

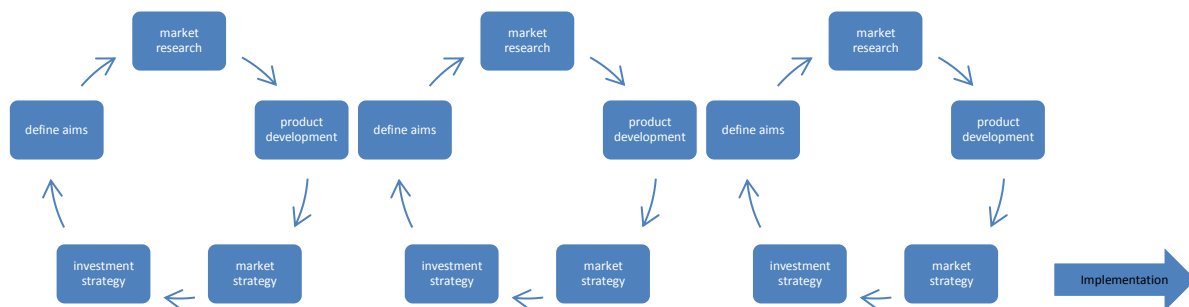
## Co-operative Skills Seminars Strategic planning & managing change

## Introduction to Agile

Agile is an approach to business planning based on techniques typically used in software development to help businesses respond to unpredictability. It proposes alternatives to traditional project management.

As far back as 1970, Dr. Winston Royce presented a paper entitled “Managing the Development of Large Software Systems,” which criticized sequential development. He asserted that software should not be developed like an automobile on an assembly line, in which each piece is added in sequential phases, each phase dependant on the previous. Royce specifically objected to the **lack of communication** between the specialized groups that complete each phase of work.

Instead of sequences: define aims - market research - product development - market strategy - implement strategy, the Agile approach is iterative and incremental:



With all activities blending into each iteration, adapting to discovered realities at fixed intervals.

Realities such as product design, customer satisfaction, competition, pricing can change during the planning process, so that a lot of time and effort is wasted and the plan is useless as a guide for implementation.

Agile development provides opportunities to assess the direction throughout the development lifecycle. This is achieved through regular iterations, at the end of which software development teams must present a **‘potentially shippable product increment’** – a prototype if you like, which could be sold or even given away as a method of market testing.

With Agile, every aspect of development — requirements, design, etc. — is continually revisited. When a team stops and re-evaluates the direction of a project every two weeks, there’s time to steer it in another direction. It’s easy to correct or go back one step. Agile Project Planning requires the team to breakdown tasks into smaller ones and execute each iteration within an estimated time frame. It is collaborative in nature and wider in scope as the entire team partakes in planning and scheduling.

More information at: <http://agilemethodology.org/>