

Kent Beck

(1961 -)

Kent Beck is an American software engineer best known as one of original signatories of Agile Manifesto and the creator of extreme programming. Moreover, he has made contributions to software design patterns, application of Smalltalk, JUnit Pocket and Eclipse.

Background

In 1968, the term "software crisis" was coined for the difficulty of writing efficient and useful computer programs in the required time, at the first NATO Software Engineering Conference in Germany. Then, about 50 top-class programmers and computer scientists discussed about strategies to get rid of the "software crisis". At that Conference, the concept of software engineering was first proposed.

Extreme Programming

Kent Beck graduated from the University of Oregon in 1987 with a bachelor's and master's degree in computer and information science. In one of his early jobs, he and another programmer were assigned to accomplish a project. At the beginning of this project, he made an estimation that they required about six weeks to complete the programming. However, at this time, the other programmer was reassigned by his manager. Consequently, he had to complete the work

all by himself. Finally, the project was completed by Kent in twelve weeks. Because it took six weeks longer than the original estimate, he felt disappointed and frustrated and he was blamed by his boss due to the slow pace of the second six weeks. After thinking about this failure, he realized that the failure was actually the manager's failure as it was absolutely accurate for his original estimate of 6 weeks for two people. He thought the failure of the standard "fixed" process mindset, which plagued our industry frequently, went on every day in the industry of external and internal customers, marketing, and management. The problem that practically ran throughout Dilbertesque organizations wasn't merely a software development problem

Afterwards Kent Beck created the extreme programming (XP), which is one of the most famous agile methods and had mushroomed in use and interest. It consists of a series of simple but interdependent practices. The reason why it became so popular is that the practices define a developer community freed from the baggage of Dilbertesque corporations.

Later Career

In 1996 Beck worked on a project called Chrysler Comprehensive Compensation System (commonly referred to as "C3"), which is the first formal XP project.

In the spring of 2000, an earlier organization of Extreme Programming proponents organized by Kent Beck at the Rogue River Lodge in Oregon, incubated a meeting at Snowbird. Then they framed and signed one of

the most significant documents in software engineering development history, a sort of Declaration of Independence for the coding set -- the Agile Manifesto.

Relevant Thoughts

It was undeniable that as programming is a creative process, some designers are inherently better than others. Nevertheless, as the younger generation of the software engineer, we can learn a lot about the process of creation from the experience of Kent. Keep thinking and summarizing, follow the trend of programming and make clear the direction, focus on issues in the field and overcome difficulties.