1. Software Engineering and why do we need it? (HR Question)

Software is a program or **set of programs** containing instructions which **provide desired functionality**. And Engineering is the **processes of designing and building** something that serves a particular purpose and find a cost-effective solution to problems.

> ***Software Engineering*** *is a systematic approach to the design, development, operation, and maintenance of a software system.*

Objectives of Software Engineering:

1. **Maintainability –**
   It should be feasible for the software to evolve to meet changing requirements.
2. **Efficiency –**
   The software should not make wasteful use of computing devices such as memory ,processor cycles etc..
3. **Correctness –**
   A software product is correct, if the different requirements as specified in the SRS document have been correctly implemented.
4. **Reusability –**
   A software product has good reusability, if the different modules of the product can easily be reused to develop new products.
5. **Testability –**
   Here software facilitates both the establishment of test criteria and the evaluation of the software with respect to those criteria.
6. **Reliability –**
   It is an attribute of software quality. The extent to which a program can be expected to perform its desired function, over an arbitrary time period.
7. **Portability –**
   In this case, software can be transferred from one computer system or environment to another.
8. **Adaptability –**
   In this case, software allows differing system constraints and user needs to be satisfied by making changes to the software.
9. **Interoperability** – Capability of 2 or more more functional units to process data cooperatively.

2. Explain the classification of Software.

On the basis of application:

1. **System Software –**
   System Software is necessary to manage the computer resources and support the execution of application programs. Software like operating systems, compilers, editors and drivers etc., come under this category. A computer cannot function without the presence of these. Operating systems are needed to link the machine dependent needs of a program with the capabilities of the machine on which it runs. Compilers translate programs from high-level language to machine language.

2. **Networking and Web Applications Software –**
   Networking Software provides the required support necessary for computers to interact with each other and with data storage facilities. The networking software is also used when software is running on a network of computers (such as World Wide Web). It includes all network management software, server software, security and encryption software and software to develop web-based applications like HTML, PHP, XML, etc.
3. **Embedded Software –**
   This type of software is embedded into the hardware normally in the Read Only Memory (ROM) as a part of a large system and is used to support certain functionality under the control conditions. Examples are software used in instrumentation and control applications like washing machines, satellites, microwaves etc.

4. **Reservation Software –**
   A Reservation system is primarily used to store and retrieve information and perform transactions related to air travel, car rental, hotels, or other activities. They also provide access to bus and railway reservations, although these are not always integrated with the main system. These are also used to relay computerized information for users in the hotel industry, making a reservation and ensuring that the hotel is not overbooked.

5. **Business Software –**
   This category of software is used to support the business applications and is the most widely used category of software. Examples are software for inventory management, accounts, banking, hospitals, schools, stock markets, etc.

6. **Entertainment Software –**
   Education and entertainment software provides a powerful tool for educational agencies, especially those that deal with educating young children. There is a wide range of entertainment software such as computer games, educational games, translation software, mapping software, etc.

7. **Artificial Intelligence Software –**
   Software like expert systems, decision support systems, pattern recognition software, artificial neural networks, etc. come under this category. They involve complex problems which are not affected by complex computations using non-numerical algorithms.

8. **Scientific Software –**
   Scientific and engineering software satisfies the needs of a scientific or engineering user to perform enterprise specific tasks. Such software is written for specific applications using principles, techniques and formulae specific to that field. Examples are software like MATLAB, AUTOCAD, PSPICE, ORCAD, etc.
9. **Utilities Software –**
   The programs coming under this category perform specific tasks and are different from other software in terms of size, cost and complexity. Examples are anti-virus software, voice recognition software, compression programs, etc.

10. **Document Management Software –**
    A Document Management Software is used to track, manage and store documents in order to reduce the paperwork. Such systems are capable of keeping a record of the various versions created and modified by different users (history tracking). They commonly provide storage, versioning, metadata, security, as well as indexing and retrieval capabilities.

On the basis of copyright:

1. **Commercial –**
   It represents the majority of software which we purchase from software companies, commercial computer stores, etc. In this case, when a user buys a software, they acquire a license key to use it. Users are not allowed to make the copies of the software. The copyright of the program is owned by the company.

2. **Shareware –**

Shareware software is also covered under copyright but the purchasers are allowed to make and distribute copies with the condition that after testing the software, if the purchaser adopts it for use, then they must pay for it.
In both of the above types of software, changes to software are not allowed.

3. **Freeware –**

In general, according to freeware software licenses, copies of the software can be made both for archival and distribution purposes but here, distribution cannot be for making a profit. Derivative works and modifications to the software are allowed and encouraged. Decompiling of the program code is also allowed without the explicit permission of the copyright holder.

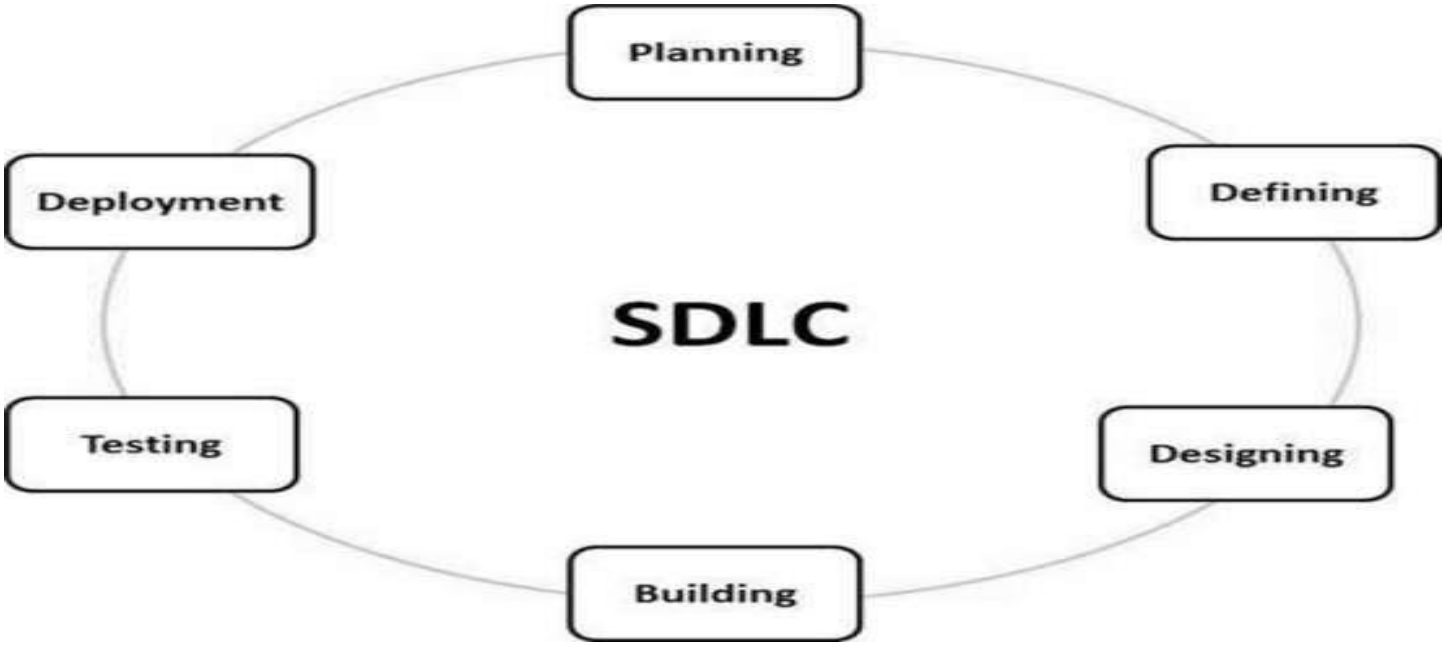
4. **Public Domain –**

In case of public domain software, the original copyright holder explicitly relinquishes all rights to the software. Hence software copies can be made both for archival and distribution purposes with no restrictions on distribution. Modifications to the software and reverse engineering are also allowed.

3. Software Development Life Cycle (SDLC).

SDLC is a process followed for a software project, within a software organization. It consists of a detailed plan **describing how to develop**, **maintain**, replace and alter or enhance specific software. The life cycle defines a methodology for improving the quality of software and the overall development process.

The following figure is a graphical representation of the various stages of a typical SDLC.



A typical Software Development Life Cycle consists of the following stages −

Stage 1: Planning and Requirement Analysis

Requirement analysis is the most important and fundamental stage in SDLC. It is performed by the senior members of the team with inputs from the customer, the sales department, market surveys and domain experts in the industry. This information is then used to plan the basic project approach and to conduct product feasibility study in the economical, operational and technical areas.

Planning for the quality assurance requirements and identification of the risks associated with the project is also done in the planning stage. The outcome of the technical feasibility study is to define the various technical approaches that can be followed to implement the project successfully with minimum risks.

Stage 2: Defining Requirements

Once the requirement analysis is done the next step is to clearly define and document the product requirements and get them approved from the customer or the market analysts. This is done through an **SRS (Software Requirement Specification)** document which consists of all the product requirements to be designed and developed during the project life cycle.

Stage 3: Designing the Product Architecture

SRS is the reference for product architects to come out with the best architecture for the product to be developed. Based on the requirements specified in SRS, usually more than one design approach for the product architecture is proposed and documented in a DDS - Design Document Specification.

This DDS is reviewed by all the important stakeholders and based on various parameters as risk assessment, product robustness, design modularity, budget and time constraints, the best design approach is selected for the product.

A design approach clearly defines all the architectural modules of the product along with its communication and data flow representation with the external and third-party modules (if any). The internal design of all the modules of the proposed architecture should be clearly defined with the minutest of the details in DDS.

Stage 4: Building or Developing the Product

In this stage of SDLC the actual development starts and the product is built. The programming code is generated as per DDS during this stage. If the design is performed in a detailed and organized manner, code generation can be accomplished without much hassle.

Developers must follow the coding guidelines defined by their organization and programming tools like compilers, interpreters, debuggers, etc. are used to generate the code. Different high-level programming languages such as C, C++, Pascal, Java and PHP are used for coding. The programming language is chosen with respect to the type of software being developed.

Stage 5: Testing the Product

This stage is usually a subset of all the stages as in the modern SDLC models, the testing activities are mostly involved in all the stages of SDLC. However, this stage refers to the testing

only stage of the product where product defects are reported, tracked, fixed and retested, until the product reaches the quality standards defined in the SRS.

Stage 6: Deployment in the Market and Maintenance

Once the product is tested and ready to be deployed it is released formally in the appropriate market. Sometimes product deployment happens in stages as per the business strategy of that organization. The product may first be released in a limited segment and tested in the real business environment (UAT- User acceptance testing).

Then based on the feedback, the product may be released as it is or with suggested enhancements in the targeting market segment. After the product is released in the market, its maintenance is done for the existing customer base.

4. SDLC Models (Important).

There are various software development life cycle models defined and designed which are followed during the software development process. These models are also referred as Software Development Process Models". Each process model follows a Series of steps unique to its type to ensure success in the process of software development.

Following are the most important and popular SDLC models followed in the industry −

- Waterfall Model
- Iterative Model
- Spiral Model
- V-Model
- Agile Model

Waterfall Model

The Waterfall Model was the first Process Model to be introduced. It is also referred to as a **linear-sequential life cycle model**. It is very simple to understand and use. In a waterfall model, each phase must be completed before the next phase can begin and there is no overlapping in the phases.

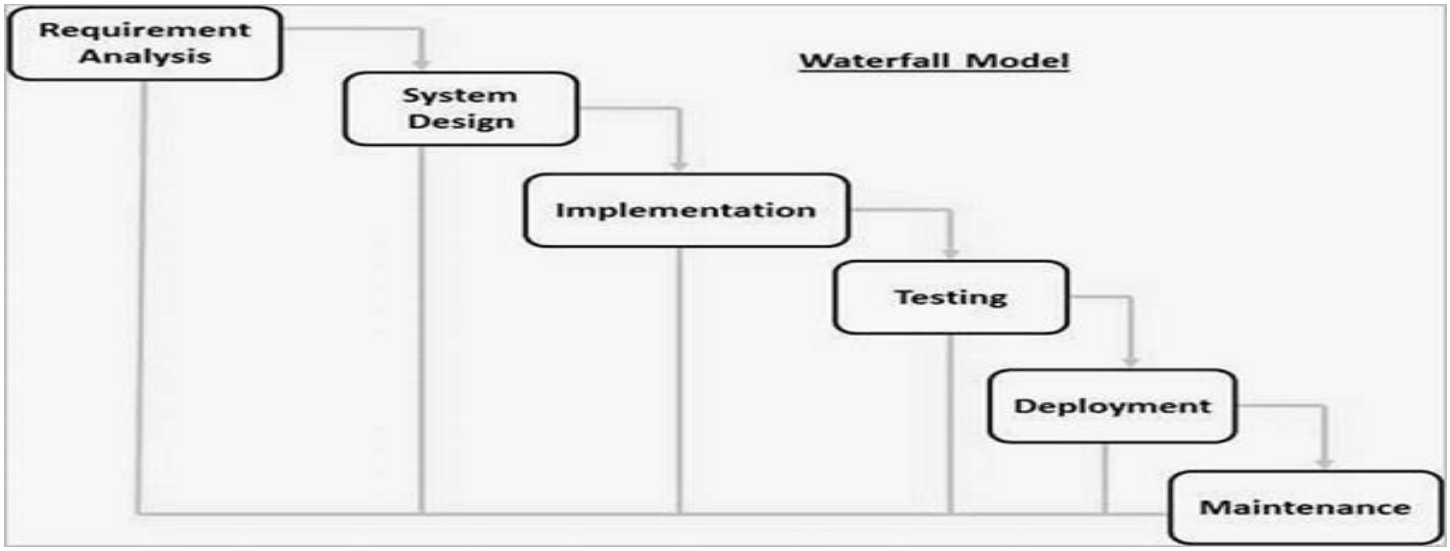
The Waterfall model is the earliest SDLC approach that was used for software development.

The waterfall Model illustrates the software development process in a linear sequential flow. This means that any phase in the development process begins only if the previous phase is complete. In this waterfall model, the phases do not overlap.

Waterfall Model – Design

Waterfall approach was first SDLC Model to be used widely in Software Engineering to ensure success of the project. In "The Waterfall" approach, the whole process of software development is divided into separate phases. In this Waterfall model, typically, the outcome of one phase acts as the input for the next phase sequentially.

The following illustration is a representation of the different phases of the Waterfall Model.



The sequential phases in Waterfall model are −

- **Requirement Gathering and analysis** − All possible requirements of the system to be developed are captured in this phase and documented in a requirement specification document.
- **System Design** − The requirement specifications from first phase are studied in this phase and the system design is prepared. This system design helps in specifying hardware and system requirements and helps in defining the overall system architecture.
- **Implementation** − With inputs from the system design, the system is first developed in small programs called units, which are integrated in the next phase. Each unit is developed and tested for its functionality, which is referred to as Unit Testing.
- **Integration and Testing** − All the units developed in the implementation phase are integrated into a system after testing of each unit. Post integration the entire system is tested for any faults and failures.
- **Deployment of system** − Once the functional and non-functional testing is done; the product is deployed in the customer environment or released into the market.
- **Maintenance** − There are some issues which come up in the client environment. To fix those issues, patches are released. Also to enhance the product some better versions are released. Maintenance is done to deliver these changes in the customer environment.

All these phases are cascaded to each other in which progress is seen as flowing steadily downwards (like a waterfall) through the phases. The next phase is started only after the defined set of goals are achieved for previous phase and it is signed off, so the name "Waterfall Model". In this model, phases do not overlap.

Iterative Model

In the Iterative model, iterative process starts with a simple implementation of a small set of the software requirements and iteratively enhances the evolving versions until the complete system is implemented and ready to be deployed.

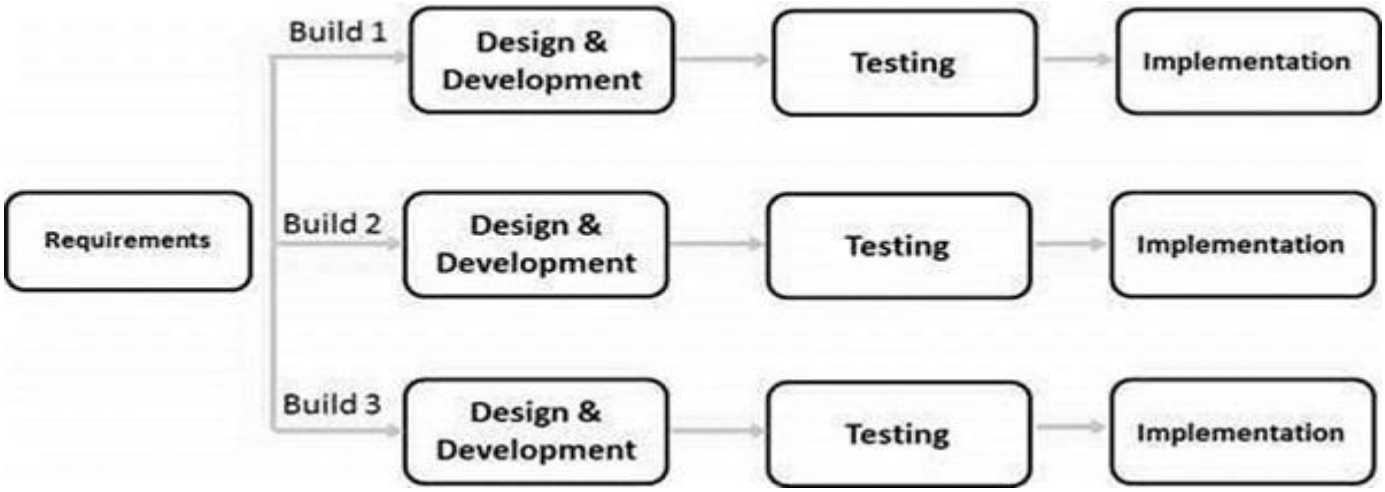
An iterative life cycle model does not attempt to start with a full specification of requirements. Instead, development begins by specifying and implementing just part of the software, which

is then reviewed to identify further requirements. This process is then repeated, producing a new version of the software at the end of each iteration of the model.

Iterative Model – Design

Iterative process starts with a simple implementation of a subset of the software requirements and iteratively enhances the evolving versions until the full system is implemented. At each iteration, design modifications are made and new functional capabilities are added. The basic idea behind this method is to develop a system through repeated cycles (iterative) and in smaller portions at a time (incremental).

The following illustration is a representation of the Iterative and Incremental model −



Iterative and Incremental development is a combination of both iterative design or iterative method and incremental build model for development. "During software development, more than one iteration of the software development cycle may be in progress at the same time." This process may be described as an "evolutionary acquisition" or "incremental build" approach."

In this incremental model, the whole requirement is divided into various builds. During each iteration, the development module goes through the requirements, design, implementation and testing phases. Each subsequent release of the module adds function to the previous release. The process continues till the complete system is ready as per the requirement.

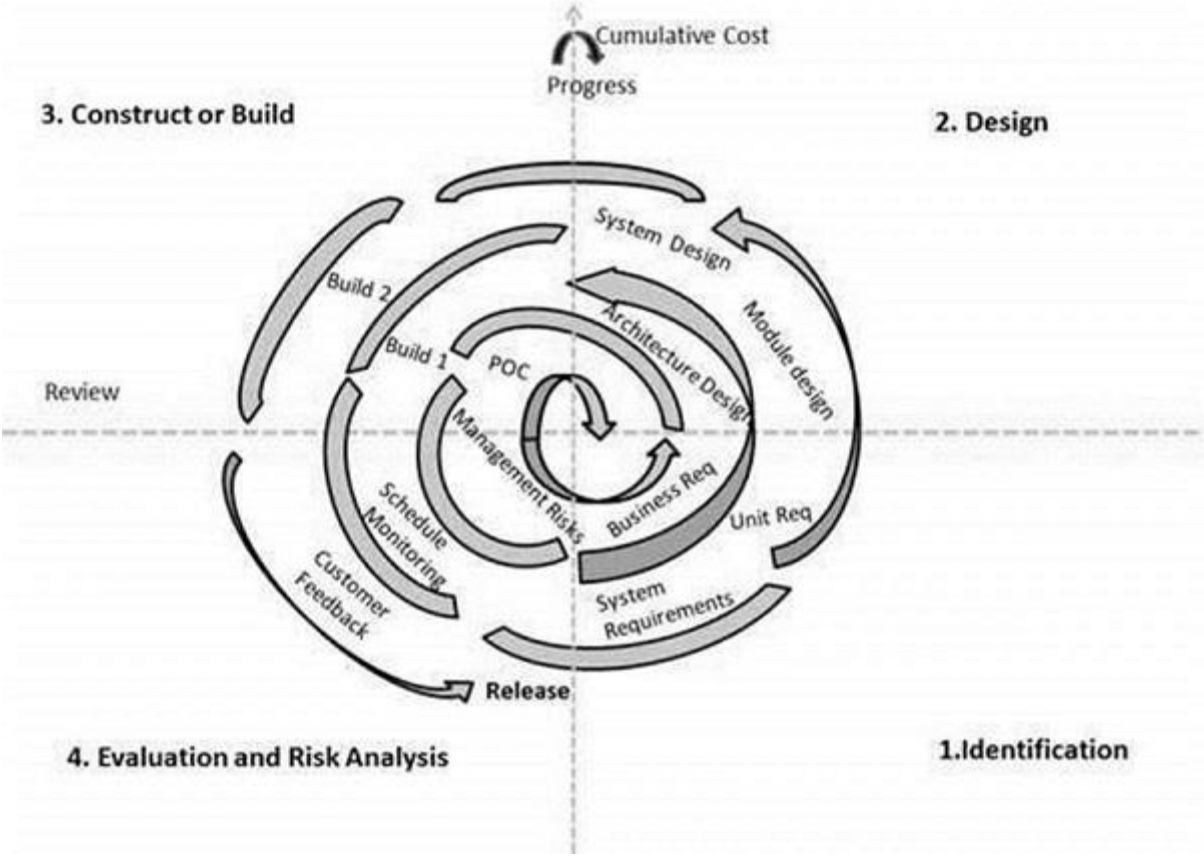
The key to a successful use of an iterative software development lifecycle is rigorous validation of requirements, and verification & testing of each version of the software against those requirements within each cycle of the model. As the software evolves through successive cycles, tests must be repeated and extended to verify each version of the software.

Spiral Model

The spiral model combines the idea of iterative development with the systematic, controlled aspects of the waterfall model. This Spiral model is a combination of iterative development process model and sequential linear development model i.e. the waterfall model with a very high emphasis on risk analysis. It allows incremental releases of the product or incremental refinement through each iteration around the spiral.

Spiral Model – Design

The following illustration is a representation of the different phases of the Spiral Model.



The spiral model has four phases. A software project repeatedly passes through these phases in iterations called Spirals.

Identification

This phase starts with gathering the business requirements in the baseline spiral. In the subsequent spirals as the product matures, identification of system requirements, subsystem requirements and unit requirements are all done in this phase.

This phase also includes understanding the system requirements by continuous communication between the customer and the system analyst. At the end of the spiral, the product is deployed in the identified market.

Design

The Design phase starts with the conceptual design in the baseline spiral and involves architectural design, logical design of modules, physical product design and the final design in the subsequent spirals.

Construct or Build

The Construct phase refers to production of the actual software product at every spiral. In the baseline spiral, when the product is just thought of and the design is being developed a POC (Proof of Concept) is developed in this phase to get customer feedback.

Then in the subsequent spirals with higher clarity on requirements and design details a working model of the software called build is produced with a version number. These builds are sent to the customer for feedback.

Evaluation and Risk Analysis

Risk Analysis includes identifying, estimating and monitoring the technical feasibility and management risks, such as schedule slippage and cost overrun. After testing the build, at the end of first iteration, the customer evaluates the software and provides feedback.

Based on the customer evaluation, the software development process enters the next iteration and subsequently follows the linear approach to implement the feedback suggested by the customer. The process of iterations along the spiral continues throughout the life of the software.

V Model

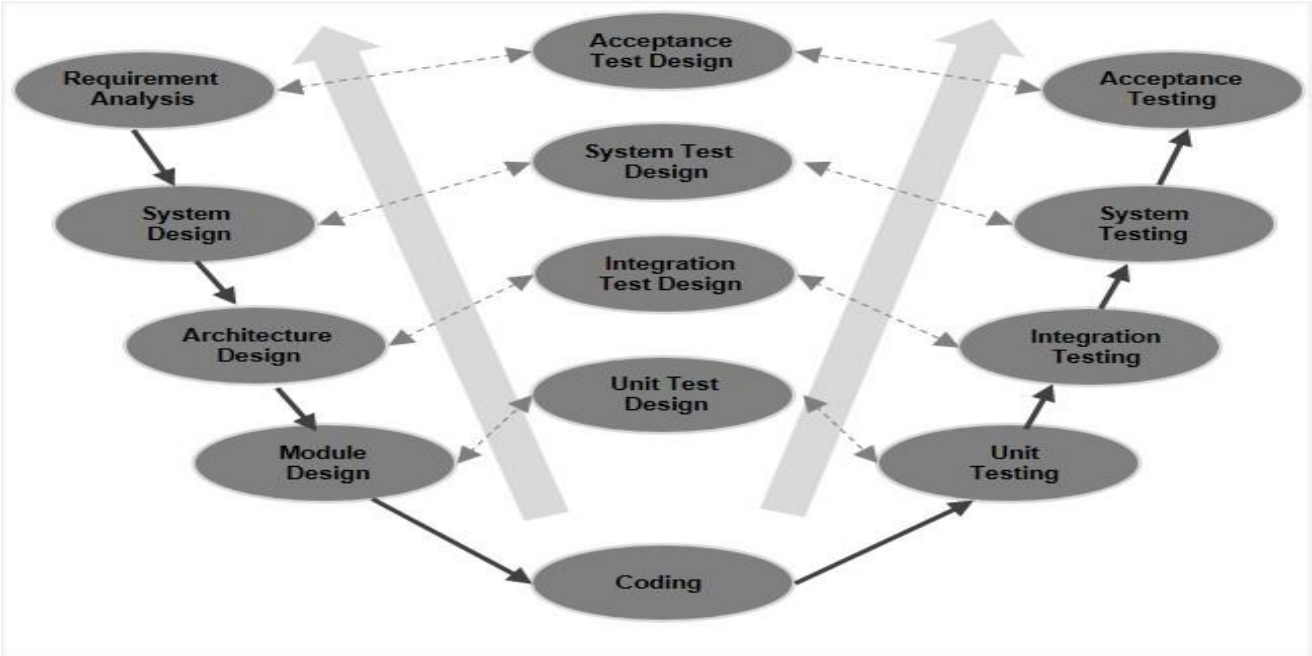
The V-model is an SDLC model where execution of processes happens in a sequential manner in a V-shape. It is also known as **Verification and Validation model**.

The V-Model is an extension of the waterfall model and is based on the association of a testing phase for each corresponding development stage. This means that for every single phase in the development cycle, there is a directly associated testing phase. This is a highly-disciplined model and the next phase starts only after completion of the previous phase.

V-Model – Design

Under the V-Model, the corresponding testing phase of the development phase is planned in parallel. So, there are Verification phases on one side of the 'V' and Validation phases on the other side. The Coding Phase joins the two sides of the V-Model.

The following illustration depicts the different phases in a V-Model of the SDLC.



V-Model - Verification Phases

There are several Verification phases in the V-Model, each of these are explained in detail below.

Business Requirement Analysis

This is the first phase in the development cycle where the product requirements are understood from the customer's perspective. This phase involves detailed communication with the customer to understand his expectations and exact requirement. This is a very important activity and needs to be managed well, as most of the customers are not sure about what exactly they need. The **acceptance test design planning** is done at this stage as business requirements can be used as an input for acceptance testing.

System Design

Once you have the clear and detailed product requirements, it is time to design the complete system. The system design will have the understanding and detailing the complete hardware and communication setup for the product under development. The system test plan is developed based on the system design. Doing this at an earlier stage leaves more time for the actual test execution later.

Architectural Design

Architectural specifications are understood and designed in this phase. Usually more than one technical approach is proposed and based on the technical and financial feasibility the final decision is taken. The system design is broken down further into modules taking up different functionality. This is also referred to as **High Level Design (HLD)**.

The data transfer and communication between the internal modules and with the outside world (other systems) is clearly understood and defined in this stage. With this information, integration tests can be designed and documented during this stage.

Module Design

In this phase, the detailed internal design for all the system modules is specified, referred to as **Low Level Design (LLD)**. It is important that the design is compatible with the other modules in the system architecture and the other external systems. The unit tests are an essential part of any development process and helps eliminate the maximum faults and errors at a very early stage. These unit tests can be designed at this stage based on the internal module designs.

Coding Phase

The actual coding of the system modules designed in the design phase is taken up in the Coding phase. The best suitable programming language is decided based on the system and architectural requirements.

The coding is performed based on the coding guidelines and standards. The code goes through numerous code reviews and is optimized for best performance before the final build is checked into the repository.

Validation Phases

The different Validation Phases in a V-Model are explained in detail below.

Unit Testing

Unit tests designed in the module design phase are executed on the code during this validation phase. Unit testing is the testing at code level and helps eliminate bugs at an early stage, though all defects cannot be uncovered by unit testing.

Integration Testing

Integration testing is associated with the architectural design phase. Integration tests are performed to test the coexistence and communication of the internal modules within the system.

System Testing

System testing is directly associated with the system design phase. System tests check the entire system functionality and the communication of the system under development with external systems. Most of the software and hardware compatibility issues can be uncovered during this system test execution.

Acceptance Testing

Acceptance testing is associated with the business requirement analysis phase and involves testing the product in user environment. Acceptance tests uncover the compatibility issues with the other systems available in the user environment. It also discovers the non-functional issues such as load and performance defects in the actual user environment.

Agile Model

Agile SDLC model is a combination of iterative and incremental process models with focus on process adaptability and customer satisfaction by rapid delivery of working software product. Agile Methods break the product into small incremental builds. These builds are provided in iterations. Each iteration typically lasts from about one to three weeks. Every iteration involves cross functional teams working simultaneously on various areas like −

- Planning
- Requirements Analysis
- Design
- Coding
- Unit Testing and
- Acceptance Testing.

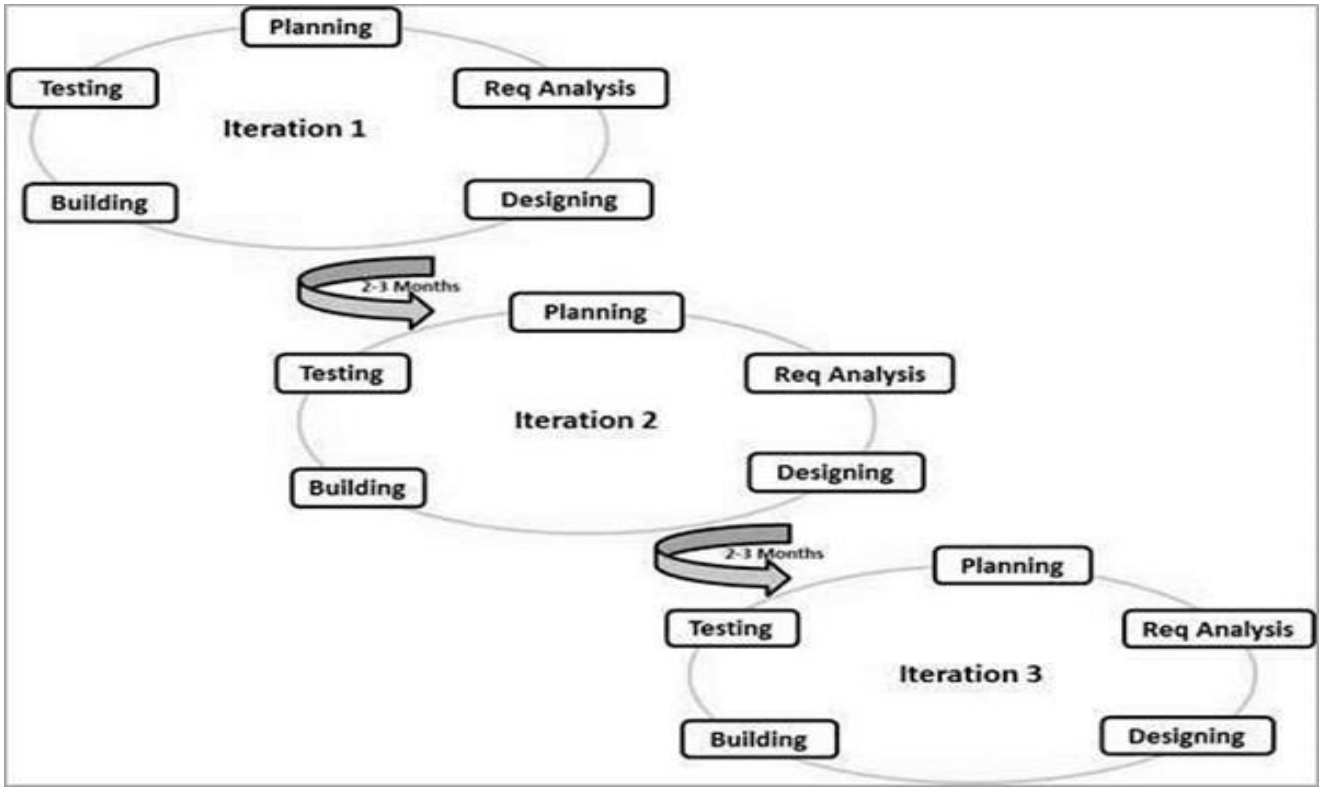
At the end of the iteration, a working product is displayed to the customer and important stakeholders.

What is Agile?

Agile model believes that every project needs to be handled differently and the existing methods need to be tailored to best suit the project requirements. In Agile, the tasks are divided to time boxes (small time frames) to deliver specific features for a release.

Iterative approach is taken and working software build is delivered after each iteration. Each build is incremental in terms of features; the final build holds all the features required by the customer.

Here is a graphical illustration of the Agile Model –



The Agile thought process had started early in the software development and started becoming popular with time due to its flexibility and adaptability.

The most popular Agile methods include Rational Unified Process (1994), Scrum (1995), Crystal Clear, Extreme Programming (1996), Adaptive Software Development, Feature Driven Development, and Dynamic Systems Development Method (DSDM) (1995). These are now collectively referred to as **Agile Methodologies**, after the Agile Manifesto was published in 2001.

Following are the Agile Manifesto principles −

- **Individuals and interactions** − In Agile development, self-organization and motivation are important, as are interactions like co-location and pair programming.
- **Working software** − Demo working software is considered the best means of communication with the customers to understand their requirements, instead of just depending on documentation.
- **Customer collaboration** − As the requirements cannot be gathered completely in the beginning of the project due to various factors, continuous customer interaction is very important to get proper product requirements.

- **Responding to change** − Agile Development is focused on quick responses to change and continuous development.

Agile Vs Traditional SDLC Models

Agile is based on the **adaptive software development methods**, whereas the traditional SDLC models like the waterfall model is based on a predictive approach. Predictive teams in the traditional SDLC models usually work with detailed planning and have a complete forecast of the exact tasks and features to be delivered in the next few months or during the product life cycle.

Predictive methods entirely depend on the **requirement analysis and planning** done in the beginning of cycle. Any changes to be incorporated go through a strict change control management and prioritization.

Agile uses an **adaptive approach** where there is no detailed planning and there is clarity on future tasks only in respect of what features need to be developed. There is feature driven development and the team adapts to the changing product requirements dynamically. The product is tested very frequently, through the release iterations, minimizing the risk of any major failures in future.

Customer Interaction is the backbone of this Agile methodology, and open communication with minimum documentation are the typical features of Agile development environment. The agile teams work in close collaboration with each other and are most often located in the same geographical location.