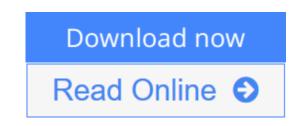# Being Agile: Eleven Breakthrough Techniques to Keep You from "Waterfalling Backward"

By Leslie Ekas, Scott Will

Being Agile: Eleven Breakthrough Techniques to Keep You from "Waterfalling Backward" By Leslie Ekas, Scott Will

Break the Old, Waterfall Habits that Hinder Agile Success:
Drive Rapid Value and Continuous Improvement

When agile teams don't get immediate results, it's tempting for them to fall back into old habits that make success even less likely. In *Being Agile*, Leslie Ekas and Scott Will present eleven powerful techniques for rapidly gaining substantial value from agile, making agile methods stick, and launching a "virtuous circle" of continuous improvement.

Drawing on their experience helping more than 100 teams transition to agile, the authors review its key principles, identify corresponding practices, and offer breakthrough approaches for implementing them. Using their techniques, you can break typical waterfall patterns and go beyond merely "doing agile" to actually thinking and being agile.

Ekas and Will help you clear away silos, improve stakeholder interaction, eliminate waste and waterfall-style inefficiencies, and lead the agile transition far more successfully. Each of their eleven principles can stand on its own: when you combine them, they become even more valuable.

Coverage includes

- Building "whole teams" that cut across silos and work together throughout a product's lifecycle
- Engaging product stakeholders earlier and far more effectively
- Overcoming inefficient "waterations" and "big batch" waterfall thinking
- Getting past the curse of multi-tasking
- Eliminating dangerous technical and project debt
- Repeatedly deploying "release-ready" software in real user environments
- Delivering what customers really need, not what you think they need
- Fixing the root causes of problems so they don't recur

- Learning from experience: mastering continuous improvement
- Assessing whether you're just "doing agile" or actually "being agile"

Being Agile will be indispensable for all software professionals now adopting agile; for coaches, managers, engineers, and team members who want to get more value from it and for students discovering it for the first time.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Leslie Ekas has worked in software development for over 20 years as a developer, manager, and agile coach. Her industry experience ranges from a startup, to a mid-sized company, and now IBM. She has led multiple products to market successfully over the years. She has managed teams of all sizes and many disciplines and across broad geographies. Leslie helped start the IBM Software Group Agile Center of Competence after her team's early success transforming to agile. After coaching for several years, she returned to development to lead the worldwide Rational ClearCase team. In her new job as the Smarter Infrastructure Portfolio Manager, she is helping the business team adopt an agile operational approach.

Scott Will has been with IBM for more than 22 years, the last six as an agile consultant. His experience ranges from providing consulting for small, co-located teams to teams with hundreds of engineers scattered across the world. Previously Scott was a successful programmer, tester, and customer support team lead, and he was in management for years. He is a contributing author to the book *Agility and Discipline Made Easy*, an IBM Master Inventor with numerous patents, a former Air Force combat pilot, and a graduate of Purdue University with a triple-major in Computer Science, Mathematics, and Numerical Analysis. He also completed his MBA while in the Air Force.

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Thad Whitehead:

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Preston Sloan:

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