ASSIGNMENT 3 : GER REFLECTIONS

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Introduction:

Ger Hartnett is officially the VP of Engineering for MongoDBs headquarters where he manages multiple teams across Europe. He has been part of the company for the last 5 years dealing with a variety of tasks based on the mix of technical and management jobs. His talk today was based on his upbringing to his current position, his struggles and his accomplishments.

Education:

He started his education in Limerick then attended UCC from 1992 to 1995. Though his education Ger learned programming principles and worked hard on improving his technical skills. He developed an understanding for technologies in CON, UNIX and EMACS. Ger was very interested in the building of programs but also the fundamental reasons to why he coded. This meant learning a lot of theory.

Career:

He began his career by interning at Analog Devices in 1985. After a year of learning how a company works and gathering new principles and personal beliefs, he went on to work at SW Engineer as a QC data engineer. At this stage, Ger wanted to be part of start-up companies where he landed his first job working for a boss he believed to be crazy. He then tried to work for another startup, but the company failed. From these experiences, Ger knew it became essential to learn when to leave a company and how to get back on your feet. He quickly moved up to be employed at Motorola where he was given the opportunity to work on some of the best projects of his career. This included developing GSM chips that are implemented in our phones today along with working side by side with IBM. Ger gathered project management skills because of his relations with IBM. In this period Ger also learned a lot about what it meant to debug your code and reuse the same tools that were given at hand rather than restart a project from scratch when it has issues. Since agile wasn't highly recognized at the time, the company was having a hard time keeping up with the quality of their project. Everything based on management was dysfunctional for the company. They tried going from a traditional approach such as models based on UML all the was to an Ad Hoc method. However, a team of 7 people including Ger gathered their skills together and found that the principles based on agile to be a good middle ground and saved the company. This is where he understood that it doesn't matter madder how many people you have in your team. If you have 7 and all members are focused, then you can accomplish even more than if you had 70 employees and a disorganized project.

Ger then moved on to other companies such as Digital Equipment Corporation and Tellabs where he worked as a Software Engineer. He hit a big break when he landed a job working directly with Intel where he worked with technologies such as Microcode, Linux Kernel, and other device drivers. Throughout his career, at Intel, he worked closely with the Waterfall model along with other agile methods. After eight years at Intel he started his own company: Goshido. Goshido was a company that helped customers organize their current projects. Throughout this experience, not only was he able to work directly with shareholders, investors, and customers but also learn from which of these experiences he got the best results from when directing a company. Ger believed that concentrating on your customers needs to be a priority. Seven years later Ger left his company and went on to work for MongoDB.

Other Moto:
In his Career Ger gathered a lot of understanding on how to become a good employer and a few rules to live by when working for a company. These rules included staying away from unfair bosses but remain composed at your job, knowing when to stop a company when the budget is too low and having a backup plan, communicate often between your peers, that 90% of startups fail and being ready for action if they do.