Agile's Weakness!

In a non-Agile team conversation earlier this month, a team member asked, "What is the biggest weakness of Agile?" A couple of team members readily responded, "It cannot predict what will be delivered when." And then everyone looked at me, expecting me to cave in to a very solid argument against Agile. My question to them was, "How many of the past 20 projects you worked on, were delivered on the date with the scope that was predicted the first time project was planned? No revisions. The first prediction." There was silence in the room after that.

This is one of the conceived notion about why Agile does not work. In case of the team above, the problem was team commitment and management support. The team was very disengaged, since they had no liberty to innovate and to take risks. Team members efforts were not highlighted and the team was not given credit for their work. No reward, lot of reprimand.

One of the teams I worked with in the past had similar problems. Management changed its approach to risk taking. Team got a lot of freedom, was able to take risks. This created a sense of commitment and belonging. The team always delivered what it projected.

In most situations, projections about project completion are treated as predictions, and the entire project is tracked to that prediction. The truth is, no one can predict the future. Not even Oracles. We can only make projections. Our projections will get better as the product progresses, or as the project moves to completion. Not considering projections as predictions in Agile's strength, not a weakness!