



## Agile Project Management: Creating Innovative Products (2nd Edition)

By Jim Highsmith

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Best practices for managing projects in agile environments—now updated with new techniques for larger projects

Today, the pace of project management moves faster. Project management needs to become more flexible and far more responsive to customers. Using Agile Project Management (APM), project managers can achieve all these goals without compromising value, quality, or business discipline. In Agile Project Management, Second Edition, renowned agile pioneer Jim Highsmith thoroughly updates his classic guide to APM, extending and refining it to support even the largest projects and organizations.

Writing for project leaders, managers, and executives at all levels, Highsmith integrates the best project management, product management, and software development practices into an overall framework designed to support unprecedented speed and mobility. The many topics added in this new edition include incorporating agile values, scaling agile projects, release planning, portfolio governance, and enhancing organizational agility. Project and business leaders will especially appreciate Highsmith's new coverage of promoting agility through performance measurements based on value, quality, and constraints.

This edition's coverage includes:

- Understanding the agile revolution's impact on product development
- Recognizing when agile methods will work in project management, and when they won't
- Setting realistic business objectives for Agile Project Management
- Promoting agile values and principles across the organization
- Utilizing a proven Agile Enterprise Framework that encompasses governance, project and iteration management, and technical practices
- Optimizing all five stages of the agile project: Envision, Speculate, Explore, Adapt, and Close
- Organizational and product-related processes for scaling agile to the largest projects and teams

- Agile project governance solutions for executives and management
- The “Agile Triangle”: measuring performance in ways that encourage agility instead of discouraging it
- The changing role of the agile project leader

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# Preface

When the Manifesto for *Agile Software Development* (<http://www.agilealliance.org>) was written in spring 2001, it launched a movement—a movement that raced through the software development community; generated controversy and debate; connected with related movements in manufacturing, construction, and aerospace; and extended into project management.

The impetus for this second edition of *Agile Project Management* comes from three sources—the maturing of the agile movement over the last five years, the trend to large agile projects, and the formation of a project management organization for agile leaders (the Agile Project Leadership Network).

The essence of this agile movement, whether in new product development, new service offerings, software applications, or project management, rests on two foundational goals: delivering valuable products to customers and creating working environments in which people look forward to coming to work each day.

Innovation continues to drive economic success for countries, industries, and individual companies. While the rates of innovation in information technology in the last decade might have declined from prodigious to merely lofty, innovation in areas such as biotechnology and nanotechnology are picking up any slack.

New technologies such as combinatorial chemistry and sophisticated computer simulation are fundamentally altering the innovation process itself. When these technologies are applied, the cost of iteration can be driven down dramatically, enabling exploratory and experimental processes to be both more effective and less costly than serial, specification-based processes. This dynamic is at work in the automotive, integrated circuit, software, and pharmaceutical industries. It will soon be at work in your industry.

But taking advantage of these new innovation technologies has proved tricky. When exploration processes replace prescriptive processes, people have to change. For the chemist who now manages the experimental compounding process rather than designing compounds himself, and the manager who has to deal with hundreds of experiments rather than a detailed, prescriptive plan, new project management processes are required. Even when these technologies and processes are lower cost and higher performance than their predecessors, the transformation often proves difficult.

Project management needs to be transformed to move faster, be more flexible, and be aggressively customer responsive. Agile Project Management (APM) answers this transformational need. It brings together a set of principles and practices that enable project managers to catch up with the realities of modern product development.

The target audience for this book is leaders, those hearty individuals who shepherd teams through the exciting but often messy process of turning visions into products—be they software, cell phones, or medical instruments. Leaders arise at many levels—project, team, executive, management—and APM addresses each of these, although the target audience continues to be project leaders. APM rejects the view of project leaders as functionaries who merely comply with the bureaucratic demands of schedules and budgets and replaces it with one in which they are intimately involved in helping teams deliver products.

There are four broad topics covered in *Agile Project Management*: opportunity, values, frameworks, and practices. The opportunity lies in creating innovative products and services—things that are new, different, and creative. These are products that can't be defined completely in the beginning but evolve over time through experimentation, exploration, and adaptation.

The APM values focus helps create products that deliver customer value today and are responsive to future

customer needs. The frameworks include both enterprise and project levels, with phases of Envision, Speculate, Explore, Adapt, Close that deliver results reliably, even in the face of constant change, uncertainty, and ambiguity. Finally, the practices—from developing a product vision box to participatory decision making—provide actionable ways in which teams deliver results.

In this second edition of APM the four major new or updated topics are: agile values, scaling agile projects, advanced release planning, and organizational agility. Chapters 2-4 have been rewritten around three summarizing value statements—delivering value over meeting constraints, leading the team over managing tasks, and adapting to change over conforming to plans. The scaling agile chapter has been completely revised to reflect the last five years of experience. A new chapter on release planning has been added to encourage teams to place more attention on release planning. Finally, chapters on the organizational topics of project governance and changing performance measurement systems have been added.

In the long run, probably the most important addition is the new perspective on performance measurement. We ask teams to be agile, and then measure their performance by strict adherence to the Iron Triangle—scope, schedule, budget. This edition of APM proposes a new triangle—an Agile Triangle that consists of Value, Quality, and Constraints. If we want to grow agile organizations then our performance measurement system must encourage agility.

Jim Highsmith  
July 2009  
Flagstaff, Arizona

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