**Lean Method**

Introduce the Topic

* Term lean software development originated in a book by the same name, written by Mary Poppendieck and Tom Poppendieck
  + Book presents the traditional lean principles in a modified form as well as a set of 22 tools and compares the tools to agile practices
* Lean Principles
  + Can be summarized by seven principles, very close in concept to lean manufacturing principles

1. Eliminate waste

* Regards everything not adding value to the customer as waste
* Waste may include:
  + Unnecessary code and functionality
  + Delay in the software development process
  + Unclear requirements
  + Avoidable process repetition (often caused by insufficient testing)
  + Bureaucracy
  + Slow internal communication
* In order to eliminate waste, one should be able to recognize it
  + If some activity could be bypassed or the result could be achieved without it, it is waste
  + Partially done coding eventually abandoned during the development process is waste
  + Extra processes and features not often used by customers are waste
  + Waiting for other activities, teams, processes is waste
  + Defects and lower quality are waste
  + Managerial overhead not producing real value is waste
* A value stream mapping technique is used to identify waste
* Second step is to point out sources of waste and eliminate them
* Waste removal should take place iteratively until even seemingly essential processes and procedures are liquidated

1. Amplify learning

* This is the best approach for improving a software development environment
* Accumulation of defects should be prevented by running tests as soon as the code is written
* Instead of adding more documentation or detailed planning, different ideas could be tried by writing code and building
* Process of user requirements gathering could be simplified by presenting screens to the end users and getting their input
* Learning process is sped up by usage of short iteration cycles – each one coupled with refactoring and integration testing
* Increasing feedback via short feedback session with customers helps with determining the current phase of development and adjusting efforts for future improvements
* During these short sessions both customer representatives and the development team learn more about the domain problem and figure out possible solutions for further development
  + Thus, the customer better understand their needs, based on the existing result of development efforts, and the developers lean how to better satisfy those needs
* Another idea in communication and learning process with a customer is set-based development
  + Concentrates on communicating the constraints of the future solution and not the possible solutions
    - This promotes the birth of the solution via dialogue with the customer

1. Decide as late as possible

* Better results should be achieved with an options based approach, delaying decisions as much as possible until they can be made based on facts and not on uncertain assumptions and predictions
* The more complex a system is, the more capacity for change should be built into it
  + Enable the delay of important and crucial commitments
* Iterative approach promotes this principle
  + The ability to adapt to changes and correct mistakes, which might be very costly if discovered after the release of the system
* Agile software development approach can move the building of options earlier for customers
  + Delay certain crucial decisions until customers have realized their needs better
  + Also allows later adaptation to changes and the prevention of costly earlier technology bounded decisions
* This does not mean no planning should be involved
  + Planning activities should be concentrated on the different options and adapting to the current situation as well as clarifying confusing situations by establishing patterns for rapid action
* Evaluating different options is effective as soon as it is realized that they are not free, but provide the needed flexibility for late decision making

1. Deliver as fast as possible

* The sooner the end product is delivered without major defects, the sooner feedback can be received, and incorporated into the next iteration
* The shorter the iterations, the better the learning and communication within the team
* With speed, decisions can be delayed
  + Speed assures the fulfilling of the customer’s present needs and not what they required yesterday
  + Gives them the opportunity to delay making up their minds about what they really require until they gain better knowledge
* Customers value rapid delivery of a quality product

1. Empower the team

* Managers are taught how to listen to the developers, so they can explain better what actions might be taken, as well as provide suggestions for improvements

1. Build quality in
2. See the whole

Present details about it (including code and non code based examples)

Provide Pointers to additional material on the topic for interested readers

Example of Lean Method

Why should software developers care about this topic?

Other information

References