

COMPETENCIES OF AN **AGILE TEAM**

By Agile Cockpit

INDEX

Index.....	2
Introduction	3
Overview of the competencies	4
Competencies and subcompetencies.....	5
Personal Agility	6
People Agility	10
Stakeholder Agility*	13
Results Agility	15
Mental Agility	17
Critical Thinking	18
Change Agility.....	19
Innovation Agility	21
Systems Agility	22
About us.....	24

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INTRODUCTION

An Agile Team works as an independent unit and ensures constant collaboration, has all the necessary skills for effective development and delivery of the products/services, and ensures constant iterative discovery. An Agile Team follows empiricism and portrays high levels of performance by believing in and following Agile Principles and Scrum values. An Agile Team must have a specific set of competencies in order to be successful in their role.

What is Agile Cockpit's Agile Teams Competency Framework?

Our Agile Teams Competency Framework strives to articulate the expected behaviors and the desired competencies to be successful as an Agile Team. It will further help in assessing the Agile Teams based on 8 Agilities. This enables data driven insights into the journey towards Agile transformation of the Agile Teams.



OVERVIEW OF THE COMPETENCIES

Personal Agility

The ability to be self-aware and have a realistic view of one's own strengths, weaknesses and areas of improvement.

People Agility

The ability to understand and relate to other people and collaboratively work with them in dynamic situations to harness and multiply collective performance.

Stakeholder Agility

The ability to leverage data to understand and validate stakeholder's/customer's assumptions and hypotheses and ensure complete stakeholder/ customer satisfaction.

Results Agility

The ability to deliver valuable results in short iterations by inspiring teams and enabling the organization to execute long-range strategic plans.

Mental Agility

The ability to think critically to deal with complex problems and expand possibilities.

Change Agility

The ability to identify and seize opportunities in a consistently changing environment and enabling teams to contribute to change.

Innovation Agility

The ability to focus on untested hypotheses and validate their relevance through continuous experimentation to trigger creative discovery and innovation.

Systems Agility

The ability to embrace, encourage and follow systems thinking, Agile values, principles and practices.



COMPETENCIES AND SUBCOMPETENCIES

Personal Agility

- ▶ Self-Organizing
- ▶ Cross-Functional
- ▶ Collective Ownership
- ▶ Decisiveness
- ▶ Resilience
- ▶ Team-Identity
- ▶ Courageous

Innovation Agility

- ▶ Innovation & Creativity

Systems Agility

- ▶ Technical/ Professional Expertise
- ▶ Planning Skills
- ▶ Stability

People Agility

- ▶ Collaboration
- ▶ Effective Communication
- ▶ Conflict Management
- ▶ Experience Sharing

Stakeholder Agility

- ▶ Customer Orientation
- ▶ Stakeholder (Internal) Orientation
- ▶ Results Agility
- ▶ Resource Management
- ▶ Result-Oriented
- ▶ Forward Thinking

Mental Agility

- ▶ Problem Solving
- ▶ Critical thinking

Change Agility

- ▶ Adaptability
- ▶ Dealing with Ambiguity
- ▶ Seek Change
- ▶ Taking Initiatives



PERSONAL AGILITY

Self-Organizing

Definition: The team achieves the business goals by planning and managing the tasks based on their time and capacity. The team works within set boundaries and exhibits accountability to achieve the measurable goals as planned using the most effective ways. The team focuses on continuous experimentation, improvement and adjustment based on self-evaluation and continuously finds ways to make the product development process/ service process better.

Behavioral Indicators:

- ▶ Takes their own decisions.
- ▶ Manage the tasks based on their time and capacity.
- ▶ Organizes themselves to choose the most effective ways to achieve the measurable goals as decided by them.
- ▶ Focuses on continuous experimentation, improvement and adjustment based on self-feedback.
- ▶ Continuously finds ways to make the product development process better.
- ▶ Has a clear set of expectations with respect to the work to be done, and have set boundaries to work within.
- ▶ There is a clearly defined criteria to measure the performance of the team.

Cross-Functional

Definition: The team possess all the necessary skills for effective development and delivery of a product/ service increment. It involves having team members from diverse functional expertise working towards achieving a common goal in a collaborative manner. The team has a complete understanding of the purpose as the goal for the team is clearly defined. There is consistent development of competence in collaboration with other teams of the organization.



Behavioral Indicators:

- ▶ Has all the necessary skills for effective development and delivery of a product increment.
- ▶ Has team members from diverse functional expertise working towards achieving a common goal.
- ▶ Completely understands the problems to be solved.
- ▶ The goal for the team is clearly defined.
- ▶ Development and delivery does not get affected in case a team member is not present.
- ▶ Consistent development of competence with other teams of the organization.

Collective Ownership

Definition: The team collectively takes responsibility for effective development and continuous improvement of the product/ service and there is no dependency on any one individual. Anyone in the team can introduce new ideas and everyone steps up when something goes wrong. The team shares all the successes and failures they face and there is a culture of collaboration. The team thinks in terms of 'We' and not as individual units.

Behavioral Indicators:

- ▶ Shares all the successes and failures they face.
- ▶ Realizes and drives their own responsibilities without anyone telling them to do so.
- ▶ Ensures effective development and continuous improvement of the product.
- ▶ Contributes in regularly introducing new ideas.
- ▶ There is no dependency on one individual.
- ▶ Steps up when things do not go as planned.
- ▶ Thinks in terms of 'We'.

Decisiveness

Definition: The team supports inclusive discussions and transparent communication while making a collective decision. The structure of the team and the roles are clear to all and the team comes prepared with ideas to discuss. The team discusses individual inputs and perspectives to reach at a consensus. The team supports and is committed to the decision once it is final.



Behavioral Indicators:

- ▶ Has a clearly defined time frame and objective for effective decision making.
- ▶ The structure of the team and the roles are clear to all.
- ▶ Comes prepared with ideas for discussion during a meeting.
- ▶ Inclusive discussions and transparent communication are encouraged while making a collective decision.
- ▶ Decision is made after discussing individuals' perspectives.
- ▶ Everyone is committed to and supports the final decision once made.

Resilience

Definition: The team is able to effectively deal with ambiguity and difficult situations. There is a 'safe to fail' environment and challenges are viewed as opportunities. The team can effectively think through the impact of their actions and has a positive attitude where everyone can openly communicate the concerns and support each other. There is a sense of trust and belongingness within the team which is viewed as a strength. The team finds ways to develop and deliver the products/ services even in unfavorable situations.

Behavioral Indicators:

- ▶ Works in a 'safe to fail' environment and is able to view challenges as opportunities.
- ▶ Knows how to effectively deal with frustrations and disappointments.
- ▶ Has a positive attitude where everyone can openly communicate the concerns.
- ▶ Provides each other with the help that is needed.
- ▶ There is a sense of trust and belongingness within the team.
- ▶ Diversity in the team is valued and used as a strength.
- ▶ Finds ways to develop and deliver the products/services even in unfavorable situations.



Team-Identity

Definition: The team completely understands and believes in the purpose, vision and goals of the team. The team is committed and focused to develop their own work procedures while leveraging the strengths of the team members. The team effectively utilizes the opportunity to voice the concerns and opinions about the followed procedures. The team identify with their own rituals and team symbols, for e.g., team name, logo, captions, etc.

Behavioral Indicators:

- ▶ Completely understands and believes in the purpose, vision and goals of the team.
- ▶ Is committed to develop their own work procedures.
- ▶ Is able to effectively voice their concerns and opinions about the followed procedures.
- ▶ Practice team rituals regularly.
- ▶ Identifies with some unique team symbols, for e.g., team name, logo, captions, etc.

Courageous

Definition: The team can respond to the constant changes and take calculated risks to try new things to ensure effective product development and continuous improvement. It involves dealing with team-related issues in a head-on manner without avoiding them. The team has the courage to hold themselves and others accountable for the work to be done and to ensure that the Agile Principles and Scrum values are being followed correctly. It also involves regularly giving and receiving constructive feedback to each other within the team. There is a sense of psychological safety within the team.

Behavioral Indicators:

- ▶ Responds to the constant changes.
- ▶ Takes calculated risks to try new things to ensure effective product development and continuous improvement.
- ▶ Does not avoid team-related issues.
- ▶ Everyone holds each other accountable for the work to be done.
- ▶ Ensures Agile Principles and Scrum values are being followed correctly.
- ▶ Gives and receives constructive feedback to each other within the team.
- ▶ There is a sense of psychological safety within the team.



PEOPLE AGILITY

Collaboration

Definition: The team is willing to work together and shares common beliefs and works towards a common purpose. The team explores diverse ideas and reaches a consensus about the methods and processes to be used to achieve the desired business results. The team consistently and collectively identifies the obstacles and work towards resolving them to achieve the desired outcomes and the business results. The team is willing to and ensures working along with other teams to identify ways to learn continuously.

Behavioral Indicators:

- ▶ Works towards the common purpose and the goals.
- ▶ Explores diverse ideas and reach a consensus about the methods to achieve remarkable business results.
- ▶ Anticipates and works towards removing obstacles regularly to achieve business results effectively.
- ▶ Willing to and ensure working along with each other.
- ▶ There is regular collaboration with other teams to ensure continuous learning.

Effective Communication

Definition: The team encourages a regular and open communication and information sharing within the team. There is clarity about the roles and the team ensures that everyone feels heard and respected. It involves awareness and understanding of others' intentions and emotions. The team openly discusses the desired outcomes, value creation and goals to be achieved in each Sprint. The team also consults the people outside the team to understand and improve their communication skills.



Behavioral Indicators:

- ▶ Encourages open and regular communication and information sharing within the team.
- ▶ Ensures that everyone feels heard and respected.
- ▶ There is awareness and understanding of others' intentions and emotions.
- ▶ There is clarity about the roles within the team.
- ▶ Openly discusses the desired outcomes, value creation and goals to be achieved in each Sprint.
- ▶ Consults people from outside the team to understand whether their communication is effective or not.
- ▶ Consults people from outside the team to improve their intra-team communication strategies.

Conflict Management

Definition: The team identifies and addresses the conflicts and disagreements, and resolves them in a timely manner. The diversity in the team, and the differing opinions, skills and experiences are well respected. The team ensures that the conflicts and disagreements lead to a positive change. The frequency of the team's conflict is neither too high and nor too low.

Behavioral Indicators:

- ▶ Identifies, addresses and resolves the conflicts and disagreements in a timely manner.
- ▶ Understands and respects the differing opinions, skills and experiences.
- ▶ Ensures that the conflicts and disagreements lead to a positive change.
- ▶ There is a balanced level of conflict within the team.

Experience Sharing

Definition: The team has all the necessary skills for effective product development or delivery of a service. Everyone works towards sharing one's learnings and experiences to ensure information visibility, continuous learning and improvement and removing dependencies on one individual. The team exchanges one's knowledge and experiences on a regular basis with other teams.



Behavioral Indicators:

- ▶ Has all the necessary skills for effective product development or delivery of a service.
- ▶ Everyone shares their learnings and experience with each other within the team.
- ▶ Removes dependencies on one individual.
- ▶ Ensures continuous learning and improvement of the team.
- ▶ Exchanges one's knowledge and experiences on a regular basis with other teams.



STAKEHOLDER AGILITY*

Customer Orientation

Definition: The team is aware of, understands and effectively responds to the requirements and the feedback and inputs of the customer in a collaborative and short cyclic manner. This involves iteratively delivering the products/ services while enabling the customers to discover their requirements. The team works towards customer satisfaction for achieving business goals. It involves consistently addressing customer issues and working towards resolving them to ensure customer delight.

Behavioral Indicators:

- ▶ Is aware of, understands and effectively responds to the requirements and feedback & inputs of the customer in a collaborative and short cyclic manner.
- ▶ Iteratively deliver the products/ services while enabling the customers to discover their requirements.
- ▶ Believes that the business results can be achieved only if the customer is completely satisfied.
- ▶ Consistently addresses customer issues and works towards resolving them.
- ▶ Strives towards an excellent customer experience.

*Stakeholders here means everyone except the Scrum Team.

Stakeholder (Internal) Orientation

Definition: The team is aware of, understands and effectively responds to the requirements and the feedback & inputs of the management* of the organization. The team works together with the other teams to achieve the business goals, vision and mission of the organization by constantly learning with and from each other. The team involves the Product Owner to deal with all the internal stakeholders to get their requirements approved.



Behavioral Indicators:

- ▶ Aware of, understands and effectively responds to the requirements and feedback & inputs of the management of the organization.
- ▶ Collaborates with the other teams to achieve the business goals, vision and mission of the organization.
- ▶ Continuously learns with and from other teams.
- ▶ Involves the Product Owner to deal with all the internal stakeholders to get their requirements approved.



RESULTS AGILITY

Resource Management

Definition: The team is aware of the material resources available to them and are able to plan and use them efficiently and optimally. The team ensures that there is no dependency of material resources on the work to be done at any point of time to ensure effective product development or delivery of service. It involves forecasting needs and ensuring suitable material resources are assigned to the tasks.

Behavioral Indicators:

- ▶ Is aware of the material resources available to them.
- ▶ Is able to plan and use the material resources efficiently and optimally.
- ▶ Ensures there is no dependency of material resources on the work to be done at any point of time.
- ▶ Forecasts needs and ensures that suitable material resources are assigned to the tasks.

Result-Orientation

Definition: The team understands and is committed to the measurable goals and focuses on collective results. The team consistently focuses on high-priority actions and does not get distracted by unproductive and low-priority work. The team proactively anticipates, identifies, and deals with the underlying risks and plans for contingencies and unexpected challenges. The team validates the achieved results based on a measurable criteria by themselves. The team is committed to developing a highly valued product/service for the customer.

Behavioral Indicators:

- ▶ Understands and is committed to the measurable goals and focuses on collective results.
- ▶ Focuses on timely and effectively achieving the measurable goals.
- ▶ Does not get distracted by unproductive and low-priority work.
- ▶ Proactively anticipates, identifies, and deals with the underlying risks.
- ▶ Plans for contingencies and unexpected challenges.
- ▶ Validates the achieved results based on a measurable criteria by themselves.
- ▶ Committed to develop a highly valued product/service for the customer.



Forward Thinking

Definition: The team effectively anticipates the probable implications of any situation and plans accordingly. They are able to notice the market trends, identify opportunities and capitalize on them to achieve the measurable goals decided by them. The team works with an open mindset, can look at the bigger picture and are able to connect the dots with a better understanding of a situation. The team thinks about the end result from the customers' perspective to validate their assumptions about the product/services.

Behavioral Indicators:

- ▶ Anticipates the probable implications of any situation and plans accordingly.
- ▶ Notices the trends in the market.
- ▶ Identifies opportunities and prepares to capitalize on them.
- ▶ Has an open mindset and can look at the bigger picture.
- ▶ Is able to connect the dots and better understands any situation.
- ▶ Thinks about the end result from the customers' perspective to validate their assumptions about the product/services.



MENTAL AGILITY

Problem Solving

Definition: The team has an analytical mindset to resolve concerns that impact timely and effective development of a product or delivery of a service. The team does so by proactively identifying the problem, defining and understanding the problem and collectively finding the most suitable solutions. The team regularly involves individuals from outside the team to have an external perspective of any concern.

Behavioral Indicators:

- ▶ Has an analytical mindset to resolve the concerns impacting effective development and delivery of a product or service.
- ▶ Proactively identifies and understands the problems with respect to effective product development.
- ▶ Collectively finds the most suitable solutions.
- ▶ Involves individuals from outside the team to have an external perspective of any concern.



CRITICAL THINKING

Definition: The team gathers and evaluates information in a logical way to understand and exercise sound judgement. The team resorts to asking relevant questions and weighing opinions in an unbiased manner to come to a rational conclusion. The team assesses all the alternatives and possibilities to reach a consensus. The team always identifies the root cause of the situation by understanding and analyzing it at a deeper level.

Behavioral Indicators:

- ▶ Gathers and evaluates information in a logical way to understand and exercise sound judgment.
- ▶ Resorts to asking relevant questions.
- ▶ Weighs opinions in an unbiased manner to come to a rationale conclusion.
- ▶ Assesses all the alternatives and possibilities.
- ▶ Always Identifies, analyzes and works towards the root-cause of the situation.



CHANGE AGILITY

Adaptability

Definition: The team embraces changes and challenges with respect to effective and incremental development and delivery of the products and services, and is flexible in adapting to the iterative requirements. The team constantly experiments and tries new things to ensure continuous learning to improve team performance. The team also challenges any proposed change that may impact the development and deliver of the product/services.

Behavioral Indicators:

- ▶ Has an adaptive mindset.
- ▶ Embraces changes and challenges with respect to effective development and delivery of the products and services.
- ▶ Constantly experiments and tries new things to facilitate continuous learning to improve team performance.
- ▶ Proposes the change that is required to accommodate the iterative requirements.
- ▶ Incrementally delivers the products/services to effectively adapt to the iterations.
- ▶ Challenges any proposed change that may impact the development and deliver of the product/services.

Dealing with Ambiguity

Definition: The team collectively identifies the situations that result in ambiguity. It involves gathering relevant information and identifying the information gaps in order to make an effective decision. The team explores alternative scenarios and is open to experimentation and iterative discovery. The team helps their Product Owner and stakeholders to effectively deal with ambiguous situations by providing appropriate information.

Behavioral Indicators:

- ▶ Identifies the situations that result in ambiguity.
- ▶ Gathers relevant information about the situation.
- ▶ Identifies the information gaps about the situation.
- ▶ Explores alternative scenarios through experimentation and iterative discovery.
- ▶ Helps their Product Owner and stakeholders to effectively deal with ambiguous situations by providing appropriate information.



Seek Change

Definition: The team seeks iterative discovery through early validation of business results. It involves proactively identifying and implementing the necessary change in the processes to ensure effective development and delivery of the product/services. The team proposes alternatives for a concern to the Product Owner and stakeholders as and when required.

Behavioral Indicators:

- ▶ Iteratively discovers through early validation of business results.
- ▶ Identifies the processes that need change.
- ▶ Works towards implementing the necessary change to ensure effective development and delivery of the product/services.
- ▶ Proposes alternatives for a concern to the Product Owner and stakeholders as and when required.

Taking Initiatives

Definition: The team takes initiatives to self-organize and identifies the areas of improvement and learning through iterative feedback. It involves continuously improving the efficiency of the followed processes. The team resolves the impediments that hinder the effective development and delivery of product/services. The team proactively gathers different perspectives from outside the team to identify and work towards the desired changes.

Behavioral Indicators:

- ▶ Takes initiatives to self-organize.
- ▶ Identifies the areas of improvement and learning through iterative feedback.
- ▶ Continuously improves the processes through knowledge sharing and upskilling.
- ▶ Resolves the impediments that hinder the effective development and delivery of product/services.
- ▶ Proactively gathers different perspectives from outside the team to identify and work towards the desired changes.



INNOVATION AGILITY

Innovation & Creativity

Definition: The team has an open mindset and explores and experiments with new possibilities and opportunities. The team questions the existing processes and finds out new and effective ways to achieve the business results. There is a “safe to fail” environment in the team and healthy conflicts are encouraged to come up with innovative solutions. The team works along with other teams to identify the ways to do things more optimally.

Behavioral Indicators:

- ▶ Has an open mindset and explores new possibilities and opportunities to innovate.
- ▶ Questions the existing processes.
- ▶ Finds out new and effective ways to generate better business results.
- ▶ There is a “safe to fail” environment within in the team.
- ▶ Healthy conflict is encouraged to come up with innovative solutions.
- ▶ Works along with other teams to identify the ways to do things more optimally.



SYSTEMS AGILITY

Technical/Professional Expertise

Definition: The team has the technical and professional expertise needed and does not have to depend on anyone outside the team for effective development of the product/ delivery of services. The team has adequate practical knowledge of their respective area or domain and focuses on continuous improvement and learning. The team works towards bringing in new expertise in our team.

Behavioral Indicators:

- ▶ Has the technical and professional expertise needed.
- ▶ Does not have to rely on anyone outside the team for effective development of the product/ delivery of services.
- ▶ Has adequate practical knowledge of their respective area or domain.
- ▶ Focuses on continuous improvement and learning.
- ▶ Works towards bringing in new expertise in their team.

Planning Skills

Definition: The team clearly and effectively communicates the tasks to be accomplished by the team. The focus is on collectively devising a plan to attain business results through small and achievable goals. The team ensures productive meetings and focuses on relevant discussions. It involves value-based prioritization of the work as agreed upon by the Product Owner and the team and maintaining transparency about the plan. The team regularly refines the Product Backlog with the Product Owner.

Behavioral Indicators:

- ▶ Has clarity about its purpose, vision and goals.
- ▶ Clearly and effectively communicates the tasks to be completed.
- ▶ Collectively devises a plan to attain business results through small and achievable goals.
- ▶ Ensures effective meetings and focuses on relevant discussions.
- ▶ There is value-based prioritization of the work as agreed upon by the Product Owner and the team.
- ▶ Transparency is maintained about the plan.
- ▶ Regularly refines the Product Backlog with the Product Owner.



Stability

Definition: The team stays together for a long-term working towards the collective goals. The team grows together and there is a high level of trust within the team. The stability helps in improving the productivity and efficiency of the team. It involves the team to understand each other better and maintain a smooth working flow to ensure consistent and effective development of the product / delivery of services. The team tries their best to ensure that separation of an existing team member or joining of a new team member does not impact the team's performance.

Behavioral Indicators:

- ▶ Stays together for a long-term.
- ▶ Works towards a collective goals.
- ▶ Has high levels of trust within the team.
- ▶ Generates high levels of productivity and efficiency.
- ▶ Maintains a smooth and well managed working flow.
- ▶ Smoothly accommodates new members in the team.
- ▶ Try our best to ensure that the separation of an existing team member or joining of a new team member does not impact the team's performance.



ABOUT US

Agile Cockpit is a Dutch Software & Consulting firm with its offices in the Netherlands, UK, US and India and provides its services across the globe. Our mission is to create high performing digital enterprises and to achieve this, we offer - Software, Consulting and Training services. Discover our global data-driven experience and increase the impact of your Agile journey today!

For questions or more information you can contact us at info@agilecockpit.com

Request your demo

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