

## What is agility?

Agility is a management method focused **on realising immediate return on investment**. The method is based on:

- Short term plans
- Results
- People
- Collaboration
- Simplicity

## What are the benefits?

Agile methods **address those unpredictable project issues** by:

- managing changing business priorities
- managing changing requirements
- managing complexity
- managing new technology
- delivering solutions at regular intervals

## How are these benefits measured?

The benefits of agile approaches can be measured by applying the following metrics:

- Product Stabilisation Metrics & Complexity Metrics
- delivering solutions at regular intervals
- managing complexity
- managing new technology
- Customer Satisfaction Metrics
- manage changing business priorities
- manage changing requirements

## How is it different to other methods?

The alternatives to an agile approach are i) the traditional heavy approach, and ii) the chaotic unplanned/managed approach.

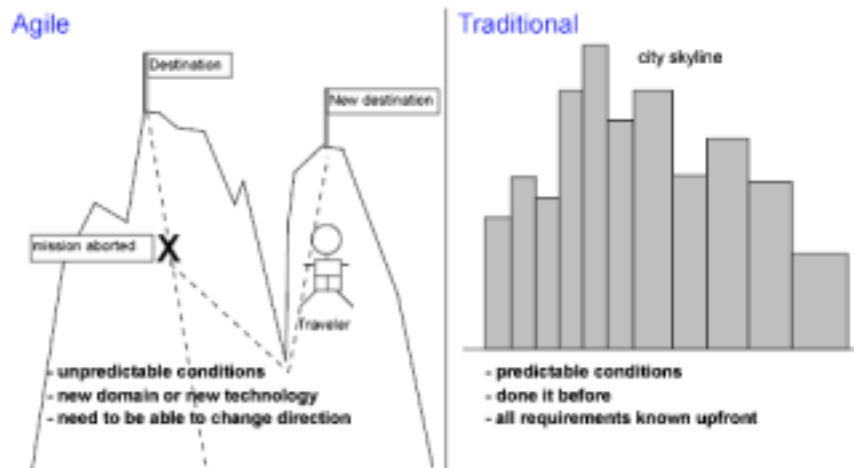
The traditional heavy approach is characterised as:

- Predictive
- Focus is on identifying all the requirements up front
- Steep learning curve
- Unresponsive to change

The traditional approach is based on:

- the idea of control
- optimizing what we have done before and how to do it better

## Who should consider using agile methods?



There is no doubt that traditional heavy approaches are well suited to large scale critical projects:

- building a city
- building the space shuttle

However, **most business projects face new/different concerns:**

- global business competition with time-to-market pressures
- new & demanding e-business initiatives needing high quality
- ever increasing customer demands with changing requirements

Business' whose projects are like climbing mountains, as opposed to building cities, should consider employing an agile method.

## What support is out there for these new management methods?

Many agile methods have been developed over the last 10 years. These include:

- SCRUM
- Crystal
- Feature Driven Development (FDD)
- Dynamic Systems Development Methodology (DSDM)
- XP

These approaches are being adopted in projects employing new technology and new domains.

## How long after implementation does the method take to demonstrate benefits?

**Most agile methods will yield benefits on a monthly basis.** However, upon initial implementation, project stakeholders (incl. product managers, customers, managers and development staff) will take time to adjust. This initial adjustment is anticipated to end by the 3rd month (ie. 3rd iteration/sprint).

## What is the setup cost of an agile method?

Agile methodologies will vary from method to method. However, if we consider the SCRUM adaptive method, management can anticipate the following costs:

- Cost to employ a Scrum Master (ie. coach/mentor)
- Cost associated with training each project stakeholder of process/roles (1 day - simple process)

## What tools should be adopted for agile methods?

The following tooling will benefit an agile method:

- Lightweight project management tooling (eg. Excel)
- Software Configuration Management
- Integrated Development Environment
- Testing framework
- Collaboration Portal (incl. documentation/modeling tooling)

The collaboration portal is the new light-weight tooling that is required for monitoring and controlling the collaborative effort.

## Summary

In this paper we covered:

- Agile methods are an alternative to traditional heavy methods
- Agile methods are well suited for projects that are unpredictable or with many unknowns

In the next paper in this series we will introduce the Wall-of-Wonder and how it address the collaboration issue.

## About the Authors



Helping you  
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Ashin and the Self team were responsible for creating the CollaborativeAID collaboration portal, delivering agile workshops/courses and generally educating the Australian market on better techniques for developing software.

High Octane is the consulting practice of Ir Philippe Back. Philippe has been working with software projects for more than ten years now since he earned a degree in Civil Engineering in 1992. He has extensive background in leading, facilitating and mentoring teams in delivering interactive systems. He also has a strong and proven object oriented skillset, hardened by experience. He has applied his skills in various sectors including interactive telephony, security, banking, food retail, telecom, media, insurance, education and automation. Knowledgeable in end-to-end information systems modeling and construction, he has delivered on Unix and Windows platforms. Philippe is also active in the training field, providing Requirements engineering, UML, Unified Process, Java and J2EE courses in Belgium and France. He has a RENTIC agreement from the AWT (RENTIC0001).