Supplementary resource for the book *The Agile Mind-Set.* More at www.TheAgileMindsetBook.info

Planning with the Agile Mind-Set

Evolve the solution

- Grow the solution in response to needs. Adapt it to learning about both the needs and the implementation.
- Identify the parts that are likely to change at a high cost.
- Make the design pliable and simple enough that future adaptations are practical and require little correction or rework.
- Plan collaboratively, ensuring everyone has a chance to contribute.
- Build for changeability and low cost of change.

First be effective, then be efficient

- Never work for too long without feedback.
- Seek feedback on something built, not only on the idea or specification of it.

Guidelines for splitting work items

- "What's our biggest unknown here?"
- "What's the best thing we could learn here?"
- "Which 20% would yield 80% of the return?"
- "If we had only X units (of time or money) to spend, what would we choose to do?"
- "Which assumption or hypothesis should we prove—or disprove?"
- "Which part has the highest cost of delay?"

Proceed in small cycles

- Do "big work" in a sequence of small cycles.
- Identify the main objective of the cycle: customer value (features and capabilities); risk reduction; learning and feedback (experiments); enablement of next change.
- Plan the minimum amount of work to achieve that objective.
- The team must have a good idea about the cycle's top few valuable outcomes.
- If the cycles are sprints, they need to be long enough for the team to accomplish sub-outcomes, and to be disturbance-free.

Plan for less

- YAGNI: Will you *really* need this item?
- Otherwise, perhaps you don't *really* need it *now*?
- Split items and focus your plans and commitments on the first few parts.

Guidelines for estimation

- Estimate only small- and medium-size work.
- See the big picture, not only a pile of tasks.
- Favor team completion over individual busyness.
- The whole team to estimate collaboratively.
- As the team owns the outcomes, use team units.
- Change the estimation method if it's not useful for forecasting or planning.
- Distinguish ideal effort from actual time.

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