Project management in agile environments

Tony Cotgrave

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Learn. To Change.

FAQ's

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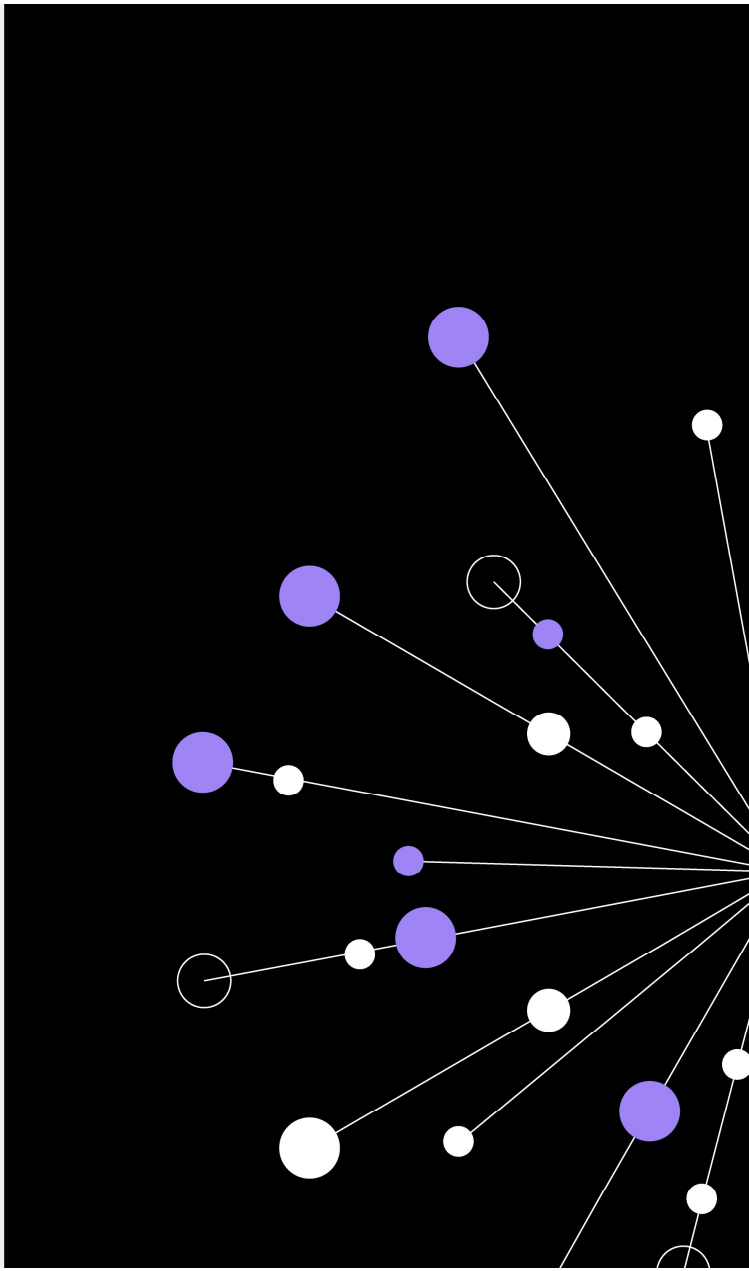
- **Can we have a copy of the presentation? – Yes! A pdf will be made available www.qa.com/resources/events :-**



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Learning objectives

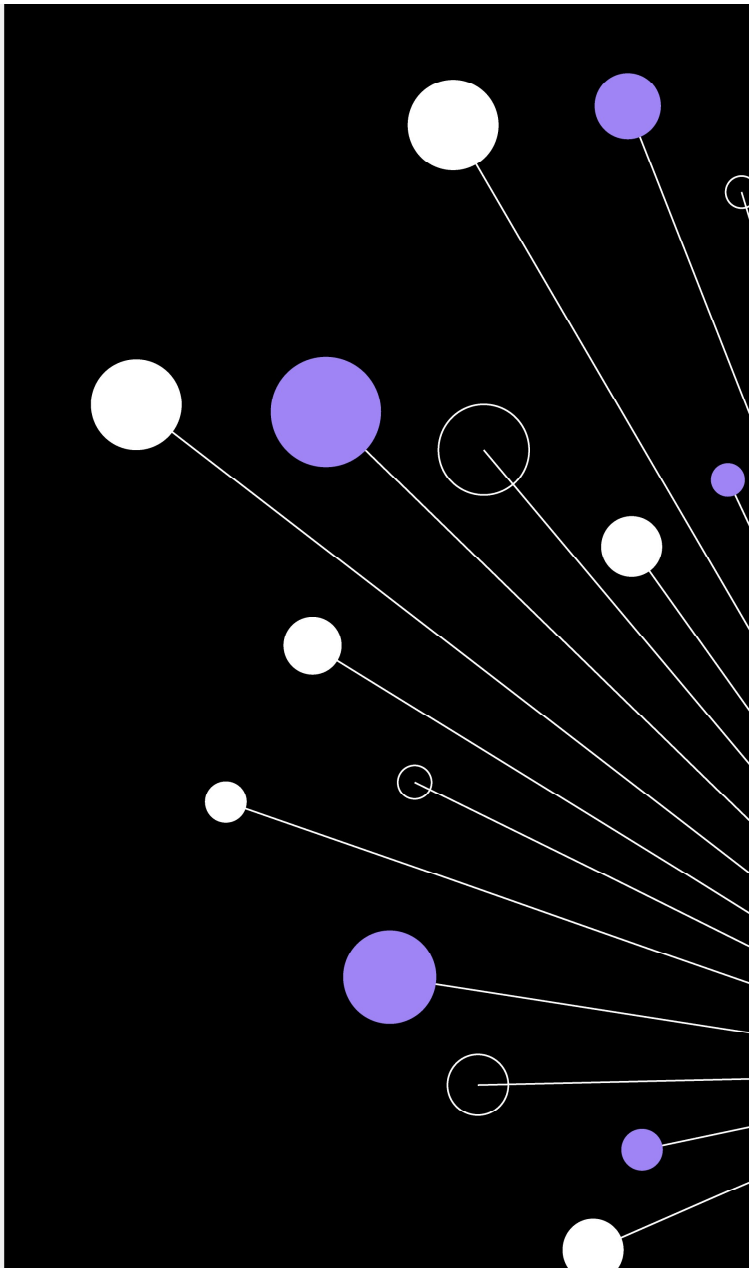
Understand the Role of Project Management in Agile – Explore how project management differs in Agile compared to traditional approaches.

Balance Flexibility and Structure – Learn how Agile project management adapts to change while maintaining control over key project elements.

Manage Scope and Timelines – Discover techniques for handling evolving requirements while delivering value effectively.

Explore PRINCE2 Agile® and AgilePM® V3 – Gain insights into these leading Agile project management approaches and how they are applied in practice.

Recognise the Role of Agile Project Managers – Understand how leadership, facilitation, and team collaboration support Agile success.



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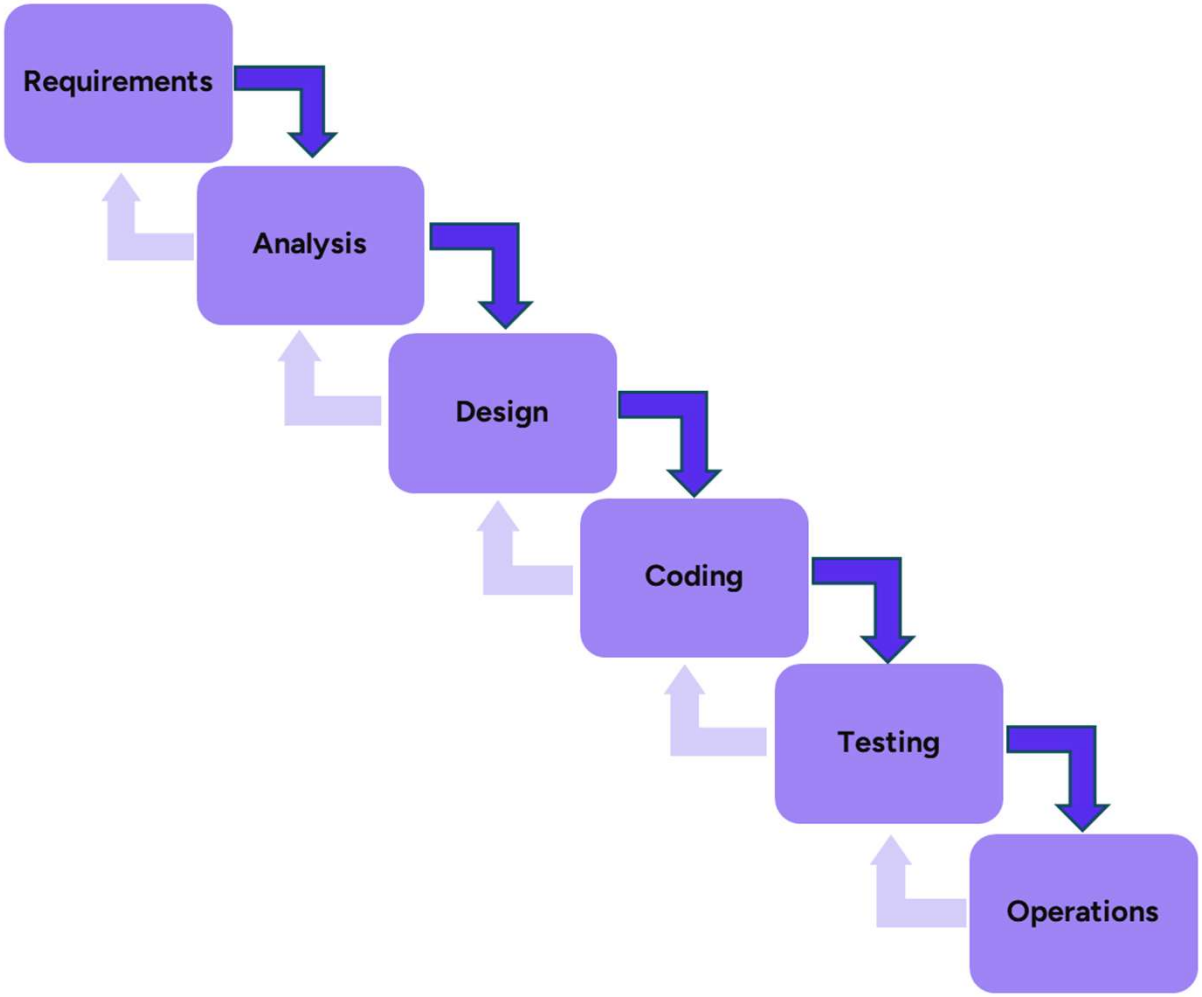
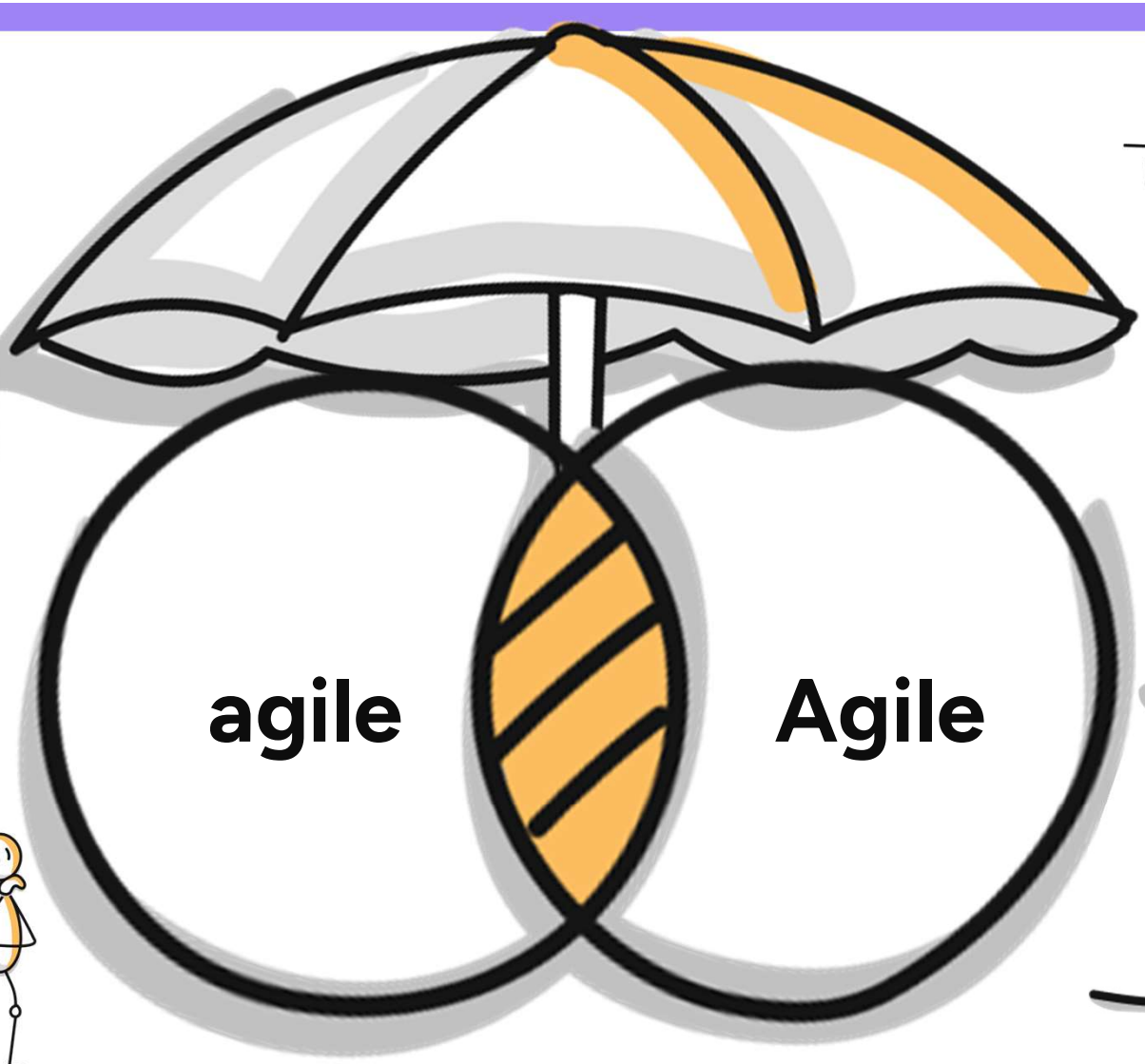
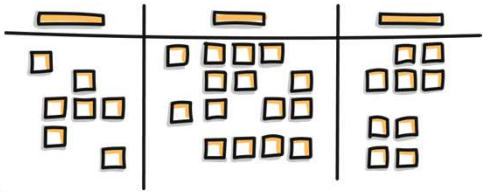
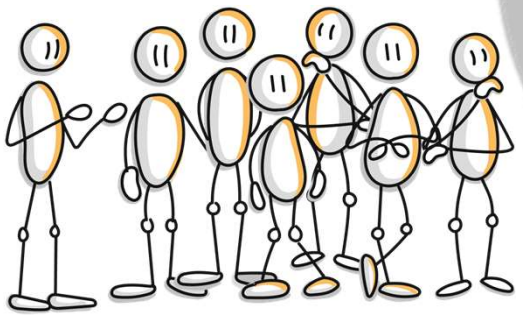
Waterfall



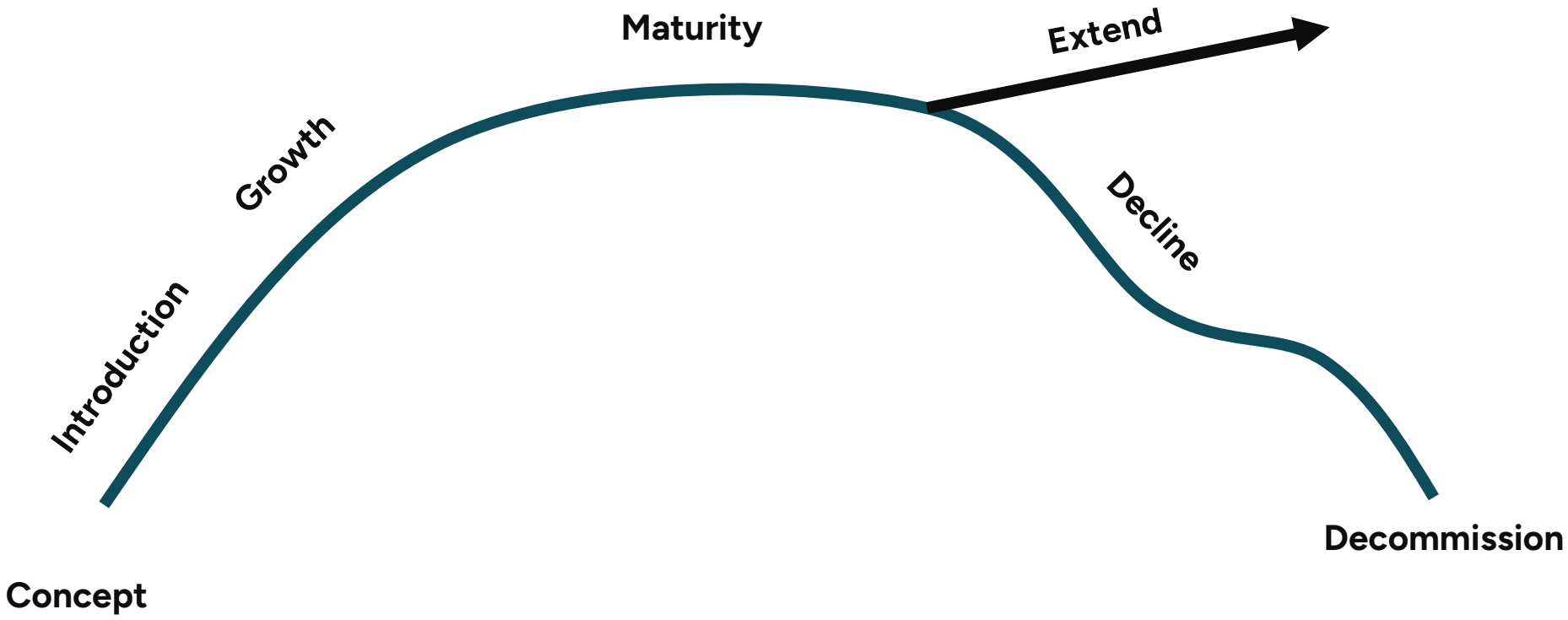
Agile Manifesto



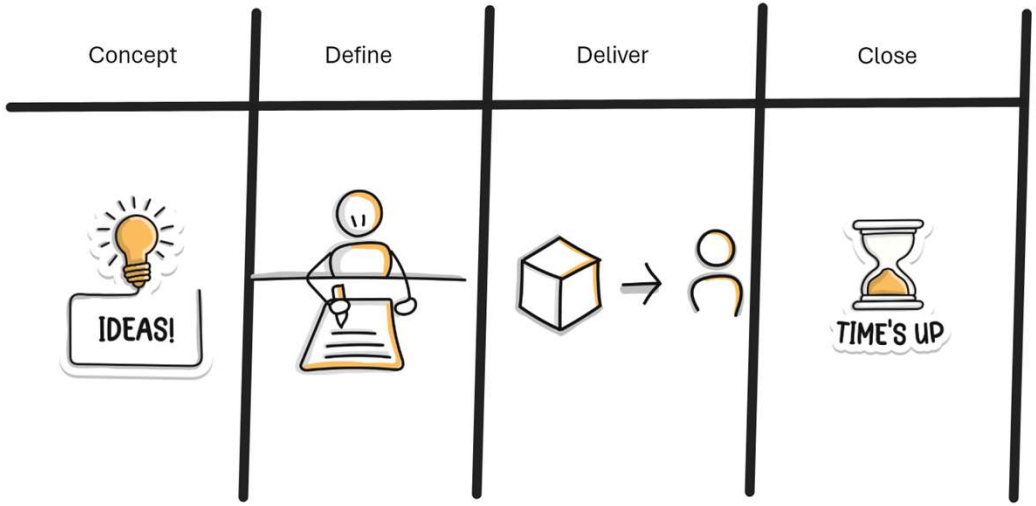


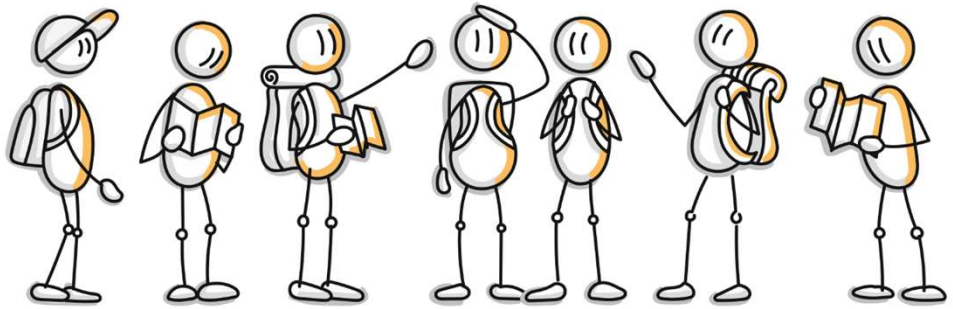


Product Lifecycle



Project Lifecycle





Are projects bad then?

Clear Timebound Delivery

- Projects have defined start and end dates, making them ideal for delivering specific outcomes within a set timeframe.

Structured Governance and Control

- Project management provides well-defined processes for risk, cost, and quality control.

Resource Allocation and Budgeting

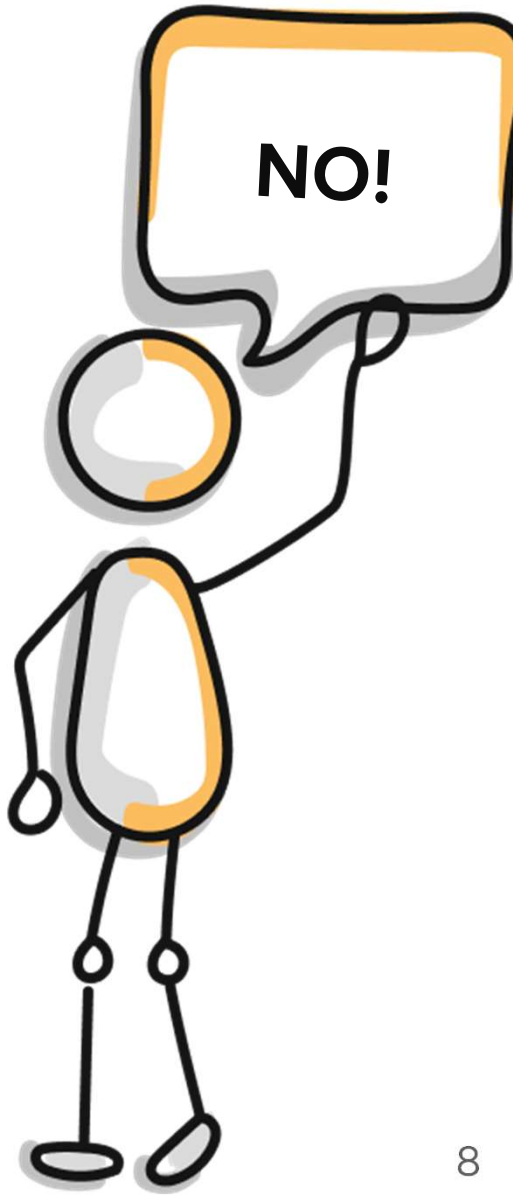
- Projects often come with dedicated teams, budgets, and funding approval.

Coordination

- Project management frameworks (like PRINCE2, PMBOK, AgilePM) provide clear roles and governance structures for managing across departments.

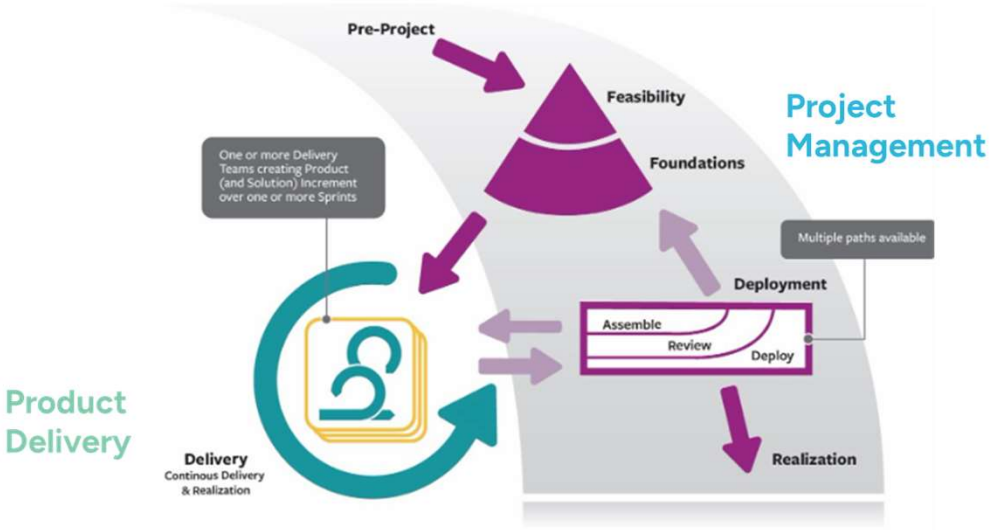
Good for "Start and Finish" Initiatives

- Projects work well for delivering things that *end*, like implementing a new CRM or decommissioning a legacy system.



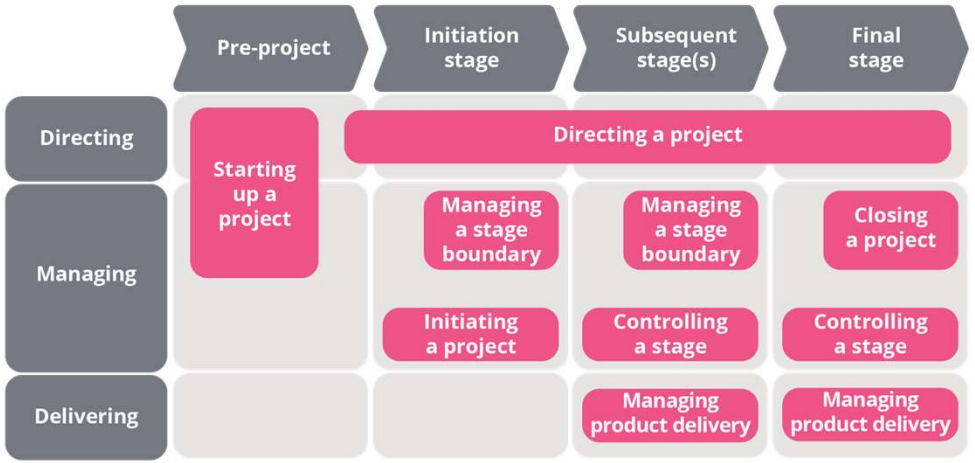
Project Lifecycle

AgilePM



Agile Business Consortium

PRINCE2 Agile



Note

- Starting up a project is used by both the directing and managing levels.
- There should be at least two stages, the first of which is the initiation stage.
- Managing a stage boundary is first used at the end of the initiation stage and repeated at the end of each subsequent stage except the final stage. It is also used to prepare exception plans, which can be done at any time including in the final stage.

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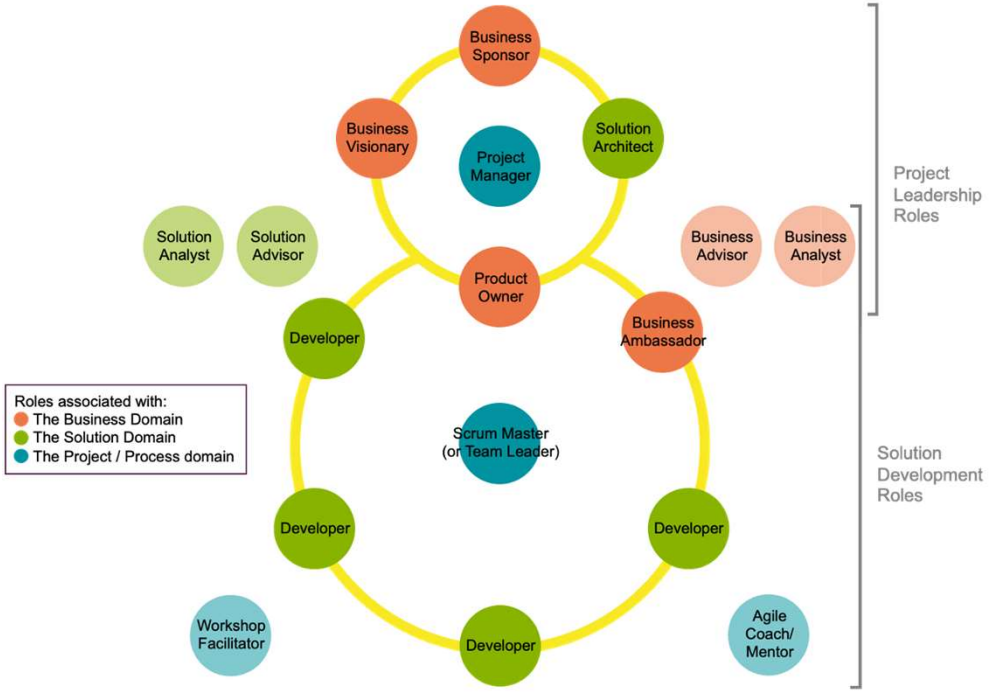
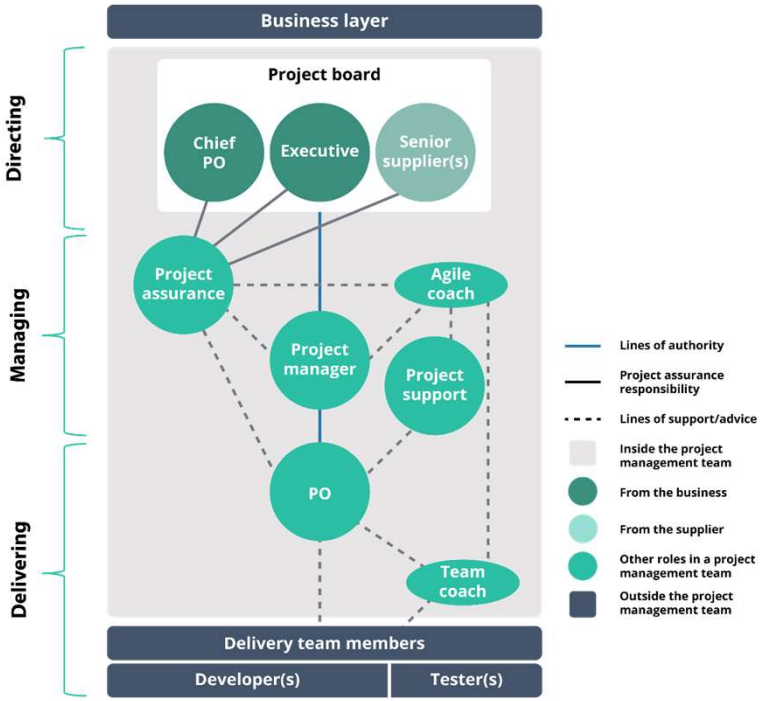
Project roles

AgilePM



PRINCE2 Agile



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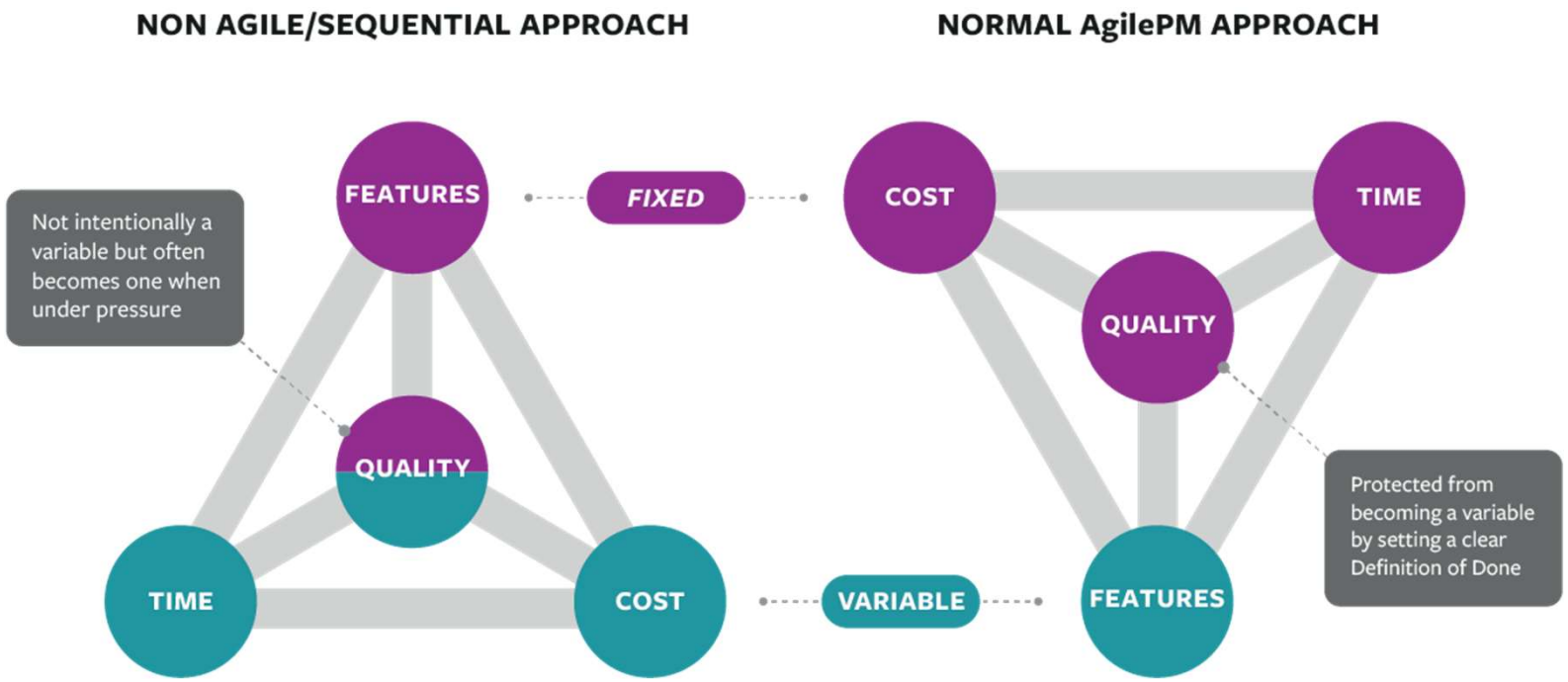
Fixing and flexing

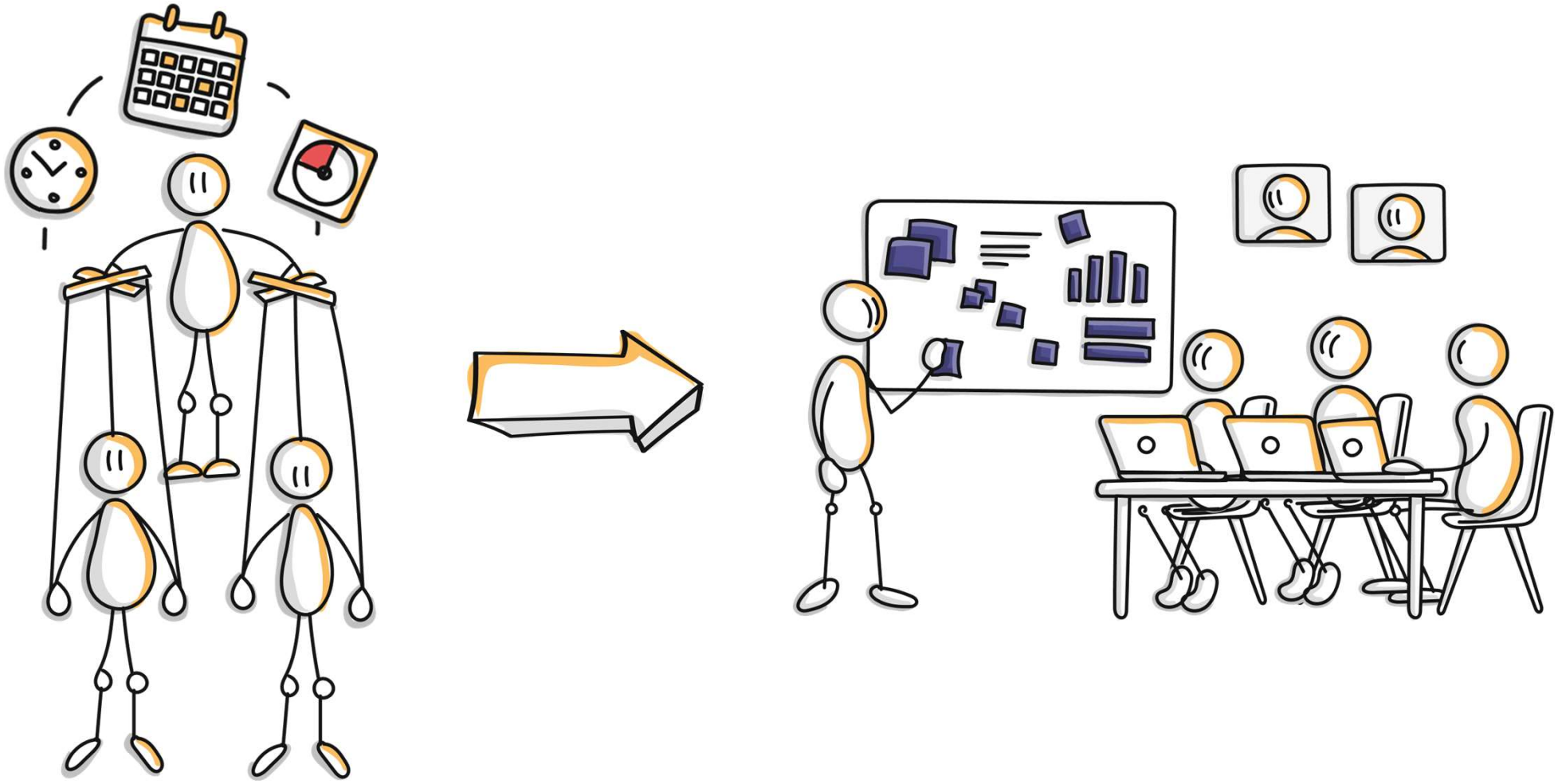


How do we stay on time and budget?

Must have	• No point delivering/deploying without this • Not legal or unsafe • Solution will not operate without it
Should have	• Important but not vital • May be painful to leave out but solution still viable • May need workaround, which may be temporary
Could have	• Wanted or desirable but less important • Less impact if left out (compared with a Should)
Won’t have this time	• Will not be delivered in this timeframe

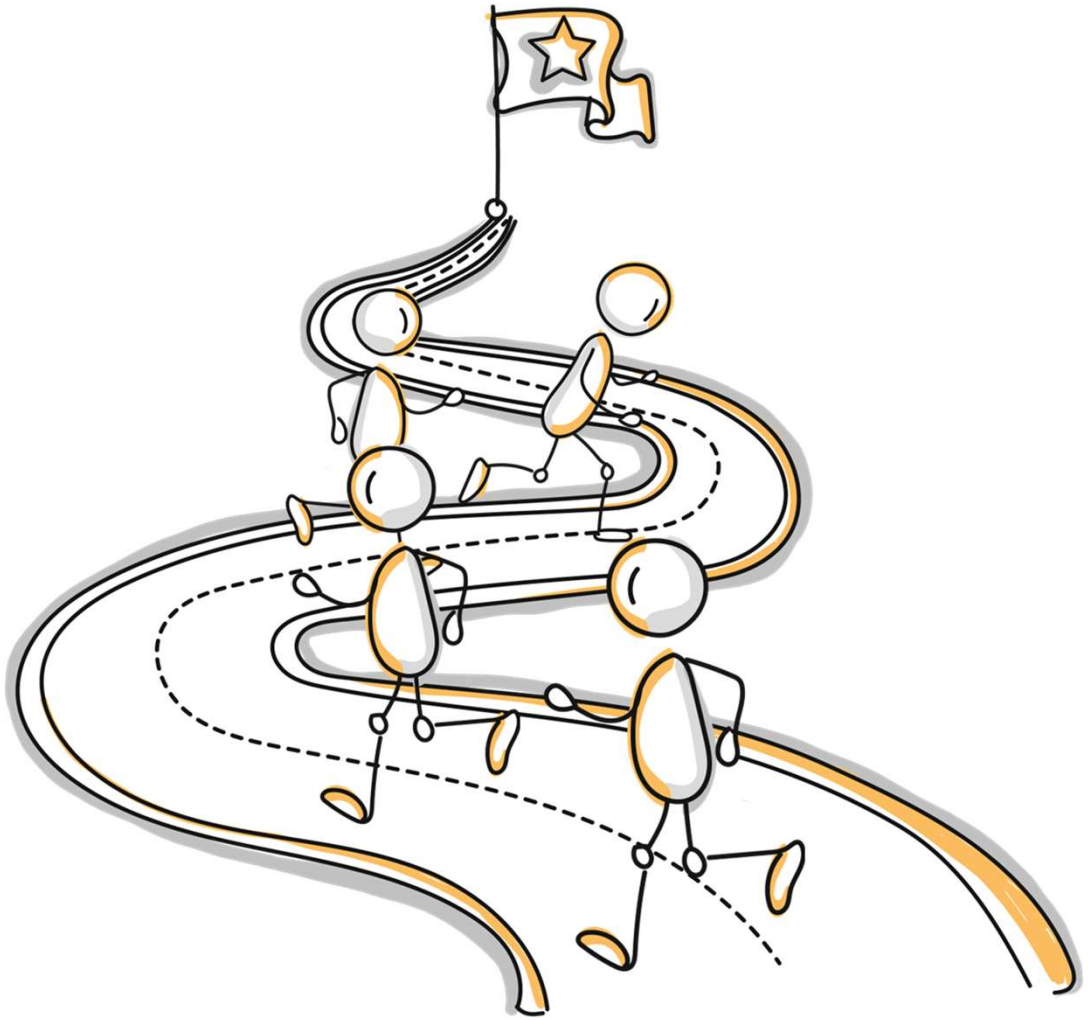
What if everything is a Must have?

Does the role of Project Manager change?



Outputs to outcomes

Vision



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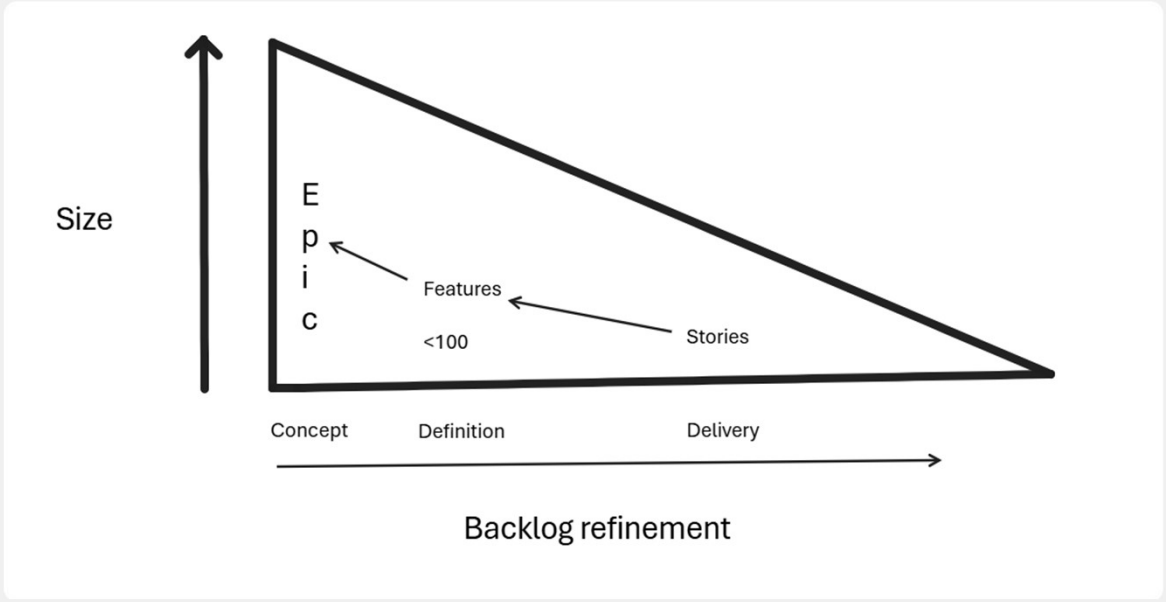
Answers to unanswered questions during the session

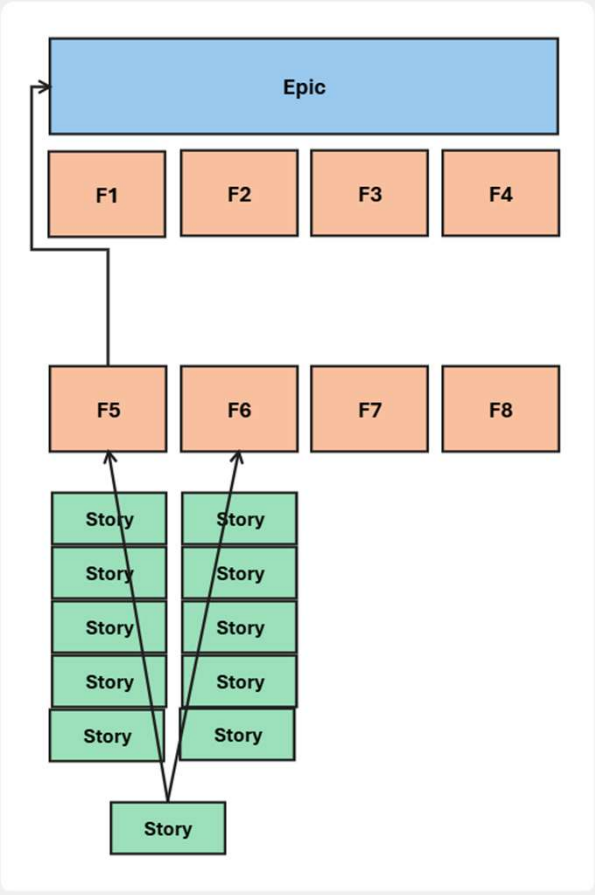
First name	Question	Answer
Krishna Kanth	Are there templates or tools you recommend to apply PRINCE2 Agile in day-to-day projects?	I don't usually recommend specific tools, because the right choice really depends on your organisation's environment, culture, and existing systems. A good starting point is Capterra.com (no affiliation), it's a review site that lets you compare different project management tools based on user feedback. In terms of templates, the newest version of PRINCE2 Agile includes a number of canvasses and practical resources that you can adapt to your projects. In addition, the Agile Business Consortium provides templates and guidance via their website: https://www.agilebusiness.org/.
Richard	Can you remind me where i can find the session recordings please	https://www.qa.com/resources/events/
Katie	In agile working, how do ensure that you have a healthy backlog that meets the DoR without tracking the steps to get a piece of work to readiness like a waterfall plan?	The focus should be on progressive elaboration, making work items clearer and smaller as they get closer to delivery, not upfront planning everything in detail. **Regular refinement sessions** – short, frequent conversations with the team and Product Owner to shape and split backlog items. **Just-enough detail** – aim for clarity, not perfection. Stories should be clear enough to start, but still allow for learning and collaboration during development. **Collaborative ownership** – make sure the whole team shares responsibility for requirements meeting the DoR. In an Agile project – see need slide

Answers to unanswered questions during the session

Katie I'm not sure if this helps, in an Agile project we would have Epics Broken down into no more than 100 features by the end of definition.

Then we can break them into stories as we move forward, this would be Ongoing in a product development model.





Answers to unanswered questions during the session

Krishna Kanth	How can we measure success of PRINCE2 Agile adoption?	Measuring the success of PRINCE2 Agile adoption isn't just about whether the framework has been implemented it's about whether it is adding value. A few common ways to measure success include: **Business outcomes** – are projects delivering the expected benefits, not just outputs? **Time, cost, quality** – are projects being delivered more predictably, with fewer overruns? **Agility indicators** – how well can teams respond to change while still maintaining control and governance? **Stakeholder satisfaction** – are customers, sponsors, and team members happier with the way projects are run? **Ways of working** – are PRINCE2 controls and Agile practices being applied consistently and in balance, rather than one dominating the other? Ultimately, success should be framed in terms of improved project delivery and business value, not just compliance with the method. They had a PRINCE2 Agile health check in version one of the guidance which I always really liked, because its focus was measuring behaviours, environment, process, and techniques, you will still be able to find it.

Answers to unanswered questions during the session

First name	Question	Answer
Ebuka	When will it be preferable to adopt a kanban instead of an Agile for teams?	It's not so much Kanban versus Agile, since Kanban itself is an Agile method, but rather when Kanban might be a better fit than something like Scrum. Kanban is often preferable when: **Work is continuous and flow-based** – e.g. support, maintenance, operations, service desks. **Priorities change frequently** – teams need flexibility to pick up the next most valuable item without being tied to a fixed sprint. **Teams need to visualise and manage flow** – making bottlenecks visible and improving throughput. **The team is new to Agile** – Kanban can provide a gentler entry point, introducing transparency and incremental improvement without major role or process changes. **Predictability comes from data** – lead time and throughput metrics become the basis for forecasting, instead of planning fixed iterations. Scrum tends to work best when there's a need for time-boxed delivery of increments and a regular cadence for inspection and adaptation, whereas Kanban shines when you want to maximise flow and adaptability. If you haven't already watch - https://www.qa.com/resources/events/kanban-for-continuous-delivery/

Answers to unanswered questions during the session

First name	Question	Answer
Dhiren	What is your view on SaFE for large complex organisations?	I shall try not to let bias lead my answer, as I am a SAFe Practice Consultant. Firstly, it is one of the most widely adopted scaling approaches for large and complex organisations. It can provide structure, common language, and alignment across many teams, which is valuable when you're trying to coordinate at enterprise scale. However, SAFe can become heavy and process-driven if adopted incorrectly, which risks losing the agility it's meant to enable. It requires strong leadership buy-in and cultural change, not just structural change. The goal should always be business agility, not the adoption of a framework. https://www.qa.com/resources/events/understanding-safe-for-scaling-agile/

Answers to unanswered questions during the session

Matt	Any recommendation for Agile PM v Prince 2 for an experienced PM looking to add a formal qualification? And is there still value in doing the original Prince 2 for a Tech-focused PM?	This question could get me into a lot of trouble! **AgilePM** (from the Agile Business Consortium) is highly practical, lightweight, and focused on agile delivery in a project environment. It's often a good fit if you're looking for a qualification that demonstrates agile project delivery competence quickly. **PRINCE2 Agile** builds on the well-established PRINCE2 framework, adding agile concepts and tailoring guidance. It can be valuable if you want to show you can bridge structured governance with agile ways of working, especially in organisations already using PRINCE2. The new version even includes guidance on the operational environment. As for the **PRINCE2**: yes, it still has value, especially if you are in a sector or organisation where it remains the baseline for governance. For a tech-focused PM, however, PRINCE2 Agile is usually more relevant, as it shows you can balance structure with adaptability.

Answers to unanswered questions during the session

First name	Question	Answer
Priya	my new team don't have project manager so we work with Enggs, Product owners and Scrum masters but no PM so how will that impact our in long term and short term?	If you are using Scrum for Product Development, Scrum does not define a Project Manager role. Instead, the responsibilities of a traditional PM are redistributed across Scrum roles: **Product Owner** – owns the what and why: vision, priorities, value delivery, and stakeholder engagement. **Scrum Master** – focuses *on how*: supporting the team, coaching on Scrum, removing impediments, and fostering continuous improvement. **Developers (the team)** – own the doing: estimating, planning, delivering, and maintaining quality. Some traditional project management tasks (budgeting, reporting, risk oversight) may still be required by the organisation, but these are usually handled outside the Scrum Team or adapted into the Product Owner's or leadership's responsibilities. The key point: Scrum is designed to be self-managing and team-driven, so the need for a "project manager" as a command-and-control role is intentionally removed.

Training courses you may be interested in

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PRINCE2 Agile V2.0 (QAP2AGFP)

APMG Agile Project Management (QAAGPMFP)

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Product Thinking: Agile Mindsets for Business Value

24th September 2025 | 11:00am - 12:00pm GMT | 6am - 7am EST

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