Flow-Based Delivery for the Enterprise™

A Practical Approach to Improving Delivery Performance at Scale

Most organizations try to improve delivery by adding more planning, more coordination, and more governance. This approach improves delivery differently:

By controlling how work enters and flows through the system.

The Problem

Delivery performance often deteriorates as organizations scale.

Work enters the system faster than it can be completed. More initiatives are launched. More dependencies emerge. More time is spent coordinating work rather than finishing it.

When demand exceeds capacity:

- Work-in-progress expands
- Queues lengthen
- Coordination overhead increases
- Lead times become unpredictable
- Value is delayed

Most delivery systems are not failing because people are not working hard enough.

They are failing because the system is carrying more active work than it can absorb cleanly.

The result is familiar:

- too much work started
- too much work aging
- too much planning required just to stay aligned
- too little work actually finishing

The Core Idea

The Flow Control System applies a simple control model to delivery:

- limit how much work is active
- measure how work is behaving
- act when flow becomes unstable

This creates a more predictable, lower-friction operating model.

Instead of managing delivery primarily through large planning events and coordination layers, the system is regulated continuously through flow signals such as:

- work-in-progress
- aging
- cycle time
- throughput
- blocked work
- demand load

The goal is not to increase activity. The goal is to improve flow.

One Model, Applied Everywhere

The same control logic can be applied across all levels of the organization.

Level	What Flows	Typical Signals
Team	Stories / work items	WIP, aging, blocked work
Product	Features	Feature aging, cycle time, blockers
Portfolio	Initiatives / investments	Demand load, aging, evidence delay

At each level, the same questions apply:

- How much work is currently in progress?
- Is work aging beyond acceptable limits?
- Is the system finishing work predictably?
- What corrective action is required?

The work changes. The control logic does not.

This is what makes the model scalable.

The Approach

I help organizations improve delivery by designing and implementing **flow-based delivery systems** and **lighter-weight Agile operating models**.

This work is especially relevant in environments where delivery is constrained by:

- excessive work-in-progress
- unstable prioritization

- too much coordination overhead
- slow feature completion
- dependency-heavy planning
- poor predictability
- overloaded portfolios or ARTs

The approach is practical rather than theoretical.

It focuses on improving how the delivery system behaves in reality — not just how it is described in a framework.

Typical areas of focus include:

- Flow-based delivery design
- Kanban system design
- Product / ART flow control
- Portfolio flow and intake control
- Flow metrics and operating signals
- Delivery governance redesign
- Leaner alternatives to coordination-heavy planning models
- Executive coaching for leaders operating in scaled Agile environments

How I Help

My work typically follows a simple progression from diagnosis to design to implementation.

1. Flow Health Diagnostic

A focused assessment of current delivery performance using flow metrics and operating signals.

Typical focus:

- cycle time
- aging
- throughput
- WIP
- blocked work
- signs of overload or instability

Outcome:

A clear picture of where flow is breaking, where overload exists, and what should be addressed first.

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2. Flow System Design

Design of a practical delivery control model tailored to your environment.

Typical focus:

- workflow design
- WIP limits
- intake and pull policies
- aging thresholds
- review cadences
- escalation and governance triggers
- backlog readiness and feature sizing
- product / ART / portfolio control design

Outcome:

A clearer, more stable operating model with explicit control points and lower coordination overhead.

3. Pilot Implementation

Implementation of the model in a real delivery environment.

Typical focus:

- launching the system in a team, product, or ART environment
- coaching leaders and teams on new operating behaviors
- stabilizing flow through observation and adjustment
- using real signals to improve the system over time

Outcome:

A working system with measurable improvements in predictability, flow stability, and completion behavior.

4. Executive Coaching

1-on-1 coaching for leaders navigating Agile delivery, flow-based systems, and scaled operating model decisions.

Typical focus:

- flow-based delivery leadership
- Kanban and flow control thinking
- SAFe and scaled delivery leadership
- operating model decisions

- leadership behavior under delivery pressure
- how to reduce coordination without losing control

Outcome:

More confident leadership decisions, better system-level thinking, and stronger executive sponsorship for sustainable change.

What This Changes

A healthier delivery system typically produces:

- less work-in-progress
- faster completion of valuable work
- improved predictability
- reduced coordination burden
- clearer priorities
- fewer stalled items
- more stable delivery behavior
- lighter-weight governance

The goal is not simply to "do Agile better."

The goal is to create a system that can absorb demand more effectively and deliver with less friction.

What This Is Not

This is not:

- a framework rollout
- a ceremony redesign exercise
- a generic Agile coaching package
- a training-only offering

This is a system design and implementation approach.

It is designed for organizations that want better delivery performance — not just better process compliance.

About

Liam Kane, Enterprise Agile Transformation Advisor

Specializing in the design and implementation of flow-based delivery systems and Agile operating models across large organizations.

Experience includes work across:

- financial services
- insurance
- utilities
- retail
- technology

Areas of expertise include:

- Flow-based delivery
- Kanban
- SAFe
- Lean Portfolio Management
- Agile operating model design
- Delivery governance
- Executive coaching

Author of:

Flow-Based Delivery with Kanban

A practical guide to improving delivery performance through flow control

Next Step

If your organization is experiencing:

- too much coordination
- too much work in progress
- poor predictability
- overloaded teams or ARTs
- heavy planning with limited delivery improvement

…it may be time to improve the system, not just the planning.

Request the overview or get in touch to discuss your current delivery challenges. Contact: **theburndown.com**