

Matching Process to Types of Teams

One size does not fit all when it comes to project teams and their own unique process.

We got away without software process for quite a long time, and produced a lot of software, some of it pretty good, too.

The fact is, process is often strongly resisted by the people who are expected to use it. It is often implemented less than optimally in many establishments. There are certainly many improvements that could be made to both our approach to software process and the process our approach produces. But is all the hesitancy, reservations, resistance, and outright rebellion simply the work of recidivists? Is it just stepping on the cowboy programmers' inalienable right to program whatever and however the heck they please? What is it they object to? "Your process is stifling my creativity!" is the cry. Do they have a point?

The cornerstone of the software process faith is that process engenders repeatability. "Repeatable" is even the name of the first level above bare existence in the SEI

model. But what is repeatability? And is it valuable?

This scenario may help explain: a couple of years ago I was facilitating a management workshop for a

tion of one person, they did not have a process-oriented bone in their collective and corporate body. Their idea of process was "just do it." The personality profiling we did with them during the workshop

supported this view. Collectively they had both the right

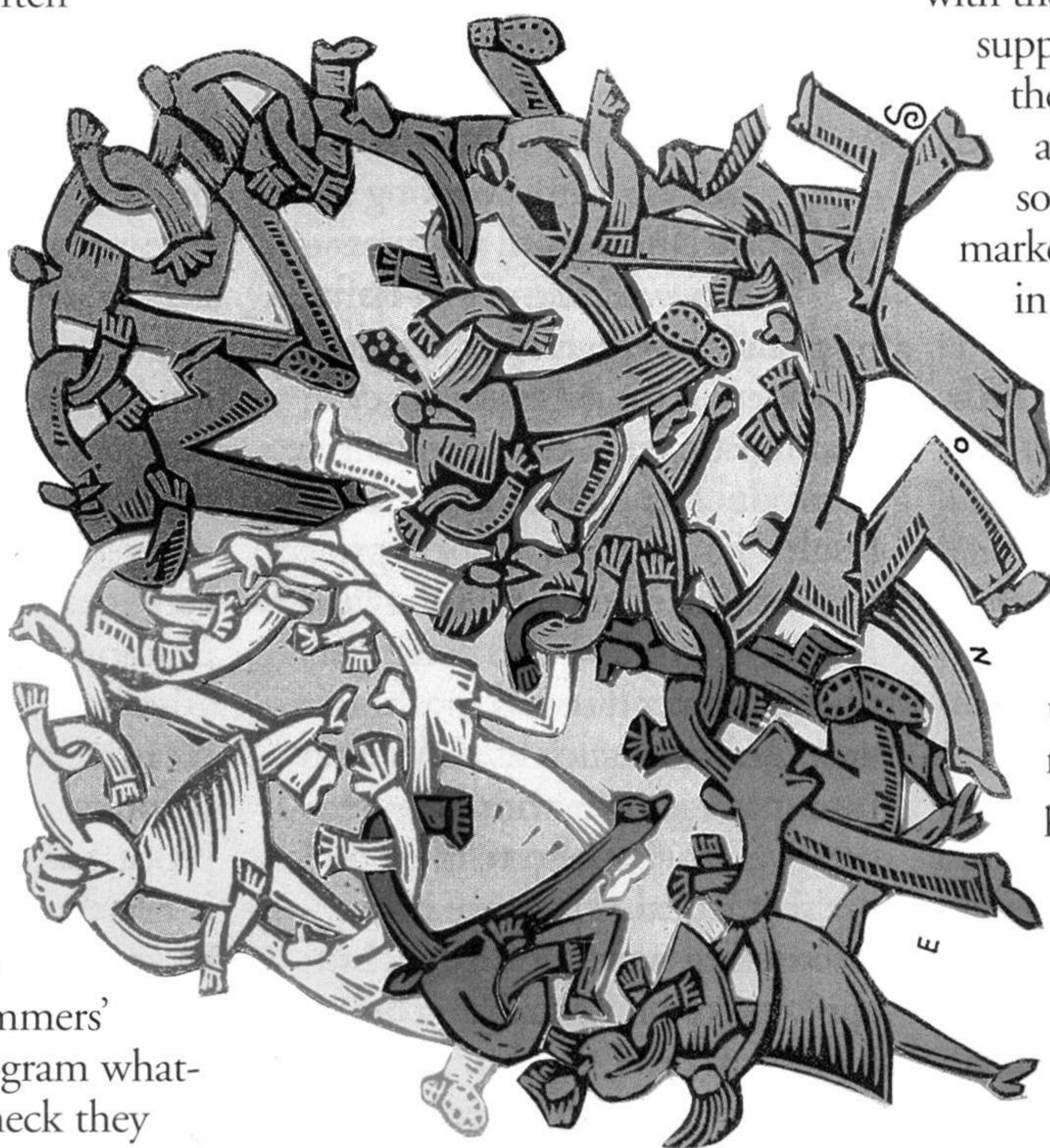
approach and the right personalities to break open a new market, make things happen, fly in the face of accepted wisdom,

accomplish things that had never been done, do things others said couldn't be done—boldly go where no person had gone before. But process?

You could have tortured these people and they would not have admitted that process was a good idea. The solitary process-oriented individual was a voice crying in the wilderness.

I was giving a pitch on the SEI/CMM model, and it received the predictable response. Jim was one of the more challenging of a challenging group.

"SEI Level 2 is 'repeatable', right?" Jim pointed out. "Well, look at our title. We're the Advanced Products Group. *Advanced*. Everything we build is new. Different. We don't want to



systems engineering group. There were 14 senior managers and their VP in the room. These managers were, in their engineering youth, the people responsible for making the first cellular telephone systems operational. A more "can do" group I cannot imagine. With the excep-