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CSD 380 Module 8.2

The Dangers of Change Approval Processes

The discussion on the dangers of traditional change approval processes emerges from the broader context of improving software development and deployment practices. The insights are drawn from various studies and real-world practices observed in high-performing organizations like Google, Amazon, and Netflix, which successfully deploy code multiple times daily using DevOps principles.

While intended to ensure stability and control over deployments, change approval processes can introduce significant challenges and risks if not managed properly. These processes can create a higher chance of errors due to a lack of immediate feedback from the deployment process and a low-trust, command-and-control culture. Some of the primary dangers of a change approval are the following:

* Increased Lead Times and Reduced Deployment Frequency: Traditional change approval processes often involve extensive paperwork, multiple levels of management approval
* Higher Likelihood of Errors: The longer the time between code changes and deployment, the more difficult it becomes to trace and fix issues​
* Low-Trust, Command-and-Control Culture: Overly controlling change processes foster a low-trust environment.

A more effective approach is to adopt lightweight, peer-reviewed approval processes integrated with automated deployment pipelines. This combination allows for quick detection and rejection thereby increasing the overall quality and stability of the system.

# References

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