

Twitter Thread by [Jared Spool](#)



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A common misunderstanding about Agile and “Big Design Up Front”:

There’s nothing in the Agile Manifesto or Principles that states you should never have any idea what you’re trying to build.

You’re allowed to think about a desired outcome from the beginning.

It’s not Big Design Up Front if you do in-depth research to understand the user’s problem.

It’s not BDUF if you spend detailed time learning who needs this thing and why they need it.

It’s not BDUF if you help every team member know what success looks like.

Agile is about reducing risk.

It’s not Agile if you increase risk by starting your sprints with complete ignorance.

It’s not Agile if you don’t research.

Don’t make the mistake of shutting down critical understanding by labeling it Big Design Up Front.

It would be a mistake to assume this research should only be done by designers and researchers.

Product management and developers also need to be out with the team, conducting the research.

Shared Understanding is the key objective here.

<https://t.co/l8q6rRqxym>

I would recommend that the devs participate directly in the research.

If the devs go into the first sprint with a thorough understanding of the user’s problems, they are far more likely to solve it well.

— Jared Spool (@jmspool) November 18, 2018

Big Design Up Front is a thing to avoid.

Defining all the functionality before coding is BDUF.

Drawing every screen and every pixel is BDUF.

Promising functionality (or delivery dates) to customers before development starts is BDUF.

These things shouldn't happen in Agile.

Researching the user's problem is not any of these things.

It's important we not lump all possible pre-Sprint 1 activity under the Big Design Up Front label.

We shouldn't head into Sprint 1 believing we know the solution. Yet, we need to be clear on the problem.

Austin Govella (@austingovella) said it well.

<https://t.co/8fJA3QpA0X>

For your consideration: <https://t.co/CNf3fjZNw4>

— Austin Govella (@austingovella) November 19, 2018