Why FTE based planning is not useful for managing SW engineering teams

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What we learned in physics class:

Power = Work/Time

But FTE is only about time!

What about the second parameter?

The amount of "Work" is influenced by:

- expertise and soft skills
- context and experience

If not dealing with clone warriors or AI agents you should expect different values for each developer.

Agile processes and methods?

The Agile Manifesto is talking about individuals not about equivalents. And even worse as you may get only time slots of a shared equivalent.

Somebody promises you 5.5 FTE for your project – what does it mean?

Hard to say, but you know nothing about expected performance and work progress. You even don't know how many developers you'll get.

And as everyone is nothing more than a plain FTE your top performer might be replaced tomorrow by another FTE.