

Agile Methods in a Product Development Setting

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Most people find the
concept of programming
obvious, but the doing
impossible.

Alan Perlis

The background of the slide is a solid blue color. In the bottom right corner, there are several sets of concentric circles, resembling ripples in water, rendered in a lighter shade of blue. These circles are of varying sizes and are positioned in the lower right quadrant of the slide.

Successful Products

- Working Software
- Value for Company and Customers

Dealing with failure is easy: Work hard to improve. Success is also easy to handle: You've solved the wrong problem. Work hard to improve.

Alan Perlis

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Agile Development

- High Risk Projects
- Extended Teams
- Testability

It is easier to change the
specification to fit the
program than vice versa.

Alan Perlis

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Product Development

- Competitive
- Very High Risk/Low Information
- A Product is complete if it “achieves its business objective(s) on or before the desired date”

In computing, turning the obvious
into the useful is a living definition
of the word “frustration”.

Alan Perlis

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Key Agile Ideas for Product Development

- Product-Centric Deliverables
- Very Short Iterations
- Eat Your Own Dogfood

Is it possible that software is
not like anything else, that it is
meant to be discarded: that
the whole point is to see it as a
soap bubble?

Alan Perlis



Product-Centric Deliverables

- Tracks 'Done-ness' in terms of Company Value
- The Deliverable *Definition*
- The *Acceptance Test*

Programmers are not to be
measured by their ingenuity
and their logic but by the
completeness of their case
analysis.

Alan Perlis

The bottom of the slide features several faint, concentric circles in a lighter shade of blue, resembling ripples in water, positioned in the lower right and bottom center areas.

Predictive Deadlock Detection

If the running software acquires two locks (“x”, ”y”) two or more times such that at least once it holds x when it attempts to acquire y and at least once it hold y when it attempts to acquire x, a potential deadlock shall be signaled.

Predictive Deadlock Detection is acceptable when:

- “Nels” can run sample programs with lock order anomalies
- He is informed of the problem
- The exact lines of code where the second lock is acquired are shown

Very Short Iterations

- Manages Risk
- Maximizes Response to Information
- Regular 'Done-ness' Metric
- Iteration *Themes*


Around computers it is difficult to find the correct unit of time to measure progress. Some cathedrals took a century to complete. Can you imagine the grandeur and scope of a program that would take as long?

Alan Perlis

A decorative graphic consisting of three sets of concentric circles, resembling ripples in water, located in the bottom right corner of the slide. The circles are light blue and have a subtle gradient.

“Would you like Fries with that Shake?”

In this iteration we will display end to end Cross-Sell and Up-Sell, showing how ‘Adele’ sets up cross-selling and up-selling, how ‘Michael’ learns about products when browsing, and how ‘Suzette’ gathers statistics about Michael’s interests after the fact.

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Eat Your Own Dogfood

- Define the Absurdly Minimal Product
- Stub Out The Architecture
- Define the *Dogfood Milestone*

The computer is the ultimate polluter:
its feces are indistinguishable from
the food it produces.

Alan Perlis



The Absurdly Minimal Product

- Runs on the command line
- Signals in text to Stdout
- Runs at least two stub analyzers
- At least one analyzer reports running condition of subject code

Miscellaneous Recommendations

- Customer Representation by Proxy:
Product or Program Management
- A Defect is “Failure to Pass an Acceptance Test”; a Bug is “Anything You Can Put In The Read Me File”
- Only Make Promises You Can Keep in the Next Two Iterations
- Use Unit Tests to Prevent Regression and Facilitate Refactoring

Documentation is like term insurance: It satisfies because almost no one who subscribes to it depends on its benefits.

Alan Perlis

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One More Time!

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 - Manages Risk/Maximizes Response to Information
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If a listener nods his head
when you're explaining your
program, wake him up.

Alan Perlis

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Thank you!