



**Agile Project
Management**

Agile Enablement: An Assessment of Readiness

CUTTER
CONSORTIUM

A new approach to project management
and project governance

Access to the Experts

Incorporating agile practices into your product development process will help you:

- Reduce product defects
- Improve productivity
- Increase innovation
- Save costs
- Shorten time to market
- Pay down design debt
- Improve team collaboration, and more.

Is your organization challenged by growth and product complexity? Are quality and product adaptability declining? Is your ability to reliably deliver results hindered by an erosion of technical skills and domain knowledge? Are you considering agile project management and/or software development practices to help you overcome these challenges?

Enabling Agile Project Management and Software Development

Cutter Consortium's Agile Enablement engagement provides your organization with experienced, hands-on assistance to jumpstart and guide your transition to agile methods. Led by Practice Director Jim Highsmith, Cutter's team of experts help you identify which agile practices — such as iterative product development, test-first design, project chartering sessions, pair programming, team collocation, onsite customers, sustainable work schedules, and others — will bring the greatest return-on-investment to your organization. Our goal: to enable you to implement agile software development and project management methods quickly and effectively, shorten your product development schedule, and increase the quality of the resultant product.

Cutter's Agile Approach

We help our clients implement agile methods by focusing on agile principles and traits — delivering customer value, embracing change, reflection, adaptation, etc. — and the basic project management model of envisioning the project, planning the overall project and next iteration, working with the pilot team during the iteration in a knowledge transfer mode, and closing out the project at the end with an overall project retrospective. Cutter's approach mirrors that of our overall philosophy with respect to IT, namely that we do not promote a single strategy but instead customize our approach to fit a client's specific situation.

Cutter Consortium's world-renown Senior Consultants and best-in-class coaches and facilitators have the experience and skills — technical, process and interpersonal — to help you determine your best course of action. We'll fine-tune the right combination of training and coaching for your entire team, from project managers to developers, testers to users, to ensure that your organization can succeed using agile methods. We are well equipped to customize agile templates, borrowing from the best practices of a variety of methodologies and combine them with your existing processes to meet your ongoing requirements.



The Engagement

Cutter's Agile Enablement takes a 5-part approach:

- 1. Education:** We offer two distinct introductions to the benefits of Agile; one customized for senior executives and one for your implementation staff.
- 2. Assessment:** Cutter's Agile Assessment process includes both quantitative and qualitative components. After conducting a benchmark comparison of your existing projects and interviewing key stakeholders, we'll assess your readiness based on:
 - Business drivers
 - Project successes and concerns
 - Basic understanding of existing metrics such as defect levels, productivity, and customer satisfaction
 - Current methodologies being used
- 3. Creating an Agile Vision:** We'll help you identify and clarify an end-state vision of what your agile approach should look like, pinpointing your core values and relating them to the benefits that an agile approach brings. We'll also help you set the objectives for your agile initiative and determine a realistic time schedule for agile implementation. Then we'll help you sell this vision to both key decision makers and your technical staff.
- 4. Determination of Specific Solution Components:** Our methodology recommendations cover Product Development, Project Management, Software Development, and Portfolio Management. In addition, we deliver practice/skill recommendations in Technical Practices, Project Management Practices, and Collaboration Practices.
- 5. Action Plan:** Lastly, together we'll set an action plan, including:
 - Identifying which projects should go agile
 - Checkpoints for determining implementation success
 - Creating implementation teams that are a mix of your staff and appropriate Cutter Senior Consultants and/or coaches
 - Determining the correct mix of coaching, training, and consulting required based on your goals and budget
 - Creating a three-tier action plan to meet short-, intermediate-, and long-range objectives

Cutter's Agile Enablement Team

- Jim Highsmith, *Director*
- Christopher Avery
- Sam Bayer
- Mike Cohn
- Ken Collier
- Rachel Davies
- Joshua Kerievsky
- Bartek Kiepuszewski
- Ken Orr
- Bob Wysocki



A Sample Agility Readiness Assessment
(1=Low; 5=World Class)

The Cutter Difference

Cutter Consortium is a unique IT advisory firm consisting of more than 125 internationally recognized experts who have come together to offer content, consulting, and training to our clients. These experts are committed to delivering top-level, critical, and objective advice. They have done, and are doing, groundbreaking work in organizations worldwide, helping companies deal with issues in the core areas of software development and agile project management, enterprise architecture, business technology trends and strategies, enterprise risk management, metrics, and sourcing.

Cutter offers a different value proposition from other IT research firms: we give you Access to the Experts. You get practitioners' points of view, derived from hands-on experience with the same critical issues you are facing, not the perspective of a desk-bound analyst who can only make predictions and observations on what's happening in the marketplace. With Cutter Consortium, you get the best practices and lessons learned from the world's leading experts; experts who are implementing these techniques at companies like yours right now. Cutter's clients are able to tap into its expertise in a variety of formats including content via online advisory services and journals, mentoring, workshops, training, and consulting. And Cutter's flexibility allows clients to customize the training/consulting services and information products they select so as to attain the solutions they need, while staying within budget.

About Cutter Agile Project Management Practice Director Jim Highsmith

Jim Highsmith is Director of Cutter Consortium's Agile Software Development & Project Management Practice and a Fellow of the Cutter Business Technology Council. He is considered a leader of the agile methodology movement and is a frequent keynoter at Cutter Summits and symposia. Mr. Highsmith has 20-plus year's experience as an IT manager, product manager, project manager, consultant, and software developer. Mr. Highsmith is the recipient of the 2005 Stevens Award, in recognition of his work on Adaptive Software Development and agile processes.

Mr. Highsmith is the author of the acclaimed book *Agile Project Management: Creating Innovative Products*, as well as the books *Agile Software Development Ecosystems*, and *Adaptive Software Development: A Collaborative Approach to Managing Complex Systems*, which won the prestigious Jolt award for product excellence. Mr. Highsmith is a founding member of both the AgileAlliance and the Agile Project Leadership Network. He can be reached at jhighsmith@cutter.com.