

The background features abstract, overlapping green geometric shapes in various shades, including light lime green, medium green, and dark forest green, creating a modern, layered effect.

# CS 428

# Peopleware: Part I

# (Chapters 1-6)

Winter 2021

Bruce F. Webster

# Ch 1: Somewhere today, a Project is Failing

- ▶ “For the overwhelming majority of the [failed] projects we studied, *there was not a single technological issues to explain the failure.*”
- ▶ “The major problems of our work [e.g., IT development and deployment] are not so much *technological* as they are *sociological* in nature.”
- ▶ “Most managers are willing to concede...that they’ve got more people worries than technical worries. *But they seldom manage that way.*”
- ▶ “The main reason we tend to focus on the technical rather than the human side of the work is not because it’s more crucial, but because it’s easier to do.”
- ▶ Observations and feedback?

# Ch 2: Make a Cheeseburger, Sell a Cheeseburger

- ▶ Management tends to see development like making fast food
- ▶ Tendency to punish/bury errors and dead ends (cf. Armour)
- ▶ Common attitude that “management provide[s] all the thinking and the people underneath just carry out their bidding.”
- ▶ Common attitude that people are interchangeable parts and that interrelations - good or bad - aren't important
- ▶ Steven Covey: we are often too busy sawing to sharpen the saw
  - ▶ “The average software developer...doesn't own a single book on the subject of his or her work, and hasn't ever read one.” [Hence this class]
- ▶ Observations and feedback?

# Ch 3: Vienna Waits for You

- ▶ “Real-world” management too often “is all about getting people to work harder and longer, largely at the expense of their personal lives.”
  - ▶ There ain’t no such thing as [sustained] overtime
  - ▶ Remember, too: no other success can compensate for failure in the home
  - ▶ Billboard on I-15: “You can code and still go home to your family at night.”
- ▶ Such management is often blind to costs of turnover and burnout
- ▶ People under time pressure don’t work better - just “faster”
  - ▶ Result is poorer quality and more job dissatisfaction
- ▶ Observations and feedback?

# Ch 4: Quality - if time permits

- ▶ We tend to tie our self-esteem not to the quantity of what we produce but the quality, and yet management often emphasizes just the opposite
- ▶ “Quality, far beyond that required by the end user, is a means to higher productivity”
  - ▶ Remember Brooks: we spend 50% of a project schedule in testing & QA, whether we plan for that or not
- ▶ High quality can result in cost reduction
- ▶ “Quality is free, but only to those who are willing to pay heavily for it.”
- ▶ Observations and feedback?

# Ch 5: Parkinson's Law Revisited

- ▶ “Work expands to fill the time allotted.” - was actually a satirical observation
- ▶ “Parkinson's Law almost certainly doesn't apply to your people.”
  - ▶ They have too many other things they want to do.
- ▶ Bad estimates tend to lower productivity; good/credible estimates tend to raise it
  - ▶ Death march vs. achievable goal
- ▶ Organizational busy work tends to expand to fill the working day
- ▶ Observations and feedback?

# Ch 6: Laetrile

- ▶ The Seven False Hopes of Software Management
  - ▶ There is some new trick that could send productivity soaring (cf. “No Silver Bullet”)
  - ▶ Other managers are getting gains of 100-200% or more!
  - ▶ Technology is moving so swiftly that you’re being passed by.
  - ▶ Changing languages [or methodologies] will give you huge gains.
  - ▶ Because of the backlog, you need to double productivity immediately.
  - ▶ You automated everything else; isn’t it time to automate away your developers?
  - ▶ Your people will work better if you put them under a lot of pressure.
- ▶ Observations and feedback?