

Agile Software Development



[Agile Methods]

Overview:

- Focus on the code rather than the design
- Are based on an iterative approach to software development
- Are intended to deliver working software quickly and evolve this quickly to meet changing requirements.

The aim of agile methods is to reduce overheads in the software process (e.g. by limiting documentation) and to be able to respond quickly to changing requirements without excessive rework.

Principles of Agile Methods:

Principle	Description
Customer involvement	Customers should be closely involved throughout the development process. Their role is provide and prioritize new system requirements and to evaluate the iterations of the system.
Incremental delivery	The software is developed in increments with the customer specifying the requirements to be included in each increment.
People not process	The skills of the development team should be recognized and exploited. Team members should be left to develop their own ways of working without prescriptive processes.
Embrace change	Expect the system requirements to change and so design the system to accommodate these changes.
Maintain simplicity	Focus on simplicity in both the software being developed and in the development process. Wherever possible, actively work to eliminate complexity from the system.

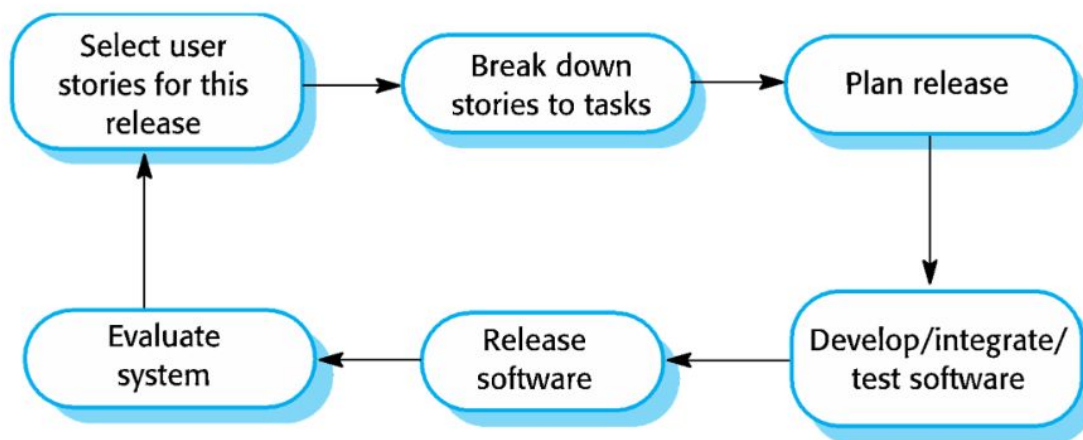
Agile Method Applicability:

- Product development where a software company is developing a small or medium-sized product for sale.
 - Virtually all software products and apps are now developed using an agile approach
- Custom system development within an organization, where there is a clear commitment from the customer to become involved in the development process and where there are few external rules and regulations that affect the software.

[Agile Development Techniques]

Extreme Programming:

- Extreme Programming (XP) takes an 'extreme' approach to iterative development:
 - New versions may be built several times per day;
 - Increments are delivered to customers every 2 weeks;
 - All tests must be run for every build and the build is only accepted if tests run successfully
- Extreme Programming Release Cycles:



- Extreme Programming Practices:

Principle or practice	Description
Incremental planning	Requirements are recorded on story cards and the stories to be included in a release are determined by the time available and their relative priority. The developers break these stories into development 'Tasks'. See Figures 3.5 and 3.6.
Small releases	The minimal useful set of functionality that provides business value is developed first. Releases of the system are frequent and incrementally add functionality to the first release.
Simple design	Enough design is carried out to meet the current requirements and no more.
Test-first development	An automated unit test framework is used to write tests for a new piece of functionality before that functionality itself is implemented.
Refactoring	All developers are expected to refactor the code continuously as soon as possible code improvements are found. This keeps the code simple and maintainable.
Pair programming	Developers work in pairs, checking each other's work and providing the support to always do a good job.
Collective ownership	The pairs of developers work on all areas of the system, so that no islands of expertise develop and all the developers take responsibility for all of the code. Anyone can change anything.
Continuous integration	As soon as the work on a task is complete, it is integrated into the whole system. After any such integration, all the unit tests in the system must pass.
Sustainable pace	Large amounts of overtime are not considered acceptable as the net effect is often to reduce code quality and medium term productivity
On-site customer	A representative of the end-user of the system (the customer) should be available full time for the use of the XP team. In an extreme programming process, the customer is a member of the development team and is responsible for bringing system requirements to the team for implementation.

Pair Programming:

- Pair programming involves programmers working in pairs, developing code together.
- This helps develop common ownership of code and spreads knowledge across the team.
- It serves as an informal review process as each line of code is looked at by more than 1 person.
- It encourages refactoring as the whole team can benefit from improving the system code.
- In pair programming, programmers sit together at the same computer to develop the software.
- Pairs are created dynamically so that all team members work with each other during the development process.
- The sharing of knowledge that happens during pair programming is very important as it reduces the overall risks to a project when team members leave.
- Pair programming is not necessarily inefficient and there is some evidence that suggests that a pair working together is more efficient than 2 programmers working separately.

[Agile Project Management]

Overview:

- The principal responsibility of software project managers is to manage the project so that the software is delivered on time and within the planned budget for the project.
- The standard approach to project management is plan-driven. Managers draw up a plan for the project showing what should be delivered, when it should be delivered and who will work on the development of the project deliverables.
- Agile project management requires a different approach, which is adapted to incremental development and the practices used in agile methods.

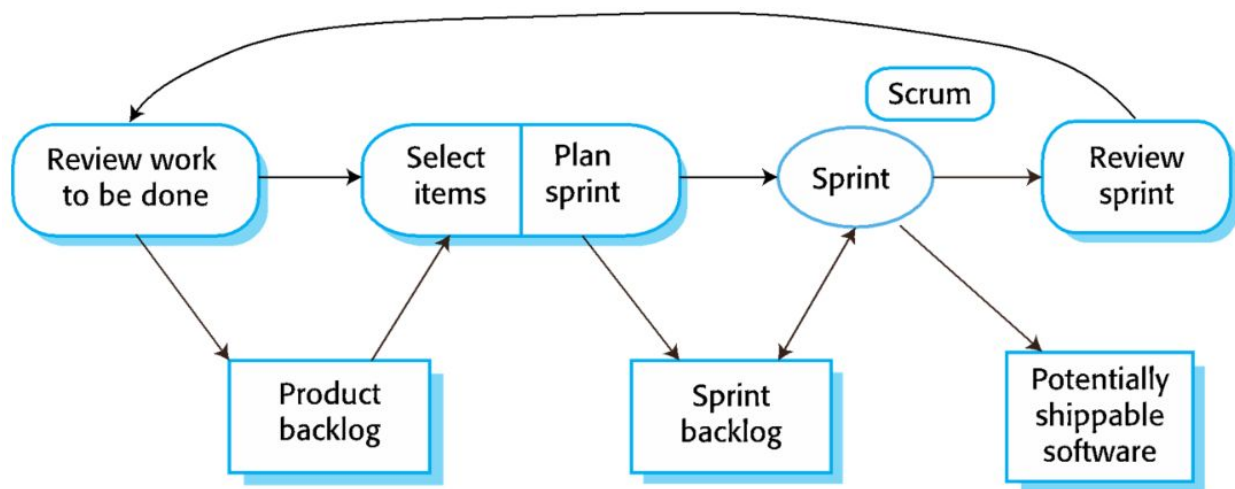
Scrum:

- Scrum is an agile method that focuses on managing iterative development rather than specific agile practices.
- There are three phases in Scrum.
 - The initial phase is an outline planning phase where you establish the general objectives for the project and design the software architecture.
 - This is followed by a series of sprint cycles, where each cycle develops an increment of the system.
 - The project closure phase wraps up the project, completes required documentation such as system help frames and user manuals and assesses the lessons learned from the project.

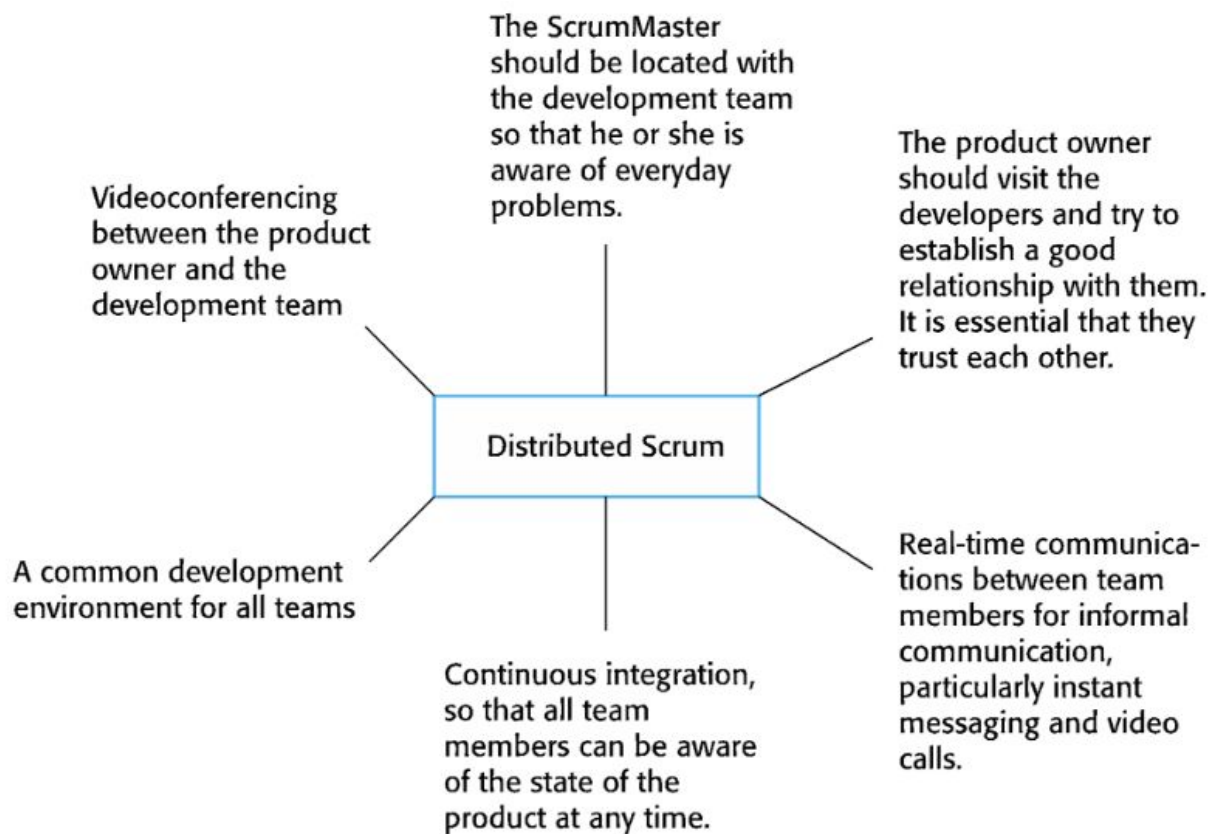
- Scrum Terminology:

Scrum term	Definition
Scrum	A daily meeting of the Scrum team that reviews progress and prioritizes work to be done that day. Ideally, this should be a short face-to-face meeting that includes the whole team.
ScrumMaster	The ScrumMaster is responsible for ensuring that the Scrum process is followed and guides the team in the effective use of Scrum. He or she is responsible for interfacing with the rest of the company and for ensuring that the Scrum team is not diverted by outside interference. The Scrum developers are adamant that the ScrumMaster should not be thought of as a project manager. Others, however, may not always find it easy to see the difference.
Sprint	A development iteration. Sprints are usually 2-4 weeks long.
Velocity	An estimate of how much product backlog effort that a team can cover in a single sprint. Understanding a team's velocity helps them estimate what can be covered in a sprint and provides a basis for measuring improving performance.
Development team	A self-organizing group of software developers, which should be no more than 7 people. They are responsible for developing the software and other essential project documents.
Potentially shippable product increment	The software increment that is delivered from a sprint. The idea is that this should be 'potentially shippable' which means that it is in a finished state and no further work, such as testing, is needed to incorporate it into the final product. In practice, this is not always achievable.
Product backlog	This is a list of 'to do' items which the Scrum team must tackle. They may be feature definitions for the software, software requirements, user stories or descriptions of supplementary tasks that are needed, such as architecture definition or user documentation.
Product owner	An individual (or possibly a small group) whose job is to identify product features or requirements, prioritize these for development and continuously review the product backlog to ensure that the project continues to meet critical business needs. The Product Owner can be a customer but might also be a product manager in a software company or other stakeholder representative.

- Scrum Sprint Cycle



- Distributed Scrum:



[Scaling Agile Methods]

Overview:

- Agile methods have proved to be successful for small and medium sized projects that can be developed by a small co-located team.
- It is sometimes argued that the success of these methods comes because of improved communications which is possible when everyone is working together.
- Scaling up agile methods involves changing these to cope with larger, longer projects where there are multiple development teams, perhaps working in different locations.

- Scaling Out & Scaling up:

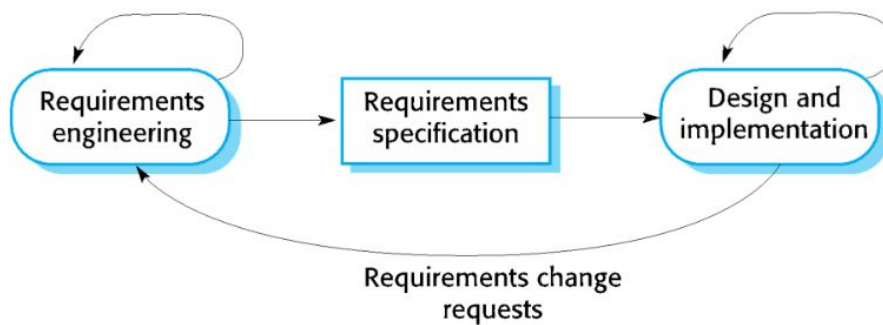
- 'Scaling up' is concerned with using agile methods for developing large software systems that cannot be developed by a small team.
- 'Scaling out' is concerned with how agile methods can be introduced across a large organization with many years of software development experience.
- When scaling agile methods it is important to maintain agile fundamentals:
 - Flexible planning, frequent system releases, continuous integration, test-driven development and good team communications.

[Plan-Driven & Agile Development]

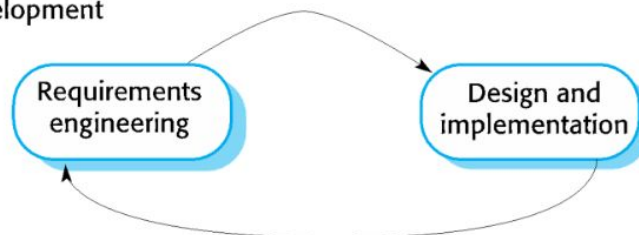
Plan-driven development

- A plan-driven approach to software engineering is based around separate development stages with the outputs to be produced at each of these stages planned in advance.
- Not necessarily waterfall model – plan-driven, incremental development is possible
- Iteration occurs within activities.

Plan-based development



Agile development



Agile and Plan-based factors

