

Peopleware

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Ch. 2 Cheeseburgers

- How is software development different from production environments (e.g. fast food, automobile factory)?

Ch. 3 Vienna Waits for You

- Spanish Theory
 - Fixed value, extract it efficiently => inflation
- English Theory
 - Value can be created through ingenuity and technology => Industrial Revolution
- People know that life is short and “there has got to be something more important than the silly job they’re working on.”

Ch. 4 Quality – If Time Permits

- What does Philip Crosby mean by “Quality is Free”?
 - Investments in quality are offset by future savings
- Who do you think values quality more:
 - Consumers, managers, builders?

Ch. 5 Parkinson's Law Revisited

- Parkinson's Law
 - Work expands to fill the time allocated for it
 - Do you agree?
 - Argument: people are more productive when no estimates, or third-party estimator
- Variation:
 - Organizational busy work tends to expand to fill the working day

Ch. 6 Laetrile

- Laetrile is the extract from apricot pits, sold as a cure to cancer, but with no proof
- What are some software productivity promises that have no proof?
- Do we need a software mythbusters?
- “The manager’s function is not to make people work, but to make it possible for people to work”

Ch. 7 Furniture Police

- What's wrong with typical cubicle office spaces?
- Compare Peopleware's opinions on environment with that of XP (e.g. Role Model's Software Studio)
- What do you think the ideal office configuration would look like?

Ch. 8 Interruptions

- Empirical results of Coding War Games:
 - Top performers outperformed worst by 10 to 1
 - Top performers were about 2.5 times faster than median performers
 - Top half performers were about twice as fast as bottom half performers
 - Non-factors: language, yrs of experience, number of defects, salary
 - Factors: work space, noise, privacy, interruptions
- Compare appropriateness of interruptions for Managers and Sys Admins with Software Developers

Ch. 9 Space

- A quiet and interruption-free workplace is necessary for quality work
- Smaller work spaces mean more noise

Intermezzo

- How do you measure productivity?
- Gilb's Law
 - Anything that you need to quantify can be measured in some way that is superior to not measuring it at all.
- What are dangers of managers knowing productivity measures at the individual level?

Ch. 10 Brain Time

- What is flow and what does office configuration have to do with it?
- Flow is single-minded work time
 - Extremely productive
 - Time passes without noticing it
 - Takes ~15 minutes to enter
- E-Factor =
Uninterrupted Hrs/Body-Present Hrs

Ch. 11 Phone vs. Email

- How can asynchronous email become synchronous like the phone?
 - Email beeps when new mail arrives

Ch. 12 Objections

- Cornell Study
 - Two groups: some like to work with music, others don't
 - Half of each group put in two rooms, one with music, one without
 - All performed about the same, but
 - Many more in quiet room noticed the futility of the programs
 - Moral: music is fine with tedious work, but interferes with creative work

Ch. 13 Office Environments

- Compare the XP Software Studio (see RoleModel Software) with Peopleware's opinion of the ideal workspace