

Discussion-1 Adaptive Agile mindset

Discussion Topic:

What are the core approaches in the Adaptive Agile mindset that makes project management different from traditional approaches? Give an example of a project the Adaptive Agile mindset could be used in as well.

My Post:

Hello Class,

The Traditional Project Management (TPM) focuses on a step-by-step approach to planning a project's life cycle (ISciforma, n.d.). TPM is associated with a Waterfall methodology, where a project's development is divided into phases and these phases are completed in a sequential order (Mao, 2025). It is a very structured approach to project management, and it is just about the process. An entire project is planned upfront, meaning that the project's scope, schedule, and cost are defined with a set goal and plan that resists change.

On the other hand, an Adaptive Agile approach to project management relies on the Agile methodology, which is based on a manifesto referred to as the Agile Manifesto (Slack Team, 2024). The manifesto emphasizes flexibility, close collaboration with stakeholders (usually customers), performing regular updates/maintenance (or iterations), and the value of the project.

In other words, the adaptive Agile approach is different from TPM because:

- It is value-driven, ensuring that the product delivered is functional and has a return on investment. On the other hand, TPM is more process-driven than value-driven
- It emphasizes continuous collaborations with the stakeholders, making them an active partner, ensuring that the final product meets the stakeholders' expectations/requirements. On the other hand, the TPM approach involves the stakeholders at the start of a project to set product requirements, and at the end of it for product acceptance, but not really in the middle during the development of the product.
- It has a flexible and adaptive planning approach to project management, focusing on "just-in-time" planning. The project team's planning and product development are iterative (e.g., two weeks), where each next step is planned in detail based on the prior ones. On the other hand, TPM focuses on a detailed master plan created at the start and a rigid management/development/implementation structure.
- It empowers the different project management teams by allowing them to be self-organized and to be more autonomous; the project manager acts more as a facilitator than a central authority who assigns work, controls, and directs the teams. On the other hand, TPMs are often more hierarchical, a top-down approach where the project manager's authority and role are defined by the structure and plan set at the start of the project.

An example where the Adaptive Agile mindset approach differs from the traditional approach is in software development, more specifically, video game development.

Before the rise of digital distribution (e.g., e.g., Steam, PlayStation Network, Blizzard - Battle.net, and Xbox Marketplace), most video games were distributed on CDs or cartridges, and they were developed using the Waterfall approach. An entire game with all its levels and features had to be planned and finalized upfront, no after-release bug fixes or adding features. A team would usually develop a game sequentially through phases like design, development, and testing. At the end of the development process, the game was deemed ready to be pressed onto discs. Once pressed on the discs, there was no easy way to fix bugs or add new content/features; the product was final (set in stone), and no changes were possible.

Today, with the Adaptive Agile approach to project management, video games are developed very differently. Feature planning, design, development, and implementation are done iteratively, often using Scrum methodology. Scrum is based on short planning, design, development, testing, and implementing sprints (e.g., two to four weeks) that deliver a feature, a small functionality, bug fix, or a playable piece of the game. This allows video games to be launched with a “live service” approach, where the game is treated as an ongoing service, allowing games to be released with few core features (even bugs), knowing that new features/content and bugs can be added and fixed after release.

-Alex

References:

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