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Waterfall / Agile Development

The traditional Waterfall development cycle differs from Agile development primarily due to the phase-by-phase nature. Once development begins on a particular step within the Waterfall method it must be followed through to completion before the next step can be introduced. Agile cycles follow an iteration process allowing the end user to gain access to software earlier. Development occurs using small improvements during the process cycle allowing a more dynamic and flexible way of handling projects. The Waterfall cycle suffers from a linear path, only allowing withdrawal to previous steps if the need arises whereas Agile allows movement to handle unforeseen problems that may occur.

The Agile method emphasizes efficiency at the expense of potential long-term issues such as maintenance. However, compared to the Waterfall method, it can cut costs due to the Waterfall's linearity which makes it difficult to calculate potential costs for bigger projects. To further add on to the linear nature of the method, it can be said that if requirements change it would be more difficult to make adjustments to the software considering the time and cost it took to address the initial problems. Agile seems to be more flexible by allowing smaller increments of improvements to take shape with constant communication between customer and developer.