

FaST Guide

Version 3.0

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**Building a Better World
Through Better Workplaces**

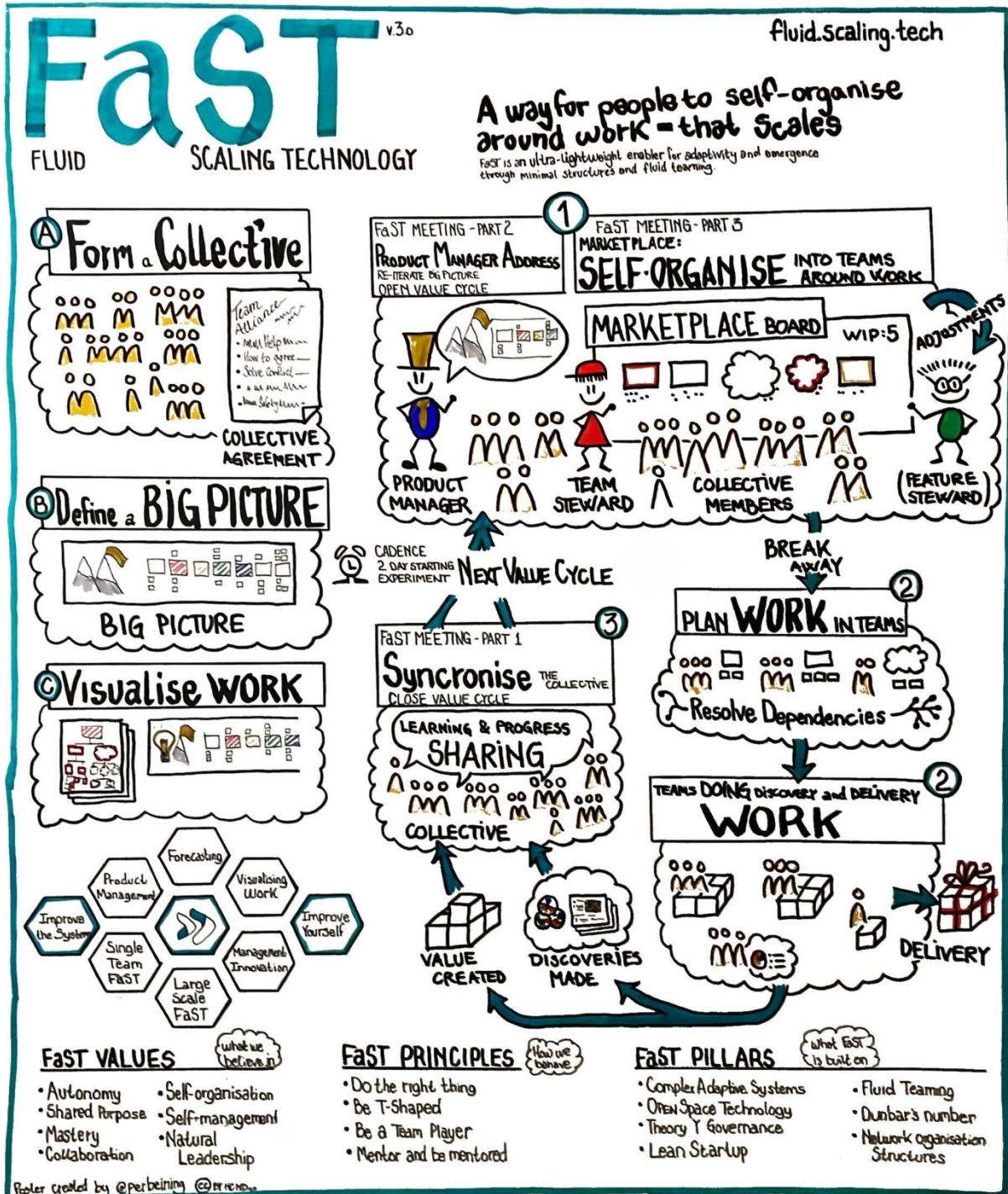
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Rich Picture by Per Beining



Fluid Scaling Technology (FaST)

A way for people to self-organise around work
- that scales.

FaST is an ultra-lightweight enabler for adaptivity and emergence through minimal structures and fluid teaming.

FaST Method

One-Time Setup

A) Form a Collective - Combine everyone needed to do the work into a **Collective**.

The **Collective** is an autonomous, empowered, self-organised, self-managed group of people gathered around a common purpose capable of product discovery and delivery of business goals.

B) Define a Big Picture – A purpose and mission for the **Collective**.

C) Visualise Work - Visually represent the current understanding and progress of the work for the **Collective**.

Value Cycle – A Continuous Cycle of Work

The next three steps form the **Value Cycle**. Repeat these steps continuously.

1) Self-organise - Facilitate a meeting for people to self-organise into teams around work.

2) Work - Teams plan and collaborate on the work item that they formed around.

3) Synchronise - On a short cadence, the **Collective** meets to share learning and progress to gain a shared understanding of product state and current conditions.

There is no prescription in FaST regarding the length of the **Value Cycle**; merely a directive to find the shortest possible period that is sensible for the **Collective**. **Value Cycle** length doesn't need consistency from one cycle to the next. For example, a **Collective** may have a two-day **Value Cycle** followed by a three-day **Value Cycle**.

FaST is a pull-based flow system where work is continuous and not time-boxed.

FaST Roles

Member - Everyone in the **Collective** is a **Member**.

Product Manager – A **Member** who understands the mechanics of strategy, product discovery, and value delivery to customers and the business.

A **Collective** can work on multiple products and have multiple **Product Managers**.

Team Steward - A **Member** who has volunteered to steward a team in a **Value Cycle**.

Feature Steward (Optional) – A **Member** who has volunteered to fully understand a feature from conception to completion and can discuss development progress.

FaST Tools

Collective Agreement - a living document describing how the **Collective** will be together. At a minimum, it should describe how decisions are made and conflicts resolved.

Marketplace Board - an artefact to visually see which work items were chosen for the current **Value Cycle** and who is in each team that formed around those items.

Work Visualisation – information radiators of current understanding and progress.

Product Mapping and Discovery Trees

are information radiators from the first FaST experiment.

FaST Meeting

The **FaST Meeting** creates a heartbeat for the **Collective** to pause for sense-making, adaptation, synchronisation, self-organisation and emergence of work and structure to best match current conditions and understanding.

Part 1: Synchronise the Collective

- Close Value Cycle

In part one, a representative of each team takes their turn giving a concise update, with just enough information for the **Collective** to understand what that team did and learned in the **Value Cycle**.

The goal of this part is for the **Collective** to synchronise in understanding. What has changed in the environment, market, and the state of product development since we last met?

Reset the **Marketplace Board**, and the **Value Cycle** is considered closed. There is no break in the **FaST Meeting**; immediately open the next **Value Cycle**.

Part 2: Product Manager Address

- Open Value Cycle

The **Product Manager** opens a **Value Cycle** with an inspiring message. Ideally reiterating the **Big Picture**. The **Product Manager** might highlight changes to the product since the last **FaST Meeting**, e.g., new aspects or a change in urgency.

Part 3: Self-organise Into Teams Around Work

- Marketplace

Using a process inspired by Open Space Technology, the **Collective** creates a **Marketplace** of work for a new **Value Cycle**. **Team Stewards** voluntarily stand up and deliver a brief "pitch," one by one, announcing their intent to steward work. The **Team Steward** then puts a placeholder on the **Marketplace Board** for that work. Once all **Team Stewards** have pitched, the **Collective** has a **Marketplace** of work. **Members** individually decide how best to contribute and put their names next to a work item on the **Marketplace Board**, thus self-selecting into a team.

The **Collective** evaluates proposed work items and team compositions and may adjust these based on sense criteria such as dependencies or limited specialities. A final evaluation rounds up the **FaST Meeting**, and **Members** break away to work with their self-selected team.

How FaST Teams Work and Resolve Dependencies

FaST Teams can work however they wish as long as it aligns with the **Collective Agreements**. Each team agrees on how they will collaborate.

A team could agree on such things as:

- Working synchronously or asynchronously?
- Core hours?
- Collocated or distributed?
- If collocated, then office, someone's home, or a coffee shop?
- Solo work or ensemble?

Breaking Down Work and Planning

Most often, work is prepared just enough and just in time inside the **Value Cycle**. Work is recursively broken down until actionable items are discovered.

Teams merge for planning and breakdown when larger cross-team items require a shared understanding.

Discovery Trees are a useful visual tool for breaking down, tracking progress, and creating a shared context for work items while enabling rapid understanding.

*"It's in the doing of the work
that we discover the work we must do."*

Woody Zuill

Dependency Resolution

Self-organisation and adjustments in the **FaST Meeting** resolve the most obvious dependencies. However, understanding of work often changes once it starts, so dependencies can still surface. Interdependent teams self-manage through communication, collective intelligence, and best judgment to resolve dependencies.

Example – During planning, team A discovers they will clash with the work of Team B. Team A calls an impromptu meeting with Team B to discuss and perhaps have an architectural discussion. They then find creative ways to move forward.

Resolutions might be:

- One team drops the work item they were on to pick up something else.
- Teams merge temporarily.
- The architectural discussion revealed separate work tracks that do not collide, and the teams stay independent to work on these.
- Teams do parallel probes until an obvious best solution reveals itself.
- Etc. There are infinitely more resolutions than just these examples.

Resilient teams have full agency in finding creative solutions to continue momentum.

Law of Mobility

The law of mobility comes from Open Space Technology, allowing **Members** to switch teams at any point if it makes sense.

"Resilient learning team members form a collaborating, self-organising team. They have the autonomy to determine how they approach the work."

The essential motivators—purpose, co-intelligence, and autonomy—lay the foundation for enabling high performance. Purpose and co-intelligence without autonomy equals dependencies and bottlenecks."

Diana Larsen and Tricia Broderick

FaST Values, Principles, and Pillars

FaST Values

- Autonomy
- Shared Purpose
- Mastery
- Collaboration
- Self-organisation
- Self-management
- Natural leadership

FaST Principles

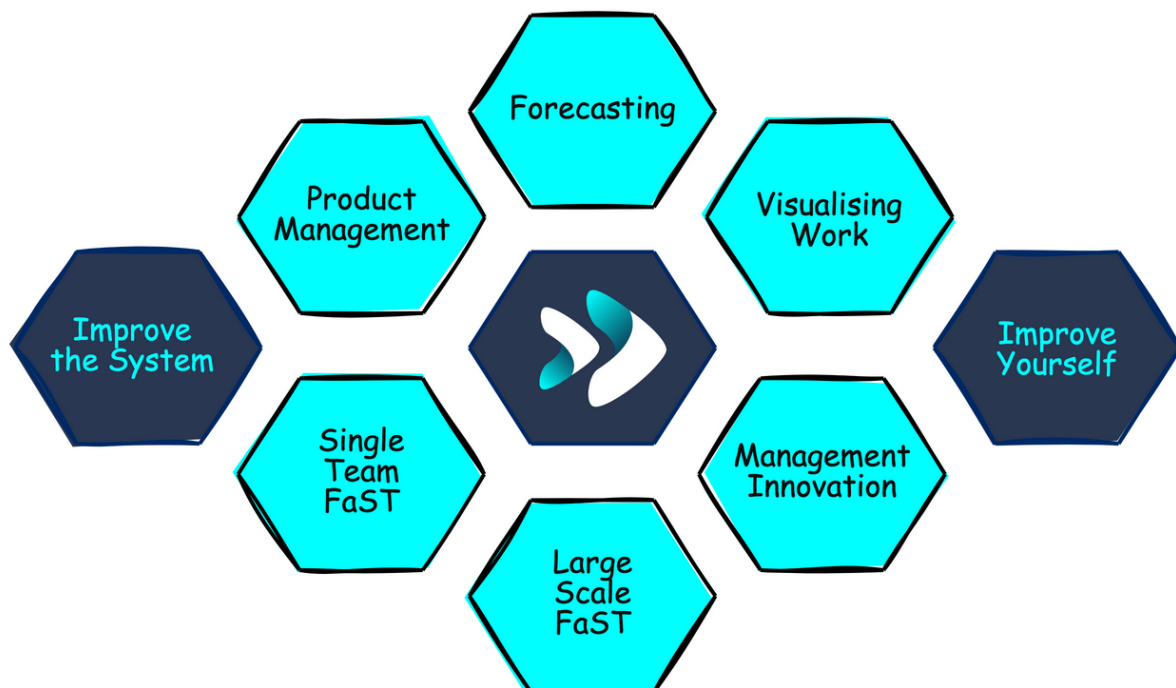
- Do the right thing
- Be T-shaped
- Be a Team Player
- Mentor and be mentored

FaST Pillars

- Complex Adaptive Systems
- Open Space Technology
- Theory Y Governance
- Lean Startup
- Fluid Teaming
- Dunbar's Number
- Network Organisation Structures

FaST Method and FaST Operating Model

This document describes the **FaST Method**, which is just one component of the **FaST Operating Model**. The **FaST Method** is depicted as the centre hexagon with the FaST logo in the figure below.



The surrounding hexagons comprise framework aspects and supporting concepts described in more detail in [separate supplementary guides](#).

For Single Team FaST, this core guide is still relevant and should be read first.