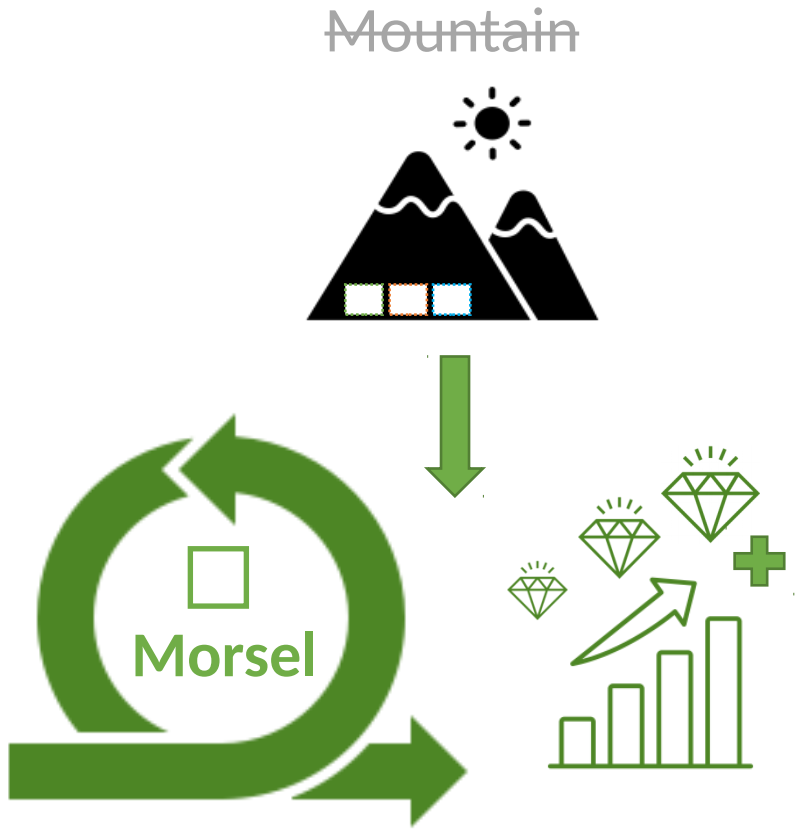
Agile Thinking

Why? What? How?



Andy Bleach, January 2024

Who Am I?

Andy Bleach

Agenda

1. Once upon a time…
2. What is Agile Thinking?
3. Exercise: Agile in practice
4. Summary & Questions

Objectives

By the end of today's session you will be able to:

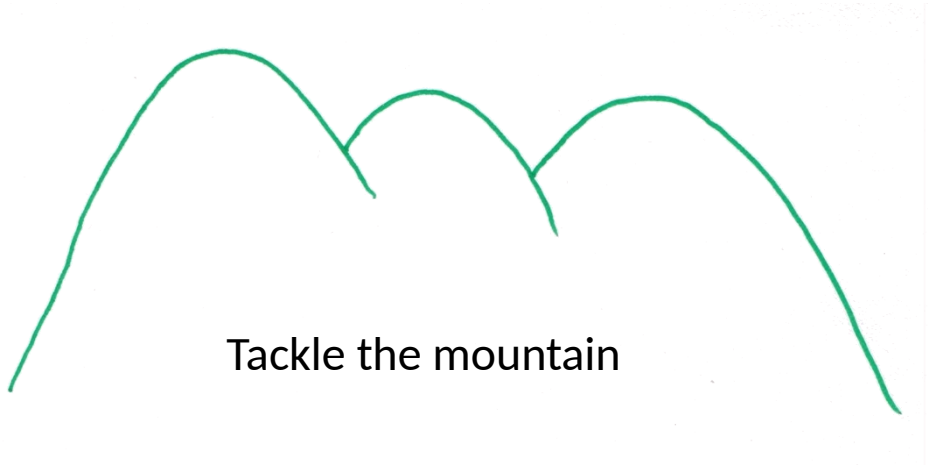
1. Explain why agile thinking developed
2. Describe some of the key elements of agile thinking
3. Understand some of the benefits and challenges in using agile thinking

Why?

A story of mountains and morsels…

Why Agile?

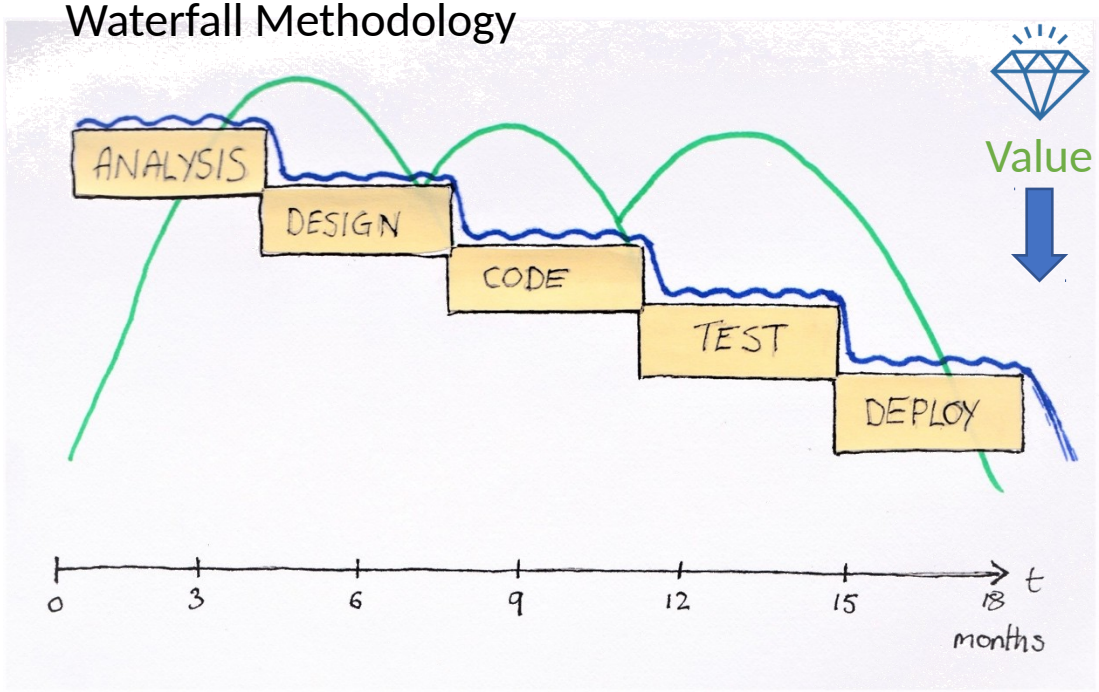
The traditional approach to software development (borrowed from engineering)…



Tackle the mountain

Up-front Planning

Waterfall Methodology

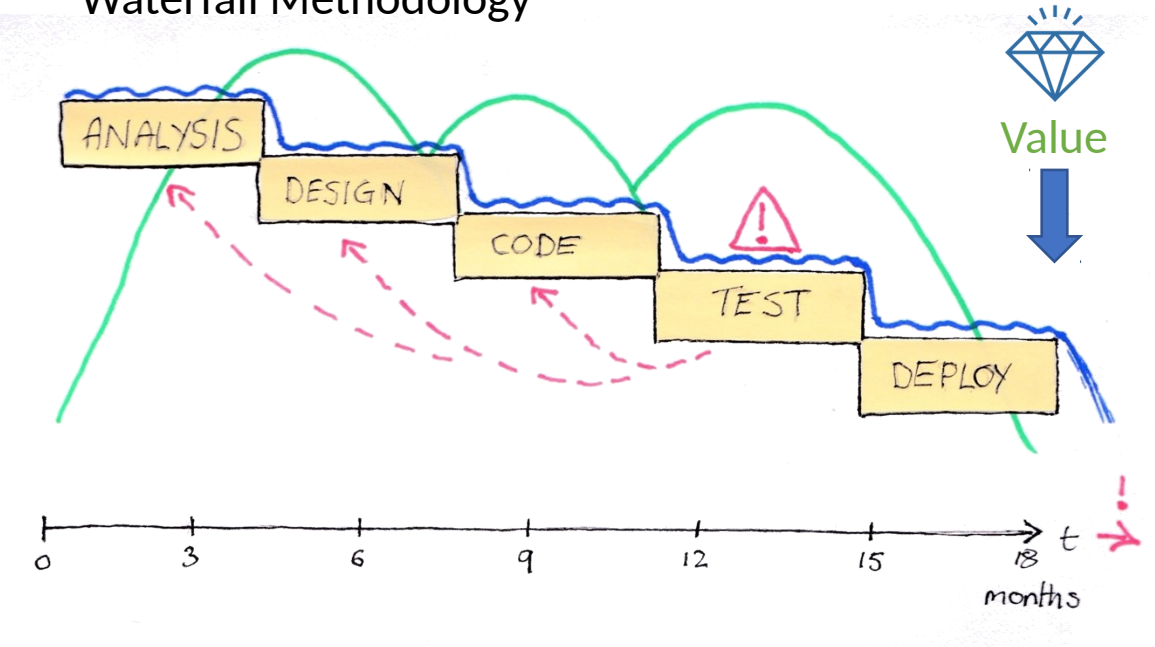


Unknowns

Why Agile?

Why Agile?

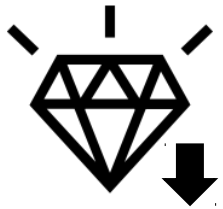
Waterfall Methodology



Unknowns

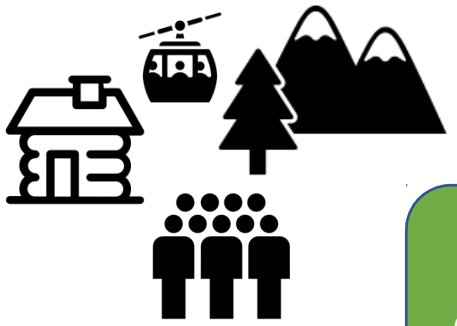
More resource
(More money!)

More time
(Delay release)



Reduce quality
(Deliver less)

Agile Thinking - The ‘Beginning’



“We are uncovering better ways of developing software by doing it and helping others do it”

- February 2001
- Ski Lodge, Utah
- 17 IT Professionals

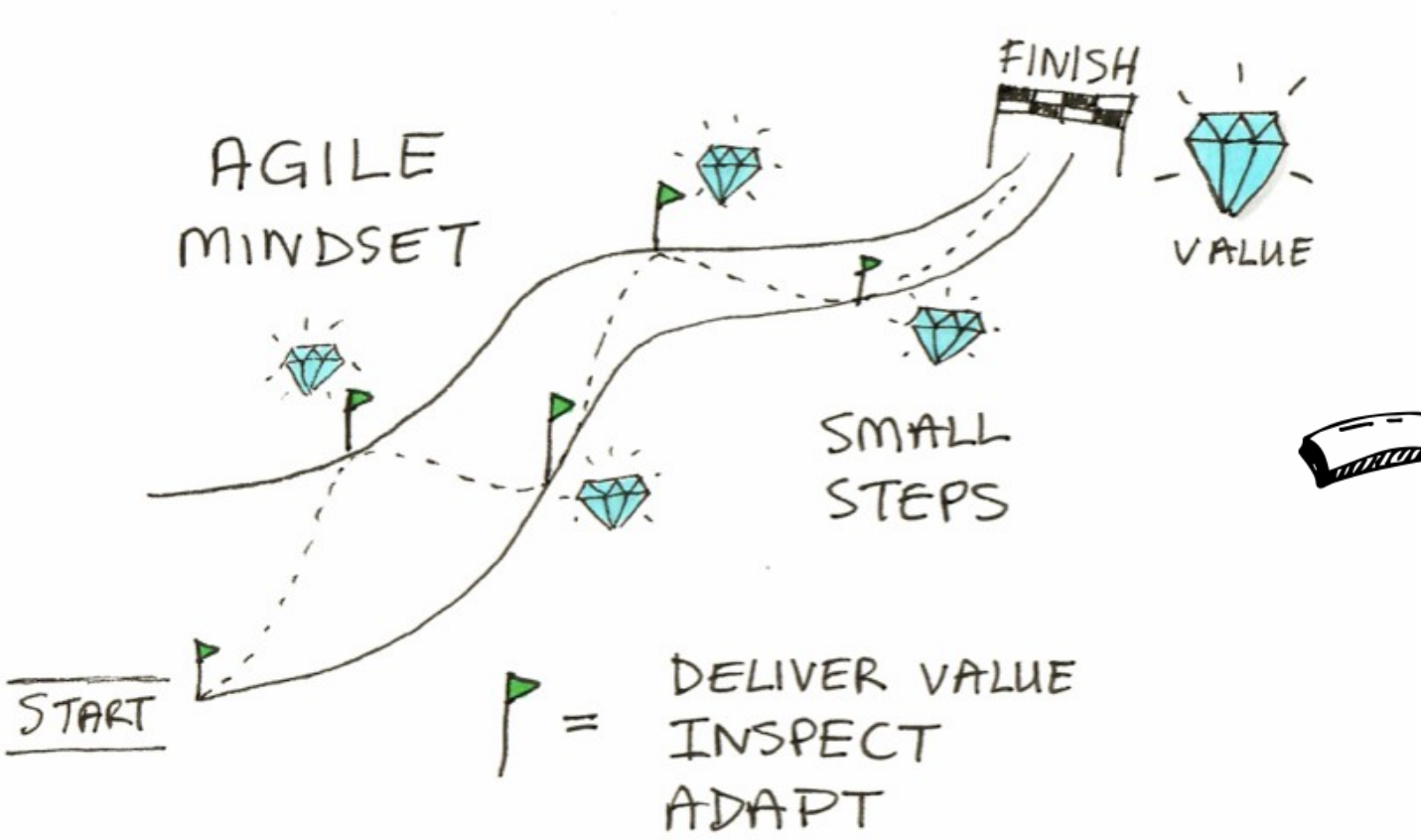
Why Agile?

Empiricism:
Knowledge comes only or primarily from sensory experience

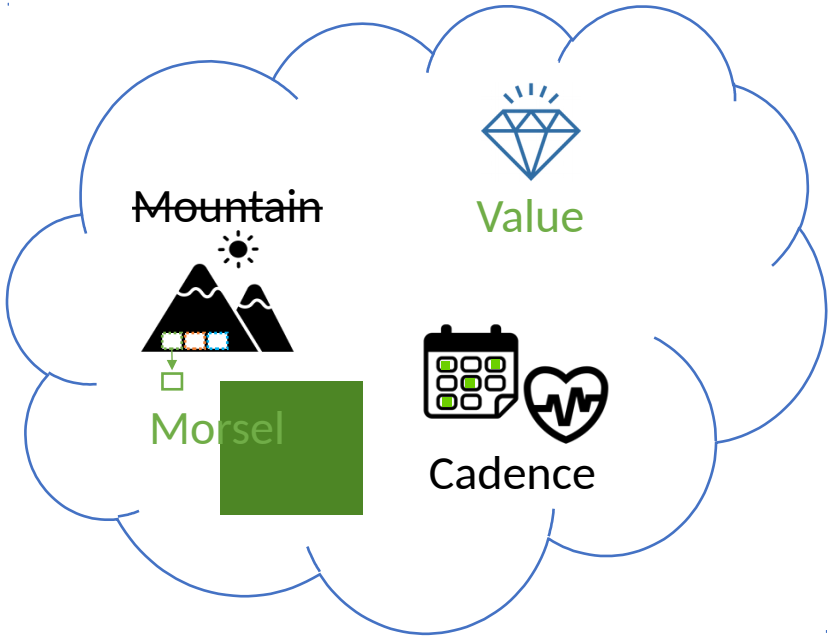
What?

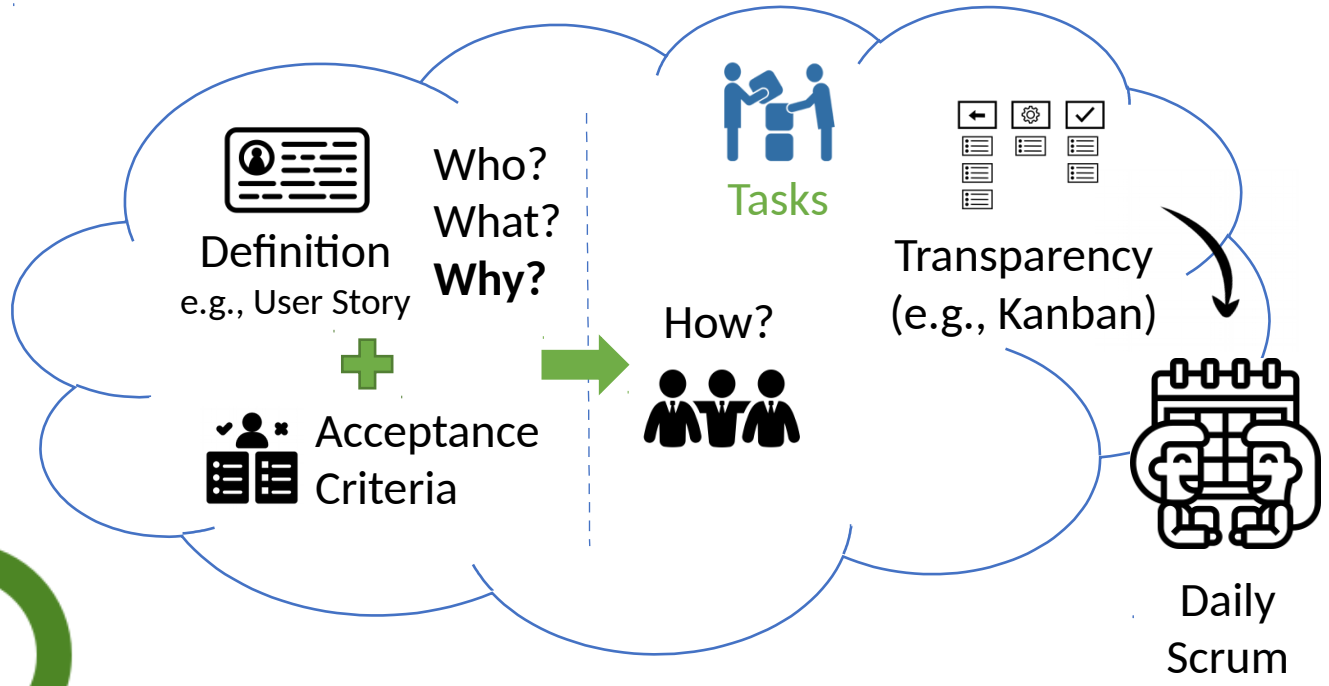
Typical elements of Agile Thinking

Agile Thinking - The Mindset

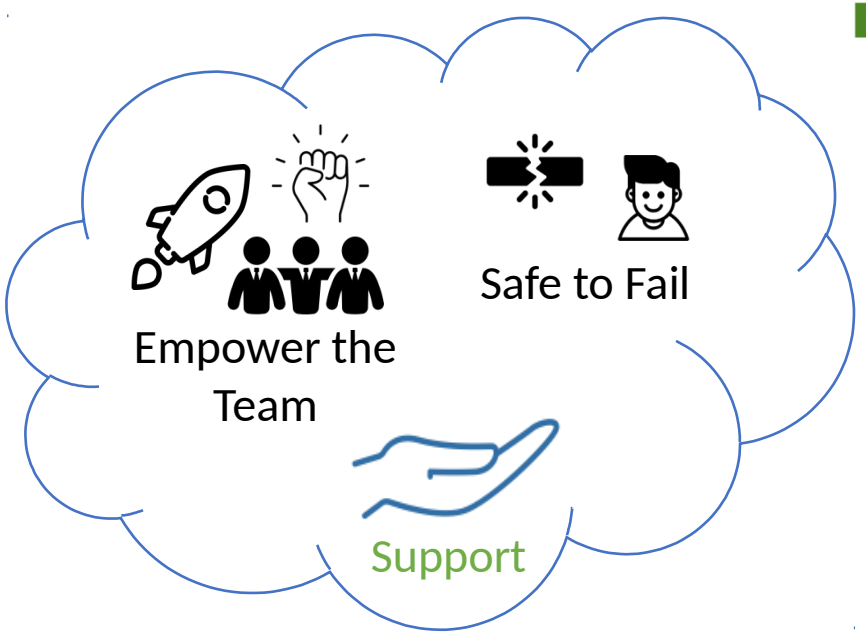


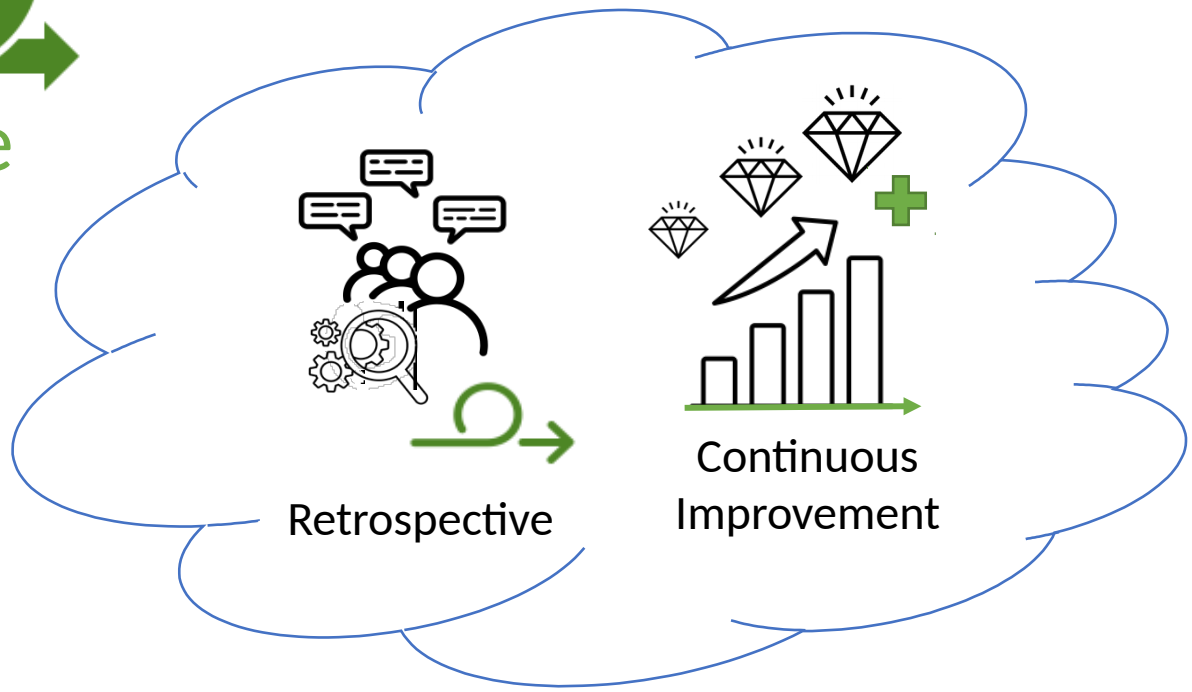
Frameworks
e.g., Scrum


~~Mountain~~
Value
Morsel
Cadence


Definition
e.g., User Story
Who?
What?
Why?
Acceptance Criteria
Tasks
How?
Transparency
(e.g., Kanban)
Daily Scrum

Agile


Empower the Team
Safe to Fail
Support


Retrospective
Continuous Improvement

How?

Team exercise

Exploring agile thinking continuous improvement

Teams of 3 (or 4)

Exercise Part 1

Step 1: Plan
Step 2: Research
Step 3: Reflect & Adjust

Exercise Part 2

Step 1: Research
Step 2: Reflect

Team Exercise: Part 1

User Story

As a team
we need to be able to research and record an agreed number of agile related facts
so that we can explain each of them in a short presentation to someone who is new to agile thinking

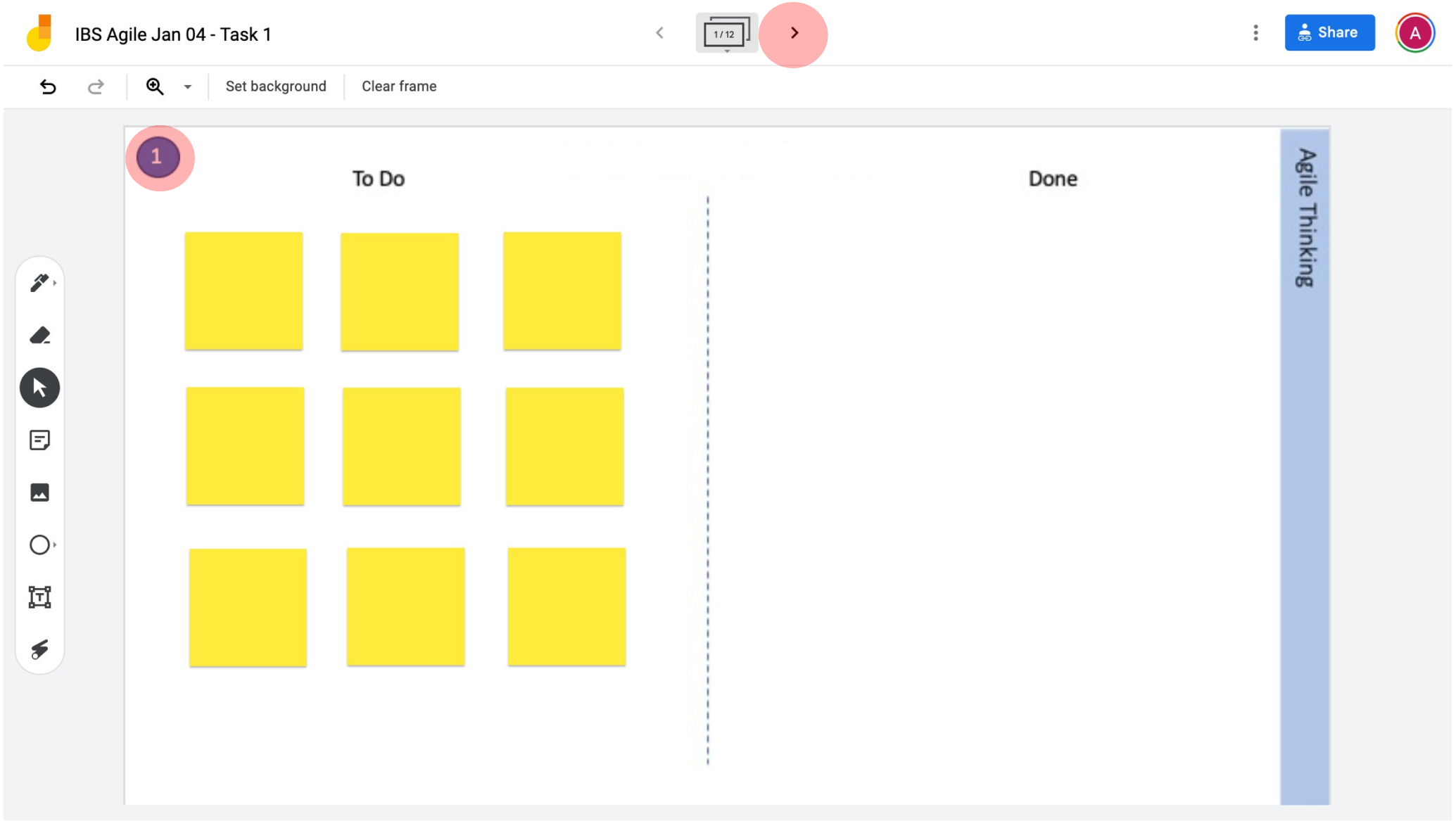
Acceptance Criteria:
After the research phase is complete, any member of the team should be able to present the gathered information to an audience if called upon.

Step 1 – Planning (3 minutes)

As a team, decide how you will approach this challenge.

You will have a Kanban board to help you if you wish. You will have 2 minutes to complete your research.

Team Exercise: Part 1, Step 2 – Research (2 minutes)



Team Exercise: Part 1

Step 2 – Research (2 minutes)

Visit the following web site and navigate to the page with your team number in the top left corner:

https://tinyurl.com/agilejam01a

Here you will see the topic for your research plus a simple Kanban style board to record your results.

Your time starts now! ᴍ

Team Exercise: Part 1

Step 3 – Retrospective (4 minutes)

As a team, discuss how your research task went.

What worked well?
What did not work so well?

Did everyone contribute and feel involved?

Identify at least 1 specific thing that can you do differently to improve next time.

Team Exercise: Part 2

Step 1 – Research (2 minutes)

Visit the following web site and navigate to the page with your table number in the top left corner:

https://tinyurl.com/agilejam02a

Here you will find a Kanban board containing the 8 items you must research. Your time starts now! ᵚ

Team Exercise: Part 2

Step 2 – Retrospective (3 minutes)

- How did the second exercise compare with the first?
- Did you implement your changes?
- Did they make the desired improvement?

- How can you make use of small step, continuous reflection and improvement in your study and work?

Open Discussion

What challenges do you think businesses/teams might face when trying to adopt agile thinking?

Agile is...

A way of thinking with huge potential to radically transform...

...but tarnished by many poor implementations

Something you are...

...not something you do

A journey of continuous improvement...

...not a quick, one-off fix

Adaptable to many scenarios...

...but not necessarily the best approach

A mindset...

...not a tick list

Easy to understand...

...but challenging to implement

Summary

Can you:

1. Explain why agile thinking developed?
2. Describe some of the key elements of agile thinking?
3. Discuss some of the benefits and challenges encountered when using agile thinking?

Questions?

Agile Thinking

Thank you

#andy-bleach