

Enterprise-level Agile Project Management

Making Agile Work at an Enterprise Level



Enterprise-level Challenges
Reinterpreting Agile Manifesto Values and Principles

Enterprise-level Challenges

Reinterpreting Agile Manifesto Values and Principles

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2

In this lesson, we're going to continue discussing Scaling Agile to an Enterprise Level and focus specifically on the need to reinterpret the Agile Manifesto Values and Principles somewhat differently in an enterprise level context.



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Enterprise-level Challenges: Agile Manifesto Values

Typical Small Agile Project

Tools:

“Individuals and interactions over processes and tools”

Typical Enterprise-level Implementation

There is a greater need for tools at an enterprise-level:

- There is more of a need for a defined process to coordinate and synchronize the work of large projects requiring multiple teams as well as coordinating other activities outside the teams
- Tools can become more important at an enterprise level as the scope and complexity of the effort grows

Cobb, Charles, Managed Agile Development – Making Agile Work for Your Business, Outskirts Press, 2013

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4

The next slides will show some differences and challenges associated with an enterprise-level Agile implementation that require reinterpreting the values and principles in the Agile Manifesto somewhat differently. Here's the first example:

An important Agile value is “Individuals and interactions over processes and tools”; however,

- There is more of a need for a defined process to coordinate and synchronize the work of large projects requiring multiple teams as well as coordinating other activities outside the teams
- Tools can become more important at an enterprise level as the scope and complexity of the effort grows – a good example of that is the case study I discussed in my Mastering Agile Project Management course of Harvard Pilgrim Healthcare involving over 100 Agile teams. It would have been virtually impossible to pull off an effort of that scope and complexity without the appropriate Agile Project Management tools to integrate the entire effort.

Enterprise-level Challenges: Agile Manifesto Values

Typical Small Agile Project

“Working software over comprehensive documentation”

Typical Enterprise-level Implementation

- At an enterprise level, solutions tend to be much more complex and software is only one part of the overall solution
- At an enterprise level, a solution might also include training, business process changes, a support plan, a marketing and roll-out plan, and many other requirements beyond just developing software

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5

Another important Agile value is “Working software over comprehensive documentation”; however,

- At an enterprise level, solutions tend to be much more complex and software is only one part of the overall solution. As a result, some form of additional overall coordination is needed to integrate all the components of the overall solution.
- At an enterprise level, a solution might also include training, business process changes, a support plan, a marketing and roll-out plan, and many other requirements beyond just developing software. All of these may increase the need for some kind of documentation.

Enterprise-level Challenges: Agile Manifesto Values

Typical Small Agile Project

“Responding to change over following a plan”

Typical Enterprise-level Implementation

As the scope and complexity of an effort at an enterprise-level increases, there is typically a need for more planning to:

- Coordinate the efforts of large projects requiring multiple teams
- Synchronize the efforts of development teams with other activities outside the scope of the development effort
- Adapt the development effort into higher-level management processes that may be more plan-driven

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6

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Enterprise-level Challenges: Agile Manifesto Principles

Typical Small Agile Project

Change Control:

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

Typical Enterprise-level Implementation

- Change never comes without consequences and change control can be valuable for configuration management and validating that any new changes are consistent with other previously developed requirements and assumptions
- Done properly, it does not equate to stifling or preventing change

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7

Now let's talk about some of the Agile Manifesto principles...An Agile principle is related to Change Control and says “Welcome changing requirements, even late in development. Agile processes harness change for the customer's competitive advantage.”; however,

- Change never comes without consequences and change control can be valuable for configuration management and validating that any new changes are consistent with other previously developed requirements and assumptions.
- Done properly, it does not equate to stifling or preventing change. It means ensuring that unnecessary change (as ultimately defined by the Sponsor) is rejected, but that necessary change is brought into the project with the full awareness of all concerned and that necessary adjustments to designs, plans, timescales, tests, contracts (etc.) are made with a minimum of wider disruption.

Enterprise-level Challenges: Agile Manifesto Principles

Typical Small Agile Project

Communications:

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

Typical Enterprise-level Implementation

- At an enterprise level because of the focus on the overall solution, rather than just software, the team is typically broader than simply the people who are developing the software
- At an enterprise level, the communications strategy must include a broader set of people such as production operations and support that are important stakeholders in the implementation of the solution

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8

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Enterprise-level Challenges: Agile Manifesto Principles

Typical Small Agile Project

Progress Measurement:

“Working software is the primary measure of progress.”

Typical Enterprise-level Implementation

- At an enterprise level, success or failure is measured more in terms of delivering real business value to the users over simply developing software
- The primary measure of progress should be whatever the Sponsor defines as value (Think about user training or process change, for example)

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9

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Enterprise-level Agile implementations can significantly change the context of an Agile project and it's very important to take that context into consideration.

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NEXT LECTURE... PROJECT GOVERNANCE

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11

In the next lecture, we're going to discuss Project Governance at an Enterprise level.