professional
development

Your Essential Guide to Agile Project Management

TO DO INPROGRESS TESTING DONE

Contents

What is Agile?

Versatile... Flexible... Effective...

Agile is a flexible approach to project management that focuses on delivering value consistently throughout a project.

It is a powerful ally in the challenging task of managing a project effectively and delivering results on-time and within budget.

How Does Agile Work?

Unlike traditional approaches to project management, Agile breaks a project into smaller chunks so that project teams can deliver value at the end of each chunk and react to change when necessary.

There are so many benefits and capabilities of the agile project management approach. You can read some key agile benefits on the following page.

What are the Benefits of Using Agile?

1. Responsive: Adapt to Change with Ease

Agile is best suited to projects that have hard-to-define parameters or a high likelihood of changing requirements.

One of the 4 core values of Agile is "Responding to Change over Following a Plan".

This lowers a project's risk and increases your team's ability to deliver the best product or service to meet the customer's needs.

2. Clearer Ownership Through Shared Responsibilities

Agile does not rest all responsibility for the project on a single project manager's shoulders.

The team members share responsibility, enabling greater clarity in ownership, and facilitating a higher level of focus for everyone.

3. Collaborative

Regular communication is a key part of any agile project. The team holds short meetings daily to update on progress. During this "daily standup", members of the team identify current or potential obstacles and offer solutions for these obstacles.

Regular communication - both within the team and with all other stakeholders - enables re-prioritisation when necessary, and the ability to easily troubleshoot any problems.

4. Greater Visibility, Better Control, Lower Risk

The increased level of communication in an agile project combined with the smaller delivery cycles gives everyone involved the ability to respond to change, avoid risk, and create realistic budgets and timeframes.

5. Customer & Value Focused

Early and frequent delivery of value is a key characteristic of agile project management.

The very first of the 12 Principles of Agile states "Our highest priority is to satisfy the customer through early and continuous delivery of valuable software."

6. Sustainability

The agile framework is designed to be sustainable, meaning that once you're up and running, you can maintain the agile level of productivity indefinitely.

Is Agile Right for You?

- "I work on projects where the requirements can - and do - change often."

- "I need a flexible project management approach."

- "I want to deliver value to my stakeholders / customers as quickly as possible."

- "I'm seeking greater visibility at every stage of a project."

- "We need better communication within our project management team, and with our stakeholders."

- "I need to be able to react quickly to any changes or obstacles that arise."

- "'Bottlenecks' are a productivity block in my working environment."

- "I want greater control over a project's time and cost management."

- "More clearly-defined roles would greatly increase the productivity of my project team."

Do any of these statements apply to you?

If yes, then Agile could be your perfect fit!

Origins of Agile

Agile originated in the software development industry. Software development has always required a more iterative approach to project management, so it's no surprise that this was the birthplace of a methodology like Agile.

As far back as 1957, software developers had been trialling different forms of approaches to flexible project management. By the turn of the century, the industry was crying out for a more adaptable and streamlined way of managing software development projects.

The Agile Manifesto

A group of 17 developers met in Oregon in 2000, and then again in 2001 in Utah to brainstorm a more iterative approach to software development.

As a result of these summits, The Agile Manifesto was published in 2001. It has become the foundation of all agile practices. The Agile Manifesto outlined 4 values and 12 principles, which guide all agile projects.
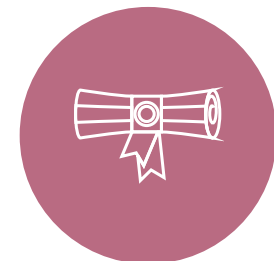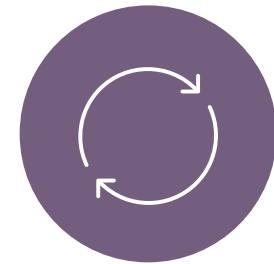
The 4 Values of Agile

1

"Individuals and Interactions over Processes and Tools"

Continual communication and responding to change with ease are important elements within an agile project. People and not processes are the crucial factor in both of these elements, so while processes and tools are certainly required, people and communication are of much higher importance.

2

"Working Software over Comprehensive Documentation"

You can read this as "working product", or "quality service" if you're working outside the software development sector. This value outlines the importance of not becoming bogged down in detail, and of not losing focus on the goal of delivering a high quality, functioning product or service.

3

"Customer Collaboration over Contract Negotiation"

This advocates a high level of stakeholder engagement. In traditional project management, a key stakeholder, such as the customer, would usually be involved at the beginning & end of a project, and perhaps at set periodic intervals throughout. Agile focuses on regular collaboration with the customer to ensure any changing requirements are considered & incorporated.

4

"Responding to Change over Following a Plan"

Having a plan is great. Being able to adjust your plan to respond to change is even better. This is at the heart of agile project management, and when you think about it, is truly the most practical way to approach most tasks.

The 12 Principles of Agile

As with the 4 Values, the 12 Principles were written with software development in mind. We've paraphrased them to fit a broader scope of industry priorities.

1 Customer satisfaction is the top priority of an agile project. This is achieved through continuous delivery of value.

2 Agile has a positive and welcoming attitude to change at all stages of a project. In fact, Agile processes are designed to utilise change as a competitive advantage for the customer.

3 The early and frequent delivery of value is a high priority for any agile team.

4 Daily communication between the project team and stakeholders.

5 A motivated project team and stakeholders lie at the heart of an agile project. Provide the support and environment they need to get the job done, and trust them to get there.

6 Where possible, face-to-face conversations are emphasised as the most effective and productive way to communicate.

7 A working product or excellent service is the true mark of progress.

8 Agile must be sustainable, meaning that the pace of development and progress could be maintained indefinitely.

9 Maintain high standards of quality on all work delivered.

10 Keep it simple.

11 Self-organising teams are the most effective teams.

12 The team reflects on how they can work more efficiently on a regular basis, and works to implement changes to act on this.
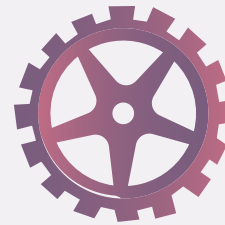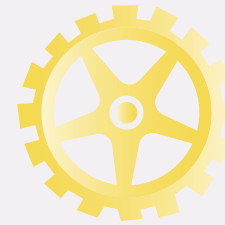
Agile Frameworks

Scrum **Kanban** **XP** **FDD** **Crystal** **DSDM**

These frameworks are methods for applying the principles of Agile to a project. Think of Agile as the overall philosophy, and these frameworks as tools you use to carry out that philosophy.

There is no "best Agile framework". There is only what's best for your project team, and your project work. The great news is that you don't have to select just one framework. You can combine several to achieve the best-possible results for your project.

You'll find a taster of the style and primary benefit of each framework on the next page. During our 3-day [Agile Certified Course](#), we introduce you to the most popular of these frameworks - Scrum, Kanban, and XP. We also provide a high-level overview of other Agile frameworks.

Agile Frameworks

Scrum Framework

Scrum is perhaps the most popular Agile framework.

It is a team-centric framework, utilising clearly defined team roles and responsibilities to implement the responsive style of Agile project management.

Focus: Team-led projects

Kanban

Kanban is similar to Scrum, in that it aims to support teams working at top-level efficiency together.

It zooms in on the workflow aspect of a project, streamlining what is in progress and avoiding bottlenecks in productivity. Kanban usually involves use of a Kanban board or flowchart.

Focus: Streamlining workflow

XP

XP or Extreme Programming is popular in the software development sector due to its goal of frequent releases.

This approach is ideal for projects where continuous value delivery is a high priority.

Focus: Value Delivery

FDD

Feature-Driven Development is not a million miles from XP. It also seeks to deliver value to clients regularly throughout the lifecycle of a project.

This particular framework is client-centric, paying particular attention to stakeholder engagement.

Focus: Stakeholder Management

Crystal

Crystal also dedicates a high level of focus to the project team, and places a lot of value on their ability to make key decisions on what's best for the project's success.

It's a great option for smaller teams who prefer a "lightweight" approach to their project work – less documentation, reporting and micro-management.

Focus: Self-Managing Teams

DSDM

DSDM stands for "Dynamic Systems Development Method". Like XP and FDD respectively, it aims for regular value delivery and clear communication with stakeholders.

DSDM concentrates on delivering the project goals on time and within budget.

Focus: Time & Budget Control

Getting Started with Agile

Agile project management can yield outstanding results, but only if understood and implemented correctly. Halfheartedly adopting one or two of the principles will only get you so far, and may even hamper your effort to become more "agile".

We have seen the best results from teams and companies that have taken the time to study and train in agile and scrum methodologies.

Getting trained and certified in Agile or Scrum doesn't require a huge investment of time, and it will ensure that you have the confidence, credibility, and ability to implement agile processes effectively within your working environment.
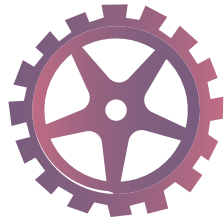
Choosing Training and a Qualification

We offer a range of agile and scrum courses and qualifications to suit every level of experience.

You can find out more about these courses on the next pages, or call us on Freephone 1800 910 810 to chat with our training consultants about the best choice for your career.

Agile for You: Public Courses
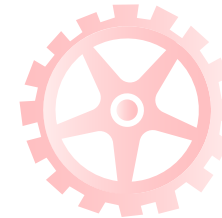
Agile Certified Course (SAMC™)

3 Days

Our Agile Certification Training is perfect for anyone who wants to gain Agile skills and knowledge, and achieve an international certification.

- ✓ Internationally recognised certification
- ✓ Practical skills, exam prep + online materials
- ✓ Exam and certification included
- ✓ No experience needed

Learn More   **Ask A Question**

Scrum Master Certified Course (SMC™)

2 Days

If you want to acquire the skill and confidence to perform the role of Scrum Master and get certified, this course is an excellent choice.

- ✓ Internationally recognised certification
- ✓ Practical skills, exam prep + online materials
- ✓ Exam and certification included
- ✓ No experience needed

Learn More   **Ask A Question**

Agile for Your Team: In-Company Training

If you're thinking about introducing Agile to your team or across your organisation, it might be time to consider an in-company (on-site) solution.

In-company training is a format where we come to your location to deliver customised agile training exclusively to your team. It's an excellent opportunity to adapt the training to fit your business needs and train many team members at once. Here are some of the key benefits:
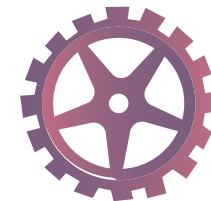
Tailored

We will customise an agile training and certification solution that matches the goals and challenges on your radar.

Flexible

We will work around your business schedule, delivering training on dates that minimise disruption to your productivity (already putting agile into practice!).

Consistent

Each member of your team will receive the same standard of training, making it easy to implement a universal terminology and process within the business.

Learn More About our Agile and Scrum In-Company Training Options   **Learn More**

Get in Touch

Talk to Us

You can reach us by phone on Freephone 1800 910 810, or 01 861 0700 (mon - thurs, 9.00am - 5.30pm, fri, 9.00am - 5.00pm).

We will be happy to answer any questions you have, advise on the best option for your Agile training, or book a place for you on an upcoming course date.

Freephone 1800 910 810

Which Course is Right?

If you're not sure which course is right for you, click below.

We'll chat with you about your background and goals to assess which Agile course is the best option for your career or your team's development.

Which Course?

Reserve an Agile Place

If you're ready to go and want to reserve your spot on one of our next Agile Certified Course training dates, you can save your spot by clicking below.

We will get in touch to go through the course details and confirm your spot.

Reserve My Place

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