

Agile development delivers value to its stakeholders and requires stakeholder commitment

Defining the customer needs

The team needs to understand the product requirements. To reach this understanding, the team follows a communication pattern that includes repetitive harmonization between the product being developed and the customer's acceptance criteria. In the end the customer (or those who represent the customer) accepts the built product. People who are able to bridge between the perspective of the customers (business/user view) and the way the team sees things (it/technical view) play an important role in representing stakeholders. They make sure the team gets all relevant information needed for developing the product and they help the team in setting task priorities.

Satisfy all stakeholders

In larger organizations the agile team has multiple stakeholders. These stakeholders all have their individual needs. The agile team often delivers its products to the operations department. Operations, as receiver of the product, has special requirements to be able to bring the product to production. Operations needs to work with the team to make sure that the team understands its requirements. The same is true for the service department, auditing department or QA department. Commitment of all these departments to work with and facilitate the agile team is important for the success of agile development.

Enabling agile development

The basic task of a team is to develop software (a product) that provides value to customers or users (further referred to as the customers). In order to perform tasks, the team needs people, a working environment, tools, etcetera, in short: "resources". Stakeholders who have interest in getting the software developed typically provide the environment, resources and funding.

Levels and check points for stakeholder commitment

The levels for *Stakeholder commitment* are typified as follows:

- **Forming:** *Stakeholders start projects*
- **Norming:** *Stakeholders help projects*
- **Performing:** *Stakeholders participate in projects*

Please find the checkpoints below.

Forming

1. The principal stakeholder is defined and known by the team(s)
2. Stakeholders deliver the committed resources
3. Stakeholders actively acquire information on the progress of the project
4. Stakeholders are willing to adapt their way of working to the (test) process

Norming

1. The stakeholders provide a mandated representative (PO) to the team
2. The stakeholders define business value and provide a prioritized product backlog
3. The stakeholders define acceptance criteria for the items on the product backlog
4. Stakeholders attend the review meeting

Performing

1. The product owner is actively participating in the team activities
2. Stakeholders trust and value the team(s)
3. Stakeholders share responsibility for the quality of the product