WHAT’S DIFFERENT ABOUT TODAY?

- Faster! Faster! Faster
- Harder! Harder! Harder!
- Quality matters more (less) than ever.
- The demographics are killing us.
FASTER . . .

Want to be faster? That will require change.
Excuse me for asking, but can you change at all?

Characteristics of companies that can’t change:

- over-optimized
- fearful
- extremely busy
Slack is the degree of freedom (in time and budget and manpower and space, etc.) necessary to make change possible.
The Agility Principle

Business is not the same as busy-ness.
Slack: getting past burnout, busywork, and the myth of total efficiency by Tom DeMarco

Random House: April 10, 2001
Prioritization

The most common approach:

- Each project is given a priority: (High, Medium, or Low)
- All projects are immediately assigned a priority of High (since only High projects ever get done)
- New projects are added without adding new resources
Prio Diagram

Staff

Project 5

time
For information about SystemPrio, see:
http://www.access.ch/imczuerich/systemprio.html
Management would really like to add . . .

. . . this project:

to the current portfolio:
The effect of adding “just one more”:

Note that all delivery dates move out to the right.
Priority discipline

- rank order priorities
- staff each project optimally
- put projects on hold when their priority doesn’t justify doing them yet

(Obviously this is a drastic departure from the way that project initiation usually works.)
“Whenever I hear people talking about process I think they’ve got it all wrong. What we need is not so much a process for doing projects as a thoughtful and well-designed process for deciding which ones to do at all.”
"Thin is in. Heavy is out."

- Jim Highsmith*

Candidate light processes:

- XP (eXtreme Programming)
- Crystal Methods
- S.C.R.U.M.
- Dynamic System Development Methodology

Relative advantage

Knights in armor

Invention of the tank

Genghis Kahn

Maginot Line
HARDER...

The systems we tend to build today are characterized by:

- more stakeholders
- more conflict
- shorter schedules
- tighter budgets
- more visibility
- more risk

Most of all, modern day systems are harder because we built all the easy ones years ago.
THE DEMOGRAPHICS . . .

Three new sources of supply of IT workers:

🌟 The baby boom

🌟 Introduction of women into the workforce

🌟 Increasing educational levels of the post-war generation
The "trough" as of 1995

The advancing baby boomer trough by 2015
“We may never have enough knowledge workers again.”

— Bruce Taylor, Publisher of KM World
QUALITY . . .

. . . matters more than ever.

Doesn’t it? Huh? Huh?
PRESCRIPTION FOR A NEW ERA:

- Become less efficient
- Lighten process (strive for light process and heavy skills)
- Learn to Prioritize
- Choose your projects very wisely; what you decide not to build is more important than how you build
- Invest in human capital