



Overview – The Integral Agile Transformation Framework™

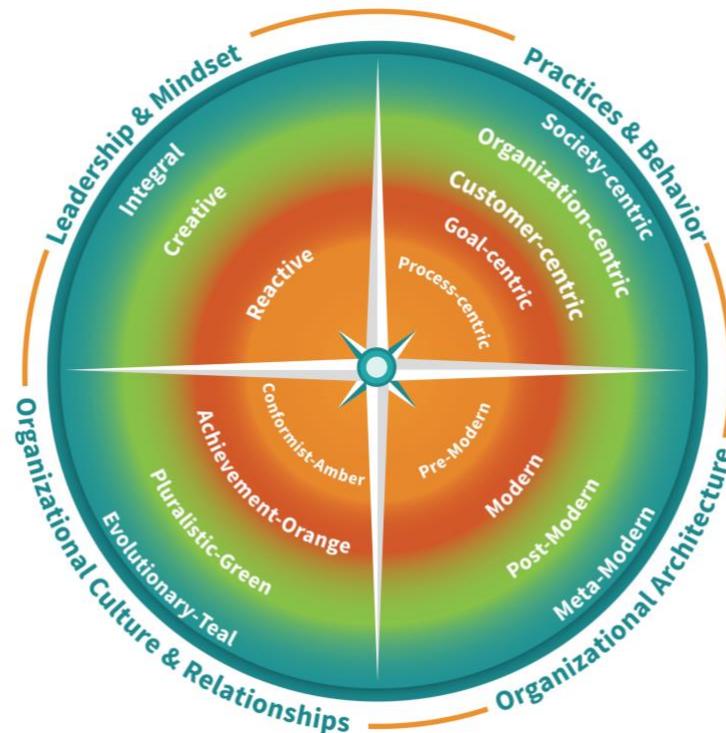
The road to organizational agility using an Agile transformation is littered with pundits and ads telling you to go this way or that, use this tool not that, believe this philosophy rather than others. So many choices! All have wisdom, and limitations. How can you sort this all out? Are any of them **the** answer? Which one is best...for you?

The Integral Model – developed by Ken Wilber and thousands of worldwide practitioners, and applied now in the field of Agile transformations by Trans4mation, may help.

We describe the **Integral Agile Transformation Framework™** (IATF) as a ‘meta-framework’ because it is not really in “competition” with other frameworks or tools – like Scrum, SAFe, LeSS, VersionOne or Cynefin. Rather, it provides what we might call an **addressing system** for such frameworks, approaches, models and techniques. Significantly, it creates four fundamental distinctions between different types of approach and their ‘come-from’ bias – be it internal or external (left and right of circle), and individual or collective (top and bottom). These distinctions are the four **quadrants**, and are labeled I, WE, IT, and ITS, corresponding to whether they take a 1st, 2nd or 3rd person perspective on the world.

The other major aspect of the framework is how **evolution** proceeds in each of the four quadrants, regarding real-world situations and any corresponding ‘methodologies’ used to work with those situations. In integral, we call these distinctions **altitudes**, and they move from less complex (inside) to more complex, and labeled with semi-arbitrary colors, from **Amber** (inside) to **Orange** to **Green** to **Teal**.

The **IATF** is an application of the generic Integral model, specifically developed to work with Agile Transformations using a 4-quadrant, holistic approach. This is Trans4mation’s latest version of the IATF:



The four quadrants – applied specifically to Agile organizational transformations – are characterized as follows:

- **Leadership & Mindset** – An organizational transformation can only be led, not delegated. Leadership is not simply a matter of choosing strategy or deciding on metrics, it is a supremely human activity, highly reliant on emotional intelligence, caring for people, having a vision, and acting with integrity. In our application, we refer to Leadership not only as an organization’s formal leaders, but the leadership the lies within each of us. The I quadrant focus is **beliefs, values, and intentions**.
- **Practices & Behavior** – Implementing Agile is typically done through enacting certain practices to create products in a highly collaborative and customer-centric manner, that elevates value creation over schedule compliance. Relevant practices range from those for product innovation, to facilitating collaboration and spanning boundaries, to operating as a team. The IT quadrant focus is **skills, competencies, and performance**.
- **Organizational Culture & Relationships** – Culture has been described as ‘the way we get things done around here in order to succeed;’ or by analogy: what **personality** is to an individual, **culture** is to an organization. Culture is sort of the sum total of how we think about and act upon the world, together, as an organizational entity. Culture has systemic and emergent properties, and acts as a kind of ‘force field’ on the actions and thinking of individual agents in the system. In addition to culture, we also focus on the nature of relationships within the system, from dyads up to teams to departments to the whole organization, since relationships are how things get done in organizations. The WE quadrant focus is **mental models, shared values, relationship health, and common vision**.
- **Organizational Architecture** – By organizational architecture we mean the combination of things that have tangible presence, like business and reporting structures, org charts, policies, systems of all kinds (from IT to performance management to staffing and recruiting), governance, legal entities, etc. Org architecture determines workflow and the ability of products (and value) to flow from teams to customers. The ITS quadrant focus is **systems, structures, value flow and adaptability**.

The altitudes within each quadrant reveal how development happens in that area of organizational life, from less complex (Amber) to more complex (Teal). To be precise, in the IATF we are choosing certain relevant **developmental lines** to track as important to characterizing the whole quadrant for the sake of organizational transformation. Evolution within each quadrant is Illustrated below:

Leadership & Mindset – The developmental line in the I quadrant is an amalgam most closely represented by Robert Kegan’s *Orders of Consciousness*, or the related term, **meaning making**, how we make sense of the world. Kegan’s research shows people developing from *Socialized Mind* to *Self-authoring* to *Integral*. Basically, a person centered in socialized mind is defined by the values and perspectives of their social group; a person with self-authoring mind has their own philosophy of life and makes decisions from their own internal principles; Integral mind realizes any system of thought is limited, including its own, opening them to their ‘shadow’ and other’s perspectives in a new, more mature way.

The labels used in the IATF are those of [The Leadership Circle](#), Reactive (socialized), Creative (self-authoring), and Integral (self-transforming). The Reactive is negatively correlated with **leadership effectiveness** (-.61), whereas the Creative is strongly positively correlated with leadership effectiveness (.93). Most leaders are firmly in the Reactive (Amber-Orange), or moving from the Reactive to the Creative (Orange to early Green). Agile practices and mindsets are firmly in the Green-Teal range, so

there is a mismatch between implementing an Agile process and most leader's ability to fully support such practices.

Practices & Behavior – The line represented in the IT quadrant is most associated with the complexity of product innovation practices and thinking. Here the work of *Design United* and their [Advanced Design Methods](#) provides guidance. *Process-centric* innovation (Amber) implies a 'push' process where the expertise of the product designer overrides the needs or wants of the customer/user. *Goal-centric* (Orange) implies an innovation process that focuses on revenue and market share goals, and some consideration of customer needs to the extent it enhances buying behaviors. *Customer-centric* (early Green) is now more fully Agile, where the product development process has the customer in the middle of things (Product Owner, Lean Startup, etc.); at the high-end, this can include good collaboration with the product team, but decisions are still made by the customer. *Organization-centric* (late Green/early Teal) explicitly includes all voices in the system as part of the innovation process, with the organization's brand being the guiding principle for product decisions: is this product consistent with our values, our purpose, and the relationship we want to have with our customers? It naturally includes the customer's voice being fully present, but not necessarily the final decider. The last level shown is *society-centric* (Teal), where product innovation is done for the good of **all stakeholders** (win-win-win), including the societal context (e.g., the so-called triple bottom line: people, planet and profits).

Boundary-spanning practices (and [boundary spanning leadership](#)) – as articulated by the Center for Creative Leadership – are typically needed for reaching the higher levels of product innovation (organization- and society-centric). Of note, Lean Startup, as commonly practiced, is primarily a customer-centric mindset, but could be extended to organization-centric with a shift in focus.

Organizational Culture & Relationships – The developmental focus in the WE quadrant could be termed 'cultural complexity', especially as seen in the prevalent **value memes** at each altitude, as originally articulated by Clare Graves. We use Frederic Laloux' labels from [Reinventing Organizations](#), since that research solely concerned organizations¹.

Traditional-Amber represents a pre-modern world view of absolute truth, dogmatic beliefs, and an inviolable hierarchy; it is also the culture of honor, obedience, and service in the name of duty (though not truly servant-leadership). Amber is process-focused ("there's a right way to do things"), seeks order, control and predictability; follows the chain of command and has formal job titles. It believes workers need direction, so planning happens at the top, execution at the bottom. Amber strongly identifies with their role, and values social belonging over self-expression. Amber is expressed in most military forces, many government bureaucracies, the Catholic church, and any 'fundamentalist' organization.

Achievement-Orange likes the scientific method, effectiveness and efficiency. In this view, the organization is a machine and management is like engineering. Achievement-Orange invented innovation, accountability and meritocracy; it trusts rationality and is suspicious of emotions. Management exercises control by setting goals, relinquishing some control over **how** things are done. Yearly budgeting, KPIs, balanced scorecards, performance appraisals, bonuses and stock options are all Orange innovations. It must value individual freedom to have the ability to pursue one's own goals.

Pluralistic Green prefers bottoms-up processes, strives for consensus, and takes a servant leadership approach; it therefore may have a hard time getting started or past deadlocks due to wanting to hear from everyone. It values corporate social responsibility and stakeholders, including employees,

¹ The colors used in the IATF are those defined by the Integral community, adapted loosely from Spiral Dynamics, to be more neutral and apply across all four quadrants. In Integral, Amber = Blue and Teal = Yellow in Spiral Dynamics.

customers, suppliers; the organizational metaphor is of a family. This thinking created 360-feedback, vision statements, values-driven cultures, worker empowerment, leaders as teachers, as well as helped lead to the birth of Agile.

Evolutionary-Teal – As the first instance of so-called *second-tier* altitudes, Teal sees the validity of all the other altitudes. Being at an Integral level of leadership, we are now able to dis-identify with our ego, and get in-touch with a deeper part of ourselves; the locus of evaluation of the self shifts from ‘outer success’ to an internal satisfaction when we act from our ‘calling.’ Teal organizational practices include self-organization, no or minimal job titles, peer appraisals, minimal need for hierarchies or consensus per se, rather letting individual agents be autonomous and accountable; making decisions using the advice process (consulting affected stakeholders but are not being constrained to get agreement). Teal is focused on purpose and mission fulfillment. There is evidence that Teal has greater effectiveness, both for leaders for teams and for organizes centered culturally at this level. The metaphor shifts to being a living system or organism. Teal is central to much of Agile thinking.

Organizational Architecture – The line tracked in the ITS quadrant might be termed **structural adaptability** or **structural complexity**. The **pre-modern** architecture (Amber) is rigid, typically a strict hierarchy and does not adapt to changing conditions nor promote value flow. The **modern** architecture (Orange) is designed to combine the (functional) hierarchy of pre-modern with a project oriented structure, hence the matrix organization. A modern architecture is somewhat resistive to change, since it tends to change the power structure and is not ideally suited to support flow, though better than pre-modern. The **post-modern** architecture tends more toward a flat org structure and a lessening of worker restricting policies, but a heightening of diversity-oriented ones. It is more adaptive and oriented towards flow, as the logical unit of organization is around processes or activities that serve the customer. Meta-modern (also known as post-post-modern) is an attempt to transcend the limitations of both modern and post-modern forms; it is informed by systemic thinking, is quite fluid, and can be adapted to changing circumstances and business conditions. Some structural forms are the network, lattice, meshworks, and ad hoc. Optimizing flow is a primary concern in a meta-modern structure.

In summary, the **IATF** can be thought of as a systems-thinking tool. It helps you to see more clearly, so you can act more effectively. Rather than reacting to events, you are able to take a step back and use the map to look through the many available lenses available to you in this meta-map. In Integral, we refer to this map as the AQAL constellation – All Quadrants, Levels, Lines, States, & Types. We know there are many ways to look at the same situation, this is a map that gives you a concrete way to do that, and then to help you interpret what you see. With that information, you are more able to meet people where they are, and make conscious informed choices in your approach to change.