

Preface

I still like to write software. The material in this book and the relative success of the first edition have caused my own senior managers to pull me away from writing software and push me more into managing software and systems projects. Although I miss writing software, I do like to manage projects.

The first edition of this book sold well, at least that is what the fine people at the IEEE Computer Society have told me. It has been most gratifying to hear from people who have read the first edition. Some people have told me that they generally “like the book,” whereas others have pointed to specific pages and related how something that has worked for me also worked for them. Recently, a project manager told me how her team had never liked the concept of earned value, but something clicked when they saw the figures in the first edition. Since then, they bother her until she updates the earned value charts and posts them publicly so everyone can see how they are progressing.

Although gratified at hearing this, I also winced a bit because I felt that I had erred in some of my descriptions of earned value. There were several other things in the first edition that I wished I had described differently. That is the main reason for the second edition of *The Software Project Manager's Handbook*.

Another reason for the second edition is that I have learned a few things in the past five years that I have seen work at work. I wanted to update the book so that I could remember and use them better.

Several events have occurred in my life since the first edition that have had a significant impact on the second edition. First, I was able to meet Jerry Weinberg and attend several of his seminars. The ideas I had read in his books came to life. I am most grateful to Jerry and to some of the fine people I met at his seminars. Notable among these are Johanna Rothman, Dale

Emery, Steve Smith, Elizabeth Hendrickson, Don Gray, Esther Derby, Naomi Karten, and Jerry's wife Dani. I had the great pleasure of attending one of Jerry's writers workshops. That wonderful week led me to write another book on project management with Roy O'Bryan—*It Sounded Good When We Started*—also published by the IEEE Computer Society and Wiley.

A second event that occurred since the first edition of this book was that I attended a seminar on requirements led by James Robertson. This was significant for two reasons. First, the second day of the seminar was that terrible day of September 11, 2001. James was sensitive to our needs as people as well as students. Second, I learned much about the requirements techniques that James and his wife Suzanne wrote about in their book.

The third significant event has been the agile methods movement. This has influenced much in the field of software. Agile methods have emphasized the idea of thinking about who is doing what on a project (the people and the product) and choosing a process that best fits that situation. For many projects undertaken today, the agile methods are the best processes. There is room for many other types of projects, so the other processes I describe herein still have their place.

Given these events in my life and our field, I have updated this book. There is about 20% more material in each chapter. I have changed the wording of many passages in the book to help reach the reader. In all, people who have read the first edition have the opportunity to learn a few things by reading this second edition.

I thank the IEEE Computer Society for allowing me to update the book. I thank my wife Karen for loving me for five more years and supporting my writing. My three sons are five years older, and the eldest, Seth, is a college student studying computer engineering (no, he has not bothered to read a page of this). My second son Nathan is a senior in high school and undecided on his next step, but is showing me the joy and creativity of the skateboard and guitar. My youngest son Adam is in ninth grade and impressing me everyday with the effort he puts into things that do not come naturally and the ease with which he influences people.

Thanks are due to the many people in our field who have written and spoken about the things that have helped them at work. Their names are referenced in many places throughout this book. It has been my privilege to use their ideas in my work and my pleasure to pass them along in this book.

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