

# Understanding Agile at a Deeper Level

---



**Chuck Cobb**

AGILE PROJECT MGT AUTHOR AND INSTRUCTOR

@chuckcobb3 [www.managedagile.com](http://www.managedagile.com)



# Agile Business Management Roadmap

## Learning Paths:



**3. Enterprise-level Agile Business Management**

**2. Mastering Agile Business Management**

**1. Introduction to Agile Business Management**



# Course Introduction

---



# Where Does This Course Fit In?

## Mastering Agile Business Management



Understanding Agile Risk Management, Metrics, Stakeholder Mgt, and Agile Contracts

Understanding Adaptive Planning and Agile Requirements Definition Practices

Understanding Lean, Value Stream Analysis, and Value-driven Delivery

Understanding Agile at a Deeper Level



# Course Overview



**Introduction**

**Agile Manifesto Values and Principles**

**Learning to See the Big Picture**

**Design Thinking**

**Managing Flow in Agile Projects**

**Course Summary**



# Understanding Agile at a Deeper Level

---

## AGILE MANIFESTO VALUES AND PRINCIPLES



**Chuck Cobb**

AGILE PROJECT MGT AUTHOR AND INSTRUCTOR

@chuckcobb3 [www.managedagile.com](http://www.managedagile.com)



# Module Overview



- **Agile Manifesto Values**
- **Agile Manifesto Principles (4 Parts)**



# Agile Manifesto Values

---





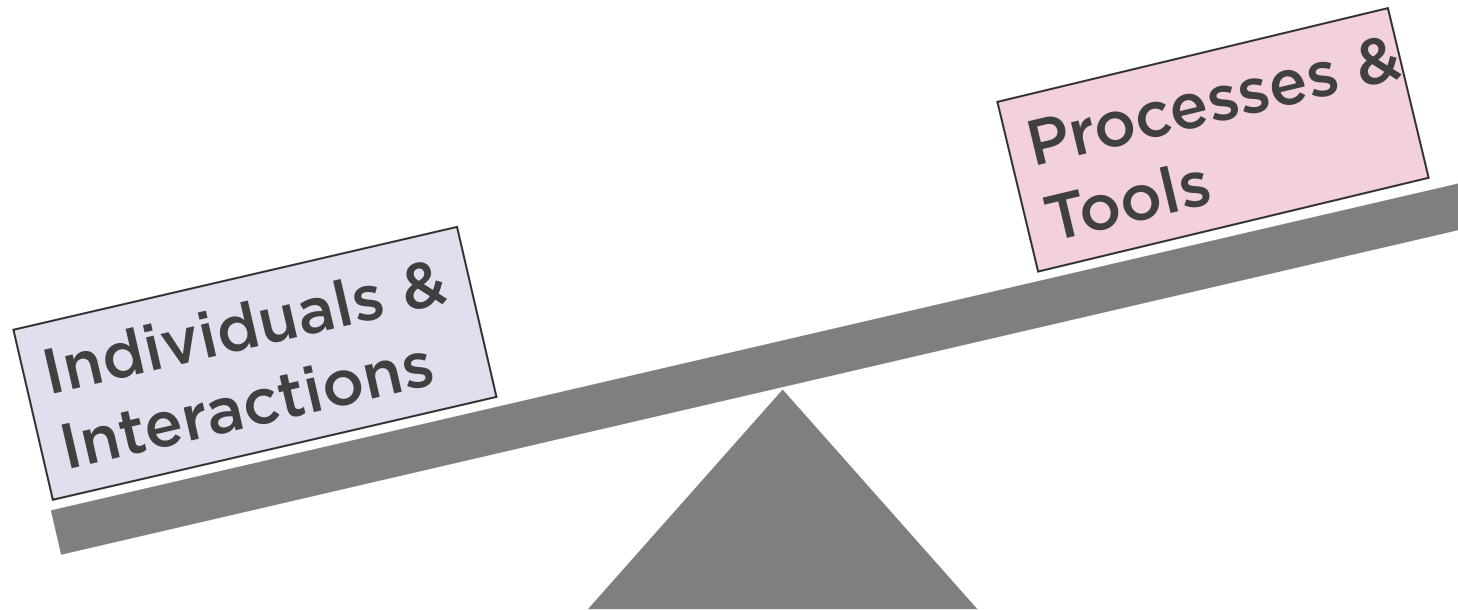
# The Agile Manifesto Values

Individuals and Interactions	Over	Processes and Tools
Working Software	Over	Comprehensive Documentation
Customer Collaboration	Over	Contract Negotiation
Responding to Change	Over	Following a Plan



# The Agile Manifesto Values

These statements are meant to be relative, not absolute. For example:



# The Agile Manifesto Values

## **“Individuals And Interactions Over Processes And Tools”**

Does not mean that there are no processes and tools in an agile project



versus





**This kind of atmosphere is particularly important in an environment that requires creativity and innovation.**



# 1. Individuals and Interactions Over Processes and Tools

Primarily a response to “command-and-control” project management practices

Calls for a softer leadership approach with an emphasis on empowering people to do their jobs

And flexible and adaptive processes

Agile does use well-defined processes like Scrum but the process itself is much more adaptive

Tools can also play a supporting role, particularly when projects are scaled to enterprise levels

The important point is that Agile processes generally depend very heavily on empowered people making intelligent decisions and the power of collaborative teamwork



# The Agile Manifesto Values

## **“Working Software Over Comprehensive Documentation”**

Does not mean that there is no documentation at all in an agile project



versus





Many times online electronic tools that are designed to facilitate collaboration and communication can take the place of hardcopy documentation



## 2. Working Software Over Comprehensive Documentation

Essentially a response to typical phase-gate project management processes that called for extensive documentation deliverables at the end of each phase.

Documentation can inhibit normal communication.

The typical Waterfall project was heavily based on documentation and the end-user doesn't even see what is being developed until the final user acceptance testing at the end of the project.

Many users have a difficult time defining detailed requirements upfront in a project especially in a very uncertain and changing environment

Relying too heavily on documentation can lead to significant miscommunications and misunderstandings about the intent of the requirements

The important point is that documentation should provide value in some way and should play a supporting role and not become an end in-itself in an Agile project





# The Agile Manifesto Values

## **“Customer Collaboration Over Contract Negotiation”**

Does not mean that contracts are incompatible with an agile approach



versus





The important thing is that the level of flexibility in the contract should be consistent with the nature of the requirements and

Both sides need a mutual understanding of the level of uncertainty in the requirements and how the contract will be managed



### 3. Customer Collaboration Over Contract Negotiation

Project Managers for many years have been measured on controlling costs and schedules and doing that has required some form of contract

Agile recognizes that particularly in an uncertain environment, a more collaborative approach can be much more effective

It's better in some cases to create a general agreement based on some high-level requirements and work out the details as the project progresses.

Naturally, this approach requires a spirit of trust and partnership between the project team and the end-customer



# The Agile Manifesto Values

## **“Responding To Change Over Following A Plan”**

Does not mean that agile projects are totally unplanned



versus





Agile uses more of a “rolling wave” planning process

Some level of planning is done upfront based on the level of uncertainty in the project, but much of the detailed planning is deferred until later in the project



## 4. Responding to Change Over Following A Plan

Many projects that have been oriented towards controlling costs and schedules and made it difficult for the customer to change the requirements in the middle of the project

That forces the user to totally define the requirements for a project upfront without even seeing what the final result is going to look like

In many situations, it is more effective to recognize that some level of requirements are going to change and evolve as the project progresses and design the project approach around that kind of change

It's important to recognize that this is not an “all-or-nothing” decision – to have either completely undefined requirements or highly detailed requirements



# Agile Manifesto Principles Part 1

---



# The Agile Manifesto Principles

1	Our highest priority is to satisfy the customer through early and continuous delivery of valuable software
2	Welcome changing requirements, even late in development. Agile processes harness change for the customer's competitive advantage
3	Deliver working software frequently, from a couple of weeks to a couple of months, with a preference to the shorter timescale





# Agile Manifesto Principles

1. Our highest priority is to satisfy the customer through early and continuous delivery of valuable software

Emphasizing early delivery of the software accomplishes two major goals:

It provides an opportunity for the customer to see the software early in the development cycle

Working software is a good measure of progress





Breaking up the effort into well-defined pieces that each have a clearly defined criteria for being considered “Done”, provides a much more factual and objective way of measuring progress



# Agile Manifesto Principles

**2. Welcome changing requirements, even late in development. Agile processes harness change for the customer's competitive advantage**

**Change is expected and welcomed rather than rigidly controlled and limited**

**There are lots of ways to manage change effectively based on a mutual understanding and partnership with the customer**





The important thing is that the project team and the customer should have a mutual understanding upfront of how change will be managed



# Agile Manifesto Principles

**3. Deliver working software frequently, from a couple of weeks to a couple of months, with a preference to the shorter timescale**

Agile development processes such as Scrum are based on continuous improvement

People work more productively given short time-boxes to get things done





A popular Agile mantra is “fail early, fail often”...in other words, its better in many cases to try something quickly and learn from it and make adjustments



# Agile Manifesto Principles Part 2

---



# The Agile Manifesto Principles

4	Business people and developers must work together daily throughout the project
5	Build projects around motivated individuals. Give them the environment and support they need, and trust them to get the job done
6	The most efficient and effective method of conveying information to and within a development team is face-to-face conversation





# Agile Manifesto Principles

## 4. Business people and developers must work together daily throughout the project

This is very consistent with the Agile Manifesto value of “collaboration over contracts”

The degree of engagement, of course, should be appropriate to the nature of the project





Designing an approach that gets the right people engaged at the right time is very important for making the project successful



# Agile Manifesto Principles

**5. Build projects around motivated individuals. Give them the environment and support they need, and trust them to get the job done**

Too often in the past, some project managers have used high-pressure, command-and-control tactics to pressure project teams into delivering results faster

The philosophy of Agile is based on a high-level of empowerment and individual initiative by the people on the project





**As an Agile Project Manager, you may need to adapt your leadership style to fit the situation**



# Agile Manifesto Principles

**6. The most efficient and effective method of conveying information to and within a development team is face-to-face conversation**

This statement also doesn't mean that the only form of communication is direct, face-to-face communications

There are many ways to communicate information in various forms and you need to choose the optimum mix to fit a given situation





The right mix will depend on a number of factors including the scope and complexity of the project and the distribution of the team working on the project



# Agile Manifesto Principles Part 3

---



# The Agile Manifesto Principles

7	Working software is the primary measure of progress.
8	Agile processes promote sustainable development. The sponsors, developers, and users should be able to maintain a constant pace indefinitely.
9	Continuous attention to technical excellence and good design enhances agility.





# The Agile Manifesto Principles

## 7. Working software is the primary measure of progress

In a software project, you typically don't know how complete it really is until it has been tested and validated to be complete

If you don't have a clear definition of "Done", any estimate of percent complete is likely to be suspect





A more accurate measure of progress is to break up a software project into chunks of functionality where each chunk of software can be demonstrated to the user for feedback and acceptance



# Agile Manifesto Principles

**8. Agile processes promote sustainable development. The sponsors, developers, and users should be able to maintain a constant pace indefinitely**

Many of the underpinnings of Agile come from Lean Manufacturing and Total Quality Management

In a manufacturing environment, companies learned many years ago that running a manufacturing plant like a “sweat shop” and forcing workers to work an excessive number of hours under poor conditions does not often result in high quality products





In a situation that depends heavily on the creativity and motivation of the team, it is even more important to create an environment where work is sustainable over a long period of time



# Agile Manifesto Principles

## 9. Continuous attention to technical excellence and good design enhances agility

Agile recognizes the need for doing things the right way to avoid unnecessary rework later

On the other hand, an Agile approach should not result in over-designing or “gold-plating” a product either





In other words, the work should be done to a sufficient level of completeness and quality to fulfill the purpose it was intended to fill and nothing more. Going beyond that level of “just barely good enough” is considered waste



# Agile Manifesto Principles Part 4

---



# The Agile Manifesto Principles

10	Simplicity--the art of maximizing the amount of work <u>not</u> done--is essential.
11	The best architectures, requirements, and designs emerge from self-organizing teams.
12	At regular intervals, the team reflects on how to become more effective, then tunes and adjusts its behavior accordingly.





# Agile Manifesto Principles

## 10. Simplicity--the art of maximizing the amount of work not done--is essential

Many times projects go out of control because the requirements become much too complex and very difficult to implement

An important concept in Agile is called the “Minimum Viable Product”...which defines the minimum set of functional features a product has to have to be viable at all in the marketplace





It's generally much more effective to take an incremental approach to start with something simple and then expand it only as necessary



# Agile Manifesto Principles

## 11. The best architectures, requirements, and designs emerge from self-organizing teams

Sometimes, developers have used the idea of “self-organizing” as an excuse for anarchy, but that is not what was intended

The intent is that if you have the right people on a team and the team is empowered to collectively use all the skills on the team in a collaborative manner, that it will generally deliver a better result than a single individual could deliver acting alone.





High performance, cross-functional teams that work collaboratively can produce superior results



# Agile Manifesto Principles

**12. At regular intervals, the team reflects on how to become more effective, then tunes and adjusts its behavior accordingly**

Agile is based heavily on continuous improvement and using short intervals to reflect on what's working and what's not working

In Scrum, this is called a “retrospective” and it happens at the end of each sprint





**A focus on continuous improvement is essential to a highly adaptive, empirical development process**



Up Next:

Learning to See the Big Picture

---

