**Annotations**

* Annotations were introduced in java 5, and since then most of the toolkits have started using them heavily. Annotations are decorators applied at the class and variable level that define the metadata about the class itself. Hibernate **loves** annotations. As they are necessary tool in developing complex ORM mappings.
* Earlier, we worked with the mapping of persistent or (Java Beans) classes using XML files. Using XML files for our configuration and mapping has both advantages and disadvantages.
* For one thing, XML are quite simple and easily readable, but they are also quite verbose (contains too many words)
* Annotations, on the other hand, are quite concise (short) and enable compile-type checks straightaway.
* They are metadata of the class, therefore enabling the entities to be managed effectively.