

# : *What can one conclude about becoming agile?*

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Agile behaviors and processes are often better than rigid, bureaucratic ones. Becoming agile is worthwhile. Agile values and principles, when internalized, do help cope with a volatile, uncertain, changing, and ambiguous situation. Agile values enhance the project development process and promote communication both horizontally and vertically throughout an organization. Agile practices enhance innovation through high-performance multidisciplinary teams and ensure business value by direct client involvement throughout the entire delivery process, eg., Paquette and Frankl (2015). Also, an organization's "transition from a plan-based approach to Agile should result in the reduction of management overhead and lessen the burden of formalities from your creative development team." (See SoftwareTestingHelp (2019) article).

Agile does **not prescribe** a specific set of actions, behaviors, or steps.

Agile is a culture, a worldview, and a mindset; it is not a methodology.

Agile is about responding to and anticipating the customer and the market. Agile is about making the creation of value for customers the highest priority.

Agile is about learning to respond effectively to both the unexpected and the unplanned.

Agile is people-focused, but successfully completing tasks is also important.

Agile is about coordinated, incremental delivery.

When successfully applied for large projects and potentially an entire organization agile can provide dramatic gains in effectiveness, efficiency and value.

An agile mindset still requires the use of processes, tools, documentation, contract negotiation and

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long and short-range plans. Do **not** eliminate these activities and capabilities. Agility also requires resilience. There will be setbacks.

Managers must have a clear vision of why they are transitioning to agile and the business goals for the change, cf., Smith (2012). Managers must understand and become agile before trying to implement and transition processes and work.

Agile organizations are more resilient and less fragile. Managers in a more agile organization need to use real-time communication and work-management software tools. Implementing a modular-based software architecture enables teams to effectively use technologies that other units have developed, cf., Aghina et al. (2018).

An agile person emphasizes continuous attention to technical excellence and solutions that are simple, flexible, and ready for adaptation and change.

Transitioning into an Agile delivery approach is a challenging task. Try, fail fast, be patient and persistent. Part of becoming agile is developing mental and emotional toughness. Learn to cope with a problem or crisis, then return to a pre-crisis status quickly.

Based on Meyer (2015) and Frick (2016), being Agile is not about moving faster, rather it is about adaptability and learning. Also, Agile processes should lead to more collaboration with stakeholders and better solutions.

Todaro (2020) identifies a number of keys to be agile, including identifying and completing small chunks of work, prioritizing tasks, focusing on the high priority tasks and user stories, communicating and collaborating effectively, being part of a team, solving problems, focusing on making progress, and tracking progress toward delivering value.

In general, know that in our lives "there is no lasting failure, only feedback." Learn to approach everything as a lesson, learn to adjust your actions according to feedback, while proceeding toward desired outcomes. This approach results in continuous improvement. Agile mindset means you have joined the quest to continually learn.

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Becoming agile is an ongoing journey that involves reflection, introspection, and thoughtfulness. One does not magically become "agile", it is hard work.

Agility is **now** a key to business success. Fragile enterprises break, agile enterprises are more resilient. The importance of agility and developing an agile mindset has been increasing rapidly with a turbulent environment.

Creating an agile organization requires managers to 1) re-evaluate roles, 2) increase training, 3) familiarize staff and customers with changing practices and processes, and 4) develop new communication/collaboration expectations.

An agile dance changes steps as the situation and the rhythm change. Do the agile dance that fits a situation and accept that change during the dance is OK. The dance may start as a slow waltz and change to the tango, then a line dance or quickstep ... and then revert to a waltz or vice versa. There are few rules governing agile behavior and processes.

How far along are you and your organization on the journey to become agile?

Think agile, do agile, and be agile. Dance on ... enjoy the journey.

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