

Agile & Waterfall

Business & Management

Two delivery approaches, and what each assumes about the requirements.

Waterfall

- Sequential phases, each signed off
- Requirements fixed early
- Detailed plan up front
- Change is expensive
- Suits stable, regulated, physical work

Agile

- Short iterations, working output each time
- Requirements evolve
- Plan adapts
- Change is expected
- Suits uncertain, software, discovery work

THE DIFFERENCE THAT MATTERS

Neither is universally better. The question is whether you can know the requirements before you start.

Building a bridge suits waterfall; building a product nobody has specified suits agile. Applying either to the other fails.