The Agile Mindset – Making Agile Processes Work

Chapter 1 – The Big Picture

1. Your mindset is how you think about acting in a given situation. – it is the thinking that drives your actions.
2. A mindset consists of 3 elements
   a. Values – what you consider most important in the current situation
   b. Beliefs – what you hold to be true in that type of situation
   c. Principles – which standards guide your choices, decisions and actions
3. Agile Values – what is most important to you in your work?
4. Agile is anchored in four foundational values
   a. People come first, before product and before process - those people are everyone with a stake in the work, not just the team that produces it. This value translates to “individuals and interactions”
   b. Adaptation – Adaptation encompasses the readiness, ability and willingness to respond to change. The change may apply to people, process or product.
   c. Early and frequent value delivery – focus relentlessly on valuable work and making a difference, so that customers see and early and frequent return on investment
   d. Customer collaboration – the producers of the work ought to collaborate with their customers for the result to truly delight them. It is a spirit of partnership, not of vendor-buyer or winner-loser.
5. A belief is a conviction. It is something you hold to be true, but haven’t proven and perhaps can’t prove rigorously. Beliefs are invisible and often hard to articulate.
6. While values do not uniquely determine beliefs, they make certain beliefs relevant and others irrelevant or improbable.
7. Agile has a set of beliefs about people, the work, and the work’s customer.
   a. People – The Agile mindset is congruent with Theory Y, which says that competent, motivated, trusted and supported people will do well. People with an Agile mindset believe that the best model that manages the downside and elevates the upside is the self-organizing, collaborative team.
   b. The customer – Agile mindset does not assume that the customer is always right. In fact, its basic belief is that customers can’t pinpoint future needs and wants. It is better to focus intently on what the customer needs now, and not commit too far into the future.
   c. The work – The Agile mindset is formulated particularly for complex work. As such it is based on a particular belief – emergence or evolution – rather than planning – is an appropriate response to complexity.
8. Agile Principles – describes how work gets done. Practitioners use the principles to design their methods and processes
9. The Agile mindset happens to accomplish the value with several other principles – Cadence, Reliability, Simplicity, Shippable, Quality, Time box and Collaboration.
10. Agile environments are built on respect, transparency, trust and personal safety. These conditions enable people to participate, beyond that, people will do their best work, if they can focus and work at a sustainable pace.

11. Agile teams are collaborative – members work together and share ownership over their results.

12. Agile teams establish maximum bandwidth means of communication so that everyone stays informed. When they make decisions, their preferred mode is to achieve consensus – to gain everyone’s support for the decision’s implementation.

13. Agile promotes leadership and it calls for servant leaders who grow teams in a trusting, supportive and humane environment.

14. Every activity in Agile starts by understanding its outcome or objective – ‘begin with the end in mind’.

15. If you need to choose between being effective (doing the right thing) and being efficient (minimizing waste) prefer to be effective. In other words, always ask “Why”, before you ask “What” and only then be concerned with the “How”.

16. Three other principles which would help in achieving the right outcomes are
   a. Defer decisions to the last responsible moment
   b. Strive for simplicity when making decisions
   c. Take an experimental approach, fail fast and cheap and maximize the learning from that.

17. The Cadence principle tells the team to deliver value as frequently as desirable and possible from a technical and business perspective.

18. The team does that with reliability ensuring they don’t compromise their future ability to deliver value.

19. Organize the work and reduce the cost of change, not the cost of work.

20. The Agile team’s guideline for progress is to keep their product in a working, shippable, and preferably deployed state.

21. The team’s results matter more than the member’s individual utilization.

22. Agile practitioners pay constant attention to quality and technical excellence.

23. In terms of common constraints around work – time, scope and cost – Agile’s preference is for time – the time box governs much of Agile planning.

24. Three additional principles enhance these principles
   a. Incorporate feedback loops – and make them short and actionable.
   b. Continual learning about things that constantly shift – the customers, the business, the team and the work.
   c. Continuous improvement – always do and be better.

25. The following checklists help determine Agile’s fit to your situation
   a. The People
      i. Do your people feel safe and trusted
      ii. Will the organization welcome a high level of transparency
      iii. Will the organization allow a collaborative, self-organizing, cross functional team to grow and thrive
      iv. Are quick actionable feedback loops possible
      v. Will the team be able to dedicate time to learning and improvement

   b. The Customer
i. Can the team establish a relationship with their customer that is collaborative and involves frequent interaction
ii. Can the customer generally choose and articulate the top needs in a timely and reliable fashion
iii. Will the customer tolerate some uncertainty about cost, scope and schedule in return for adaptation and frequent value delivery
iv. Does the customer prefer the discovery of valuable alternatives over the efficient execution of a predetermined solution

c. The work
   i. Are you solving an important problem, and do you have a rough idea about a solution worth building
   ii. Is there significant uncertainty around needs, designs or execution
   iii. Even with good certainty, can you expect opportunities for change to occur later that will be worth seizing
   iv. Does the complexity of work justify considerable collaboration among team members
   v. At the time of execution, will information, discoveries and preferences invalidate many early decisions
   vi. Are you making something that you haven’t made before
   vii. Can you keep the cost of change low
   viii. Will people continue to work on the product after it is “done”

26. If the answer is ‘Yes’ to all the questions, you have good reason to expect Agile benefits – delighted customers, quality product, reliable and healthy teams, and faster releases.

Chapter 2 - Deciding what to work on

1. Stephen Covey’s – ‘Begin with the end in mind’ can be interpreted in two ways - What is the end result – the outcome. And two – goes beyond the outcome, to what end? What is the purpose of your next action? Why do it?
2. A good question to uncover the purpose is “How will you make a difference to your organization, to the users, to the world?” “And why is that difference worth making?”
3. The team and the customer needs to build shared understanding, catch mistakes, allow changes early and focus on what the customer actually needs
4. Have a Product Owner act a representative of the sponsors, stakeholders, and users reconciling their different voices into a single voice for the delivery team to hear – the principle being have the team work from a single list.
5. The Product Owner must be empowered, knowledgeable, and available. If he or she cannot make hard decisions, does not enough, or can’t interact with the team enough, someone else will have to make that shortfall.
6. The Agile mindset prefers to work on items that have explicit or implicit value. Value could mean “Customer value” - higher sales and customer retention resulting in more business value to the organization or just getting more dollars to the company. There must be a shared understanding of value in the context of the customer.
7. To better decide what to work on, you need to test your ideas with real people who have real problems in real situations. Sending developers and testers to visit user and customer sites. Build mechanisms for collecting feedback and tracking usage into your product.

8. Usability and Test Driven Development embrace failure as a source of learning and valuable design.

9. Agile practitioners typically use experiments to prove out the value of the solution, especially if it carries a high price tag – “fail fast, fail cheap and fail early”.

10. A central principle of the Agile mindset is to have short actionable feedback loops and then to tighten them over time. Build feedback loops into your process and your chances of delivering the wrong thing will drop.

11. If Agile implementation feels less than effective, a few things to be done include
   a. Work in smaller batches, move smaller pieces from idea to production – resulting in shorter feedback loops
   b. Have the entire team establish and process those feedback loops.
   c. Increase transparency
   d. Vary methods for receiving feedback – asking both general and open ended questions
   e. Ask “why” and “what” more often than you ask “how”

12. Deferring decisions to the last responsible moment – the tricky part is knowing “when” that moment is. Making that determination depends heavily on context and experience.

Chapter 3 – Planning the work

1. The Agile principles give rise to two planning guidelines
   a. Never do anything for too long without checking your work
   b. Prefer to get that feedback on something built – not on the idea or specification of it.

2. The preference is for a good flow of valuable results and for responsiveness, over keeping workers busy (employee utilization).

3. The primary agile mechanism for putting time constraints on large work is the iteration. The idea is that before the team starts working, they determine the time box – when they will stop working.

4. An Agile team would create a shippable increment to yield the most learning and feedback necessary to prove or disprove their hypothesis.

5. An agile iteration make sense only if three conditions apply
   a. The team must have a good idea about the top few valuable outcomes, so they know what to include in the plan
   b. The iteration needs to be long enough for the team to accomplish meaningful results and short enough for the outcomes to remain valuable.
   c. The iteration must be disturbance free

6. The regular “heartbeat” of iterations creates scheduled opportunities for business, management and team members to review those choices, see progress, seek feedback and respond to changes.

7. Evolution or emergence is an approach used by Agile teams in managing complexity. The solution evolves to address the needs and no more. Its design must be pliable and simple enough so future adaptations are practical and require little correction or undoing.
8. The focal point of each backlog item is always its “value”. The backlog is a transparent means of planning work – keeping plans current with reality and needs.
9. Agile planning must strike a fine balance between determining the future and keeping options open.
10. Agile teams work on small chunks of work. Some of the questions which help decompose items into smaller ones are:
   a. What’s the biggest unknown here
   b. What is the best thing we could learn about this
   c. Which 20% of this item would yield 80% of the return
   d. If we could spend only X units of time or money, what would be chose to do
   e. Which assumption or hypothesis should we prove or disprove
   f. Which part has the highest cost of delay
11. A few guidelines for Agile estimation:
   a. Don’t bother estimating the very small or very large because your error will be high – split large pieces or aggregate small ones into more manageable pieces
   b. Don’t try to produce a precise estimate by dissecting an item into many tiny ones and then summing up their estimates. It is very likely that some tasks may be missed.
   c. Team based estimation (Wisdom of the Crowds phenomenon) is better than individual estimates which could possibly be biased.
   d. Rely on “results” or “outcome” principles and focus on the iteration goal and commitment rather than on maximizing individual inputs – don’t get hung up on detailed planning with precise hourly task estimates.
   e. A common practice of how much a team can accomplish in a sprint is adding up story points and choose a set of stories whose numbers add up close to the velocity. In case it is difficult to produce such reliable estimates, use the one question process of asking “Do we think these candidates would fit in the iteration?” – and have all of them agree on a set of stories which could be fitted in one sprint.
   f. Distinguish the “ideal” estimate from the “calendar” estimate.
12. The primary purpose of an Agile Team is to deliver value steadily – hence the team is cross functional. The scope of Definition of Done correlates to the team’s makeup – therefore anything the team leaves out of the Definition of Done has to be managed separately. E.g. work related to documentation, database administration etc.
13. Iterations are self imposed constraint that facilitates feedback, learning and change.
14. Agile’s “cadence” principles encourage practitioners to release working product regularly and to do so at a frequency that best supports the business’s rhythm.

Chapter 4 – Engaging People

1. People are not resources – A resource can be measured, divided, moved, exploited, and traded. You are a person. Would you like to be measured, divided, moved, exploited or traded?
2. Many organizational cultures still view staff as an expense instead of as an investment.
3. People’s output in an Agile environment depends on other team members and their interrelationships.
4. A key Agile belief is that a group can do better than its members working individually. Thus, an Agile environment allows the team’s wisdom and positive synergy to emerge.

5. Four principles that remove barriers to participation in Agile are – Respect, Trust, Transparency and Personal Safety.

6. Once people feel free to participate, the Agile mindset suggests approaches to amplifying individual as well as shared results
   a. Put people on equal footing – no hierarchy in Agile teams
   b. Set clear expectations – the team determines their rules of engagement and working agreements
   c. “Begin with the end in mind” – the team concentrates on producing value rather than on tasks and schedules
   d. Finish together – as a group, team members focus on just a few tasks or needs at a given time. If everyone is scattered doing different things, result is a straight sum of individual contributions.
   e. Emphasize “needle movers” – leaders and managers acknowledge members for value delivery, continuous improvement and taking leadership, not just for performing assigned tasks.

7. Human beings are imperfect – and there are situations where communication can be misunderstood, ideas misinterpreted, people procrastinate or lose motivation. These shortcomings can be effectively dealt with in Agile teams by
   a. Forming collaborative teams
   b. Begin with the end in mind
   c. Establish short feedback loops

8. In addition to these, attitudes such as the ones below amplify each other
   a. Assume best intent – trust each other’s competence and professionalism
   b. Seek forgiveness, not permission – don’t wait for permission which would hold up your progress.
   c. Failure is OK – think of failures as learning and feedback
   d. Live with the consequences of your action
   e. If doing something hurts, do it more often – e.g. integration and deployment

9. The canonical example of an Agile accomplishment is releasing a product increment and having customers accept it.

10. Agile has an explicit people-centric principle – everyone should work at a sustainable pace. All things being equal, people who work at a sustainable pace retain their morale, motivation, and clear thinking.

11. It is important to incorporate slack in your Agile processes. Slack is that extra time you set aside for thinking about the work, especially doing creative or complex work. It is a deliberate attempt to expand your mind, to consider more inputs and ideas and to amplify learning. Slack is not a buffer you reserve for crunch time, unplanned work or underestimated commitments.

Chapter 5 – Performing as a team

1. Agile prefers networks of flat, semiautonomous and cross functional teams.

2. Agile places a premium on completing valuable work frequently and is practically obsessed with it. The unit that accomplishes that – turning ideas into shippable increments – is the team.
3. An Agile team is semi autonomous, having certain rights that enable it to be effective:
   a. Only the team may commit itself to produce a certain set of outcomes in a given timeframe.
   b. The team self organizes around the work – only they determine which members will do the work and how they will do it.
   c. If the team has a problem, the team is empowered and expected to notice it and respond to it, solve it, request assistance or escalate it.
   d. The team decides on how to improve itself and its capabilities
   e. The team has the right to know their boundaries and success criteria, as well as management’s expectations.

4. In Agile, every one cares about getting valuable items to completion. The team owns its progress – this is not left to the team lead, manager or project manager.

5. The Agile mindset exacts a higher standard than ownerships, expecting team members to also share responsibility. Even though each member may contribute only a piece of any given result, the team shares responsibility for outcomes achieved by its members.

6. High levels of visibility and transparency encourage everyone to do good work and truly care about shared objectives.

7. For a team to reach a high level of effectiveness and maintain it – they must also learn about the consequences of their decisions and actions. They must learn about their abilities and limitations, how to work together, and how they respond to change.

8. Feedback loops in Agile through Reviews and Retrospectives amplify the learning

9. Teams need not limit themselves to prescheduled learning opportunities – a habit of growth minded individuals and teams is to reflect on a situation that recently ended and ask themselves – “What could we learn from that?”

10. Collaboration means working together on a task and sharing responsibility for the outcome. It requires shared understanding. It is different from cooperation, where every participant takes care of their own part, with the hope of a win-win outcome.

11. Collaboration cannot take place without respect and trust, where as cooperation may happen without them. So if someone is stuck and thereby jeopardizes the team’s promises, helping the stuck person may be more important than having others make their own progress.

12. Practices such as co-located teams, pairing, information radiators, and collaborative techniques help in building collaboration among team members.

13. Servant leadership – instead of responding to a team level problem with ‘Give me options’ or ‘Tell me what to do’, a leader would ‘take it to the team’ for a conversation and a decision.

14. Agile teams prefer to stay together for the long haul – it is this stability that allows them to maximize learning. Their knowledge is a critical asset to the organization, since much of it is tacit and undocumented. They build shared history and retain organizational memory.

Chapter 6 – Doing the work – Part 1

1. Traditional management theory calls for managing the workers. Agile calls for managing the work and for taking care of the workers.

2. Working product is the primary measure of progress – keeping every member busy is at the most a secondary consideration.
3. Teams could face issues during work – such as working in a mini waterfall, or taking a call on working on a task expected to be complete in 3 days time, which prolongs for 6 days or more, fixing a newly discovered bug within a sprint which could delay the planned deliveries etc – how the team tackles some of these issues depend on context, team skills, project constraints, stakeholder expectations etc.

4. To ensure teams complete the work without delay, Agile specifies that
   a. Team members sit in close quarters to make communication and collaboration easier.
   b. Product owner is available to answer questions about the current increment.
   c. The team creates rapid automated tests which can be run anytime to detect breakage.
   d. Teams establish mechanisms for coordinating progress, identifying problems and resolving them quickly – e.g. daily scrum meeting.
   e. Teams do not overload their members with their available time and leave some room for dealing with the unplanned. They reserve some buffer for helping out each other and dealing with surprises.

5. Agile teams are always on the lookout for impediments which they attempt to remove forthwith.

6. Teams limit their focus on few items than there are team members - this encourages collaboration and team members take these items to completion.

7. The waterfall mindset associates quality closely with testing. The working assumption is that the right time to test an artifact is after it is produced. The Agile preference for effectiveness over efficiency means that testing is primarily a learning activity, not a confirmatory activity (that would be ‘checking’).

8. Frequent and rapid testing provides information for feedback loops answering questions such as
   a. How valuable is what we have built
   b. Who else might use this and in what ways?
   c. How easy is it to understand and use?
   d. What have we broken along the way?
   e. What else does it do that we didn’t anticipate?

9. A key Agile belief is that collaboration mitigates human risk. Thus the continuous quality principle further states that quality is everyone’s concern throughout the process.

10. To improve and ensure quality, Agile teams believe in certain practices such as
    a. “All hands on deck” or “swarming” in times of crisis
    b. “The Boy Scout Rule” – if you work on some part of the product, leave that area a bit cleaner than you found it
    c. Test and demo an iteration’s code in environments that maximally resemble the production environment
    d. Hold special retrospectives to learn lessons from outages and firefighting as well as from certain features that turned out to be very hard to build

11. The default Agile prioritization of project constraints is to **put time first** (choose when you will release the product) and then **quality** (do your best work during the time box).

12. Quality has to do with delighting your users; scope has to do with satisfying them by getting the nominal job done. So if you are developing a product, **lack if scope is something you pay for now, while lack of quality is something you pay for later.**
13. It is important the organization has an environment of culture and leadership which is considered ‘safe’ in all respects – which would enable them to
   a. Give feedback and discuss sensitive matters without fear of reprisal
   b. Know their boundaries and exercise their autonomy within those boundaries without being shot down
   c. Understand the organization’s values and act on them without hesitation
   d. Retain their physical and psychological health (e.g. by maintaining sustainable pace)
   e. Enjoy respectful, sensible and consistent treatment from everyone.

14. A distinguishing factor of Agile is its insistence of making information visible to every team member. This information falls into 2 categories
   a. Information about the work – basic information that helps coordinate work among the members of a self organizing team, the impediments, build status, including the plan for the next iteration etc.
   b. The second category of information supports team work. Typical artifacts include the one page project charter to always remind the team of the big picture, project justification, team agreements etc.

15. Applying new learning, acting on feedback, and being responsive are three keys to agility – so to apply them while remaining productive, the cost of these changes must remain as low as possible.

16. One of the Agile principles is Simplicity – a simple deliverable is compact and succinct and addresses only what’s needed, future changes will have less to touch.

17. Agile requires team members to have T shaped skills – or Specializing Generalists. This would reduce the cost of delay and consequently the cost of change.

Chapter 7 – Doing the work – Part 2 When it is software development

1. In Agile, typically the Big Design Up Front (BDUF) is not a practice usually followed. BDUF inhibits change.
2. The design in Agile works on the stable and invariant aspects early – that’s both effective and efficient and defer design decisions for high change items to the last responsible moment.
3. They opt for simplicity in their designs, using simple modeling approaches that can support communication, feedback and shared understanding.
4. Another aspect of Agile is developing and delivering in an incremental and iterative manner.
5. With each increment, the team keeps the design, construction, interfaces, behaviour and flow in lockstep – the result is releasable and in good working order.
6. In the iterative phase, any changes made to the existing functionality, the team treats it the same way as an increment – make it solid, simple and sufficient and then implement it in a sequence of small, safe steps.
7. Another manifestation of the iterative change requires changes to the design and implementation but not to the functionality or purpose – in other words refactoring. This could be renaming a variable, changing a function’s argument or location, or extracting duplicate fragments into shared code.
8. While refactoring is a technical practice, it supports business decisions – it is analogous to paying back the principal and interest on money you borrowed in order to seize opportunities (technical debt).

9. Testing – the best tool for Agile testing is a critical mind.

10. Too often, testers are locked into the reactive mode of checking the product for conformance to requirements – “the test plan” thinking pattern.

11. The Agile testers go beyond verification and help make products great by critiquing the thinking that went into them. They do it throughout the lifecycle, deciding what to work, planning the work, executing the work and finally in exploring the evolving product – truly collaborating in the development of software.

12. In Agile, tests have the following properties:
   a. Fast
   b. Minimal liability
   c. Executable documentation
   d. Collectively owned

13. Approaching a work item with an Agile mindset would mean completing it as a series of micro items – look for small pieces of the item that would move it closer to a shippable state through learning, feedback, adaptation or simplicity.

14. Test Driven Development is a technique which implements this approach – of doing it at the micro level. The TDD cycle is formulated to keep developers safe to keep their results simple and to allow feedback and learning.

15. Acceptance Test Driven Development aims at a quick feedback loop between business and technology, beginning with the end in mind, and shared understanding through effective communication.

16. Agile teams need to balance between sapient testing and automated testing. Each has distinct benefits and costs, and like everything else, context is everything. A simple Agile mantra which helps build good habits is “No moving without a test.”

17. To reduce the risk of integrating work of Agile teams, developers work on small items and constantly communicate with either other to ensure that the integrated behaviour is on expected lines.

18. Multi tasking is a big “No” in Agile – team members are advised to sequence their activities and finish whatever they start before doing the next thing.

19. Similarly last minute heroics are also best avoided – doing quick and dirty work because of time pressure is only acceptable if the team takes time after the deadline to undo the cruft – and takes time to learn how to avoid a return of the situation.

20. Traditional development optimizes for writing code, while Agile optimizes for reading and changing it. Agile developers incorporate the following principles in support of this belief:
   a. Write intent revealing code
   b. Write simple code
   c. Make it easy to come back to the code
   d. Make tests the single source of truth
   e. Collaborate
   f. Act as if no design is sacred
Chapter 8 – Getting better at work

1. A key Agile principle is always to improve things through “Inspect and Adapt” and “Continuous improvement”
2. Improvements to the team’s process and work habits can have great effect on the results.
3. Agile teams rely on various tactics to identify useful targets for improvement – use of metrics, measurements or context specific performance indicators besides concepts from Lean thinking.
4. Agile mindset considers team’s productivity to be more important than individual’s productivity as much as team consensus over one person’s opinion.
5. Adaptation and improvement typically focuses on how team works together and how they get things done. E.g.
   a. Determining guidelines for making high impact technical decisions
   b. Simplifying their workflow
   c. Reconfiguring their iteration board to show different work states
   d. Trying various ways to determine who works on what and when
   e. Fleshing out a ‘Definition of Ready’ before the team starts working on an item
   f. Experimenting with new practices
   g. Increasing their technical discipline
   h. Organizing knowledge sharing events to expand member’s ability to contribute
6. Those with an Agile mindset are always on the look out to experiment, try out for a definite period of time, collect data and feedback and then decide what to do.
7. Effective Retrospectives are one of the key practices to adopt in an Agile mindset. Making improvements in small, regular doses can help avoid being overwhelmed with the amount of change – and that requires a supportive and safe culture and leadership.
8. Solid Agile teams come about with the support and cultivation of servant leaders – in an environment where members feel emotionally healthy and safe, and personal and shared responsibility is the norm.

Chapter 9 – Adopting the Mindset

1. The starting point for identifying the mindset is the values - people before process, early and frequent value delivery, customer collaboration and adaptation.
2. Cherry picking the values / principles to adopt often leads to mediocre results. E.g. allowing frequent change through iterative planning, while leaving most of testing to the very end often degrades intrinsic quality and protracts schedules.
3. Agile is a paradigm in which both the customer and the developer collaborate towards an outcome that matters to both.
4. Getting great at Agile is like becoming great at long distance running, a new career or parenting – involves a deep shift that a sequence of small steps cannot achieve adequately.
5. Robert Dilt’s “Logical Levels’ model provides a conceptual, hierarchical explanation of how people go about life. Each of the levels in this model affects those below it and supports the one above it. This model is useful in explaining the experience of change.
6. The two upper levels – Identify and Role are pivotal – they describe who you are in general and in specific contexts. They are about your personality and how you place yourself in the world.

7. Mindset lives in the next two levels – values and beliefs.

8. When people first start doing Agile, they develop capabilities, exercise behaviours and change the environment. In the Logical levels model, these live in the bottom three rungs of the ladder.

https://elisabethgoodman.files.wordpress.com/2012/03/slide6.jpg

9. Like any change, a mindset change requires motivation, bandwidth and focus.
   a. Motivation arises from the intended benefits of Agile and from the shortcomings of the present state.
   b. Bandwidth means that you have the time to practice and the slack to reflect on the practice.
   c. Focus means having dedicated, undistracted blocks of time for such practice and learning.

10. To make the shift to Agile, one needs patience for the learning experience, enough slack for frequent introspection, support of others who hold you accountable for results.

11. Processes describe steps for getting work done; practices describe particular ways to execute each step. If a practice is a bad fit or improperly implemented, it won’t achieve its stated purpose. If people don’t understand the purpose of a practice, they will actively resist it or merely not play along.

12. It is not advisable to look for “best practices” in the first place – always be on the lookout for ideas and how to evaluate them in your context. Establish feedback loops to get a feedback on the results and try to improve on them.

13. Adopting the Agile mindset in business settings requires education, patience, leadership, cultural adaptation and continuous improvement.
14. The table - How Agile are you? – contains questions that can be used to evaluate the application of Agile principles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRINCIPLE</th>
<th>QUESTION</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>How well do we respect others and their contribution?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparency</td>
<td>How accessible is the information that guides our decisions and actions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>To what extent do we rely on each other to act professionally, predictably, and with integrity?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Safety</td>
<td>How much useful input do people offer without fear of retribution?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>How frequently are we able to concentrate on our work and bring it closer to completion?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Pace</td>
<td>All things being equal, how long can the team continue delivering value at our current level of effort?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Organizing Teams</td>
<td>How much, and how well, do we distribute work among ourselves?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>How much positive synergy does our team have?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>How informed are people when they approach a task that depends on others?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consensus</td>
<td>How effectively does our team make, implement, and support decisions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>How trusting, supportive, and humane is the environment in which our team operates?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>How outcome-minded are people when they perform their tasks?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective</td>
<td>How much more attention do we pay to doing the right things than to doing them quickly?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defer</td>
<td>How well do we identify the last responsible moment for making decisions, and how close to that moment do we make them?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simplicity</td>
<td>How much work are we able to avoid without negative consequences?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiment</td>
<td>How well, fast, and cheap do we learn about what’s right and what works?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cadence</td>
<td>How close is our delivery frequency to the frequency that our business needs and can sustain?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>How reliably do we deliver value now, and how well do we avoid compromising our future ability to deliver value?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of Change</td>
<td>How well do we control the cost of change (where it matters)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shippable</td>
<td>How often is our product in a working and shippable (releasable) state?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>Do we regularly pay quality and technical excellence the attention they need to support our goals?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time-Box</td>
<td>How useful are our time-boxes to meeting our objectives? How well do we adhere to the time-boxes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results</td>
<td>How focused are we on value delivery, learning, or risk reduction?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback</td>
<td>How short, useful, and used are our feedback loops?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>As time goes on, how much better do we know ourselves, our work, and our customers?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement</td>
<td>How often do we improve our process and teamwork? And our product?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>