Agile Process Improvement

Sprint Change Method

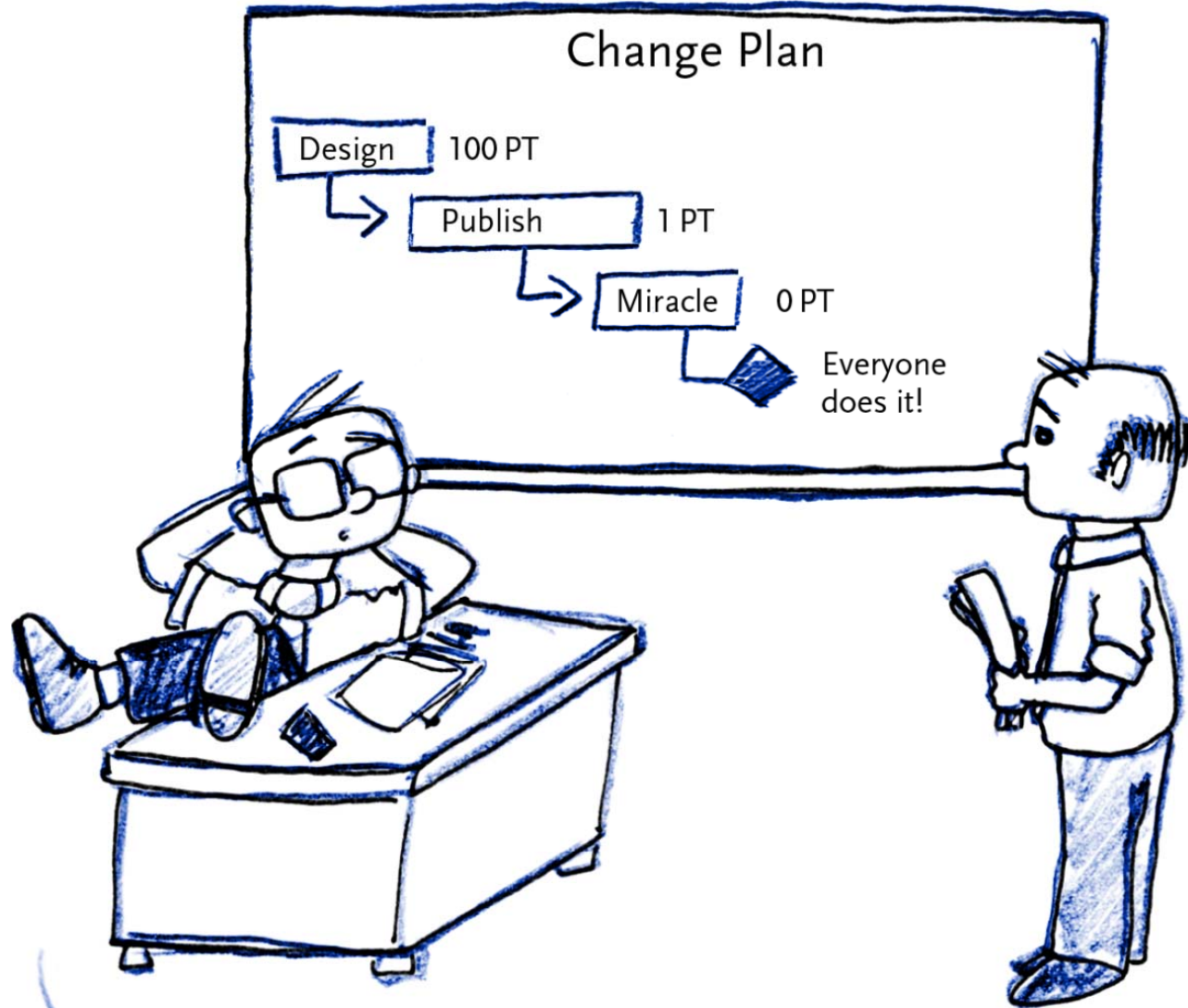**wibas** **SEI**Partner

Leading Change. Sharing Knowledge.

Seen this?

Many "change" projects still spent most of their time writing process books and announcing them. Even worse, much of the content is written in an ivory tower.

We all know that this approach fails.

Why don't we stop doing it?

Stop riding the dead horse.

The tribal wisdom of the Dakota Indians, passed on from one generation to the next, says: "When you discover that you are riding a dead horse, the best strategy is to dismount and get a different horse". But in modern business other strategies are often tried with dead horses, including the following:

1. Buying a stronger whip.
2. Changing riders.
3. Threatening the horse with termination.
4. Appointing a committee to study the horse.
5. Arranging to visit other sites to see how they ride dead horses.
6. Lowering the standards so that dead horses can be included.
7. Reclassifying the dead horse as "living".
8. Hiring outside contractors to ride the dead horse.
9. Harnessing several dead horses together to increase speed.
10. Providing additional training to increase the dead horse's performance.
11. Declaring that the dead horse carries lower overhead and therefore contributes more to the bottom line than some other horses.
12. Promoting the rider of the dead horse to a supervisory position.

Successful process improvement starts with a correct understanding of the word "process". It means "work".

RIGHT
Process = Work

WRONG
Process = Documentation

Process Improvement = **Work** Improvement
People like improving **processes** = People like improving **work**.
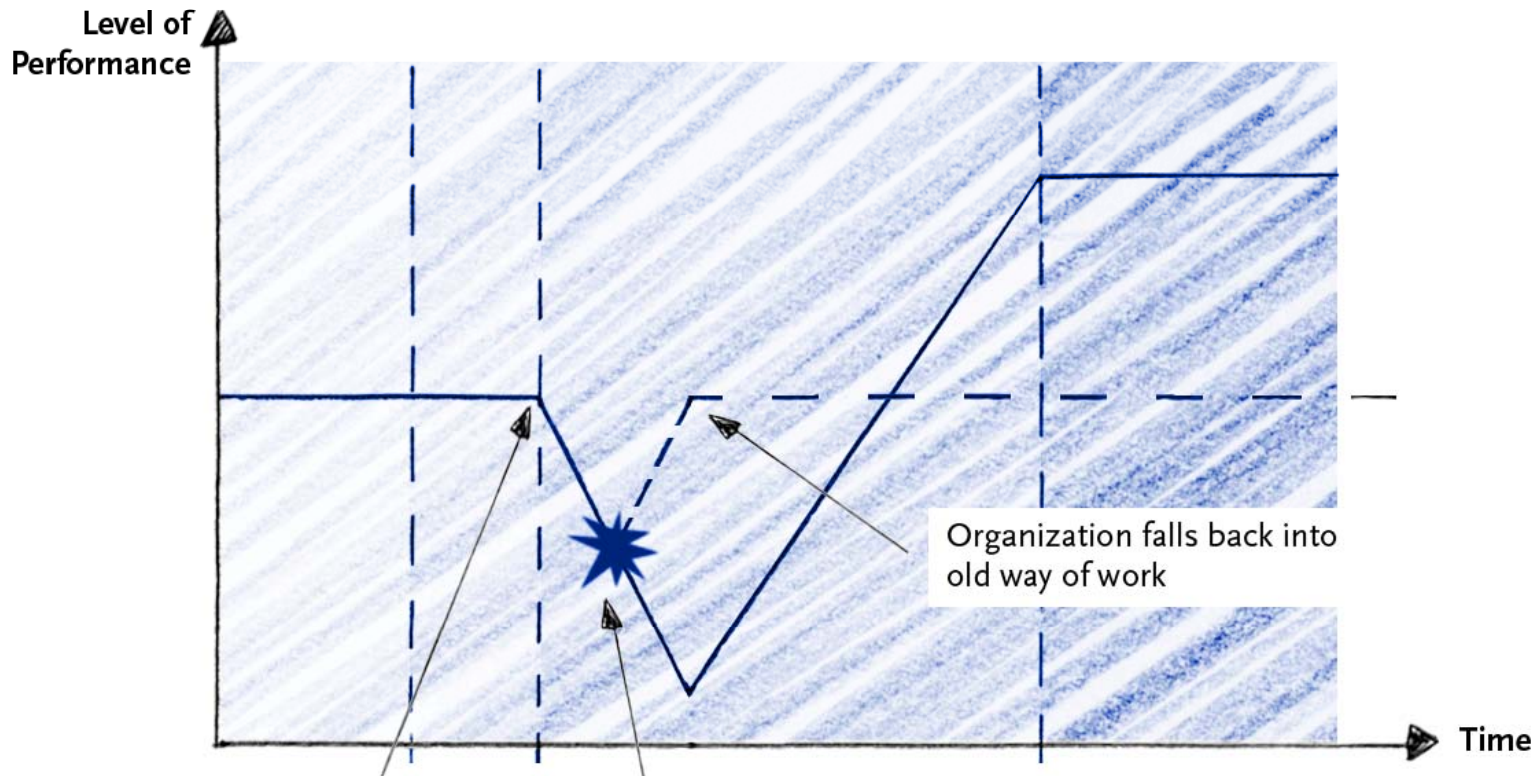Quality depends on our **processes** = quality depends on our **work**.

Process is Overhead = **Work** is Overhead???
Process improvement results in more work =
Work Improvement results in more work???

Changes always result in a temporary drop of performance. Big Bang changes are either rejected or kill the work.

Level of Performance

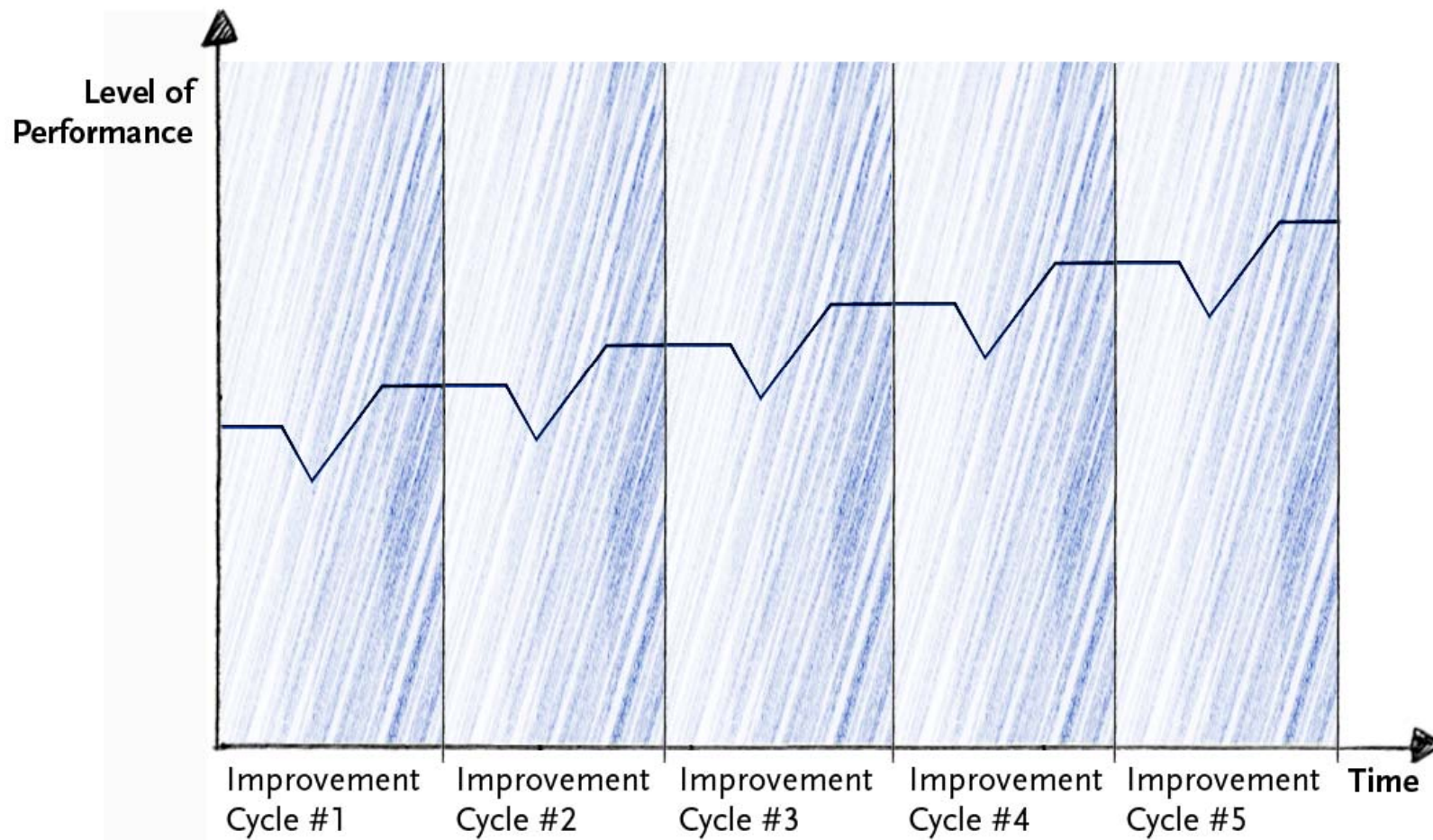Time

Organization falls back into old way of work

All changes are made mandatory in one big bang

The organization stops implementing the changes, because they require so much effort that it endangers the delivery of the normal work

Instead, reach your goal step by step.

Change must be adaptive.
Agile methods are the natural choice for change projects.

A CMMI Maturity Level is a significant improvement that takes approximately 2 years.

In 2 years many things change:
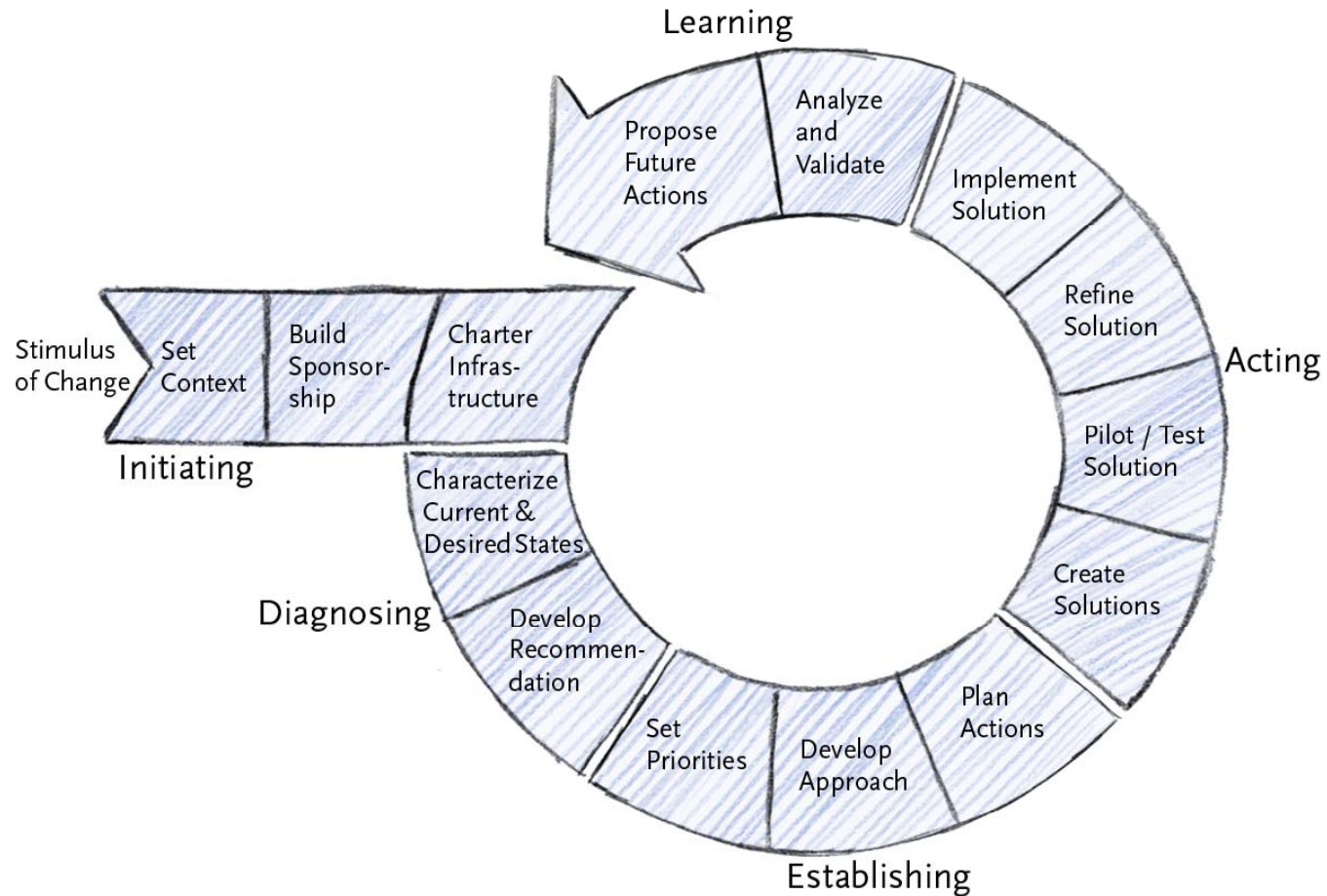
- New Products
- New Competitors
- Restructuring

A vision is broad by definition – it becomes clearer and clearer while we get there.

→ Change must be adaptive.

→ Agile methods are a natural choice for change projects.

By the way – improving iteratively is nothing new.
Agile techniques help an organization do it with discipline.


[SEI 1996]

Systematic improvement cycles ensure results every 2-6 weeks. They enable you to balance improvement and workload.

The cycles enable the organization to

- Identify and resolve issues early
- Learn how the improvements work and how to tackle difficulties
- Adapt to changing business needs
- Respond to feedback and lessons learned

Detailed plan for the current cycle

4-6 weeks

Prioritized List of improvements
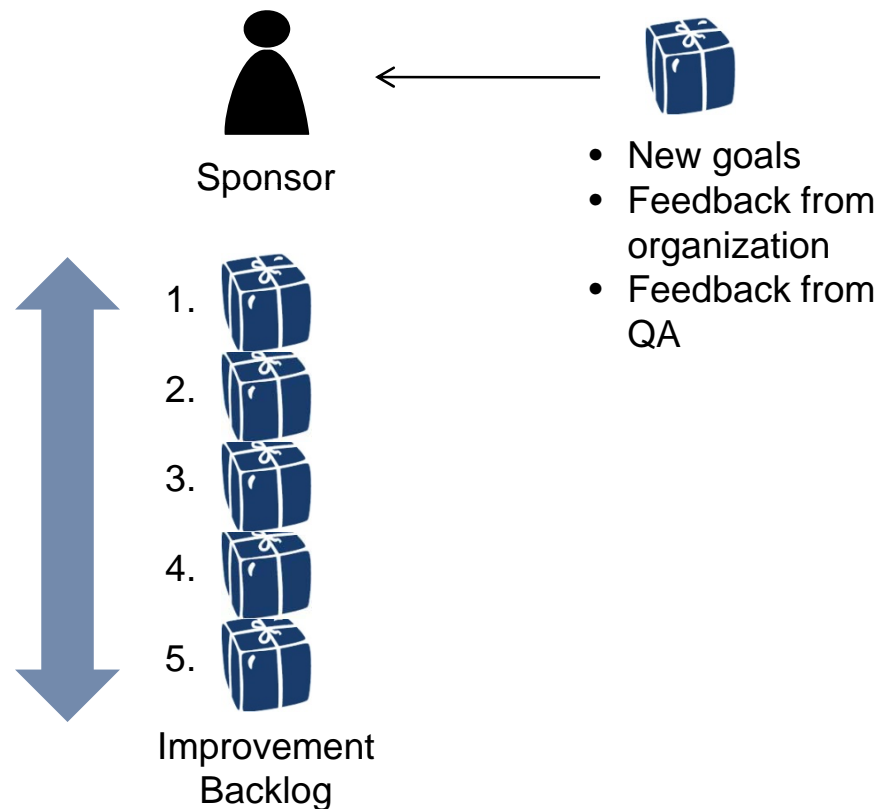
Implemented Improvement
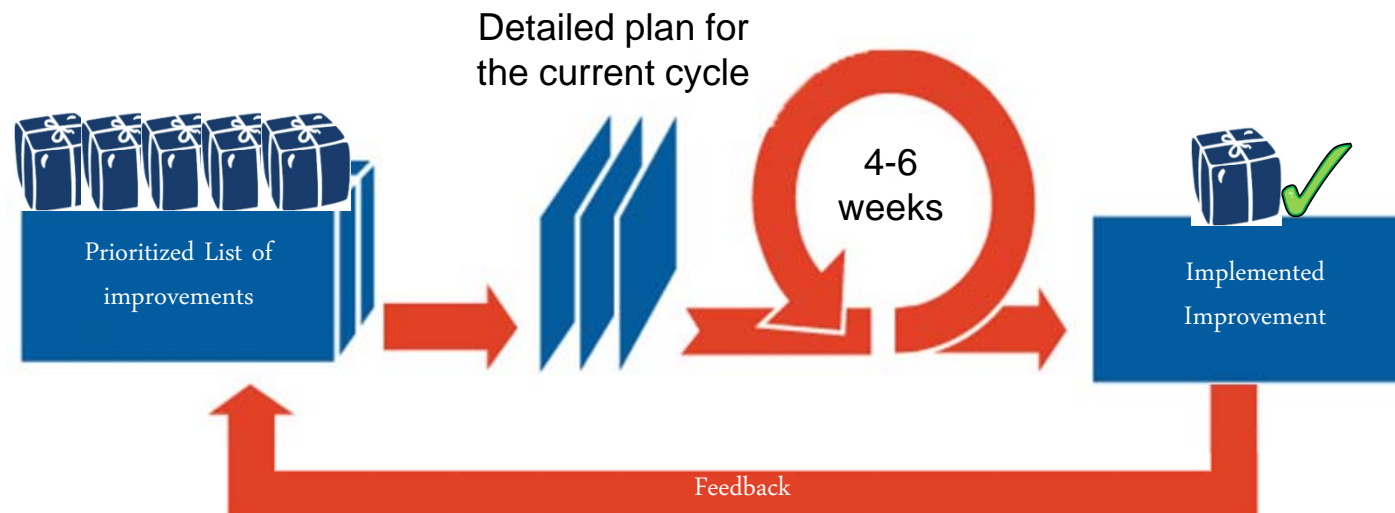
Feedback

At the beginning of each Sprint the Sponsor regularly prioritizes the improvement backlog. He is responsible for the ROI.

Prioritization is key:

- Sponsor's tool to direct the change
- Enables revised goals and feedback from organization/QA
- Focuses on benefit/ROI of each improvement package

Sponsor

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Improvement
Backlog

- New goals
- Feedback from organization
- Feedback from QA

In each Sprint, an improvement is deployed in the organization and evaluated by PPQA.
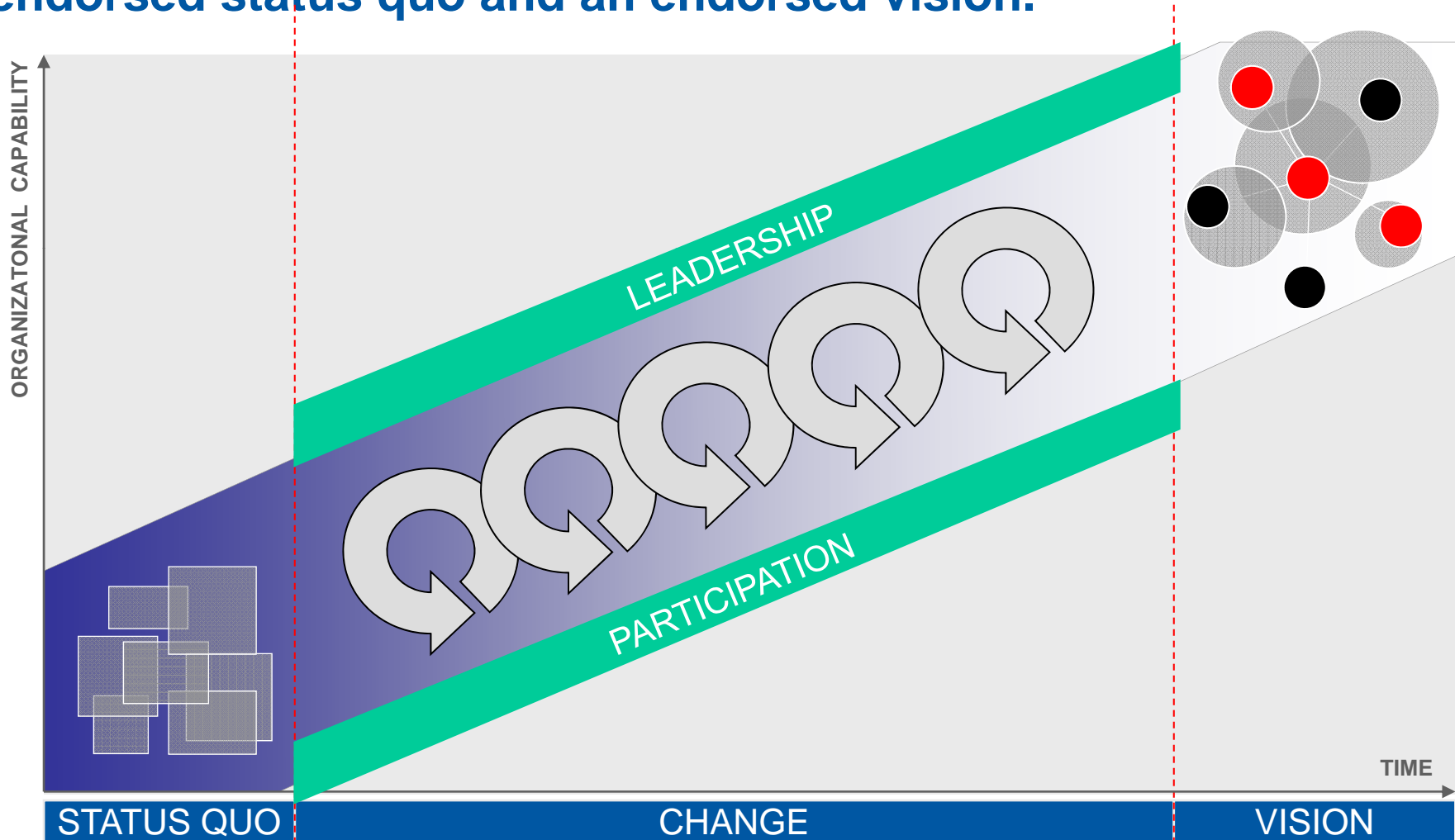

Implemented Improvement

An improvement package is implemented in the whole organization in four Sprints.

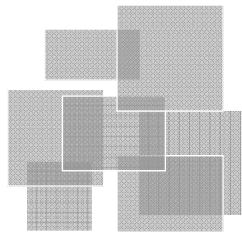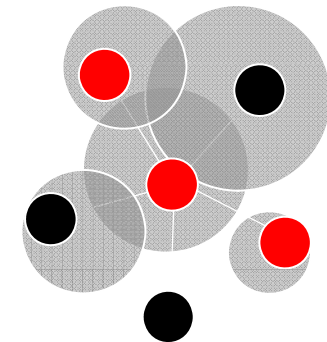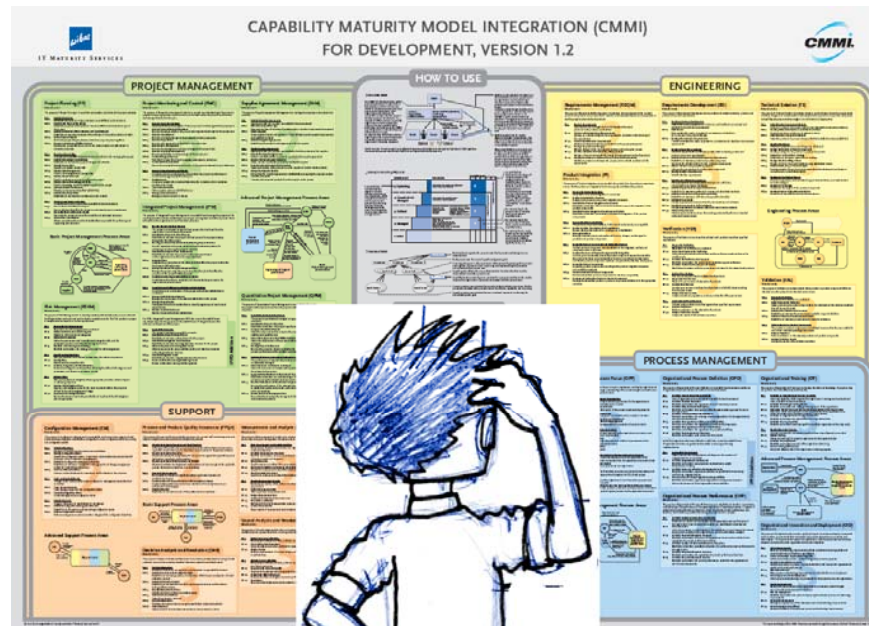| Prototyping	Piloting	Deploying	Evaluating
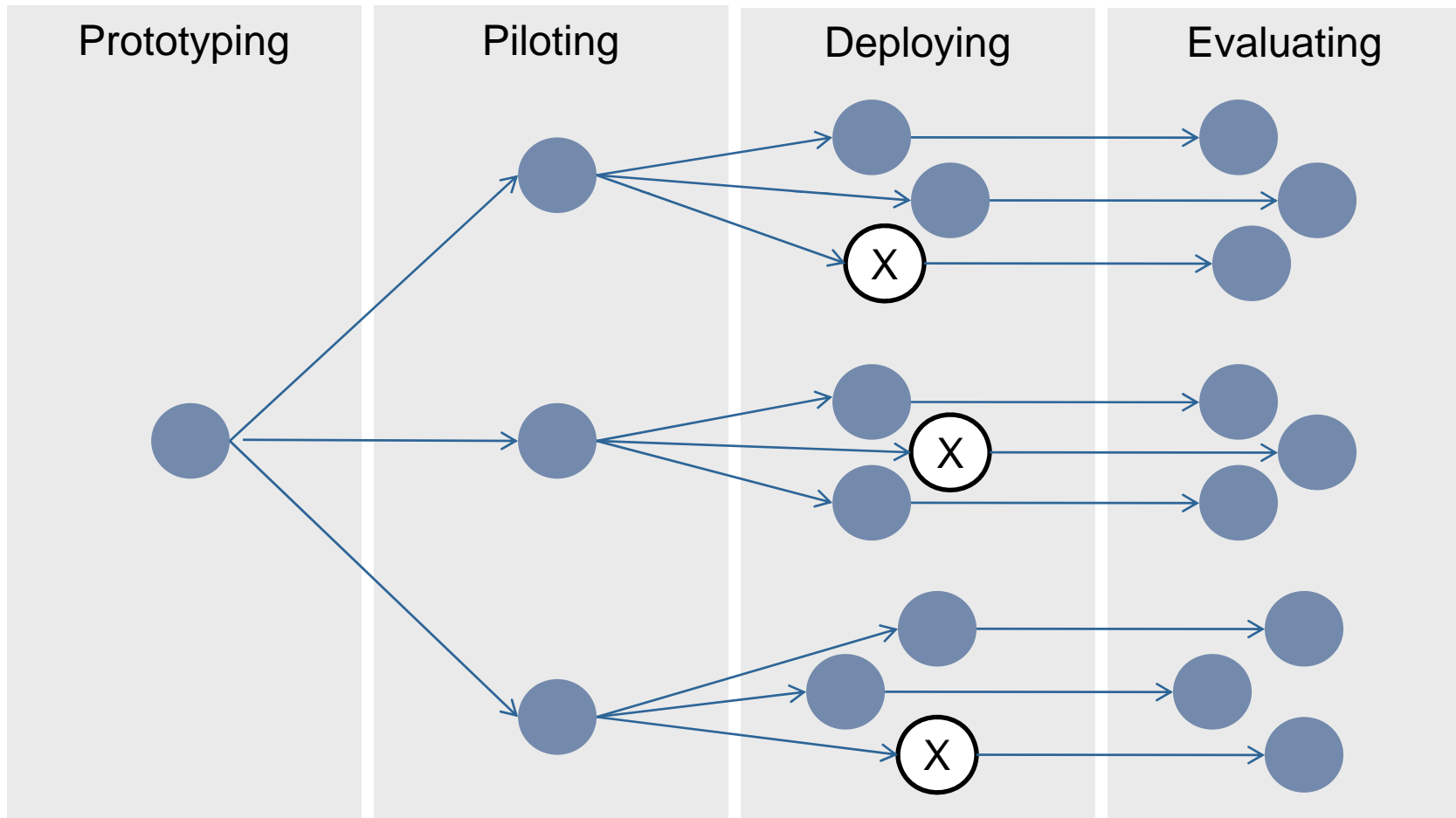
Change requires leadership and participation. It begins with an endorsed status quo and an endorsed vision.

We use CMMI and SCAMPI to establish an endorsed Status Quo and an endorsed Vision.
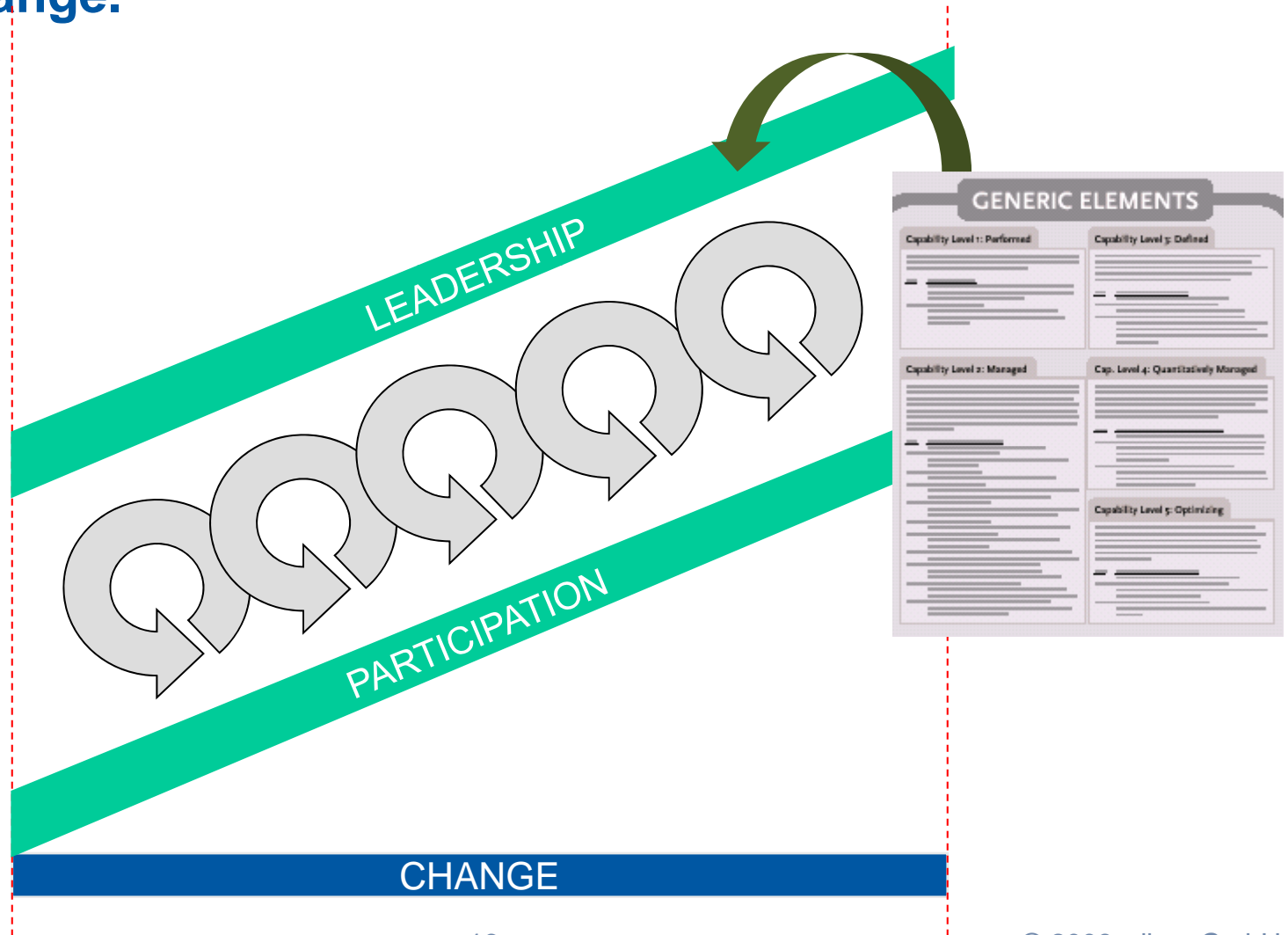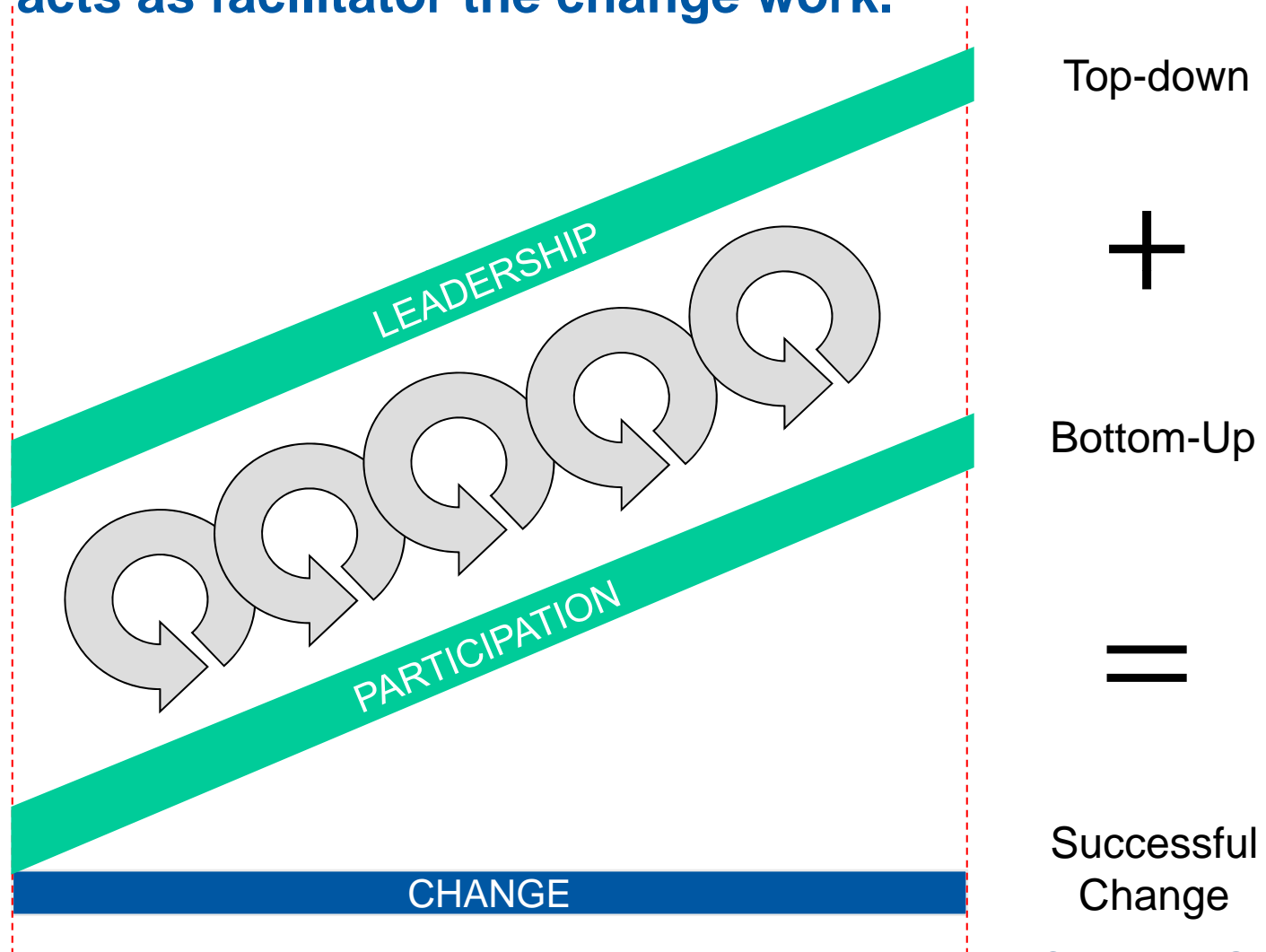

STATUS QUO

VISION

Management leads the change on a daily basis. The Generic Practices of CMMI are excellent description for this leadership work of a change.

Participation is a key element for a successful change. The change team acts as facilitator the change work.

LEADERSHIP

PARTICIPATION

CHANGE

Top-down

+

Bottom-Up

=

Successful
Change

Conclusion

1. An improvement project start with a Vision.

2. The WorkOwner (Sponsor), ScrumMaster and the Change Team define the initial Improvement Backlog, based on an assessment of the organization.

3. The Change Team facilitates the organization, which delivers with each Sprint a tangible improvement.

4. During a Sprint management leads the change (→ Generic Practices).

5. At the end of each Sprint the effect of the changes is evaluated (→ PPQA).

6. The WorkOwner defines new improvements, adds them to the Improvement Backlog, and prioritizes the Improvement Backlog.

7. An appraisal at the end supports commitment.

Along with Scrum we also use other agile techniques.

- **Continuous Integration** of improvements into the way of work of an organization.
- **Refactoring** of the way of work (and the work definitions and assets) by integrating improvements step by step.
- **Pair Work** on improvements.
- **Collective Ownership** of the organization for the improvements.
- **Testing** by pilots and evaluations.
- **Simple Solutions** are necessary, otherwise you will not succeed with Sprints.
- **On-Site:** managers, change teams, etc. work together face to face.
- **Work Description Standards** help the organization write coaching material.
- **40-h-week:** The Sprint technique help the organization to balance "normal" and improvement workload.
- **Short Releases**: we explained that.
- **Planning**: we explained that.

The Agile Change Manifest

We value

lasting improvements over certificates,

applied solutions over complex documentation,

guiding principles over restricting rules,

simple over complex solutions.

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Revision History

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0.1	Finished	17.03.2009	Initial version	Malte Foegen Mareike Solbach
1.0	Reviewed	17.03.2009	Reviewed	Claudia Raak

LEADING CHANGE. SHARING KNOWLEDGE.

SEIPartner