

Agile metaphors

Agile way of working as Living in a nudist community

Agile way of working is like living in a nudist community. In a nudist community, you do not hide your true physical appearance. You reveal yourself in the true form. Similarly, in an Agile environment, you have nothing to hide about your work – just make it available for inspection to everyone.

When you visit out of your nudist community, you will wear the clothes to conform to the norms of the new community but it does not mean you need to hide your identity. You talk about your small community. Similarly, when an agilist interacts to the external world, he presents best of Agile and invites others to try in. It does not mean who ever try in will embrace the Agile way of working – some will and some will not.

Agile Way of Delivery

There is a one apple tree in your back yard. Of course, you like apples, so you take care of the tree very diligently throughout the year. You irrigate it regularly; spray insecticides and pesticides to protect it from menacing insects and pests throughout the year. You also provide fertilizer to the tree. In short, you invest your time, money and mental space in the hope of plucking some sweet apples during spring.

Now consider two different scenarios. In the first scenario, you check on your tree every morning. You watch the blooming flowers and they're getting transformed into tiny green fruits. Slowly these apples get bigger and ripe. You see the value is getting delivered incrementally.

Agile Way of Criticism

Let's consider two big parliamentary democracies – India and Germany. In India, it is the Prime Minister while Germany prefers to call the Chancellor.

For a moment presume that the Indian prime minister loses his majority in the parliament. He can be removed by passing a no-confidence motion. The country can be thrown into limbo and may result in a costly and lengthy process of general elections. What a tragedy!

Now jump to Germany. The opposition does not like the current Chancellor and would like to remove her. Can the opposition move a simple no-confidence motion? The answer is No. In a no-confidence motion, the opposition must also propose a new Chancellor's name. No chaos but a positive no-confidence motion!

Enough politics! Now let's come back to the software industry. How many times you have criticized others work – code, architecture, documentation, or any other artifact without suggestion of alternatives. Do you criticize the work of others and but also suggest at least an alternative way of doing the same? If your answer is YES, then you are following the Agile way of criticism

