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. We 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: Yes, here is the link to the Connections Community https://w3-connections.ibm.com/communities/service/html/communityview?communityUuid=7ffbaaa6-d3f8-4855-a4c3-88fd3afa3877

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: 1) 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.
2) Another possibility is that the team was deleted or archived. You will need to contact the support team to have them check to see if it has been deleted or archived.

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 User ids (CNUM) in the Team Member list. Another reason for a mismatch is that members with 0% allocation are not considered part of the 'core team' and not calculated in the count for the 2-Pizza rule / team size.

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 User ID / CNUM. It is possible that a person's employee serial changed from the first time he/she was added to the team to the last time they were added. This happens in some countries when the team member goes from Contractor to Regular employee.

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 team.

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

A: To edit team information, you must be listed in the Team Member list. Every team should have at least one person with update authority. If you are creating teams for your organization, and not a team member on the team being created, you should add other team members and then remove your name from the member list.

Q: Why can't I change a Squad Team into a Parent Team (Non Squad)?

A: The squad team has one or more of the following conditions:
1. Iteration results have been submitted
2. A Maturity Assessment has been submitted
3. There is a Maturity Assessment in Draft

Q: How do I change a parent team into a squad team?

1. Select the team in the team navigation section
2. With the team displayed in the center section, click on the Team Setup icon
3. Click on the 'Revert to a squad team' icon.

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. Select the team in the team navigation section
2. With the team displayed in the center section, click on the Team Setup icon
3. Go to the Parent team drop-down list and pick your new parent team.

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: 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.
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 however the iteration manager feels is best to identify team iterations for tracking purposes, i.e 17-01 or 2017-01 to identify this as the first iteration of year 2017. 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. In general, teams should pick one or the other and stick with it. Teams should not be capturing iteration results for both. If your team primarily does code development you should use Velocity. If your team does primarily operational or support activities you should use Throughput.

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: When the team does a showcase or meets to review the accomplishments with their product owner, executive sponsor, stakeholders, etc, it should be asked of them at that time what his/her/their satisfaction level is with the team for that iteration. For multiple responses the value would be added and averaged for 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 is what works best for the team.

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.

Q: Are all measurements being rolled up?

A: No, some measurements 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. It is important that managers NOT use the tool to drive behavior.

Q: A duplicate iteration was created. How do I delete the extra copy?

A: Iterations can NOT be deleted. You should rename the 'copy' to be the iteration that follows the current iteration.

Q: I created an iteration but it is not appearing the Trends charts. Why?

A: We don't post iteration results in the charts until the 4th day after the iteration end date unless there are iteration results (>0) entered in at least one of the following fields:

1. Stories delivered
2. Story points delivered
3. Deployments
4. Defects
5. NPS Score
6. Client sat
7. Team sat

AND the iteration end date is > or = current date.

- Example 1: If your iteration ends on a Friday and you enter results on Thursday afternoon, it will not appear in the charts until Friday because the iteration end date is NOT > or = current date.
- Example 2: If your iteration ends on Friday and you enter your results on Friday afternoon, the results should appear in the charts right away. This is because the iteration end date IS > or = current date.
- Example 3: If your iteration ends on Friday and you do NOT enter your results by EOD on Monday (Midnight), all zeros will be posted in the Trends chart on Tuesday.

Entering / Viewing Agile Maturity Assessments

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

A: Yes. You can do this by creating a new assessment for your team and use the override date to enter the date an earlier assessment was completed. 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.

Reporting Capabilities

Q: Is there a reporting function available in the Agile Team Tool?

A: No, not at this time. This is an item of interest to many users. It is a backlog item of ours and has not yet been sized and prioritized.