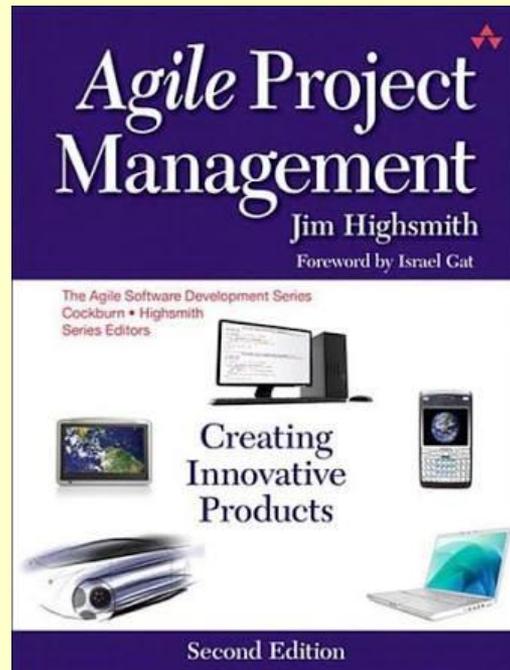


Agile Project Management

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Chapter 2

Value over Constraints



Releasable Product

“Although constraints such as cost and time are important, they should be secondary to creating value for customers.”

“Outcomes’ indicators include product vision, business objectives, and capabilities (high level product functionality) not detail requirements.”

Focus on value:

- **Value determination**... involves business managers & product management
- **Value prioritization**... involves product owners with project leaders involved (prioritizing the Project Backlog)
- **Value creation**... involves the team; collaborating with customers, running customer focus groups, & technical debt reduction

“We increase return on investment by making continuous flow of value our focus” (The Declaration of Interdependence)

- Continuous provides leaders to view value over time...
- Timely delivering version of 1 is important... but more important is delivering a high-quality product that is easily adaptable to future needs.
- Customers and Product Managers drive agile development
Development team in partnership with the Product team (customers, product managers, product specialists)
- Value arises from implementing capabilities as they evolve over the life of a project.

The formula for success is simple: deliver today, adapt tomorrow.

The footnote...

“**Customer**” represents a wide range of entities:

Commercial business-to-business customers

Retail consumers, and customers internal to the organization.

The people included... vary organization to organization.

Customers define value and are the judges of user experience!

Product Team: represents all the potential combinations of customers and others such as executives who approve purchase and product managers who coordinate customer interactions with development organizations.

Innovation

- Can offer the highest levels of value creation...
- Switching from preparing and delivering documentation ... to delivering iterative versions of real product is the shift that supports innovation.

Exploration-type product drivers:

- Focus in creating new product and services is innovation and adaptability
- APM's core purpose

Production-type product drivers:

- Focus in making minor enhancements to existing products is efficiency and optimization.

Execution

Project leader focus

- Either on delivery and the added value to projects
- Or on planning and control and the added overhead
Traditional management focus too much on management-as-planning and not on execution

Composed of three processes that exchange information

1. Planning satisfies legal, regulatory or management requirements rather than the work needed.
2. Motivation to plan relates to the need for control instead of the needs of the work (planners are not involved in doing the work)
3. Planning and Control is key!
(execution & producing results is of minor importance, legitimizing the project takes precedence)

APM is an execution-biased Model

Project Lead's primary role...

...facilitate creation of a product vision and guide the team toward making that vision a reality.

Not to develop plans and schedules and control processes ... with the primary goal being to implement the plan

Note.

APM is not anti-planning (as we will see)

... as stated in the Manifesto; there thing that between what is more important and what is less important.

Lean thinking ... Toyota development system

Auto industry % of work that adds value:

- US: 20%
- Toyota & Lean Development: 80%

Traditional emphasis:

Value process

over

Individual knowledge and capability

Project leaders

- Need to analyze project activities to maximize time spent on delivery
- Must analyze their own activities to determine whether they are contributing to delivery of compliance

Iterative, Feature-Based Delivery

“Working features provide dependable feedback into the development process in ways that documentation cannot.”

Four key terms:

1. **Iterative** development... build partial versions of a product & expand that version through short time periods of development followed by reviews and adaptations.
2. **Feature-based**... building features of the final product (or close representations)
3. **Timeboxed** (1-4 weeks)... forces making of something concrete
4. **Incremental**... products built so that they go-live at the end of one or more iterations.

If you want to innovate, you have to iterate!

Features

Features indicate real... progress.

Allows (requires) project teams, product managers, customers and stakeholders to confront difficult tradeoff decisions.

End-of-Iteration (product, technical, process and team) reviews

Feedback .. assess and adapt

Customer feedback on the product evolves from iteration to iteration

Feature delivery (tangible and verifiable) provides for realistic evaluation and change as needed.

(every product has a set of features that constitute the minimum viable set)

Timebox deliveries force tough decisions

Technical Excellence-1 (delivers customer value)

Again, the Toyota reference

One of the 4 Pillars... “Expert Engineering Workforce”

Technical excellence and individual responsibility

The critics

View Agile as ad hoc, undisciplined, and consequently producing technically inferior product

Traditionalist: focus on process, procedure & documentation

Agile discipline: “Doing what you said you would do”

View Agile development as ignoring design

True, there is no extensive up-front design

Agile relies on iterative, emergent design and frequent feedback

Technical Excellence-2 (delivers customer value)

Project Lead and team members should understand what technical excellence means ... relative to the product, the technology, and the skills of those doing the work.

Technical integrity is essential to all involved.

Project leads must focus on technical excellence

- ... involved with the team in debating and deciding on the technical approach

- ... in being aware of business objectives

- ... keeping the team on track in making timely technical decisions

Technical excellence is the key to product adaptability and low-cost iterations

Simplicity

“If you want to be fast and agile... keep things simple.”

Traditionally... the revision (change control) process is a major interrupt and adds significantly to process complexity.

... involves significant documentation and contract negotiations.

Simplicity enables speed.. requires people to think and to interact.

Personal responsibility is a function connectedness...

“ ... the art of maximizing the amount of work not done – is essential (The Agile Manifesto)

Generative Rules

“The right set of simple rules, applied within a group of highly interactive individuals generates complex behaviors such as innovation and creativity.” Swarm Intelligence!

Example (former CIO of Capital One)

Four rules:

1. Always align IT activities with the business
2. Use good economic judgment
3. Be flexible
4. Have empathy for others in the organization

The minimal set of “generative practices”... a system

Identifies practices that are of high value and should be used on nearly every project

Generates necessary support practices

Creates “Swarm Intelligence”

Barely Sufficient Methodology

Again, John Wooden

“Be quick, but don’t hurry.”

Life, like basketball, must be played fast – but never out of control

Developers that hurry to design a feature, but fails to review and test results in defects that slow the project!

Selecting delivery activities that must be done, and doing them well, contributes to quickness.

Hurrying can lead to sloppy execution of activities!

Delivery versus Compliance

Compliance activities attempt to mitigate the risk of mistakes, fraud, poor performance, financial overruns.

- Managers want reports
- Accountants want numbers
- Auditors want sign-offs
- Government agencies want documents
- Standards groups want proof of compliance
- Legal departments want everything

Failure to differentiate between delivery and compliance can lead to increased compliance work... at the expense of delivering products

ISO and CMMM certifications

Adherents of Compliance “systemisms”

Agree that this work should not shift the emphasis from results to process.

But... subversion is inevitable.

Why?

“Systems tend to expand to fill the known universe.”

“Systems tend to oppose their own proper functions.”

“Systemantics: How Systems Work and Especially How They Fail”

John Gall (1975)

There are necessary compliance activities, but...

Minimize them and *get them off the critical path and the critical people.*

Final Thoughts

Focus is on value and quality... subject to constraints

Rarely can you change one of the three constraint without impacting the others.

Focus only on constraints alone... assumes value and quality will “happen”.

Misguided... plans go out of date, overhead then increases

