

Agile Coaching and Mentoring

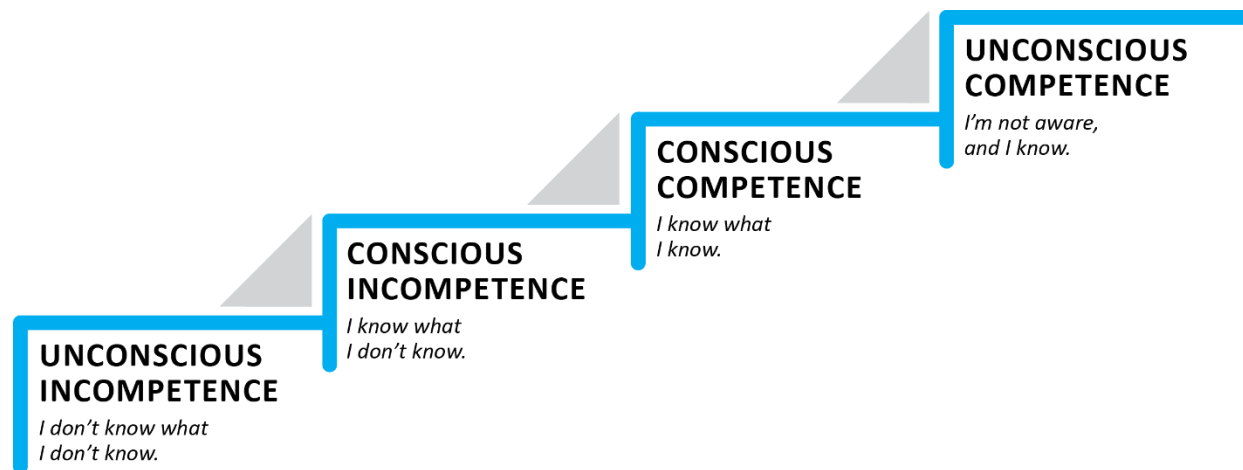
Motivation to Engage an Agile Coach

Agile development is radically different from traditional waterfall development. As strategic partners, our coaches are highly capable of working with senior leaders to formulate an Agile transformation roadmap for the organization. We are also highly skilled at articulating the benefits of Agile and developing enterprise metrics that compare Agile and waterfall delivery.

Training in Agile practices is a key starting point for teams to begin their transformation on the right path. However, new Agile teams are at great risk of quickly drifting back into old habits by misinterpreting training materials or encountering obstacles they are unprepared to deal with in context. At this tactical level, our Agile coaches accelerate the learning process, taking individuals from unconscious incompetence to unconscious competence at a rapid pace.



Progression of Learning




The Agile coach keeps the team on the right path, guiding and assisting them to ensure their Agile transformation is in accordance with the Agile principles. The coach evaluates teams and offers options to improve their adoption and performance.

Agile Coaching and Mentoring Defined

Agile coaching is a process through which the coach enables individuals or teams to mature their Agile implementation independently. The process employs a variety of techniques to help individuals or teams arrive at their own answers about improving their implementation. This approach is designed to change the way people think about developing software, which ensures buy-in and improves execution.

Agile mentoring is different in that the mentor provides answers, recommendations and next steps based on prior experience and overall objectives. Mentoring occurs when individuals or teams are unable to determine what action to take. Our coaches ensure that the individuals and teams understand how the recommendations support the principles of Agile software development.



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Benefits

Our Agile coaches enable teams and individuals to rapidly adopt and improve Agile practices by reshaping how people think about developing software. When nTier’s reputable coaches are on-site, you will notice the following benefits:

- Rapid creation of a strategic Agile adoption roadmap based on the context of the organization
- Alternatives for tactical implementations formed in collaboration with organizational leaders that take the context of the organization into account
- Quicker team adoption of fundamental Agile practices, ultimately allowing the company to reap Agile benefits sooner
- Accelerating velocity and project delivery through rapid adoption of more mature Agile and XP practices
- Solidification of Agile principles into concrete daily thinking

Our Coaches

nTier’s coaches are veterans of Agile implementation, bringing experience from past transformation successes to your organization. Philosophically, we are dogmatic about the Agile manifesto and the accompanying principles, yet very pragmatic about how the transformation takes place.

Our Agile coaches wear multiple hats while transitioning teams to full self-sufficiency:

- *Trainer* – Clients often lean on the coach for ad-hoc training and refresher courses
- *Facilitator* – Often coaches act as meeting facilitators in early sprints
- *Mentor* – Coaches provide feedback, insight and guidance to the team
- *Coach* – Asking questions designed to solidify knowledge of Agile principles and enable teams to develop solutions independently

How Agile Coaching Works

Agile coaches can be engaged in a variety of ways. At nTier Training, we offering the following customizable strategies:

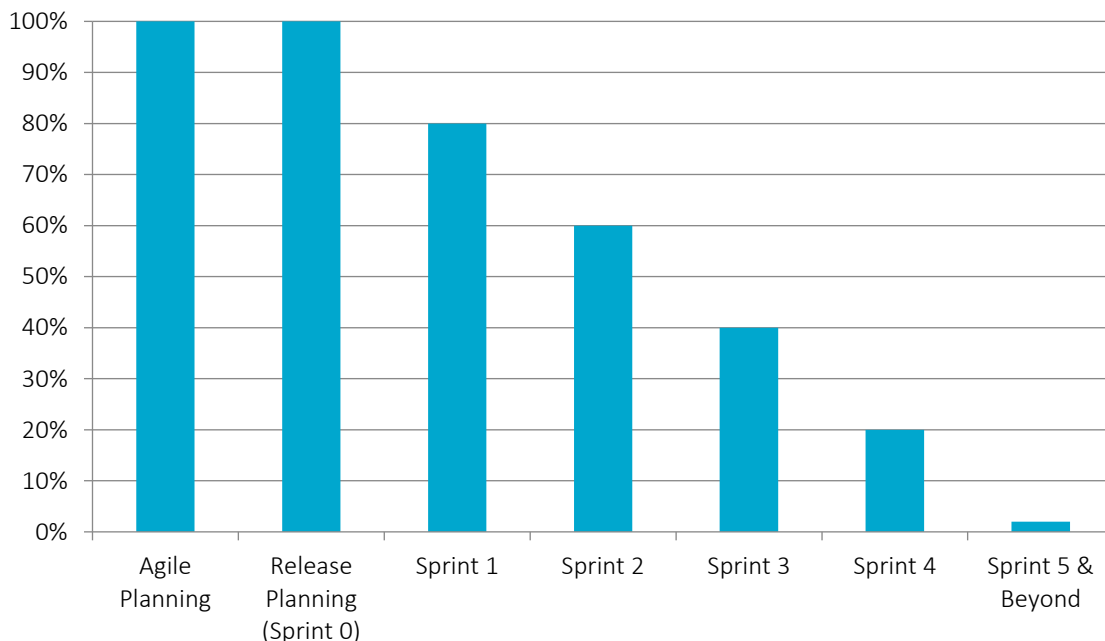
New Team Coaching

Coaching for new Agile teams should focus on fundamental Agile concepts, generally engaging a coach in conjunction with traditional Agile training. Our coach will work with teams over the course of three to four sprints, constantly guiding the group to conscious competence.

The overarching goal of this strategy is to enable individuals to move from conscious incompetence to conscious competence as expeditiously as possible. Coaching is generally comprised of:

- Intense focus on Agile principles in discussions
- Heavy support for Scrum Masters and product owners as they develop and organize the product backlog during Agile planning, facilitate Sprint 0 and run the sprints
- Assisting teams with implementation of basic Agile and Lean practices
- Constant feedback on the implementation of practices
- Spreading organizational knowledge by sharing techniques and insights from other teams within the organization
- Collaborating with management on their role in Agile

Typical Agile Coach Utilization



Maturity Coaching

Maturity coaching is ideal for teams that seem stuck in their Agile implementation. It is also often used as a checkpoint for teams, allowing them to evaluate their maturation and isolate areas for continuous improvement. This coaching focuses on:

- Assessing team maturity to identify opportunities for rapid growth
- Working with Scrum Masters and product owners on more advanced planning and reporting techniques
- Enabling teams to increase velocity at a sustainable pace by adopting more advanced technical practices
- Mentoring management to appropriately motivate teams to mature

Enterprise Agile Implementation Coaching

Often used by organizations when they want to identify and address issues that are common across teams. This coaching involves:

- Developing an assessment in collaboration with organizational leaders
- Creating enterprise metrics to compare Agile and waterfall delivery where needed
- Assessing teams, evaluating data and formulating recommendations
- Working with teams to implement recommendations

Next Steps

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About nTier Training

nTier Training was founded in 2006 on the core belief that there *is* a superior way to train technical teams. Headquartered in Atlanta, nTier designs fully-customizable learning solutions of all sizes and delivers on-site training around the globe. The company is a rare community of industry experts that exists to help clients complete their projects better, faster and cheaper than ever before.