Off the Wall and Onto the Table
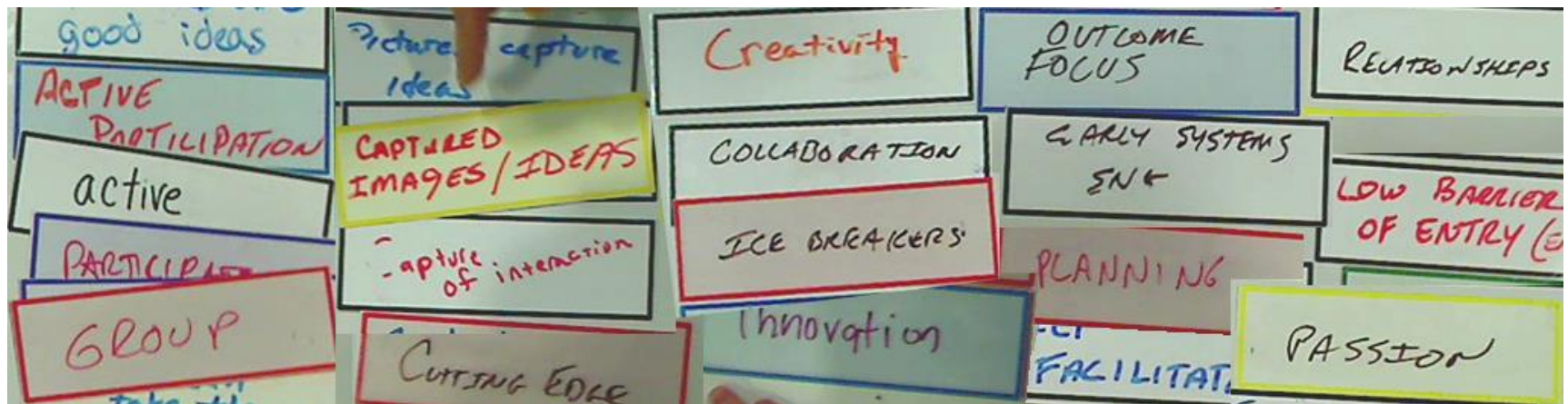
An Innovative Approach to Collaborative Idea Generation

Nancy Letsinger and John Hall

The MITRE Corporation

Session Overview

- **Overview of tool for collaborative idea generation –**
  Agile Capability Mash-up Environment (ACME)
- **Hands-on exercise to try ACME**
- **Discussion of ways to apply and leverage ACME techniques**
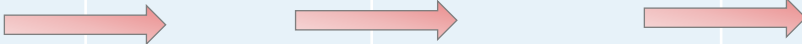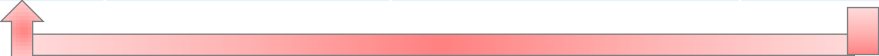

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ACME Basics

- **Originated to support systems engineering**
- **Key components:**
  - Magnetic, table-top white boards
  - Markers, laminated cards, and physical objects to support idea generation
  - Mounted camera, PC, and projector to capture and display results
- **Key Benefits:**
  - Helps participants to:
    - Think spatially and leverage different problem solving capabilities
    - Interact and collaborate
    - Levels the power relationships -- everyone gets a marker
    - Develop a project visually
    - Generate, refine, and evaluate solutions

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ACME Exercise

Instructions:

- **Consider the organizational lifecycle framework and the two questions for your assigned stage.**

	Stand-Up	Growth	Operational Maturity	Renewal
What does the organization need to do to evolve to the next stage?				
What can you do as a practitioner to help the organization grow and develop to the next stage?				

- **Take 20 minutes to capture your ideas and approaches .**

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ACME Rules of Engagement

- **Stay positive**
- **Defer judgment**
- **Everyone has a voice at the board – don't be silent**
- **Use the board – don't just talk – take a marker**
- **Encourage wild ideas and capture them on the board**
- **Stay focused on the topic**
- **Build on the ideas of others**
- **Be open to interesting failures**
- **Disengage from your normal routine while you are here**
  - Turn off your phones and devices during the session - you can return to them afterwards, we promise!

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Debriefing
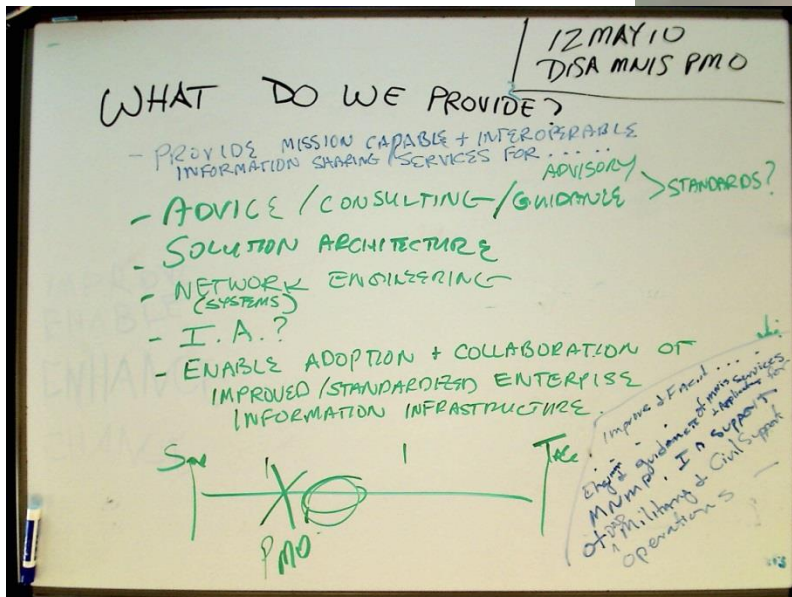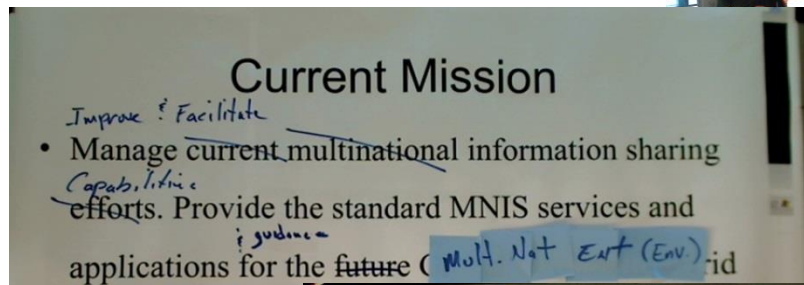
What did you notice about using ACME?

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Debriefing

Lessons learned about using ACME

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# Discussion of Ways to Apply ACME to OD Work

Here are some examples…

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Organization Design

- ✓ Develop vision and mission statements
- ✓ Define products / Services
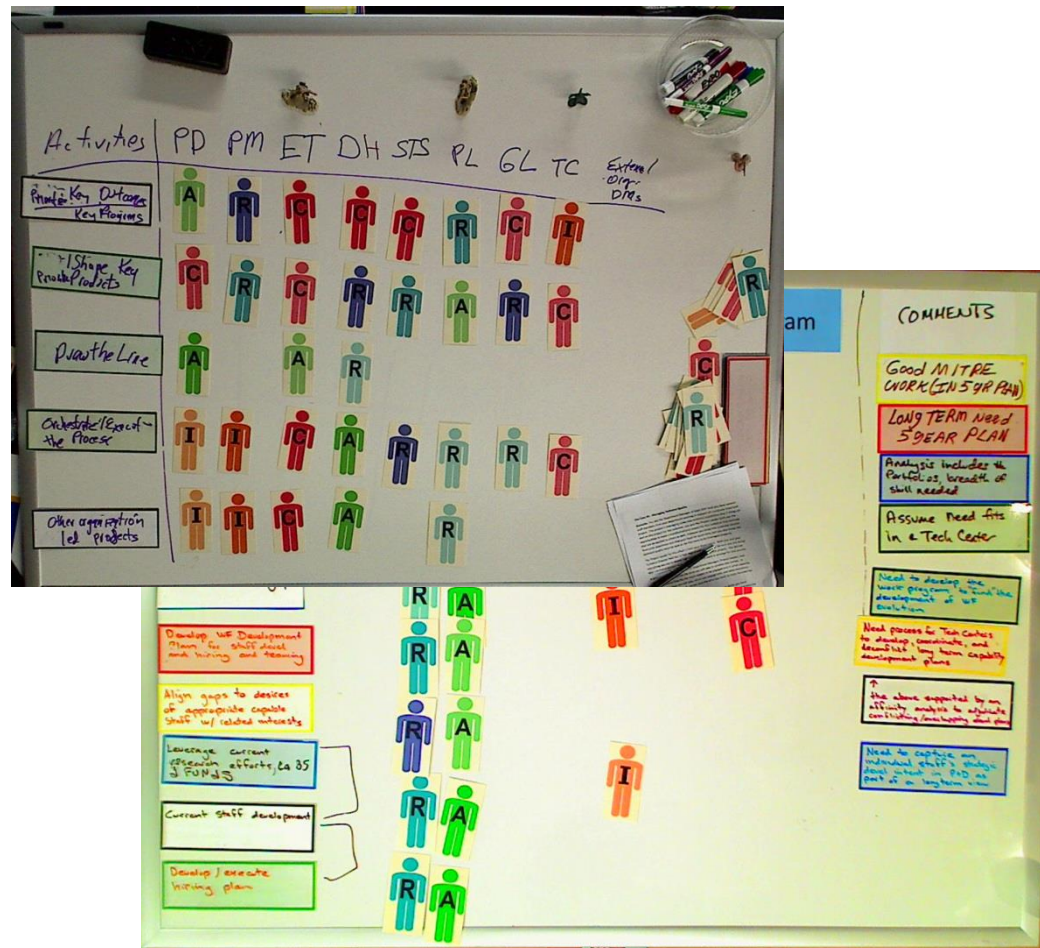- ✓ Develop Goals

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Organization Constructs & Evaluation

✓ Start with pre-drawn or have participants draw constructs

✓ List benefits and challenges for each
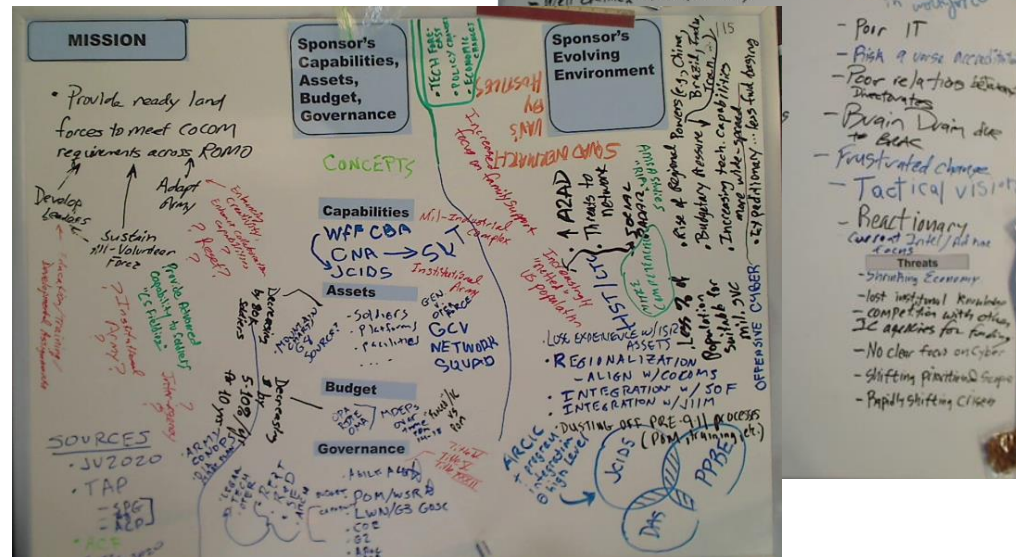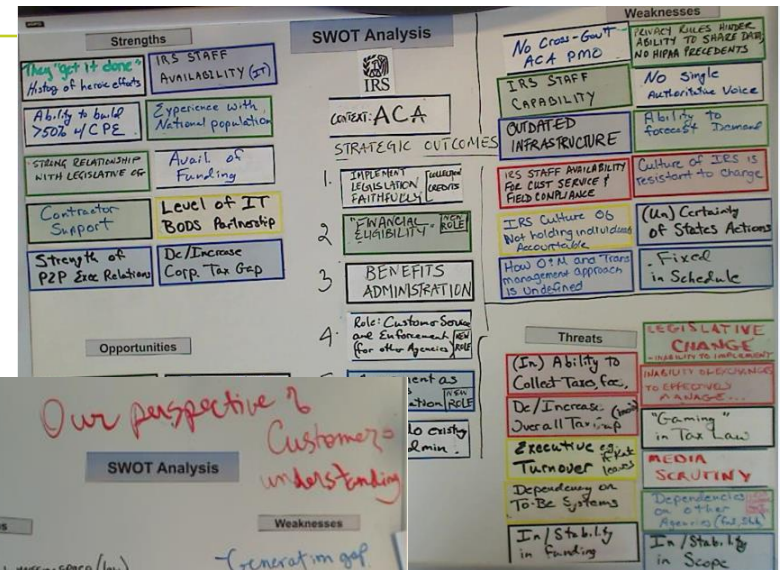
✓ Note assumptions

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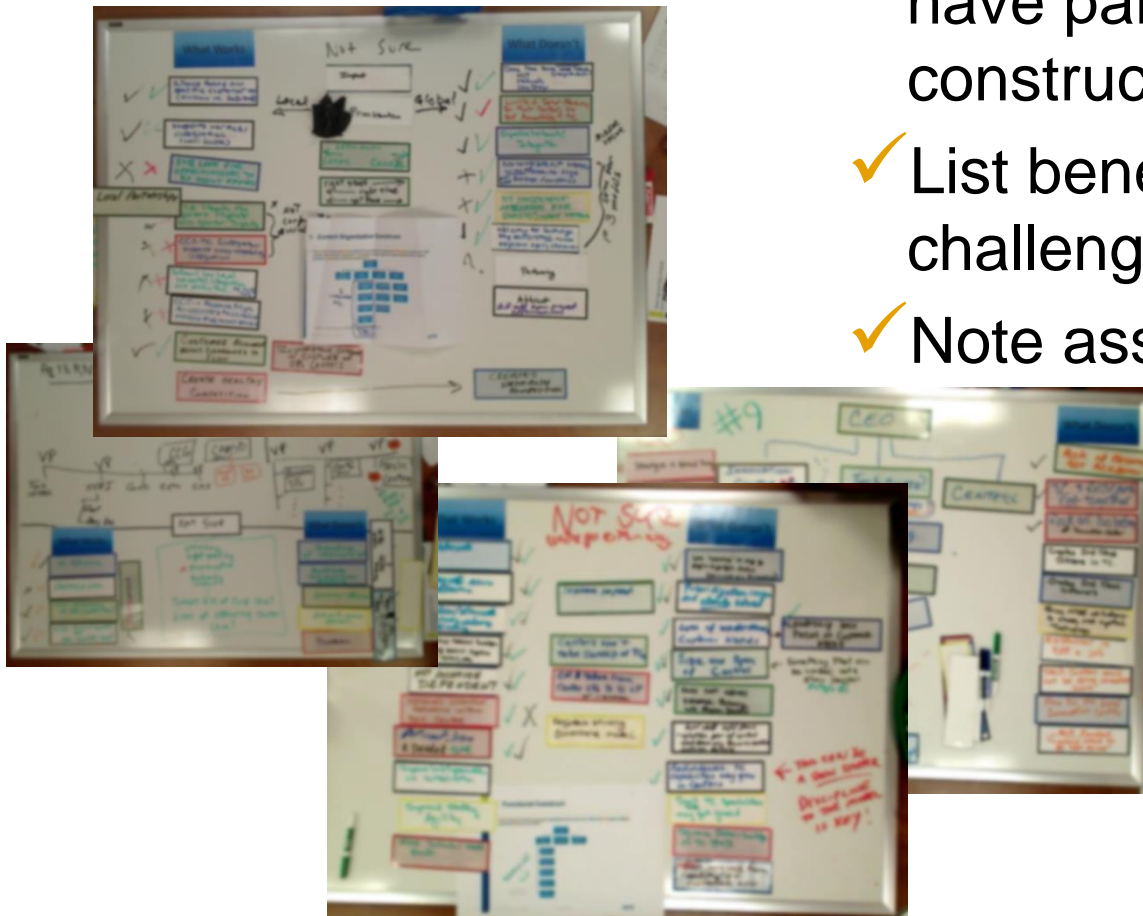
Roles and Responsibilities

- ✓ Level set activities to address
- ✓ List and agree on activities
- ✓ Identify Roles
- ✓ Assign RACI designation
- ✓ Note assumptions

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SWOT / Strategy Initiation

✓ Identify Potential:
  "*Art of the Possible*"

✓ Group logically

✓ SWOT Quadrants

✓ Tensions

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Skills Affinity

- ✓ Identify Skills
- ✓ Group logically
- ✓ Identify affinities
- ✓ Define matrix

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Storyboarding

- ✓ Create Outline
- ✓ Assign out sections
- ✓ Rotate participation
- ✓ Initial layout
- ✓ Work to final layout while developing cohesive story

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Discussion of Ways to Apply ACME to OD Work

Other thoughts/ideas about where, when, and how you might apply/adapt ACME to support your work?

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