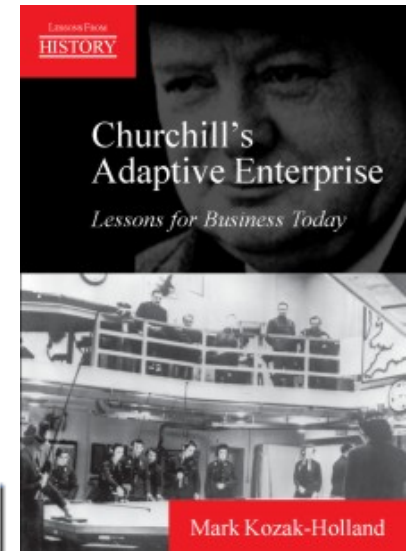
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