Understanding Agile

AND AN INTRODUCTION TO SCRUM & KANBAN

WHAT IS AGILE?

Agile is the ability to create and respond to change, in order to succeed in an uncertain and turbulent environment.

So how does Agile apply if we aren't doing software development?

Agile is an umbrella term for a mindset of iterative and incremental methodologies for delivering value. The most popular Agile methodologies include **Scrum** and **Kanban**.

While each of the Agile methodologies is unique in its specific approach, they all share a common vision and core values as expressed in the **Agile Manifesto**.

THE AGILE MANIFESTO

We are uncovering better ways of developing software by doing it and helping others do it.*

Through this work we have come to value:

Individuals & interactions *over processes and tools*
Working software* *over comprehensive documentation*
Customer collaboration *over contract negotiation*
Responding to change *over following a plan*

That is, while there is value in the items on the right, we value the items on the left more.

*By changing the focus from software development/delivery to **delivering value**, it can be applied to other work at GE.

Source: Agile Alliance, https://www.agilealliance.org/agile101/

INTRODUCTION TO SCRUM

Scrum, a type of agile methodology and process framework, is a team-based approach to delivering value early & often in a highly predictable manner to the business.

The **Scrum Team** consists of a Product Owner, a Scrum Master, & the Team. Scrum teams are self-organizing & cross-functional.

Self-organizing teams choose how best to accomplish their work , rather than being directed by others outside the team.

Cross-functional teams have all the competencies needed to accomplish the work without depending on others outside the team.

Scrum Teams deliver products **iteratively** & **incrementally**, maximizing opportunities for feedback.

DID YOU KNOW? A scrum (short for scrummage) is a method of restarting play in rugby that involves players packing closely together with their heads down and attempting to gain possession of the ball.

Source: The Scrum Guide ™, 2016, http://scrumguides.org/

KEY ROLES IN AN AGILE TEAM

PRODUCT OWNER

Product Owner or Service Request Manager

They maximize the value of the product and the work for the Team. Their responsibilities include:

- Creating and communicating the product vision
- Refining and prioritizing the product backlog*
- Defining acceptance criteria, accepts/rejects work
- Managing the product roadmap
- Collaborating with stakeholders, Scrum Master/ Service Delivery Manager, and the Team

SCRUM MASTER

Scrum Master or Service Delivery Manager

They ensure that the team adheres to Scrum/ Kanban methods, practices, and rules while delivering value. Their responsibilities include:

- Helping build self-organizing teams
- Removing impediments
- Keeping the agile process healthy
- Facilitating team cadences
- Empowering the team (servant leader)

THE TEAM

The Team

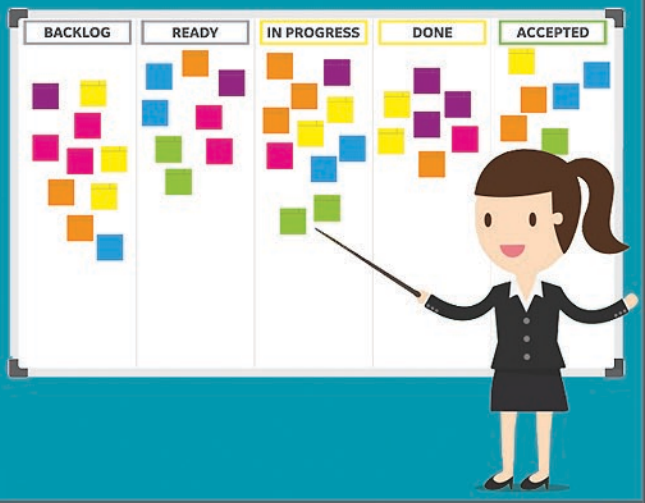
The Team organizes and manages their own work to deliver demonstrable value either at the end of each Sprint (Scrum) or in continuous delivery (Kanban). Their responsibilities include:

- Producing a solution that meets the needs of stakeholders
- Providing full transparency, including work in progress and impediments
- Validating work as early as possible, and working with others to do so
- Proactively looking for ways to improve team performance

WHAT IS KANBAN?

Kanban provides a simple method for visualizing, measuring & optimizing the flow of work within an organization.

It can be utilized in almost any type of work, but works best where teams can create a continuous flow of their output. The principles of Kanban can be applied in almost any context, from your personal or team to-do list to the organizational product pipeline.



DID YOU KNOW? "Kanban" is Japanese for "visual card". Kanban was originally developed at Toyota in the late 1940's as a scheduling approach to manufacturing to maximize efficiency in getting products to and from the assembly line.

six CORE PRACTICES of KANBAN

01 **Visualize the workflow:** Make a clear visual representation of the work so that progress can be obviously monitored

02 **Limit work in progress:** Only a set number of things can be in progress at any one time for the whole team

03 **Manage the flow of work through the system:** Actively monitor and identify hold-ups in the system by daily review

04 **Make Policies Explicit:** Prioritize completion of work in progress over new work. Work already in progress should be completed & approved before new work is taken into the system

05 **Implement Feedback Loops:** Having regular checkpoints and information sharing across the team will drive continuous improvement

06 **Improve Collaboratively:** Embrace "Kaizen", Japanese for "change for better", to create a culture of continuous improvement in which all individuals in a company are engaged

Scrum or Kanban?

Take this short assessment **sc.ge.com/*MyAgile** & find out which method is best for you, based on how you work.

***Product Backlog** is an ordered list of items representing everything that may be needed to deliver a specific outcome based on the customer's needs.

Kanban Sources Referenced:
http://www.djaa.com/blog & http://leankanban.com/project/what-is-km/