

How Stories in a Backlog Enable Agility

They say actions speak louder than words. Learn how working from a backlog enables agility.



“Being’ agile is more important than ‘Doing’ agile.”

But you can't be agile just by saying, thinking, and feeling.
Your actions have to line up with your beliefs.

Here are some simple ways that working from a backlog enables agility.

<p>BEING</p> <p>Our highest priority is to <u>satisfy the customer</u> through early and continuous delivery of valuable software.</p>	<p>DOING</p> <p>In each story, write a "why" statement. Why is this valuable for your users or buyers?</p>
<p>BEING</p> <p><u>Welcome changing requirements</u>, even late in development. Agile processes harness change for the customer's competitive advantage.</p>	<p>DOING</p> <p>Regard stories in the product backlog as options rather than commitments. A product owner has the option to reprioritize a story on demand.</p>
<p>BEING</p> <p><u>Deliver working software frequently</u>, from a couple of weeks to a couple of months, with a preference to the shorter timescale.</p>	<p>DOING</p> <p>Don't commit to a story an iteration unless you're confident you can deliver. Keep in mind, it's easier to commit when the horizon for commitment is near.</p>
<p>BEING</p> <p>Business people and developers <u>must work together</u> daily throughout the project.</p>	<p>DOING</p> <p>Regard your stories as a promise to collaborate with your team.</p>
<p>BEING</p> <p><u>Build projects around motivated individuals</u>. Give them the environment and support they need, and trust them to get the job done.</p>	<p>DOING</p> <p>Stories don't contain specifics, at least initially. Write your stories as a problem statement or hypothesis so the team can solve together.</p>
<p>BEING</p> <p>The most efficient and effective method of conveying information to and within a development team is <u>face-to-face conversation</u>.</p>	<p>DOING</p> <p>Write stories with the understanding that they're simply conversation starters. Maximize the amount of conversation that happens in person.</p>
<p>BEING</p> <p><u>Working software</u> is the primary measure of progress.</p>	<p>DOING</p> <p>Write stories so that they represent value to your users, rather than activities like testing or coding.</p>
<p>BEING</p> <p>Agile processes promote <u>sustainable development</u>. The sponsors, developers, and users should be able to maintain a constant pace indefinitely.</p>	<p>DOING</p> <p>Craft small stories to increase your likelihood of meeting commitments and get a sense of how much you can deliver in a timebox.</p>
<p>BEING</p> <p>Continuous attention to <u>technical excellence</u> and <u>good design</u> enhances agility.</p>	<p>DOING</p> <p>Give the team the freedom to redesign and improve the system within each story.</p>
<p>BEING</p> <p><u>Simplicity</u>--the art of maximizing the amount of work not done--is essential.</p>	<p>DOING</p> <p>Write stories as small as possible, while maintaining some element of value.</p>
<p>BEING</p> <p>The best architectures, requirements, and designs emerge from <u>self-organizing teams</u>.</p>	<p>DOING</p> <p>Allow the team to discover implementations specifics of each story over time.</p>
<p>BEING</p> <p>At regular intervals, the team reflects on <u>how to become more effective</u>, then tunes and adjusts its behavior accordingly.</p>	<p>DOING</p> <p>Keep finding better ways to make stories smaller without reducing them to steps in the process.</p>