Frequently Asked Questions

Q: My team tracks our work in a different tool. Why am I being asked to enter data in this tool?

A: You should continue to use the tool of your choice to track your work and manage your backlog. While the Agile Team Tool is not being mandated we think all squad teams can benefit from using it. By displaying your iteration results in a graphical format it allows your team to visually see the results and progress of each iteration over time. By sharing information with other teams it promotes transparency and allows us to learn from each other.

Q: My squad does not deploy code. Do I still need to do this?

A: All teams can benefit from using the Agile Team Tool regardless of the type of work the team does. Most of the metrics enabled in the tool apply to all squads (for example, team size, velocity or throughput, team satisfaction, client satisfaction). We currently have additional changes in our backlog that will be directed at helping non code-deploying teams capture their iteration results.

Q: How can I provide feedback, report a defect or ask questions about the tool if my question is not answered in this FAQ area?

A: Go to the Agile Team Tool Forum in the Agile Academy Connections Community. There are several topics already established, 1) Questions regarding how to use the tool; 2) Suggestions for improving the tool; 3) Questions about the Agile Maturity Assessments and 4) What's changes are coming in the tool.

Q: Do you have a Community established for the Agile Team Tool?

A: There is a web-based Agile Team Tool landing page that provides information about the tool and links to supporting documents.

Link: Agile Team Tool Landing Page

Creating / Updating Teams

Q: My team doesn't show up in the 'My Teams' view, what should I do?

A: You should check to see if your team is listed in the 'All Teams' view. You must be in the team member list before the team will appear in your 'My Teams' view.

Q: My team doesn't show up in the 'My Teams' view or the 'All Teams' view, what should I do?

A: You should contact your iteration manager or possibly your manager and verify the team name. Your team may have been added using a name you are not familiar with. Team names must be unique and it's possible an alternative name had to be used when your team was created in the tool.

Q: Why can't I update my team?

A: You must be in the team member list before you are allowed 'edit' access.

Q: If my name is in the team member list, why can't I edit the team information?

A: By default, team members are added using the Blue Pages primary internet id. You may have logged into the tool with an alternate internet id. Try logging in with your primary id.

Q: Why does the team member count in the Team Information area NOT match the number of line items in the team member list?

A: A person can have multiple roles on a team and thus be added more than one time. The team member count is derived by looking at the number of unique internet ids in the Team Member list.

Q: One or more of my team members appear to be counted more than once, why?

A: At the time team members are added the Agile Team Tool uses the Blue Pages primary Internet ID. It is possible that a person's primary internet id changed from the first time he/she was added to the team to the last time they were added.

Q: How do I resolve team member entries where a person has multiple internet ID's?

A: 1) Verify the team member's primary internet id in Blue Pages; 2) Locate the entry in the team membership list that does NOT contain the team member's primary internet id and remove it from the list; 3) Add the team member back to the member list with the proper allocation % and team role; 4) Validate the team member count now matches the number of unique internet id's in the team member list.

Q: Why can I not associate a child team under my team?

A: 1) Make sure the team you are working with is not identified as a Squad team. Squad teams are the lowest level in the hierarchical reporting structure and are NOT allowed to have child teams under them.
2) The child team you are looking for may already be associated to another parent.

Q: Why was my name added to the Team Member list automatically when I created a new team?

A: In order to edit team information, you must be listed in the Team Member list. If you are creating teams for your organization, and not a team member on this particular team, you should add other team members and then remove your name from the member list.

Q: Why can't I change the Squad Team Indicator from Yes to No?

A: If Iteration Results have been entered for this Squad Team you will NOT be allowed to change from a Squad to Non-Squad.

Q: Why can't I change the Squad Team Indicator from No to Yes?

A: If this team has a Child Team associated to it you will not be allowed to change the indicator. Squad Teams are not allowed to have Child associations because they are the lowest level in the hierarchical structure. Child team associations will have to be removed before the squad team indicator can be changed.

Q: What are the Squad Team Indicator Rules?

1. You can change the Squad Team Indicator from No to Yes if the team does not have any associated Child Teams.
2. You can change the Squad Team Indicator from Yes to No if there is no associated data like Iteration Information.
3. Otherwise, you cannot change the squad team indicator.

Q: My Squad Team has been realigned to a different Domain, Sub-Domain or Business Unit, what do I do to ensure my new alignment is reflected correctly?

A: 1) Go into the Team Management area and select your team; 2) Scroll down to the 'Parent team association' section and select your new parent team from the pick list; 3) Click on the 'Associate team to a parent' button.

Q: Which role do I select if I do not see the specific role for my team member?

A: Refer to the Agile Team Roles document in our Connections Community which maps various roles to the role categories listed in the tool. You can also find the roles in Appendix B of the detailed User Guide. If these roles do not apply select 'Other'; you will be prompted to enter a custom role for your team member.

Q: What is this thing called the 2 Pizza Rule and where did it come from?

A: 1) The 2 Pizza Rule is an easy way to determine if your squad team is too large. In general, assuming your team has no competition eaters, your squad team is too large if you need more than 2 pizzas to feed them.
2) It came from Jeff Bezos, founder and CEO of Amazon. For more info on the science behind the 2 pizza rule go here; http://blog.idonethis.com/two-pizza-team/

Entering / Viewing Iteration Information

Q: What should I use as an iteration identifier?

A: This is a free form field and can be used to identify team iterations for tracking purposes, for example 16-01 or 2016-01 to identify the first iteration of year 2016. You will probably want to use the same format from one iteration to another.

Q: Our team does a combination of developing code and operational support. Should we capture Velocity or Throughput for our team?

A: Velocity and Throughput are both measures of how much work a team can complete in an iteration. Teams should pick one or the other and stick with it. Teams should not be capturing iteration results for both. If your team primarily tracks story points, you should use Velocity. If your team primarily tracks stories, tickets or cards, you should use Throughput. If your team does some of both types of work, use Velocity (story points) for all work.

Q: How should our team report work activity for resolving problem tickets/defects if our primary focus is code development.

A: All defects should be reviewed, prioritized and assigned a story point value. Severity 1 defects will obviously get high priority and may impact the number of story points your team committed to at the beginning of the iteration. Severity 2, 3 and 4 defects should also be assigned a story point value and worked as part of your backlog.

Q: Do all field values have to be completed on the Iteration Management page?

A: No, if a field does not apply to your team because of the type work your team does, leave it blank.

Q: Where does the Client Satisfaction value come from?

A: Teams can collect client satisfaction data during a showcase or other review meeting with their product owner, executive sponsor, and stakeholders. Sponsors and stakeholders should be asked to provide a satisfaction score from 1-4 (from very satisfied to very dissatisfied) for that iteration. For multiple responses, the value should be added and averaged to obtain a single client satisfaction value.

Q: Is the Team Satisfaction value derived in a similar fashion as the Client Satisfaction?

A: It is up to the team how and when this value is captured. Some teams use a process similar to the 'mood marbles' where the team members are polled each day at the daily standup and then averaged at the end of the iteration for an overall value. Your team may decide a single poll at the end of the iteration (during the retrospective) is what works best for the team. Either one is ok.

Q: If this is a team tool why are measurements being rolled up?

A: It's important that management be aware of how their teams are trending and if progressing in adopting the agile methodology. If problems are suspected they can get teams the help they may need, i.e. coaching. Rolling up the velocity and throughput values also helps leaders manage the portfolio wall of work. Those values help them understand the capacity of their tribes / teams to complete work.

Q: Are all measurements being rolled up?

A: No, some measurements (like team roles, committed stories or story points, unit costs and non-defect quality measures) are kept at the squad level.

Q: Will our team be compared to other teams?

A: Squad teams may estimate their work differently and should not be compared to other teams. Squads and managers should look at trends to help them get better. It is important that managers NOT use the tool to drive behavior toward targeted measures .

Entering / Viewing Agile Maturity Assessments

Q: Can my team enter the results from previous Agile Maturity Assessment that were taken with the spreadsheet version?

A: Yes. You can do this by creating a new assessment for your team and enter the date that the previous assessment was completed and adding the current and target maturity levels from the previous practice. This will allow your team to maintain any improvement trends from previous assessments.

Q: What should the team consider when assigning target Agile maturity levels?

A: Follow the practice of continuous improvement and set the target maturity levels for what the team agrees can be accomplished in 90 days. The team should also focus on a few practices that will provide the most value by incrementally improving the maturity level and can be accomplished within the recommended 90 day time frame.

Q: How do I change a maturity level value after I have submitted the assessment?

A: Once you have submitted a maturity assessment you cannot change any of the assessed values for the practices and principles. Once submitted you can only make updates to the action plan.