

Deeper

- What is the difference between tenure and experience?

Experience should encompass a changing set of activities, perspectives, and responsibilities.

It might appear that someone has had fifteen years of experience, when in fact they have had one year of experience fifteen times.

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Team Structure and Processes

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Deeper

- What do we mean by domain experience?

Having studied or followed the processes, or problems associated with a particular activity or product.

- Give a few examples

Having worked in a law office.

Having taken a course in databases.

Having read about cellular telephone systems.

Having worked on (or supported) a similar product.

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Deeper

- What personal characteristics can make one a good programmer or debugger?

– *clarity of thought and attention to details*
clear understanding of goals and mechanisms

– *curiosity about events and causes*
which gives rise to learning

– *analytical ability*
draw correct inferences, formulate correct solutions

– *discipline and persistence*
to do many hours of long, hard, individual work

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- Why should collaborators work in distinct roles?

The benefits of collaboration come from the interactions of two minds, and not merely on having more hands to do the work.

Having people assume different roles raises the likelihood that their efforts will be complementary.

This is not, however, essential. Some experienced teams can be highly productive without prescribed roles.

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- How would it work to have 3-4 people involved in these activities?

More people would add more eyes and perspectives, but as we add people, it becomes more difficult to keep all of them engaged, and get full value from all of them at the same time.

There are other activities/formats (e.g. brainstorming and reviews) where the interactions of larger numbers of contributors are better exploited.

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Deeper

- Would cooperative coding yield similar benefits to pair programming?

In pair programming, the non-typing partner is still putting their full attention on the code being written, which should result in fewer problems and better code.

In cooperative coding, the two people are working on related but different things. We are not getting the benefits of two heads focused on the same problem.

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- One of the benefits of Pair Programming is the training (in technology and methodology), yet we have said that Pair Programming is not for newby training. Is this a contradiction?

An experienced partner who is not familiar with the code in question will bring new perspectives.

Working in a pair, it is easy to contribute to the code before you fully understand the technology.

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- Are there inherent conflicts between pair programming and newby training?

They have different goals. One aims to efficiently produce quality code, while the other aims to train a new person.

Some experienced programmers lack the skills or attitudes to be an effective trainer.

Pair programming can be also training activity, but only for well chosen tasks and trainers.

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- How might assignments differ for training vs. mentoring

A training assignment is often when where the output is not important, or the trainee is not expected to make significant contributions.

A mentoring development assignment is an important job that the mentee is expected to do (pretty much on their own), but has been chosen to develop or assess specific skills.

... but this is not black and white.

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- What are the practical advantages of closer proximity to customers?

The ability to provide quicker customer support, in the local language.

A better understanding of the unique needs of the customers in that locale.

Representatives with a better understanding of local customs.

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Deeper

- Why might distributed development yield cost savings?

Many parts of the world have well trained people but lower wage levels.

- Why might distributed development not yield cost savings?

Increased communication and travel costs.

Increased coordination costs.

Rework costs associated with poor communication and coordination.

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- Why, in an age of paperless offices and electronic communication, should distance and time-zones create coordination problems?

Ideas are exchanged, and decisions are made in hallway conversations.

Electronic communication has a higher personal overhead, and so will not be used as often. Issues that would have been cleared up in person will often be left unresolved.

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Deeper

- What is meant by “cultural distance” problems ?

Problems resulting from different expectations of “appropriate” inter-personal behavior.

- What are “organizational distance” problems ?

Isolationism and hostility resulting when separate (geographically, culturally, organizationally) groups cease to feel that they are the same team or have the same goals.