WATERFALL vs AGILE CHEATSHEET

Cutting-edge strategies for profitable software development


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WATERFALL

- Requires detailed planning at the outset.
- Each stage is completed in full before moving to the next.
- Good for getting from A to B... where B is well defined... and the route is well understood.
- Requires significant planning before work begins.
- Changes to scope can seriously impact time/cost.

AGILE

- Employs short, iterative build and release cycles.
- Good for getting from A to B... where B - and the route to B - is not well defined.
- Flexible: changes to scope are expected.
- Visibility (of project progress).
- Requires very little documentation.

PROS

- Best for projects with well-defined tasks/phases.
- Project plans are re-useable.
- Well-defined deliverables for each project phase.
- Agile fixes the time and (therefore) the cost. Project scope is a variable.
- Variable scope and schedule can be difficult for Stakeholders/executives to accept.
- Simple in principle, less so in practice.

CONS

- Requires significant planning before work begins.
- Changes to scope can seriously impact time/cost.
- Waterfall fixes the project scope. Cost and time change (usually expand) to match.
- Risk of failure decreases over the lifetime of the project.
- Risk of failure increases in the build phase.
- Risk of NOT DELIVERING decreases over the lifetime of the project.
- All of the value is delivered at the end of the project.

CUSTOMER VALUE

- Value is delivered early in the project and builds over time.
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