What the new DSDM Agile Project Framework handbook covers

What the handbook covers

Section One - the Foundations for DSDM Agile Project Framework

Choosing DSDM as your Agile Approach – This shows how DSDM aligns to the Agile Manifesto, and positions DSDM and its strengths when comparing with other Agile approaches, as well as highlighting the common problems that use of DSDM addresses. This information helps anyone comparing approaches when trying to decide which Agile approach to adopt.

Philosophy and Fundamentals - This describes the Philosophy that overarches the whole DSDM approach. It explains how DSDM manages the 4 demands on a project, fixing Time, Cost and Quality and allowing some negotiation around which Features are delivered.

Principles – In order to deliver consistently whilst remaining flexible, a team needs to adopt a certain mindset and set of behaviours. The Principles provide guidance on what is needed to be effective on a DSDM project, and bring the Agile Values to life.

Preparing for Success – to be successful when using Agile, certain factors need to be in place. DSDM defines factors that are instrumental for success, which help assess potential risk when using Agile.

Process (the Lifecycle) – DSDM defines a process which addresses both the Evolutionary Development element of a project, but also defines the early phases that are necessary to position the development, and the later stages which deal with putting the solution into production and evaluating the value delivered. This process forms the basis for defining the lifecycle on an individual project.

Roles and Responsibilities – DSDM provides a clearly defined set of roles and responsibilities. It highlights the area of interest for each role – Business, Solution, Management or Process. It also models how these all fit together, at Project level, Team level and Supporting roles.

Products – DSDM provides a set of Products and shows where they are produced / evolved in the DSDM Lifecycle.

Key Practices – These key practices support the use of DSDM and success of a DSDM project.

Workshops – Workshops form an important part of ensuring good communication and encouraging a collaborative approach.

MoSCoW Prioritisation – MoSCoW (Must Have, Should Have, Could Have, Won't Have This Time) is DSDM's preferred way of agreeing priorities, especially around requirements for a Solution. This chapter defines the definitions and rules for applying MoSCoW.

Iterative Development – This describes how Iterative Development works when evolving the solution, in short, informal cycles of Thought, Action, Conversation. It also describes he different focus for requirements (Functional, Usability, Non-Functional) and the different approaches that may be used to evolve a solution. It also addresses how Testing, Control and Quality form an intrinsic part of Iterative Development.

Modelling – The use of modelling, whether formally or informally helps ensure good (visual) communication and encourages a collaborative approach.

Timeboxing – DSDM defines two types of Development Timebox. One offers a Timebox structure which may be useful to plan and manage Business engagement, the other defines a Free-format Timebox, which may be more appropriate where Business engagement is less restricted.

Section Two - Additional Guidance

People, Teams and Interactions – This provides guidance on how to make communication more effective. It also identifies what is needed to build collaborative teams.

Requirements and User Stories – This provides guidance on the different types of requirement, what makes a good requirement and how requirements evolve throughout the lifecycle of a project. It also provides simple guidance on User Stories.

Planning and Control – Given that DSDM is predominantly used to deliver projects in an organisational context, Planning and Control will usually need more focus than some Agile approaches provide. This chapter provides guidance on how to plan, manage and demonstrate control in the context of a truly Agile project. Planning covers not just the project plans but also elements such as planning Testing.

Tailoring – DSDM's Project Approach Questionnaire (PAQ) helps a team assess the factors needed for a successful DSDM project. The Tailoring chapter demonstrates how negative responses on the PAQ may be used to drive tailoring of the DSDM Framework to address the risk identified.

Appendices

Glossary – Defines some common terms used in DSDM or in Agile

Project Approach Questionnaire - This simple form is used at various points in the early phases of a project to assess how well the project fits with the basic Agile and DSDM concepts, and is used to raise awareness of potential Agile project risks.

What has changed (from DSDM Atern version 2)

Choosing DSDM as your Agile Approach – A new chapter, to reinforce that DSDM is a fully Agile approach, demonstrating how it fits into the Agile Manifesto values.

Philosophy and Fundamentals –Philosophy reworded "that best business value emerges when projects are aligned to clear business goals, deliver frequently and involve the collaboration of motivated and empowered people." Addition of based on Common sense and Pragmatism" to the base of the Temple Diagram.

Principles –minor wording tweaks only

Preparing for Success – A new set of high level ISFs (5) – for improved clarity. Most of the Atern ISFs now appear as sub-bullets .

Process (the Lifecycle) – The main visible change is Exploration and Engineering phases have been removed and replaced with a single Evolutionary Development phase (addresses on-going confusion over how these were used, and also enables easier alignment with other Agile approaches). Additional clarity provided around Deployment.

Roles and Responsibilities – Addition of Technical Advisor role (to align with AgilePM v1.1 onwards). DSDM Team model amended : Addition of "Supporting Roles" (replaces Atern's "Other") to highlight that the Advisor roles are not counted as full members of the Solution Development Team. This model can be viewed as :

- 3 Category groups – Project-level, Solution Development Team, and Supporting

- 4 Interest groups - Orange – Business Interests, Green – Solution / Technical Interests, Blue – Management Interests, and Grey – Process Interests (NB Business Analyst role shaded Orange and Green, as s/he has interests in both areas.

Business Analyst role moved to sit where Project and Team circles meet (since this role typically works at both Project and Team level). Team Leader role now moved to centre of Team circle.

Products – Complete re-write, new graphic. Now 14 Products (previously 17 in Atern). Addition of "G" flag for Governance products.

Workshops – Amended, recognises that not all workshops are formal facilitated workshops

MoSCoW Prioritisation – Rewritten. Loosening of Atern's categoric 60/20/20 definition. Now guidance is "Typically no more that 60% Must Have Effort" and "Typically around 20% Could Have effort" – designed to make people think about this and calculate the right balance for each project. New graphic. More guidance on how and when to prioritise. Direct link of MoSCoW to Business Case removed, MoSCoW now links to Business Vision.

Iterative Development – Rewritten. IPER removed. New cycle defined as "Thought, Action, Conversation". Definition of focus for Iterative Development – requirement focus (Functional, Usability, Non-functional), development Focus (Horizontal, Vertical, Combined). Much stronger guidance on quality and testing

Modelling –Refreshed. No major change.

Timeboxing – rewritten. Addition of a 2nd type of Timebox – Free Format – to allow easier integration with other agile approaches and for where the formality of the Structured Timebox (the DSDM Timebox defined in earlier versions of DSDM) is not needed.

Section Two - Additional Guidance

People, Teams and Interactions – New

Requirements and User Stories – new, based on the soon-to-be-published AgileBA information (Replaces Atern Requirements chapter)

Planning and Control – New, combining Atern chapters of planning, control and elements of Atern Testing chapters.

Tailoring – New

Appendices

Glossary – Updated

Project Approach Questionnaire - Reworked to reflect new Instrumental Success Factors, and to provide better guidance.

Where have the other Atern Chapters gone? - The majority of the content has been incorporated into either Section 1 or Section 2 chapters. Some content was seen as providing limited value or had little or no direct link specifically to DSDM or Agile. Where there is a need, supplementary White Papers will probably be created to support any information gaps.

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