# PROJECT PLANNING IN AGILE METHODOLOGY

The Agile method of project management and software development is designed to be ready for change. Agile project management refers to an iterative approach to planning and guiding project processes. Just as in Agile software development, an Agile project is completed in small sections. These sections are called iterations. In Agile software development, for instance, an iteration refers to a single development cycle.

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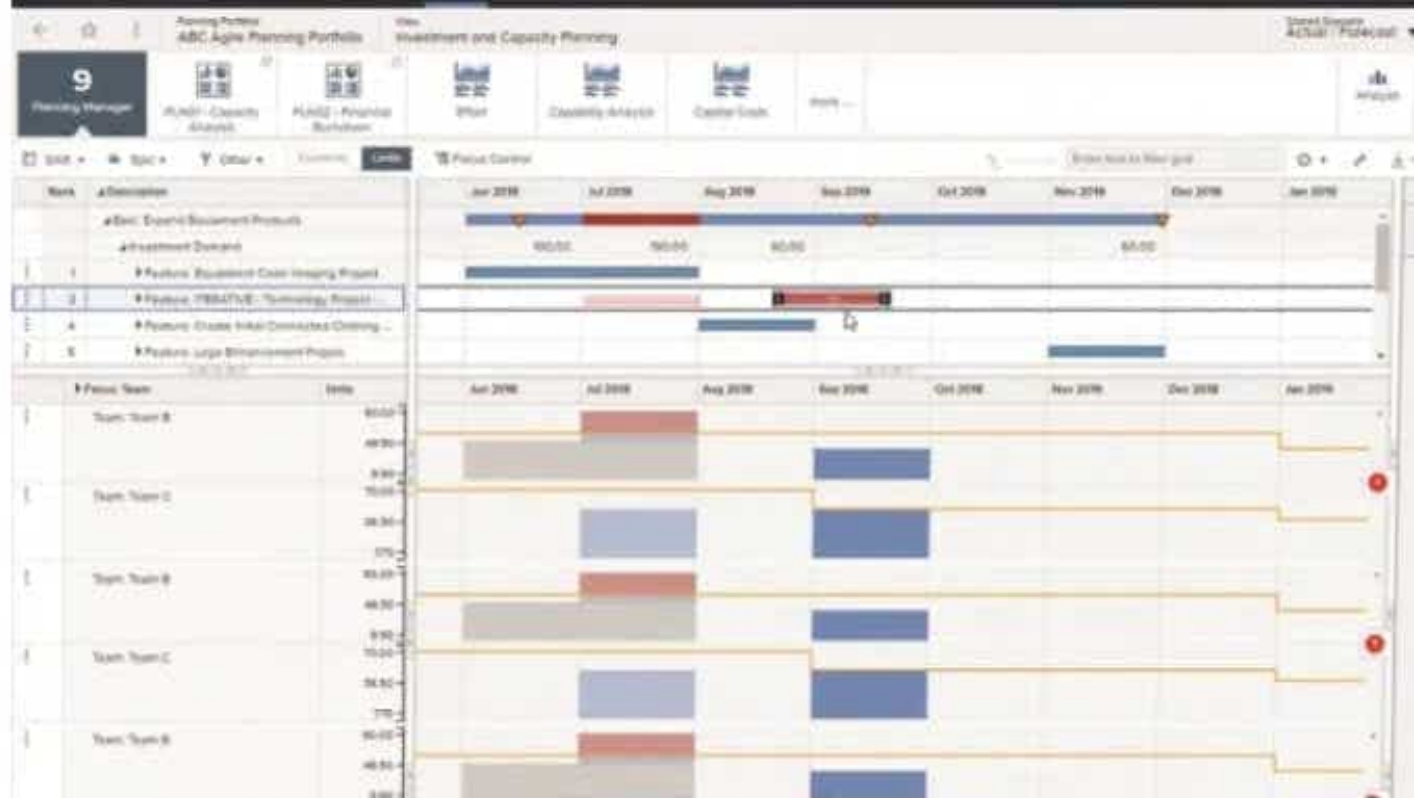
Manage the complexity of Agile at scale by leveraging scenarios to create alternate release plans across Agile teams.

Agile project management is designed to be flexible enough to handle projects with potentially moving, changing and evolving requirements and agile enough to be able to provide the end customer with functional portions of the overall final solutions promptly and as needed. It transcends the rigidity of the Waterfall process by embracing the change in scope that can so often accompany a project of even the most dedicated requirements.

Agile Project Management Advantages

There are many advantages of the Agile method of managing projects and project planning over the more traditionally considered methods of project management practices.

In the project management field, Agile provides project teams, sponsors, project leaders and customers many project-specific benefits, including:

- More rapid deployment of solutions

- Reduced waste through minimization of resources

- Increased flexibility and adaptability to change

- Increased success through more focused efforts

- Faster turnaround times

- Faster detection of issues and defects

Sprint planning

Sprint planning is an event in scrum that defines what can be delivered in the upcoming sprint and how that work will be achieved.

In the this article Dave West, CEO of Scrum.org, outlines the sprint planning ceremony as it's described

teaches scrum according to the which is considered the official guide for the scrum framework among the agile world. Below Megan Cook of Atlassian shares her perspective on sprint planning in this video:

Prep for sprint planning meeting

Running a great sprint planning event requires a bit of discipline. The product owner must be prepared, combining the lessons from the previous sprint review, stakeholder feedback, and vision for the product, so they set the scene for the sprint.

Agile scheduling

Agile scheduling is perhaps the most "project managerial" of project management activities. The following are some useful guidelines for managing scheduling:

- **Schedule in detail only for the immediate iteration:** Sprints/iterations are useful for managing uncertainty, but it is adaptability that drives sprints/iterations. Scheduling too far in advance prevents you from being nimble and responding to changing priorities.

- **Involve the entire team:** Scheduling is a team activity that is driven by estimates, so the team should be involved in the entire process, not merely for accurate scheduling, but also to promote buy-in.

- **Design and testing are also part of development:** Keep the time for these required activities during sprints/iterations in mind as you build estimates and schedules.

Summary

Whether your organization is ready to adopt the Agile methodology, already has, is considering or possibly struggling with it, keep in mind that the approach is very different from what some team members are used to, and they may initially want to reject it or be very slow to adopt. That doesn't mean you can't or won't be successful with it. Agile as a development methodology and a project management methodology has proven itself to be highly successful on many types of projects, including mission-critical projects at NASA.

Along with the aerospace industry, many critical government projects and high dollar private industry projects where mistakes aren't OK and human lives may hang in the balance rely on Agile methodology. The Agile method is effective in the right situation, but still requires a significant amount of project planning. As is so often said, failure to plan means planning to fail.

Sprint planning best practices

It is easy to get so bogged down in the details of sprint planning you forget that the focus of sprint planning is to build a 'just enough' plan for the next sprint. That plan shouldn't become a monkey for the team's back, instead, it should focus the team on valuable outcomes, and allow guardrails for self-organization. A good sprint plan motivates everyone by defining an outcome and a clear plan for success. But be careful planning too upfront. Instead of building the most complete, "every minute of the sprint is accounted for" sprint plan, focus on the goal and build enough of a sprint backlog to get started. Next, ensure that the product backlog is ordered to allow the team to pick up work