



Agile Isn't Dead, But It's Tired — What Now?

A keynote on rekindling Agile's spirit for the next decade

Roman Lobus | Regional Scrum Gathering Singapore 2025

Our Journey Today



Agile's Journey

From counterculture to mainstream (and how we got "tired")



The Myth

What narrative about Agile might be holding us back?



Singapore's Story

Learning from 60 years of national reinvention



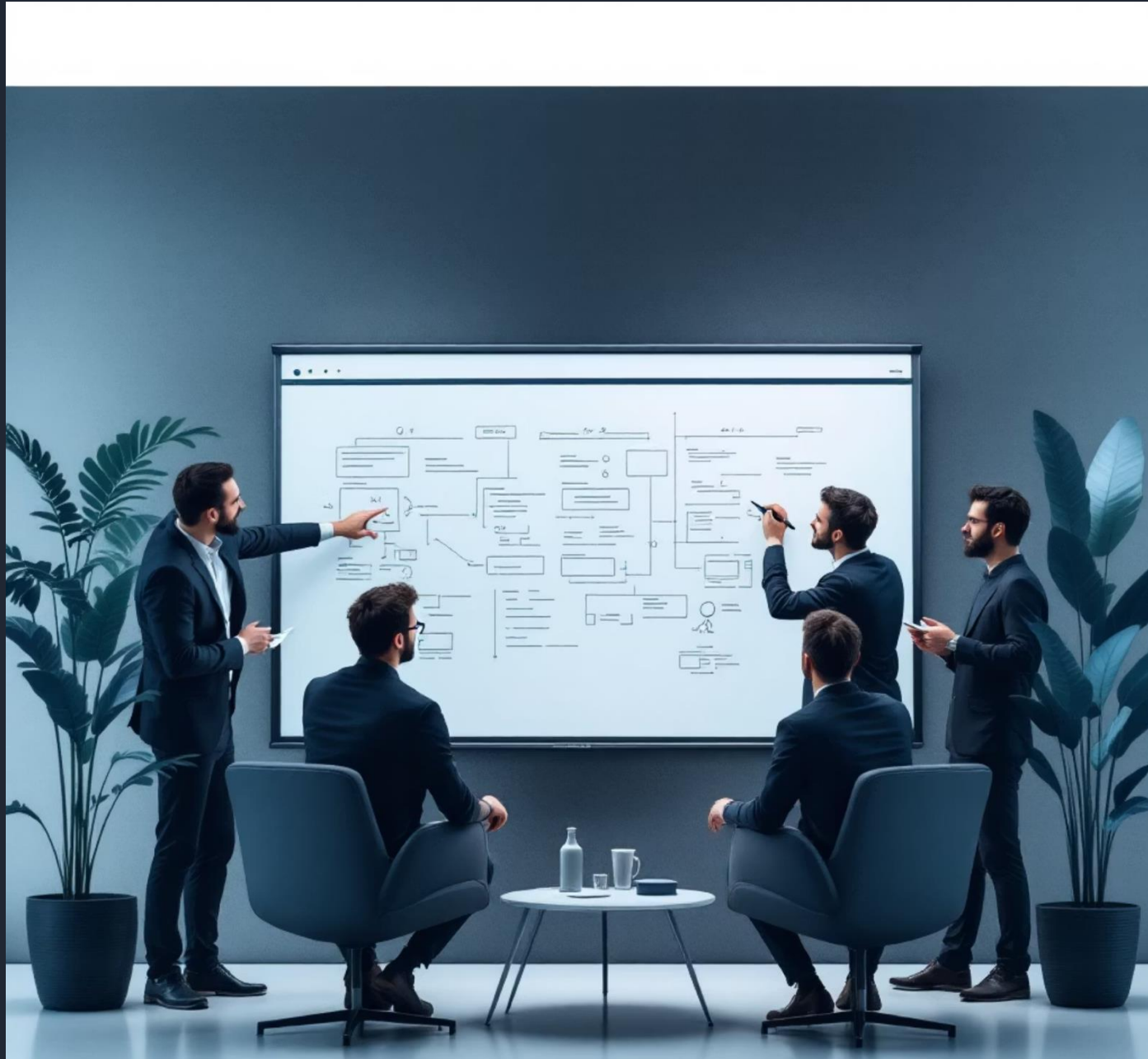
MythChange

Co-creating a renewed story for Agile's future

From Counterculture to Mainstream

Agile Manifesto (2001)

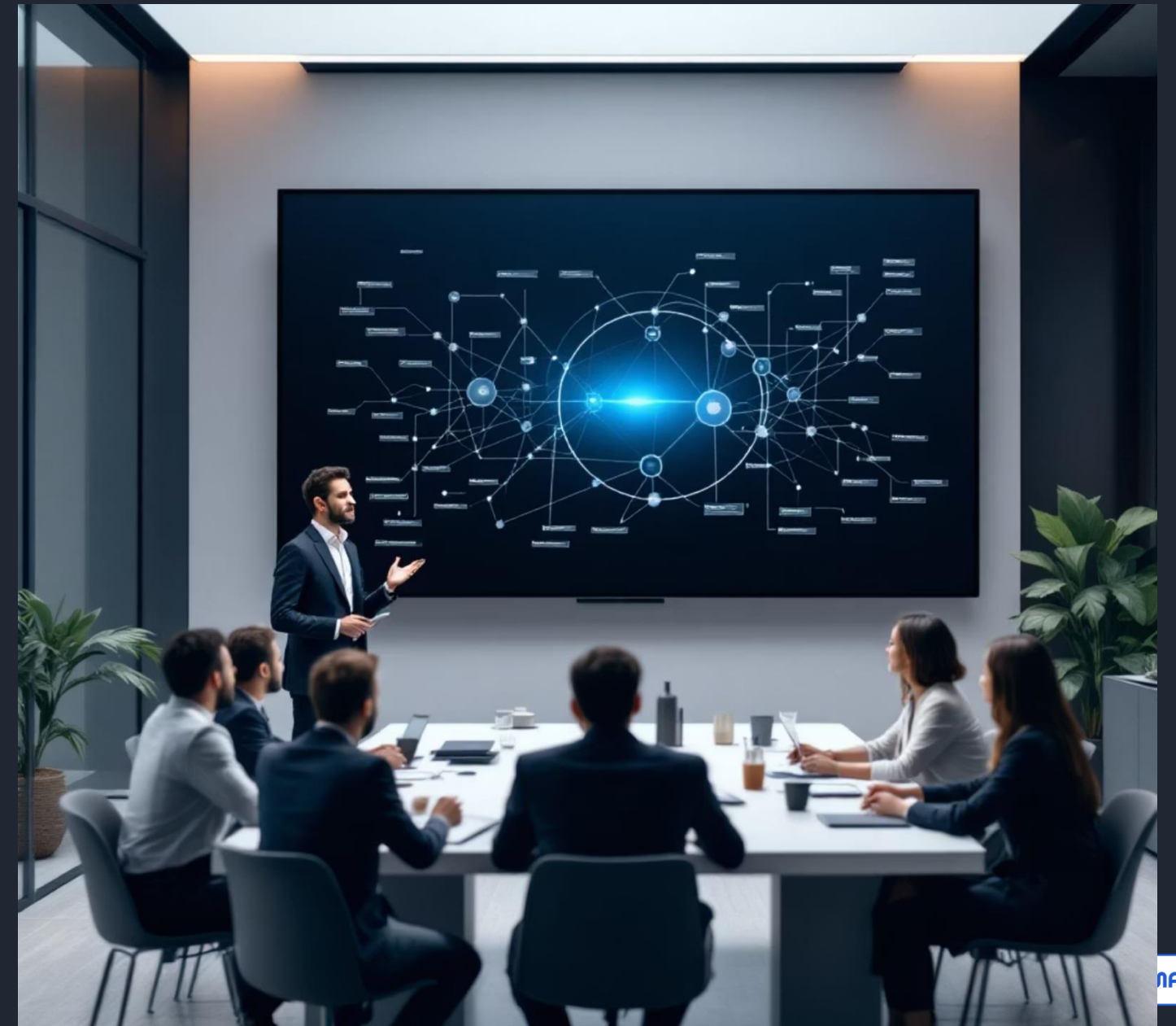
A revolutionary, people-over-process mindset born as a rebel counterculture against heavyweight software methods



Agile 2025

A global industry with large consultancies, certifications, and frameworks

Agile has entered the corporate boardroom and government projects



Why Does It Feel Off? — Symptoms of Agile Fatigue

1

Overly Structured Frameworks

Complex scaling frameworks and processes that ironically reintroduce bureaucracy

"We're back to heavy processes" —
Jon Kern, Agile Manifesto co-author

2

Transformation Fatigue

Many organizations on their 3rd or 4th "Agile Transformation"

Employees exhausted by constant change initiatives that don't deliver promised results

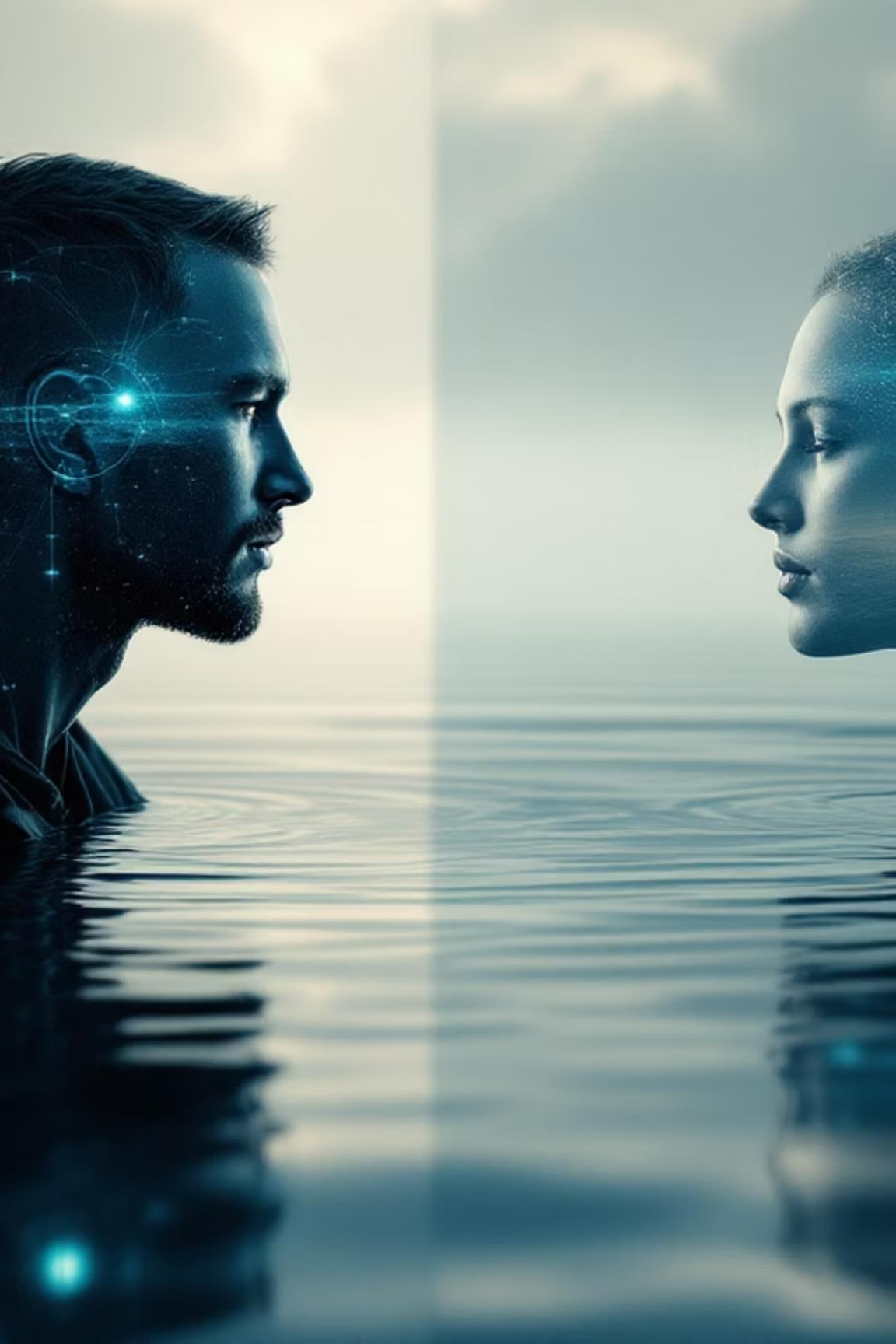
3

Performative Agility

Going through the motions without true collaboration or adaptability

Daily stand-ups, sprint rituals, Jira tickets – all done mechanically

So, how did we get here? Agile was supposed to energize us, not exhaust us.



The Agile Myth We Live By

① **Myth = Shared Narrative:** Not a falsehood, but a deep story or collective belief that guides us

What's the prevailing story about Agile that we all keep telling?

"If we just follow Agile frameworks perfectly, all our problems will be solved."

"Agile is the one true path to success and we must implement it everywhere."

When a myth outlives its usefulness, it becomes a burden rather than a guide

Every Myth Has a Shadow



These shadows aren't anyone's intention – they creep in when we follow a story too rigidly or for too long

60 Years of Reinvention: Singapore's Story



1965: Mudflat Island



Today: Global Metropolis

Reinvention Principles

Bold Vision, Clear Story

Singapore's leaders painted an inspiring picture of the future

Lesson: Articulate a positive vision for Agile's future – not just what we oppose but what we stand for

Adapt to New Context

Each era brought new focus (industrialization, high-tech, etc.)

Lesson: Agile's next chapter should address today's context – AI, distributed work, complexity

Collective Buy-in

The narrative resonated with the people

Lesson: The new Agile myth must be co-created by practitioners – not a top-down mandate

Continuous Renewal

Singapore didn't change once; it keeps scanning and renewing

Lesson: Even our new Agile myth will one day need refreshing – and that's healthy