

Lean: Results are not the Point

Quotes

Posted by:

Posted on : 2010/3/8 1:37:24

I have just finished reading the great book “Leading Lean Software Development” by Mary and Tom Poppendieck and I wanted to share with you two quotes excerpted from it.

[...] I started a conversation with the question that had been bothering me: “How do you reconcile the lean view that tests are waste with the need for tests in software development?” Mary’s immediate response: “Unit tests are what let you stop the line.” (quoted from the Foreword by Dottie Acton) In our experience, the most common causes of policy-driven waste in software development are:

1. Complexity
2. Economies of scale
3. Separating decision making from work
4. Wishful thinking

5. Technical debt The strategy of designing the effort to fit the constraints, rather than computing the constraints from the design, is absolutely the most effective way to achieve reliable delivery.

Reference: “Leading Lean Software Development – Results are not the Point”, Mary and Tom Poppendieck, Addison-Wesley, 278 pages, ISBN 978-0-321-62070-5 It could seem very provocative to propose an approach based on the slogan ” Results are not the Point”. In their book, the Poppendieck defend the idea that there are many good managers around that could foster the adoption of lean practices. From my personal experience, most of the managers thinking “results are not the point” do this because they think “costs are the most important point”. This is why I think that companies that adopt agile or lean approaches want results…. and quickly! We could all wish that more managers and developers take the time to read book like this one, but even if it was the case, I am very dubious that many companies will really abandon their “command and control” and “short term vision” culture. [Get more details on this book or buy it on amazon.com](#)

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