



# AGILE PROJECT MANAGEMENT

*QuickStart Guide – The Complete Beginners Guide To Mastering Agile Project Management*

Steven Jones

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## “ SYNOPSIS

Have you considered Agile project management but didn't know how to organize an Agile project or explain the approach to stakeholders? You aren't alone. Agile Project Management has been around in one form or another for a long time, and has matured into a process that can have profound effects on a product's development, time to market, and nimble support of company business goals. But no one said the transition is easy. One problem is that the Agile process has lacked a concise overview of every aspect. How does a team integrate themselves into the process? What shifts of thinking are needed to realize Agile's full potential? Agile can require a substantial change in "business as usual" product development, so if you are considering the Agile process it will help to have an accurate summary of its pros and cons, the standard terms used with Agile, and the know-how to quickly organize an Agile project once approved.

## CHAPTER 1 : WHAT IS AGILE PROJECT MANAGEMENT?

- ❖ The idea behind Agile Project Management originated in the software industry with a 1970 paper by Dr. Winston Royce entitle : « Managing the Development of Large Software Systems ».
- ❖ Face-to-face meetings always get priority.

## CHAPTER 2 : BENEFITS OF AGILE PROJECT MANAGEMENT

### Traditional Method

- ❖ « Waterfall » management : completing each piece one at a time, separate from other parts, and then assembled at the end.
- ❖ Named for its cascading appearance on a GANTT Chart.

### The Agile Response

- ❖ The process usually begins with developing a list of high-values features – **the « must haves »**, set out not as requirements but as goals or objectives.
- ❖ Everyone can see the big picture from the start.
- ❖ It creates feedback that can be integrated immediately.
- ❖ Each team member is accountable to the other team members rather than to a single project manager.
- ❖ Peers working together never feel like they « have to report to the boss » and creative thinking is invited, not inefficiently channeled by higher-ups who can only be partially aware of everything the working team must deal with.
- ❖ The product is adjusted continually throughout the development cycle to ensure relevance and competitive edge.
- ❖ Because teams are cross-disciplinary and organized around features, the entire team can change direction all at once.
- ❖ Emergence : The way groups of individuals such as ants develop complex, advanced and efficient behaviors that are well beyond the capabilities of any individual in the group.

## CHAPTER 3 : AGILE TEAMS AND MEETINGS

### Vision Meeting

- ❖ Equivalent to a kick-off meeting in a waterfall management term.
- ❖ Vision Statement : What the product is, who the target audience is and what business goals the project/product must support.
- ❖ Product Roadmap : View of product features and requirements. How long to complete which features. Estimates the effort and resources required for each feature or project phase.

### Iteration Planning Meeting

- ❖ The vision meeting may have broken the project into « **iterations** » or **sub-stages**. This meeting establishes objectives for the current iteration and narrows the window for a given development period or timeframe that might range **from a day to a month**.
- ❖ The team sets out requirements for meeting the immediate goals of an iteration, and lists the tasks necessary to meet each requirement.

### Daily Iteration Meeting

- ❖ A daily 15 minutes meeting held at the same time and place each day, before the day's work begins.
- ❖ This is NOT a « progress reporting » meeting. The individuals each report and discuss AS A GROUP of the CURRENT iteration progress, individual goals and tasks for THE DAY.
- ❖ Iteration List contains the individual tasks claimed by individuals.
- ❖ Impediment List shows bottlenecks and roadblocks that the team can resolve itself.

### Iteration Review

- ❖ At the end of each iteration, the team shows the Product Owner the functionality completed.
- ❖ All items not deemed complete are added to the top of the next iteration's task list.

### Iteration Retrospective (Wrap-up)

- ❖ The team should have a separate post-iteration wrap-up meeting to discuss what worked well, what didn't and what might be needed to fix it.
- ❖ Company staff who can affect an employee performance review should NEVER attend this meeting.
- ❖ In Agile, no team member outranks any other team member. Every team member is a manager.

## CHAPTER 4 : PROJECT DELIVERABLES

### Project Vision Statement Contents

- ❖ The vision statement should be specific because it helps frame the specific tasks. Answer those questions :
  - ▶ Who is the ideal target customer?
  - ▶ What is the need or opportunity they want?
  - ▶ What is the name of the product (even temporary) and its product category?
  - ▶ What will be the key benefits that will compel the target audience to buy this product or service?
  - ▶ What is the existing competition for similar products or services?
  - ▶ How will this product be differentiated from those?

### Project Roadmap Contents

- ❖ Defines the « milestones » used in traditional management.

### Project List

- ❖ Prioritized list of all items within the scope of the project.
- ❖ The list should focus less on the method of development and more on « what ». The objective.
- ❖ Also includes an estimate of the effort needed to complete it. For ex. : 3 people for 4 days.

### Release Plan

- ❖ Rough timetable for product release. Not everyone uses this since sometimes it can be counterproductive to be too much detailed.

### Iteration List

- ❖ Items from the project list that can reasonably be completed during the current iteration.
- ❖ The tasks are identified during the daily iteration meeting and are continually added as work progresses.
- ❖ **Each task should be completed in one day.**

## CHAPTER 5 : AGILE ITERATION

Before the work begins :

- ❖ Create the Project Team
- ❖ Identify the Product Owner (customer)
- ❖ Identify the Project Facilitator (facilitates the iterative process but is not in charge of the any product development tasks)
- ❖ Choose your development team.

## CHAPTER 6 : ADVICE FOR SUCCESS

- ❖ **Daily meetings** should be held in-person rather than virtual.
- ❖ **More, smaller teams.** No more than 7 people per team.
- ❖ **Agile is not always best.** It works best when requirements and technologies are uncertain or rapidly shifting. It works best when success requires collaboration and creation of new knowledge.