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Quotable Quotes List 3

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- “ In product development, our problem is virtually never motionless engineers. It is almost always motionless work products.” — Donald G. Reinertsen “The Principles of Product Development Flow”
- “Standing still is the fastest way of moving backwards in a rapidly changing world.”— Lauren Bacall
- “The people who sweep the floor should chose the broom” – Howard Behar
- “If we have data, let’s look at data. If all we have are opinions, let’s go with mine.” — Jim Barksdale, CEO Netflix
- “Authorship drives ownership” – Unknown
- “When you visualize your pain and gather data about it, it’s much easier to get the stakeholders’ and other teams’ understanding. It’s not you nagging, it’s data” — Marcus Hammarberg and Joakim Sundén, “Kanban in Action”
- “Research shows that we become fonder for people and things we experience while we are eating.” — Linda Rising, “Fearless Change”
- “Given that complete communication is never possible, the task on a project is not to try for complete communication but to manage the incompleteness of our communications” — Alistair Cockburn, Agile Software Development.
- “ … if we have managers deciding . . . which services will be built, by which teams, we implicitly have managers deciding on the system architecture.” due to Conway’s Law — Ruth Malan
- “[Conway’s law] creates an imperative to keep asking: “Is there a better design that is not available to us because of our organization?” —Mel Conway, Toward Simplifying Application Development, in a Dozen Lessons
- “Excellent firms don’t believe in excellence—only in constant improvement and constant change.” — Tom Peters
- “Any successful change requires a translation of ambiguous goals into concrete behaviors. In short, to make a switch, you need to script the critical moves.” — Chip and Dan Heath, Switch: How to Change Things When Change Is Hard
- “Nothing undermines change more than behavior by important individuals that is inconsistent with the verbal communication.” — John P. Kotter, Leading Change
- “Produces innovate; customers validate.” — not sure
- “If you don't have encapsulation, you have to have orchestration” – Mike Cottmeyer on need for dependency management when Teams are not able to produce value themselves
- “Less certainty. More inquiry.” — Erik Seidel
- “I think it’s important to reason from first principles rather than by analogy. The normal way we conduct our lives is we reason by analogy. [With analogy] we are doing this because it’s like something else that was done, or it is like what other people are doing. [With first principles] you boil things down to the most fundamental truths . . . and then reason up from there.” — Elon Musk
- “Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.” — Thomas Edison
- “Good process is absolutely essential. Without defined processes, you can’t scale, you can’t put metrics and instrumentation in place, you can’t manage. But avoiding bureaucracy is essential. Bureaucracy is process run amok.” — Jeff Bezos
- “Gentlemen, we are going to relentlessly chase perfection, knowing full well we will not catch it, because nothing is perfect. But we are going to relentlessly chase it because in the process we will catch excellence. I am not remotely interested in just being good.” — Vince Lombardi

- “Agile evolution, like agility itself, is reality-based, and reality is messy, unpredictable, and not subject to brute force or wishful thinking.” — Rick Freedman
- “I choose a lazy person to do a hard job. Because a lazy person will find an easy way to do it.” — Bill Gates
- “The only way to control chaos and complexity is to give up some of that control.” — Gyan Nagpal
- “Building product is not about having a large team to manage. It is about having a small team with the right people on it.” — Fred Wilson
- “By multiplying milestones, we transform a long, amorphous race into one with many intermediate ‘finish lines’. As we push through each one, we experience a burst of pride as well as a jolt of energy to charge towards the next one.” — Chip and Dan Heath, The Power of Moments
- “Setting an example is not the main means of influencing others, it is the only means.” — Albert Einstein
- “Many leaders pride themselves on setting the high-level direction and staying out of the details. But big picture, hands off leadership isn’t likely to work in a change situation, because the hardest part of change - the paralyzing part - is in the details.” — Dan and Chip Heath, Switch: How to Change Things When Change Is Hard
- “Innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower.” – Steve Jobs
- “Agility is the ability to adapt and respond to change … agile organizations view change as an opportunity, not a threat.” – Jim Highsmith
- “We are all familiar with guardrails on highways. They are put there to keep a simple mishap from turning into a full-blown catastrophe. If you go a little off course, the rails help you regain the path towards your destination.” – Anonymous
- “Expect resentment – and eventual trouble – if you micromanage remote workers. You provoke resistance when you demonstrate that you don’t trust your distant workers and monitor everything they do.” — Lisette Sutherland and Kirsten Janene-Nelson in “Work Together Anywhere”
- “Whether we like it or not, it’s almost like each of us have personal ‘Net Promoter Scores’ in our workplaces.” — Dynamic Reteaming - Heidi Helfand
- “People think they want to be co-located. What they really want is high-bandwidth communication.” – Bill Krebs
- “Never let a serious crisis go to waste” – Rahm Emanuel
- “Waste no more time arguing what a good person should be. Be one.” – Marcus Aurelius
- “Do you want a team of hamsters – with lots of effort that get you nowhere – or people that produce results?” —- Felipe Castro on OKRs
- “On the topic of goals, the academic research agrees with your intuition: Having goals improves performance. Spending hours cascading goals up and down the company, however, does not. It takes way too much time and it’s too hard to make sure all the goals line up. We have a market-based approach, where over time our goals all converge, because the top OKRs are known and everyone else’s OKRs are visible.” — Laszlo Bock, Google’s former VP of People Operations
- “To outdo your competition, you don’t need certainty. You just need to deal with uncertainty better than they do.” – Mike Cohn
- “John, the kind of control you’re attempting simply its … it’s not possible.” – Ian Malcolm [Jeff Goldblum, Jurassic Park]
- “If you don’t tell the story, someone else will” – Unknown
- “I’ve been really proud of being involved in three things in my career: agile, DevOps, software craftsmanship. This should have been one initiative.” – Martin Fowler (State of Agile 2018)
- “Continuous improvement is better than delayed perfection.” – Mark Twain
- “The best way to deliver value isn’t more, more, more, it’s to do small valuable things frequently.” – Ron Jeffries in "Story Points Revisited"

- “In complex environments, what will happen is unknown. Only what has already happened may be used for forward-looking decision-making.” – Scrum Guide
- “… for each desired change, make the change easy (warning: this may be hard), then make the easy change” — Kent Beck
- “Traditional teams attempt to drive out uncertainty by planning and analysis. Agile teams tend to drive out uncertainty by developing working software in small increments and then adjusting.” — Jim Highsmith
- “Build the teams that we want to be a part of” – Mike Adrian
- “You cannot change the direction of the wind, but we can adjust our sails” – Jimmy Dean(?)
- “What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is engraved in the lives of others” – Perecles
- “The impediment to action advances the action. What stands in the way becomes the way” – Marcus Aurelius
- “The true method of knowledge is experiment.” – William Blake
- “We are not critical thinkers; we think to criticize” – Unknown
- “Radical change, one PI at a time” – Mike Adrian
- “It great that you do the work, but it is even better if you bring someone along” —- Cynthia
- “The benefits of recognizing just a few extra learning opportunities compound over time.” – Annie Duke “Thinking in Bets”.
- “To change a habit, you must keep the old cue, and deliver the old reward, but insert a new routine.” – Unknown
- “Experience is not what happens to a man; it is what a man does with what happens to him.” – Aldous Huxley
- “For knowledge workers it is during the doing of work we discover the work that needs to be done.” – Vasco Duante
- “A primary cause of software complexity is that vendors uncritically adopt almost any feature that users want. People seem to misinterpret complexity as sophistication. The incomprehensible should cause suspicion rather than admiration.” – Niklaus Wirth
- “You are doing a great job of fragmenting work” – Unknown. Not necessarily a compliment.
- “Sometimes when people seem lazy, it could be that they are just exhausted” – Unknown. On too much organizational change.
- “Absolutely #noabsolutes” – heard at Value Stream Analysis workshop
- “When a measure becomes a target, it ceases to be a good measure” – Strathern (variation on Goodhart’s Law)
- “There is no question that in virtually all circumstances in which people are doing things in order to get rewards, tangible rewards undermine intrinsic motivation.” – New Scientist. 9th April 2011 pp 40-43
- “Inspection is too late. The quality good, or bad, is already in the product.” – Deming
- “Stop controlling people, start controlling value delivered” – Unknown
- “We have a whole bunch of cute puppies running around. We need to drown some of them” – Heard at leadership prioritization meeting
- “Improving daily work is more important than doing daily work” – Gene Kim
- “There is no ‘my’ work; there is no ‘your’ work; there is only ‘our’ work” – Dojo quote on team dynamics
- “Our projects are like watermelons; green on the outside and red in the middle.” – Unknown
- “The idea that the future is unpredictable is undermined every day by the ease with which the past is explained.” – Daniel Kahneman
- “What is important is seldom urgent, and what is urgent is seldom important.” – Dwight D.

Eisenhower

- “It is hard to imagine a more stupid or more dangerous way of making decisions than by putting those decisions in the hands of people who pay no price for being wrong.” – Thomas Sowel
- “Zero failure is a failure” – Unknown
- “Success is not typically measured by cost and schedule …” – Unknown
- “Everyone is doing DevOps; most are doing it poorly” – Heard at DevOps for the Agile Enterprise
- “Respect the ceremony” – Unknown
- “If you are a manager and you are not uncomfortable during an agile transformation you are probably not doing a transformation to the agile mindset”. – Unknown
- “No, I feel that my job as the commander is to tap into the existing energy of the command, discover the strengths, and remove barriers to further progress.” – David Marquet
- “The procedure has become the master not the servant.” – David Marquet
- “Don’t preach and hope for ownership; implement mechanisms that actually give ownership … Eliminating top-down monitoring systems will do it for you.” – David Marquet
- “Trust is purely a characteristic of the human relationship.” – David Marquet
- “Don’t move information to authority, move authority to the information.” – David Marquet
- “If you walk about your organization talking to people, I’d suggest that you be as curious as possible.” – David Marquet
- “Empowerment programs appeared to be a reaction to the fact that we had actively disempowered people.” – David Marquet
- “Whatever sense we have of thinking we know something is a barrier to continued learning.” – David Marquet
- “When the performance of a unit goes down after an officer leaves, it is taken as a sign that he was a good leader, not that he was ineffective in training his people properly.” – David Marquet
- “People tend to overestimate the effect of a technology in the short run and underestimate the effect in the long run.” – Amara’s Law
- “Exec quiz: How do you expect your org to innovate if your governance model is fundamentally based on adherence to long-term implementation plans? Just imagine, in order to innovate, your employees would have to put their careers at risk every time.” – Alex Yakyma
- “Don't trade uncertain earliness with certain lateness” – Unknown. On deciding too early, pretending we can plan in advance.
- “Alignment is a force multiplier” – Unknown
- “The point of estimation is not to predict the future but to understand if we are even in with a chance of managing our way to success” – Steve McConnell
- “Failure is an option to start again … this time with more information” – Henry Ford
- “More is coming at us faster.” – John P Kotter
- “Being relentless is key.” – John P Kotter
- “Be unfailingly respectful.” – John P Kotter
- “But our decisions and actions always increase the probability of what we call “luck,” good or bad.” – John P Kotter
- “Innovation requires risks, people who are willing to think outside their boxes, perspectives from multiple silos, and more. Management-driven hierarchies are built to minimize risk and keep people in their boxes and silos. To change this more than incrementally is to fight a losing battle.” – John P Kotter
- “We can’t work in silos to solve systemic problems” – Bar Yam
- “[J]ust as the essence of medicine is not urinalysis (important though that is), the essence of management is not techniques and procedures. The essence of management is to make [people and their expertise] productive. Management, in other words, is a social function.” – Peter Drucker

- “Managerial effectiveness today is, as it has ever been, based on management engaging the three tasks that Drucker identified as uniquely its own: Focusing the organization on its specific purpose and mission; making work both productive and suitable for human beings; and taking responsibility for the organization’s social impacts.” – Peter Drucker
- “We spend a lot of time looking for systemic risk; in truth, however, it tends to find us.” – Meg McConnell of the New York Fed. I think this is applicable to organizations and the need to focus on resiliency
- “Teams not individuals are the fundamental learning unit in modern organizations. This is where the rubber meets the road; unless teams can learn, the organization cannot learn.” – Peter Senge
- “People change because smart companies make them want to change. It usually involves techniques borrowed from gamification, behavioral economics, and habitualization.” – Jurgen Appelo
- “When does any waterfall project become agile? When you're out of time or money. That's when you negotiate.” – Harry Koehnemann
- “If you dig deep enough you will eventually find that at its core, every mindset is a belief system. That’s why it is so horrifically difficult to change. People don’t like their core beliefs to be shaken up and gravely endangered.” – Alex Yakyma
- “There is truly some magic to this planning thing – the magic of addressing complexity with the most powerful weaponry there is: face-to-face communication.” – Alex Yakyma
- “The teams themselves can have flawed instincts and regularly take on more work than they can actually accomplish.” – Alex Yakyma
- “As long as I do not see that I’m blind, I’m blind.” – Unknown
- “Make them jealous that their peers are doing something dangerously cool. Nothing drives large-scale adoption better than that.” – Alex Yakyma
- “A successful change agent must ensure that there’s no unproductive tension between themselves and the stakeholders. Any antagonism, even latent, may inhibit the transformation and must be promptly resolved. It’s up to you to make the first step.” – Alex Yakyma
- “No demo, no numbers”. If you can’t demonstrate a fully integrated system, don’t fool yourself with metrics. It’s better to accept the defeat and focus on solving the underlying problem. – Alex Yakyma
- “Nothing strengthens trust between teams and business owners better than the PI System Demo.” – Alex Yakyma
- “In adopting a new operating paradigm, the ways of working are only the tip of the iceberg. The real target of a change agent — the mass of ice below the surface — is the mindset of those who lead the organization.” – Alex Yakyma
- “So why is it that we acknowledge face-to-face communication as the best way of conveying information at the team level, but at the program level this simple, yet absolutely fundamental tenet of Agile is demonstrably ignored?” – Alex Yakyma through Adi
- “Our customers don’t buy components or even features; they buy systems. That’s why an iteration can be successful only if it produces an increment of the entire system, end-to-end.” – Alex Yakyma
- “Longer lead times seem to be associated with significantly poorer quality. In fact, an approximately six-and-a-half times increase in average lead time resulted in a greater than 30-fold increase in initial defects.” – David Anderson
- “Adding a WIP limit to fix the overburdening causes the average time a work item spends in the system to get much shorter.” – Andrew Stellman and Jennifer Greene
- “We would never run the servers in our computer rooms at full utilization — why haven’t we learned that lesson in software development?” – Mary and Tom Poppendieck, Lean Software Development: An Agile Toolkit

- “If stupid enters the room, you have a moral duty to shoot it, no matter who’s escorting it.” – Keoki Andrus, Beautiful Teams
- “It’s widely known that it takes time (usually between 15 and 45 minutes) for a developer to get into a state of “flow,” a state of high concentration in which she’s highly productive.” – Andrew Stellman and Jennifer Greene
- “Given enough eyeballs, all bugs are shallow” – Linus’s Law - can be applied to source code, plans, designs, etc.
- “Let the team fail: Certainly, don’t stand idly by while the team goes careening off a cliff. … Teams that fail together and recover together are much stronger and faster than ones that are protected.” – Lyssa Adkins in “Coaching Agile Teams”
- “Cockburn points out just how “distressingly Zen” this can sound. In Agile Software Development: The Cooperative Game, he talks about how people at the ri stage of learning say things that are difficult for a shu-level learner to understand” – Andrew Stellman and Jennifer Greene
- “Without concrete practices, principles are sterile; but without principles, practices have no life, no character, no heart. Great products arise from great teams — teams who are principled, who have character, who have heart, who have persistence, and who have courage.” – Jim Highsmith (and why we worry about Principles and Values)
- “In short, software is eating the world.” – Marc Andreessen
- “Value occurs only when the end user is operating the solution. The value stream can’t have a model that involves ideation and development, but excludes deployment. The DevOps pipeline is simply part of the value stream.” – Dean Leffingwell, quoted at VersionOne Webinar "Top 7 Questions
- “When an organization focuses on driving optimization of each individual project, many seemingly logical efforts to improve product development unintentionally undermine the very goal they intend to accomplish.” – Dantar P. Oosterwal in "The Lean Machine"
- “Just like air traffic controllers establish the landing patterns and cadence of airplanes to synchronize arrivals regardless of size, distance traveled, experience of the crew, or any other attribute, so that the planes follow an identical, predictable pattern when landing, a pattern and cadence that encompasses all aspects and varieties of projects in the development portfolio must be established in product development.” – Dantar P. Oosterwal in "The Lean Machine"
- “When a project fails, the failure is generally blamed on the project leader rather than recognizing that the system in which the project leader operates is a much greater determinant of success and failure than the project leader.” – Dantar P. Oosterwal in "The Lean Machine"
- “Someone who achieves a high level of personal mastery lives in a continual learning mode with no end state. They never 'arrive.'” – Dantar P. Oosterwal in "The Lean Machine"
- “You are a product of your environment. So choose the environment that will best develop you toward your objective. Analyze your life in terms of its environment. Are the things around you helping you toward success - or are they holding you back?” – Clement Stone
- “You cannot be smarter than your customer” – Alex Yakma
- “You cannot ever have diversity of opinion with yourself” – Dean Leffingwell
- “To make Lean work requires a carefully coordinated and synchronized team that is focused on end user value and on continuously improving that value.” – James Coplien
- “The key to success in both Lean and Agile is the Lean Secret: Everybody, all together, from early on. This “secret” is what makes the human side of Lean work.” – James Coplien
- “If an enterprise consistently doesn’t deliver, it should be viewed as an end-to-end process problem. This end-to-end process, its people, and its processes are called the value stream.” – James Coplien
- “Maybe half of software development is about nerd stuff happening at the whiteboard and about

typing at the keyboard. But the other half is about people and relationships." – James Coplien
- "Once you start looking for confirmation bias you see it everywhere." – Michael Feathers
- "Organizations are perfectly designed to get the results they get. If you don't like the results you are getting, then you need to change the design of the organization." – Robert McDonald
- "In theory, there is no difference between theory and practice. But in practice, there is." – Yogi Berra
- "It is better to be roughly right than to be precisely wrong" – John Maynard Keynes
- "Be aware that collaboration requires leadership. As the person in charge of the product, you should be open and collaborative but decisive at the same time." – Roman Pichler
- "Doing the right thing is more important than doing the thing right." – Peter Drucker
- "When competitive advantages do not last long, neither do the organizations that execute them." – Jay R. Galbraith
- "All the data must be available to all the parties. In complex organizations, transparency is your friend." – Jay R. Galbraith
- "When a company extends its product differentiation strategy to include chips, sensors, and software in its products, it finds itself in the software business too. Part of the organization now has to move at the pace of the software industry. This pace approaches real-time and requires that cross-functional teams operate under the newsroom model." – Jay R. Galbraith
- "Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do, and they will surprise you with their ingenuity" – George Patton. Ironically," Damian McKinney told the Financial Times, "companies are much more focused on what I call 'command and control' than their military counterparts."
- "Diversity trumps ability" – Scott Page
- "If you don't get this elementary, but mildly unnatural, mathematics of elementary probability into your repertoire, then you go through a long life like a one-legged man in an ass-kicking contest." – Charlie Munger
- "Uncertainty is real. It is the dream of total certainty that is an illusion." – Byers
- "That too is consistent with the EPJ data, which revealed an inverse correlation between fame and accuracy: the more famous an expert was, the less accurate he was." – Philip E. Tetlock
- "Scientists must be able to answer the question "What would convince me I am wrong?" If they can't, it's a sign they have grown too attached to their beliefs." – Philip E. Tetlock
- "A defining feature of intuitive judgment is its insensitivity to the quality of the evidence on which the judgment is based." – Philip E. Tetlock
- "I have been struck by how important measurement is to improving the human condition. You can achieve incredible progress if you set a clear goal and find a measure that will drive progress toward that goal." – Bill Gates
- "Foresight isn't a mysterious gift bestowed at birth. It is the product of particular ways of thinking, of gathering information, of updating beliefs." – Philip E. Tetlock
- "The further out the forecaster tries to look, the more opportunity there is for chaos to flap its butterfly wings and blow away expectations." – Philip E. Tetlock
- "Old forecasts are like old news — soon forgotten — and pundits are almost never asked to reconcile what they said with what actually happened. The one undeniable talent that talking heads have is their skill at telling a compelling story with conviction, and that is enough." – Philip E. Tetlock
- "That was the clever way reporters wrote articles. They put the most important stuff at the top, and then the next most important and then the next. It gave them and their editors huge flexibility" – Clarks Ching
- "The scope of the project always expands until it's too big to fit in the time available to deliver it." – Clarks Ching

- “Forecasts, by definition, will sometimes be right and will sometimes be wrong; otherwise we'd call them facts.” – Clarks Ching
- “That was how we motivated people: by keeping the pressure on. It didn't actually work, because we almost always delivered late anyway, but I hated to think how late we'd deliver if we took the pressure off.” – Clarks Ching
- “What is important is seldom urgent, and what is urgent is seldom important.” –- Dwight D. Eisenhower
- “Layers of redundancy are the central risk management property of natural systems” – Nassim Taleb
- “It always takes longer than you expect, even when you take into account Hofstadter's Law.” – Hofstadter's Law
- “If you think Scrum (/ agile / SAFe) is easy, just try it” – Unknown
- “Simple, not easy. There's a difference.” – Ron Jeffries
- “PowerPoint animation should be a controlled substance in our company” – Dean Leffingwell
- “Bury the word rollout in a place where it can never be found again. When you say 'rollout,' the organization probably hears 'roll over,' and probably for good reasons.” – Bjarte Bogsnes on a project approach - just do continuous change.
- “People don't resist change. They resist being changed.” – Peter M. Senge
- “If you want something you never had, you must be willing to do something you've never done.” – Thomas Jefferson
- “You can't get rid of command and control through command and control.” – Bjarte Bogsnes
- “We need to foster a cost-conscious culture where frugality saturates every decision made.” – Bjarte Bogsnes
- “Cost budgets are definitely much easier, if that is the goal. But it isn't! The goal is an optimal use of scarce resources, and we need something much more effective than the annual, preallocated, and detailed cost budget.” – Bjarte Bogsnes
- “Strategy is about making choices. Those who never say no do not have a strategy.” – Bjarte Bogsnes
- “Those who only love money will seldom succeed.” – Odd Reitan, one of the richest people in Norway
- “It seems to me to be important to distinguish a good idea from poor implementations of it” – Ron Jeffries
- “Simple, clear purpose and principles give rise to complex, intelligent behavior. Complex rules and regulations give rise to simple, stupid behavior.” – Dee Hock
- “The more details and decimal places we churn out in our plans and budgets, the more control we believe we have” – Bjarte Bogsnes note that the same could be said for detailed upfront planning in general
- “The main question for management is not how to motivate, but rather how management can be deterred from diminishing or even destroying motivation.” – David Sirota
- “A performance evaluation can never be entirely objective. There will always be subjectivity.” – Bjarte Bogsnes
- “I believe that economists put decimal points in their forecasts to show they have a sense of humor” – William Gilmore Simms
- “Cost budgets tend to be spent, even when the initial budget assumptions changed (which they almost always do).” – Bjarte Bogsnes on the budget as a ceiling on how much to spend yes, but is also a floor in that it has to be spent no matter what.
- “CEO opened the workshop. He described the cost budget as '… this cage we build. We know it will constrain us. When finished, we squeeze ourselves in, lock it, and throw away the key. It all

happens voluntarily, no one forces us.'" – Bjarte Bogsnes on the traditional use of a budget
- "But do not worry; there is more than enough left for you to do in the backseat: setting direction, coaching, motivating, and assisting when needed. Just do not become a backseat driver" – Bjarte Bogsnes on what management should do
- "Exceptions must not be generalized" – Bjarte Bogsneson the idea that you should manage for the norm, not the exception
- "By the way, who actually hired all these people that can't be trusted? Someone must have done a pretty bad recruitment job!" – Bjarte Bogsnes on whether you should be able to trust the people you hired
- "Focus on the problem, not the people" – Basic conflict resolution advice
- "When an answer to a question might change the path forward in a non-reversible (economically) way, then it's worth estimating/forecasting." – Troy Magennis
- "Let's not underestimate our Execs/stakeholders by assuming they aren't willing/capable of understanding the new paradigm" – Efrem Lirtzman on team's tendency to assume that management won't change
- "The other thing to realize about our economic decisions is that we are trying to improve them, not to make them perfect. We want to make better economic choices than we make today, and today, this bar is set very low." – Don Reinertsen
- "Almost all of the methods typically employed [for prioritisation] in large organisations end up resembling the Eurovision competition. This is essentially prioritisation by politics, horse-trading and to some extent popularity" – Josh Arnold
- "No, you don't hold each other accountable. You hold each other up." – Ron Jeffries
- "Attack the problem, not the people." – Unknown
- "The Product Owner has authority over the product, not the people." – Unknown
- "Chance favors the connected mind" – Steven Johnson in "Where Good Ideas Come From"
- "Leadership is about making others better as a result of your presence and making sure that impact lasts in your absence." – Harvard Business School definition of leadership
- "Make a difference, not just a point" – Troy Magennis
- "Never show data unless you show it compared to something else" – Edward Tufte
- "If anyone adjusts a stable process, the output that follows will be worse than he had left the process alone" – W Edwards Deming - you can do more harm than good. Don't panic
- "Testers don't break the code, they break your illusions about the code." – Maaret Pyhajarvi
- "The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place." – George Bernard Shaw
- "We are working on much bigger failures now" – Jeff Bezos, when asked to why Amazon Phone failed
- "If you have a culture of fear none of your fancy practices and processes are going to help" –Joshua Kerievsky
- "The problem is we don't know what the problem is" – Paul MacCreedy
- "The future is already here - it's just not evenly distributed" – William Gibson
- "It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is the most adaptable to change." – Charles Darwin
- "Preventive mediation is the ultimate in simplicity: 'Mediation without an event.'" – Daniel Dana, "Conflict Resolution"
- "We can't fight our way out of conflict, but we can think our way out of it." – Daniel Dana, "Conflict Resolution"
- _"Every tree was once a sapling, every adult was once a child, and every formal dispute was once an informal conflict." – Daniel Dana, "Conflict Resolution"

- “The highest type of ruler is one of whose existence the people are barely aware.... The Sage is self-effacing and scanty of words. When his task is accomplished and things have been completed, all the people say, 'We ourselves have achieved it!'” – Lao-Tzu writing about servant leadership in the fifth-century BC
- “There's a big difference between 'it can't work', 'I haven't gotten it to work', and 'I'm conjecturing that it couldn't work'” – Tom Limoncelli. To which I would as another difference “let's try it before we form a conclusion”
- “Two programmers in tandem is not redundancy; it’s a direct route to greater efficiency and better quality.” – Larry Constantine
- “I say an hour lost at a bottleneck is an hour out of the entire system. I say an hour saved at a non-bottleneck is worthless. Bottlenecks govern both throughput and inventory.” – Eliyahu M. Goldratt, The Goal
- “A programmer’s wife tells him: go to store. pick up a loaf of bread. If they have eggs, get a dozen. The programmer returns with 12 loaves.” – Unknown
- “Time triage is actually the most important decision we have. What are we going to spend our time on?” – Kurzweil
- “Is it the 'sunk cost fallacy'? Or should it be the 'sunk pride fallacy'” – Hans Samios
- “The information you have is not the information you want. The information you want is not the information you need. The information you need is not the information you can obtain. The information you can obtain costs more than you want to pay.” -– Finagle’s Laws of Information from “Against the Gods: The Remarkable Story of Risk” by Peter Bernstein
- “Uncertainty cannot be eliminated by any [organizational change or improved process or] estimation methods. It arises partly because of imperfect knowledge of what to do and how long it should take, and partly because of unpredictable events.” – Kevin Thompson, Ph.D., PMP
- “There is more room, in a mathematical sense, for work to grow beyond expectation than to shrink below expectation.” – Kevin Thompson, Ph.D., PMP
- “Consistency is contrary to nature, contrary to life. The only completely consistent people are dead.” – Aldous Huxley
- “People are more important than process, but good people with good process will outperform good people with no process every time.” – Grady Booch
- “Integration without branching = knowledge sharing” – unknown
- “Treat defects as evidence of missing tests” – Mike Scott
- “As formality increases, tests and requirements become indistinguishable. At the limit, tests and requirements are equivalent.” – Uncle Bob Martin's equivalence hypothesis
- “The most important information in a requirements document are not the requirements, but the phone number of the person who wrote it.” – Ron Jeffries Agile 2008
- “Describing how and what but not why left the success of the project to pure chance.” – Gojko Adzic in "Bridging the Communication Gap: Specification by Example and Agile Acceptance Testing"
- “Everything is vague to a degree you do not realise till you have tried to make it precise” – Bertrand Russell
- “The hardest single part of building a software system is deciding precisely what to build” – Fred Brooks
- “Effective communication is the key to successful software projects.” – Gojko Adzic in "Bridging the Communication Gap: Specification by Example and Agile Acceptance Testing"
- “It is intentionally not too technical or suited only for programmers, because agile acceptance testing is not a programming technique: it is a communication technique that brings people involved in a software project closer.” – Gojko Adzic in "Bridging the Communication Gap:

Specification by Example and Agile Acceptance Testing"

- “Quality has to be caused, not controlled” – Philip Crosby
- “For acceptance tests to be effective, they have to be automated but also have to be human readable. And ‘human’ in this case also includes those who cannot decrypt the Matrix code on the fly.” – Gojko Adzic in "Bridging the Communication Gap: Specification by Example and Agile Acceptance Testing"
- “Unit tests will insure the code is built right, and acceptance tests insure the right code is built’.” – Andy Dassing
- “And as an organization, you incur capability debt, because people (managers and technical staff) can’t improve their capabilities when they’re overburdened with too much work to do.” – Johanna Rothmans in Manage Your Project Portfolio.
- “Motivating your people is always more important than establishing your own favorite processes.” – Jurgen Appelo in “Management 3.0”.
- “What can I do to help you do your best work?” - Scott Berkun in “Making Things Happen: Mastering Project Management”
- “These motivational accessories, as they are called (including slogan coffee mugs, plaques, pins, key chains, and awards), are a triumph of form over substance. They seem to extol the importance of Quality, Leadership, Creativity, Teamwork, Loyalty, and a host of other organizational virtues. But they do so in such simplistic terms as to send an entirely different message: Management here believes that these virtues can be improved with posters rather than by hard work and managerial talent.” – Tom DeMarco and Tim Lister in “Peopleware”
- “If a system is to be stable the number of states of its control mechanism must be greater than or equal to the number of states in the system being controlled … Simply put, this law states that a system can be controlled by another system only when the other system is just as complex as or more complex than the first one.” – W. Ross Ashby's “Law of Requisite Variety”. If you want to control people, you need a system as least as complex as people.
- “People who feel good about themselves produce good results.” – Kenneth Blanchard and Spencer Johnson in “The One Minute Manager”
- “Pair programming is not pair typing - its pair thinking” – Hans Samios
- “Eighty percent of software work is intellectual. A fair amount of it is creative. Little of it is clerical.”Robert Glass in “Facts and Fallacies of Software Engineering”
- “From the beginning of the universe, everything in it was shaped by self-organization.” – Jurgen Appelo in “Management 3.0”.
- “Innovation happens to be a concept at the heart of complexity science. Researchers found that complex adaptive systems actively seek a position between order and chaos because innovation and adaptation are maximized when systems are at “the edge of chaos”” – Jurgen Appelo in “Management 3.0”.
- “There is plenty of value in root-cause analysis. I mean that root-cause analysis can only look to the past. It helps you to fix problems that have already happened, so they won’t happen again. But it won’t help you to predict what will go wrong in the future.” – Jurgen Appelo in “Management 3.0”.
- “For every complex problem there is an answer that is clear, simple, and wrong.” – H.L. Mencken, journalist, writer (1880–1956), on our often intuitive misunderstanding of complex systems
- “Stephen Hawking thought it was so important that he called the 21st century the 'century of complexity'.” – Jurgen Appelo in “Management 3.0”.
- “Our minds prefer causality over complexity.” – Jurgen Appelo in “Management 3.0”.
- “Bureaucracy destroys initiative. There is little that bureaucrats hate more than innovation, especially innovation that produces better results than the old routines. Improvements always make those at the top of the heap look inept. Who enjoys appearing inept?” – Frank Herbert in

"Heretics of Dune".

- "Never accept a traffic-light status report in a portfolio evaluation meeting. The traffic light provides no data for your decision." – Johanna Rothmans in Manage Your Project Portfolio. The thinking here is that you are about to make "going forward decisions" and so this backward looking status doesn't help with that.
- "The big rule of project portfolio management is that you never make a big decision where you commit an entire organization to a huge project for a long time. I define huge as more than 50 percent of your people, and I define long as more than three months." – Johanna Rothmans in Manage Your Project Portfolio
- "In all honesty, the only projects that are too risky to start are the ones that can't return anything you can see in a few weeks." – Johanna Rothmans in Manage Your Project Portfolio
- "Project teams don't work for many reasons. One common way is to have a person who doesn't work well with others — an unjeller" – Johanna Rothmans in Manage Your Project Portfolio. I think we've all met the "unjeller".
- "Often, innovation is a capacity problem - there needs to be slack in the system to innovate" – Hans Samios
- "If you don't know who your customers are or you haven't talked to them in six months, you will not deliver what your customers want. This is a slow but sure way to create a doomed project." – Johanna Rothmans in Manage Your Project Portfolio
- "Commitment is not a 'We'll give you part of what you need, but ...' It's a full commitment." – Johanna Rothmans in Manage Your Project Portfolio on staffing the most important projects first.
- "If you are trying to staff a project with people who are working part-time on your project and part-time on other projects, you have an uncommitted project. That's because the cost of context switching will erase any potential ability to focus on this project. Don't partially commit to a project; that's a lack of commitment. Be honest. Take that project off the committed list. You may have to move the project to the parking lot. You might have to transform it. But never make a partial commitment." – Johanna Rothmans in Manage Your Project Portfolio
- "Commitment is not a 'We'll give you part of what you need, but ...' It's a full commitment." – Johanna Rothmans in Manage Your Project Portfolio
- "Think in terms of value. Producers create value, but customers define it." – Johanna Rothmans in Manage Your Project Portfolio on defining value streams
- "The fewer number of active projects you have, the less competition the projects have for the same people. That lack of competition for people allows them to finish projects faster." – Johanna Rothmans in Manage Your Project Portfolio
- "The more frequently the projects deliver something you can see, the easier it will be to manage the project and to manage the project portfolio." – Johanna Rothmans in Manage Your Project Portfolio
- "Your customers want your products to be filled with great features that are well-tested and run smoothly. They don't care about your projects, and they certainly don't care about your portfolio. Your customers care about your products." – Johanna Rothmans in Manage Your Project Portfolio
- "I believe that inside every complex solution is a simple solution trying to get out" – Ron Jeffries
- "Integrative Thinking is the ability to constructively face the tensions of opposing models, and instead of choosing one at the expense of the other, generating a creative resolution of the tension in the form of a new model that contains elements of the both models, but is superior to each" – Rotman.
- "Commanders know the objective; leaders grasp the direction. Commanders dictate; leaders influence. Controllers demand; collaborators facilitate. Controllers micro-manage; collaborators encourage. Managers who embrace the leadership-collaboration model understand their primary

role is to set direction, to provide guidance, and to facilitate connecting people and teams." – Jim Highsmith.

- "Adaptive leaders lead teams, non-adaptive ones manage tasks." – Jim Highsmith.
- "A traditional manager focuses on following the plan with minimal changes, whereas an agile leader focuses on adapting successfully to inevitable changes." – Jim Highsmith.
- "Everyone tries to do too much: solve too many problems, build products with too many features. We say 'no' to almost everything. If you include every decent idea that comes along, you'll just wind up with a half-assed version of your product. What you want to do is build half a product that kicks ass." – Founders of 37signals in (Taylor, 2011).
- "A number of studies have shown that 50% or more of functionality delivered is rarely or never used … This leads to the conclusion that scope is a very poor project control mechanism — we should be using value." – Jim Highsmith
- "Flickr was last deployed 26 minutes ago, including 8 changes by 3 people. In the last week there were 47 deploys of 364 changes by 19 people." – From the Flickr web site (code.flickr.com), 2/22/11 @ 10:30 AM
- "I view product development as a horse race where you can move your bets after the horses have started running." – Don Reinersten
- "The longer something is in transit in a process, the more likely it is the requirement will change" – Don Reinersten
- "Stop starting and start finishing." – Unknown
- "Assume variability, preserve options." – SAFe Lean-Agile Principles
- "The vision must be followed by venture" – Vance Havner
- "It's easier to talk about our feelings when we can point to a number." – Sakaguchi from What Google Learned From Its Quest To Build The Perfect Team
- "Don't underestimate the power of giving people a common platform and operating language." – Rozovsky from What Google Learned From Its Quest To Build The Perfect Team
- "Psychological safety is 'a sense of confidence that the team will not embarrass, reject or punish someone for speaking up. It describes a team climate characterized by interpersonal trust and mutual respect in which people are comfortable being themselves." – Edmondson from What Google Learned From Its Quest To Build The Perfect Team
- "Pair programming … turbo changes competency development" – Paul Madden (Ericsson)
- "People are not afraid of the failure, they're afraid of the blame." – Seth Grodin
- "Leading as a gardener meant that I kept the Task Force focused on clearly articulated priorities by explicitly talking about them and by leading by example." – General Stanley McChrystal in "Team of Teams"
- "The role of the senior leader was no longer that of controlling puppet master, but rather that of an empathetic crafter of culture." – General Stanley McChrystal in "Team of Teams"
- "I found that, by ignoring the Perry Principle and containing my desire to micromanage, I flipped a switch in my subordinates: they had always taken things seriously, but now they acquired a gravitas that they had not had before. It is one thing to look at a situation and make a recommendation to a senior leader about whether or not to authorize a strike. Psychologically, it is an entirely different experience to be charged with making that decision." – General Stanley McChrystal in "Team of Teams". And related …
- "More important, and more surprising, we found that, even as speed increased and we pushed authority further down, the quality of decisions actually went up." – General Stanley McChrystal in "Team of Teams"
- "I was most effective when I supervised processes — from intelligence operations to the prioritization of resources—ensuring that we avoided the silos or bureaucracy that doomed agility,

rather than making individual operational decisions." – General Stanley McChrystal in "Team of Teams"

- "I began to reconsider the nature of my role as a leader. The wait for my approval was not resulting in any better decisions, and our priority should be reaching the best possible decision that could be made in a time frame that allowed it to be relevant." – General Stanley McChrystal in "Team of Teams"
- "A Bank of America call center … Success is measured by AHT (average call handle time), which ideally should be as low as possible. Pentland gave workers sociometric badges all day for six weeks, and measured levels of interaction and engagement. When he shifted the coffee break system from being individual to being team based, interaction rose and AHT dropped, demonstrating a strong link between interaction and productivity." – General Stanley McChrystal in "Team of Teams"
- "When Pentland surveyed a number of R&D labs, he found that he could predict the labs' creative output with an extraordinary 87.5 percent accuracy by measuring idea flow." – General Stanley McChrystal in "Team of Teams"
- "However, as interfaces became increasingly important, we realized the potential for bolstering our relationships with our partner agencies by way of a strong linchpin liaison officer (LNO). As it turned out, some of our best LNOs were also some of our best leaders on the battlefield. … Everyone hated removing some of our best operators from the battlefield, but we reaped enormous benefits" – General Stanley McChrystal in "Team of Teams" on the use best people as interfaces taking them away from day to day work - not efficient but effective
- "The critical first step was to share our own information widely and be generous with our own people and resources. From there, we hoped that the human relationships we built through that generosity would carry the day." – General Stanley McChrystal in "Team of Teams"
- "I've always believed that management's ability to influence work habits through edict is limited. Ordering something gets it done, perhaps. When you turn your back, though, employees tend to regress to the same old ways." – Michael Bloomberg
- "We don't know what connections and conversations will prove valuable." – General Stanley McChrystal in "Team of Teams"
- "Teams can bring a measure of adaptability to previously rigid organizations. But these performance improvements have a ceiling as long as adaptable traits are limited to the team level." – General Stanley McChrystal in "Team of Teams"
- "We had to find a way for the organization as a whole to build at scale the same messy connectivity our small teams had mastered so effectively." – General Stanley McChrystal in "Team of Teams"
- "Purpose affirms trust, trust affirms purpose, and together they forge individuals into a working team." – General Stanley McChrystal in "Team of Teams"
- "Their structure — not their plan — was their strategy." – General Stanley McChrystal in "Team of Teams"
- "Great teams consist of individuals who have learned to trust each other. Over time, they have discovered each other's strengths and weaknesses, enabling them to play as a coordinated whole." – Amy Edmondson
- "In a command, the connections that matter are vertical ties; team building, on the other hand, is all about horizontal connectivity." – General Stanley McChrystal in "Team of Teams"
- "SEAL teams accomplish remarkable feats not simply because of the individual qualifications of their members, but because those members coalesce into a single organism. Such oneness is not inevitable, nor is it a fortunate coincidence. The SEALs forge it methodically and deliberately." … "The purpose of BUD/S is not to produce super-soldiers. It is to build super teams." – General

Stanley McChrystal in “Team of Teams”
- “We needed flexibility but we also needed the advantages of scale that accompany efficiency. We had to find a way to create that adaptability while preserving many of our traditional strengths. This would prove difficult—many of the practices that are most efficient directly limited adaptability” – General Stanley McChrystal in “Team of Teams”
- “If we cannot control the volatile tides of change, we can learn to build better boats.” – Zolli
- “Efficiency is doing things right; effectiveness is doing the right thing.” – Peter Drucker
- ““Resilience thinking” is a burgeoning field that attempts to deal in new ways with the new challenges of complexity. In a resilience paradigm, managers accept the reality that they will inevitably confront unpredicted threats; rather than erecting strong, specialized defenses, they create systems that aim to roll with the punches, or even benefit from them.” – General Stanley McChrystal in “Team of Teams”
- “Data-rich records can be wonderful for explaining how complex phenomena happened and how they might happen, but they can’t tell us when and where they will happen.” – General Stanley McChrystal in “Team of Teams”
- “In such settings, the ritual of strategic planning, which assumes 'the future will be more or less like the present,' is more hindrance than help.” – General Stanley McChrystal in “Team of Teams”
- “Frederick Taylor’s managerial solutions were unequivocally designed for complicated problems rather than complex ones.” – General Stanley McChrystal in “Team of Teams”
- “Complex systems are fickle and volatile, presenting a broad range of possible outcomes; the type and sheer number of interactions prevent us from making accurate predictions. As a result, treating an ecosystem as though it were a machine with predictable trajectories from input to output is a dangerous folly.” – General Stanley McChrystal in “Team of Teams”, and related …
- “The average forecasting error in the U.S. analyst community between 2001 and 2006 was 47 percent over twelve months and 93 percent over twenty-four months. As writer and investor James Montier puts it, 'The evidence on the folly of forecasting is overwhelming . . . frankly the three blind mice have more credibility than any macro-forecaster at seeing what is coming.' In November 2007, economists in the Survey of Professional Forecasters—examining some forty-five thousand economic-data series—foresaw less than a one-in-five-hundred chance of an economic meltdown as severe as the one that would begin one month later.” – General Stanley McChrystal in “Team of Teams”
- “In popular culture, the term “butterfly effect” is almost always misused. It has become synonymous with 'leverage' - the idea of a small thing that has a big impact, with the implication that, like a lever, it can be manipulated to a desired end. This misses the point of Lorenz’s insight. The reality is that small things in a complex system may have no effect or a massive one, and it is virtually impossible to know which will turn out to be the case.” – General Stanley McChrystal in “Team of Teams”
- “Interconnectedness and the ability to transmit information instantly can endow small groups with unprecedented influence: the garage band, the dorm-room start-up, the viral blogger, and the terrorist cell.” – General Stanley McChrystal in “Team of Teams”
- “The pursuit of “efficiency”—getting the most with the least investment of energy, time, or money—was once a laudable goal, but being effective in today’s world is less a question of optimizing for a known (and relatively stable) set of variables than responsiveness to a constantly shifting environment. Adaptability, not efficiency, must become our central competency.” – General Stanley McChrystal in “Team of Teams”
- “We became what we called “a team of teams”: a large command that captured at scale the traits of agility normally limited to small teams.” – General Stanley McChrystal in “Team of Teams”
- “Specifically, we restructured our force from the ground up on principles of extremely transparent

information sharing (what we call “shared consciousness”) and decentralized decision-making authority (“empowered execution”)” – General Stanley McChrystal in “Team of Teams”
- “Efficiency remains important, but the ability to adapt to complexity and continual change has become an imperative.” – General Stanley McChrystal in “Team of Teams”
- “What had been logical became dumb, and all it took was changing the context.” – James Corey in “Abaddon's Gate”
- Coordinate cross-functionally but work independently - take responsibility. Work with details, but understand the context. Act now—think long-term. Build know-how through continuous learning. Stimulate commitment through involvement. – Scania leadership principles
- “Lean development is a careful elaboration of a single idea—learn from reality. And learning from reality has the great advantage of enabling you to live in a rational universe.” – Allen Ward in “Lean Product and Process Development”.
- “Succinctly, “grownups” learn to value “power-to” over “power-over.” – Allen Ward in “Lean Product and Process Development” on role of management
- “Put key information in the physical environment where it is available at a glance and people are reminded of it in appropriate places.” – Allen Ward in “Lean Product and Process Development” on why we seem to want to keep information hidden and pass it through workflows.
- “Keep in mind that you cannot load the organization to 100% capacity. You need to figure in a buffer, normally in the 15–20% range unless you only do fairly routine development work.” – Allen Ward in “Lean Product and Process Development”. And related:
    - “Adding a person who is unfamiliar with the project usually slows it down further while they get up to speed. So, lean companies use supervisors as the critical flexible resource. Supervisors are already familiar with each project their sections support. They are experienced developers. They can quickly step in to maintain the momentum and the flow. This critical role of lean supervisors and managers is almost unknown in conventional companies.”
- “The answer is simple: establish a cadence. Start projects at standard intervals, and finish them at standard project lengths, so that the entire development organization is marching to the beat of the same drummer” – Allen Ward in “Lean Product and Process Development”.
- “A plan that is more than one page is much too long to be understood and followed.” – Allen Ward in “Lean Product and Process Development”.
- “Conventional project management attempts to answer these questions by defining a detailed plan and trying to stick to it. Instead of learning to surf, conventional organizations try to control the waves! This almost never works.” – Allen Ward in “Lean Product and Process Development”.
- “Remain “off-line” from product development. Don’t allow research or advanced development to select a concept for product development. Product Development may use any of the data and ideas created, but research/ advanced development should always start with complete freedom to do whatever makes sense. Research or advanced development concepts are unproven because they have not been produced in volume or used by customers. Development teams must search many concepts to be confident of success.” – Allen Ward in “Lean Product and Process Development”.
- “Every specification is a trade-off between what really is wanted and what the state of the art allows. At the beginning of the project, only the old state of the art is known.” – Allen Ward in “Lean Product and Process Development”.
- “Your basic negotiating ploy is simple: “Given support A, I can do X. Given support B, I think I can only do Y. X makes 50% more money for the company.” – Allen Ward in “Lean Product and Process Development”.
- “You can’t just ask customers what they want and then try to give that to them. By the time you

get it built, they'll want something new." – Steve Jobs
- "The project leader must be both an entrepreneur and a system designer." – Allen Ward in "Lean Product and Process Development". And related:
    - "In contrast, large conventional companies often make an irrecoverable mistake: They aim project leaders at administering the project rather than designing the system. Whatever the organizational structure, the ESDs (engineering system designers) need to focus the bulk of their time and effort on creating new system knowledge for effective future value streams. It is precisely the ability to formulate a compelling but realistic vision and make good trade-offs that enables profitable products. 'Product visions' are just hot air unless they are inspired by engineering imagination and infused with engineering judgment."
    - "Why doesn't every company use ESDs effectively? Because ESDs drive bureaucrats nuts, for two main reasons: 1. ESDs trust their own judgment and love their own vision, and when these get off track, they can be disastrous. 2. ESDs won't play the game; good bureaucrats do. Bureaucrats are properly deferential to authority. They mingle well at parties."
- "Committees never do anything completely wrong, but they never do anything brilliant either." – Kelly Johnson
- "We should buy both design and make whenever we can. Why? Because it reduces the amount that we have to learn." – Allen Ward in "Lean Product and Process Development".
- "As a pilot instructor would say, 'Relax and level the wings.' In other words, stop doing those things that make the situation worse and take measured corrective action; which is, in this case, value-stream alignment." – Allen Ward in "Lean Product and Process Development".
- "Quality, timing, and design integration are strongly interactive properties, not isolated ones. Interactive properties have more effect on profit than isolated ones." – Allen Ward in "Lean Product and Process Development". And related:
    - "A good system designer will rarely choose the supplier with the lowest price, even if cost is important to the product. Price is an isolated property of the part. It has little effect on how the part works in the system as a whole. Suppose a part involves 10% of the cost of the product—increasing the part cost by 10% will increase the product cost by only 1%. The effect is isolated. Conversely, if the part fails in service, the whole product fails. If the supplier delivers the part late, the whole product is late. If the part design doesn't fit well into the system design, the customer is likely to be dissatisfied with the whole system."
- "In summary, these wastes are: 1. Scatter: management actions such as reorganization and workload variation that make knowledge hard to get to the right place; barriers to communication, such as the use of multiple forms (paper or electronic) to carry information through channels; and poor tools, which most often generate information that would have been useful in preventing a past problem but do not prevent future problems efficiently. 2. Hand-off: the most critical waste, occurring whenever a company separates responsibility, knowledge, action, and feedback; useless information, usually generated to provide management with the illusion of control; and waiting, the practice of putting learning into batches so that knowledge flows in only one direction. 3. Wishful Thinking: making decisions without data; testing to specifications, which leaves the product vulnerable to problems too infrequent for the specifications to catch; and discarded knowledge, which is the failure to put everything learned during a project into usable form." – Allen Ward in "Lean Product and Process Development".
- "Testing's job is to break the product, record how it breaks, and advise design engineering on how to make it harder to break." – Allen Ward in "Lean Product and Process Development".
- "The natural intuition is that looking at one alternative is cheaper, easier, and faster than looking at multiple alternatives. This intuition is usually wrong, because looking at a lot of alternatives early is usually cheaper than looking at a few alternatives later; and choosing the one alternative, if we

must do it with little knowledge, is simply wishful thinking." – Allen Ward in "Lean Product and Process Development".

- "My job is to keep people from making decisions too quickly." – Senior manager at Toyota
- "It's hard to find a development upstream process that has to finish before a downstream process can start. This is a major difference between development and manufacturing, and between development and construction (the environment for which PERT was designed)." – Allen Ward in "Lean Product and Process Development". And related:
    - "Sequencing creates a batch process in which all the decisions and learning of a particular kind happen at once. This: 1) Slows the process because people wait longer than they need to before starting. 2) Creates one-way rather than multiway information flows; the upstream processes don't get enough input from the downstream processes. 3) Gives the upstream developers more power than the downstream, creating quality problems. 4) Causes large variations in workload, which in turn causes scatter waste."
- "What is the most fundamental waste in conventional companies? Hand-off … A hand-off occurs whenever we separate knowledge, responsibility, action, and feedback. Hand-off is a disaster because it results in decisions being made by people who do not have enough knowledge to make them well or the opportunity to make them happen. Similar to the waste of overproduction on the plant floor, hand-off tends to produce many other kinds of development waste" – Allen Ward in "Lean Product and Process Development".
- "Hand-off creates finger-pointing—the conventional management salute." – Allen Ward in "Lean Product and Process Development".
- "The most important wastes in development are wastes of knowledge." – Allen Ward in "Lean Product and Process Development".
- "There are three primary categories of knowledge wastes: scatter, hand-off, and wishful thinking" – Allen Ward in "Lean Product and Process Development".
- "Scatter often is a death spiral, a feedback loop that makes things worse and worse. As things "fall through the cracks" because of disorganization, developers spend more time "fighting fires," responding to demands for information by others, and looking for information and harassing other developers to try to get action. Everything becomes a crisis" – Allen Ward in "Lean Product and Process Development".
- "These responses to scatter create more scatter. The result: more time spent creating waste and less time creating value." – Allen Ward in "Lean Product and Process Development".
- "Going faster improves profitability in several ways: 1) Saving time saves money. The size of a team is determined mostly by the range of expertise required. Getting done faster frees resources. 2) In markets with low switching costs for the customer to change from one supplier to another, going faster means you get your share of the market sooner. You probably keep it just as long, so you add some months or years of profit to your ROI. 3) In markets with high switching costs, getting to market first could mean you get most of the market—and you get to keep it. 4) If you are selling to industrial customers that are in a hurry themselves, the promise of speed may be enough by itself to radically improve market share and ROI. 5) Above all, of course, going faster means learning faster. If you learn 20% faster than your competitors, 30 projects later you will be 60% ahead—a tremendous advantage." – Allen Ward in "Lean Product and Process Development"
- "Estimate value-creating time for developers. Ask your developers (anonymously, at least at first) what fraction of their time is spent creating value—creating usable new knowledge or manufacturing hardware. Calculate how much you could increase your throughput by increasing your fraction of value-adding creating time. Publicize." – Allen Ward in "Lean Product and Process Development"
- "Almost all defective projects result from not having the right knowledge in the right place at the

right time. Therefore, usable knowledge is the basic value created during development. Usable development knowledge prevents defects, excites customers, and creates profitable operational value streams." – Allen Ward in "Lean Product and Process Development".

- "Usable knowledge is created by three basic kinds of learning: 1. Integration learning includes learning about customers, suppliers, partners, the physical environment in which the product will be used, etc. It helps us understand how to integrate our designs with the needs of others—most importantly, our customers. 2. Innovation learning creates new possible solutions. 3. Feasibility learning enables better decisions among the possible new solutions, avoiding cost and quality problems, or project overruns." – Allen Ward in "Lean Product and Process Development".
- "Keep the ROI model simple enough for developers to understand and use in daily work." – Allen Ward in "Lean Product and Process Development"
- "Improving the system to prevent defects does NOT mean adding more tests, analysis, signatures, gates, or controls to the system. These things make developers work harder, in an effort to prevent a particular problem from reoccurring. But the basic problem is that every developer I know already is working too hard, so things "fall through the cracks." Improving the system means making things easier for developers, not harder." – Allen Ward in "Lean Product and Process Development"
- "Use project defect rate to spur change Determine your project defect rate. To do this, plot the distribution of ROIs for recent projects, color coding for defective and completely successful projects. Compute how much more money you would make if all projects returned the maximum ROI. Publicize this in internal media, or post it in halls; use it to agitate for lean development." – Allen Ward in "Lean Product and Process Development".
- "Unless you keep spreading the virus, the immune system of the organization will reject it." – Allen Ward in "Lean Product and Process Development"
- "While we acknowledge emergence in design and system development, a little planning can avoid much waste." – James Coplien
- "It is said that a wise person learns from his mistakes. A wiser one learns from others' mistakes. The wisest person of all learns from others' successes." – John C Maxwell
- "Every dependency you can remove from your delivery stream doubles your chances of delivering on time." – Troy Magennis.
- "For high utilization systems we need to track system level impediments to the flow." – Troy Magennis
- "Its impossible to forecast a system under high utilization" – Troy Magennis. High utilization means non-linear effects become part of the system which means you cannot estimate.
- "A symptom of over-utilization in a system is high batch size" – Troy Magennis
- "If the system is so over-utlitized then you might as well send a truck through the system as a car, as you'll end up with more at the end." – Troy Magennis
- "A bad system will keep a good developer down." - Troy Magennis
- "Note - these are just ideas / approaches. If the approach does not suite your context, believe the context, and adjust the approach" – Hans Samios
- "Scope doesn't creep. Understanding grows." – Jeff Patton
- "Caution! Support organizations should support, not control. All too often, they optimize their work and make decisions that should be made by people who work on products. By taking this responsibility away from Scrum teams, the support mutates into a burden. Make sure to focus on support" – Craig Larman, Bas Vodde from "Scaling Lean and Agile Development"
- "Part-time people equate to part-time commitment. Part-time commitment leads to team failure" – Jensen
- "The sooner you get behind schedule, the more time you have to make it up." – Anonymous

- “2B | ¬2B, that is the question” – Hamlet, early hexadecimal programmer
- “Plus, research [Katz82] shows that long-lived stable R&D teams are correlated with higher productivity than temporary project groups of people drawn from a resource pool” – Craig Larman, Bas Vodde from “Scaling Lean and Agile Development”
- “The most powerful form of 'queue management' is to utterly eradicate a queue by changing the system.” – Craig Larman, Bas Vodde from “Scaling Lean and Agile Development”
- “Humans are probably more sensitive to time variation than to scope variation — 'It was late' is remembered more strongly than, 'It had less than I wanted.'” – Craig Larman, Bas Vodde from “Scaling Lean and Agile Development”
- “Time-boxing limits scope creep, limits gold-plating, and increases focus — one of the Scrum values.” – Craig Larman, Bas Vodde from “Scaling Lean and Agile Development”
- “Simply, cadence at work improves predictability, planning, and coordinating” – Craig Larman, Bas Vodde from “Scaling Lean and Agile Development”
- “Focus on large-scale test automation — to learn about defects and behavior. The setup costs are non-trivial (if you are currently doing manual testing) but the re-execution costs are almost zero.” – Craig Larman, Bas Vodde from “Scaling Lean and Agile Development”
- “Self-directed work — This is a theme found in effective-team research. Notice that visual management supports self-directed work because people can easily see what is going on, to coordinate.” – Craig Larman, Bas Vodde from “Scaling Lean and Agile Development”
- “This is one purpose of the Scrum Product Backlog. It acts as a tool for leveling or smoothing the introduction of work to feature teams. A small buffer of high-quality inventory created to support level pull is another example of useful temporarily necessary waste” – Craig Larman, Bas Vodde from “Scaling Lean and Agile Development”
- “It is interesting to note that people’s models of causation are influenced by the timeliness (delay) and quality of feedback in the system.” – Craig Larman, Bas Vodde from “Scaling Lean and Agile Development”
- ““Common sense” is not so reliable when trying to understanding nonlinear systems—such as large-scale product development.” – Craig Larman, Bas Vodde from “Scaling Lean and Agile Development”
- “Weinberg-Brooks’ Law: More software projects have gone awry from management’s taking action based on incorrect system models than for all other causes combined. Causation Fallacy: Every effect has a cause … and we can tell which is which.” – Gerry Weinberg
- “Consequently, this book suggests that one cornerstone for large-scale Scrum and agile development is people who learn and apply various thinking tools, including (but not limited to) systems thinking, mental-model awareness, lean thinking, queueing theory, and recognition of false dichotomies.” – Craig Larman, Bas Vodde from “Scaling Lean and Agile Development”
- “Whether you believe that you can do a thing or not, you are right.” – Henry Ford
- “The Wright brothers achieved the dream of flight through an organized, disciplined process of diligently orchestrated learning cycles. Each learning cycle was designed to create knowledge, which they captured on limit and trade-off curves. They had set out to undertake a study of flight and make a contribution in advancing the knowledge of powered flight. The process they employed was so successful that the result was the invention of the airplane. Clearly, there is much to be learned from their process.” – Dantar P. Oosterwal in "The Lean Machine"
- “It's what you learn after you know it all that counts.” – John Wooden
- “To unilaterally optimize the overall flow of projects across the entire development portfolio, a product development cadence must be established.” – Dantar P. Oosterwal in "The Lean Machine"
- “Actions that optimize individual projects generally serve to sub-optimize the portfolio of projects as a whole.” – Dantar P. Oosterwal in "The Lean Machine"

- “Cadence is even more critical in the product development environment, where flow is not inherently observable” – Dantar P. Oosterwal in "The Lean Machine"
- “Cadence is the metronome to pace work in all areas of business outside standard, routine production.” – Dantar P. Oosterwal in "The Lean Machine"
- “A firefighting organization requires extraordinary people to achieve ordinary results. In an exceptional organization, ordinary people achieve extraordinary results routinely.” – Dantar P. Oosterwal in "The Lean Machine"
- “In contrast to work standards, standardized work is determined collectively by the group closest to the work.” – Dantar P. Oosterwal in "The Lean Machine"
- “When a genuine shared vision (no to be confused with the all-to-familiar “vision statement”) is built, people excel and learn, not because they are told to, but because they want to.” – Dantar P. Oosterwal in "The Lean Machine"
- “Someone who achieves a high level of personal mastery lives in a continual learning mode with no end state. They never “arrive.” – Dantar P. Oosterwal in “The Lean Machine”
- “The five disciplines of a learning organization are: 1. Systems thinking. 2. Personal mastery. 3. Mental models. 4. Building shared vision. 5. Collective team learning.” – Dantar P. Oosterwal in "The Lean Machine"
- “Complex systems exhibit several kinds of telltale behaviour. I will describe some of these behaviours briefly here; they will be examined in more detail in later chapters. • self-organization into patterns, as occurs with flocks of birds or schools of fish • chaotic behaviour where small changes in initial conditions (‘the flapping of a butterfly’s wings in Argentina’) produce large later changes (‘a hurricane in the Caribbean’) • ‘fat-tailed’ behaviour, where rare events (e.g. mass extinctions and market crashes) occur much more often than would be predicted by a normal (bell-curve) distribution • adaptive interaction, where interacting agents (as in markets or the Prisoner’s Dilemma) modify their strategies in diverse ways as experience accumulates. In addition, as already mentioned, emergent behaviour is an essential requirement for calling a system ‘complex’.” – John Holland from “A Very Short Introduction to Complexity”
- “Restated for complex systems: emergent properties at any level must be consistent with interactions specified at the lower level(s).” – John Holland from “A Very Short Introduction to Complexity”
- “Each of these complex systems exhibits a distinctive property called emergence, roughly described by the common phrase ‘the action of the whole is more than the sum of the actions of the parts” – John Holland from “A Very Short Introduction to Complexity”
- “The point here is that most reasonable people don’t have to get their way in a discussion. They just need to be heard, and to know that their input was considered and responded to.” – Patrick Lencioni from “The Five Dysfunctions of a Team”
- “Politics is when people choose their words and actions based on how they want others to react rather than based on what they really think.” – Patrick Lencioni from “The Five Dysfunctions of a Team”
- “I want to assure you that there is only one reason that we are here at this off-site, and at the company: to achieve results. This, in my opinion, is the only true measure of a team” – Patrick Lencioni from “The Five Dysfunctions of a Team”
- “It is not enough that management commit themselves to quality and productivity, they must know what it is they must do. Such a responsibility cannot be delegated.” – W. Edwards Deming from Out of the Crisis, 1986
- “Culture eats strategy for breakfast” – Peter Drucker
- “Operating a product development process near full utilization is an economic disaster.” – Don Reinertsen

- “If you only quantify one thing, quantify Cost of Delay” – Don Reinertsen “Principles of Product Development Flow”
- “You can't scale crappy code.” – Dean Leffingwell
- “Provide sufficient capacity margin to enable cadence.” – Don Reinertsen “Principles of Product Development Flow”
- “Innovation comes from the producer.” – W. Edward Demings.
- “No useful improvement was ever invented as a desk” – Taiichi Ohno
- “Any inefficiency of decentralization costs less than the value of faster response time.” – Don Reinertsen “Principles of Product Development Flow”
- “Today's development processes typically deliver information asynchronously in large batches. Flow-based processes deliver information in a regular cadence of small batches.” – Don Reinertsen
- “When WIP and utilization become too high, you will see a sudden and catastrophic reduction in throughput.” – Don Reinertsen
- “People are already doing their best; the problems are with the system. Only management can change the system.” – W. Edwards Deming.
- “I like to assume that no one came to work with the explicit intention of pissing me off or doing the wrong thing.” – Hans Samios
- “A common disease that afflicts management the world over is the impression that 'Our problems are different.' They are different for sure, but the principles that will help to improve the quality of product and service are universal in nature.” – W. Edwards Deming
- “Understanding economics requires an understanding of the interaction amongst multiple variables.” – Don Reinertsen “Principles of Product Development Flow”
- “Left to themselves, components (of a system) become selfish, independent profit centers and thus destroy the system.” – W. Edwards Deming
- “All we are doing is looking at the timeline, from when the customer gives us an order to when we collect cash And we are reducing the timeline by reducing the non-value added wastes.” - Taiichi Ohno
- “Development managers today face an important trade-off between steady state of performance and the system's ability to accommodate unanticipated changes in resource requirements without descending into the firefighting cycle … Development managers and company leadership with a desire to avoid firefighting must rethink their approach to managing multi-project development portfolios.” – Dantar P. Oosterwal in "The Lean Machine"
- “People who operate within the development system are rarely directly to blame. Individual mistakes happen. However, consistent lack of performance must be attributed to systemic issues. To improve the development system, it must first be recognized that a bad system will always undermine even the best efforts of good people. Bad systems beat good people every time!” – Dantar P. Oosterwal in "The Lean Machine"
- “There was in fact no correlation between exiting phase gates on time and project success. The data suggested the inverse was true.” – Dantar P. Oosterwal in "The Lean Machine"
- “Any project that costs more than $1 million in normalized labor is a waste of money, time, and resources.” - The Standish Group asserts this startling conclusion in its “Factors of Value”report (June 29, 2015).
- “Integration points control product development.” – Dantar P. Oosterwal in "The Lean Machine"
- “Passion is inversely proportional to the amount of real information available” – “Benford's Law of Controversy”, Gregory Benford, 1980
- “The most important and visible outcropping of the action bias in the excellent companies is their willingness to try things out, to experiment. There is absolutely no magic in the experiment … But our experience has been that most big institutions have forgotten how to test and learn. They

seem to prefer analysis and debate to trying something out, and they are paralyzed by fear of failure, however small." – Tom Peters and Robert Waterman, In Search of Excellence (Peters & Waterman, 1982)

- "Cease dependence on mass inspection to achieve quality. Improve process and build quality into the product in the first place." – Deming
- "A project plan is like a lettuce. On the day you buy it, it looks firm and crispy; a week later its a bit wilty around the edges, and after a month its unrecognizable." – Martin Fowler quoting a project manager.
- "If I have learned one thing it is this: there is no answer. There is never an answer; there are only better questions."
- "… doing the wrong thing righter …" – Russell Ackoff
- "Most people do not listen to understand, they listen to reply" – Stephen Covey
- "In science it often happens that scientists say, 'You know that's a really good argument; my position is mistaken,' and then they would actually change their minds and you never hear that old view from them again. They really do it. It doesn't happen as often as it should, because scientists are human and change is sometimes painful. But it happens every day." – Carl Sagan
- "A mind is like a parachute. It doesn't work if it's not open" – Frank Zappa
- "Study after study shows that we have little-to-no skill in when it comes to making predictions — but that sure doesn't keep us from trying."
- "Today's development processes typically deliver information asynchronously in large batches. Flow-based processes deliver information in a regular cadence of small batches." – Don Reinertsen
- "Everyone has a plan, until they get punched in the mouth." – 'Iron' Mike Tyson.
- "Performance of the individual cannot be measured, except on a long-term basis, for which I mean 15, 18, 20 years." – W. Edwards Deming
- "Motivation – nonsense. All that people need to know is why their work is important." – W. Edwards Deming
- "The idea of a merit rating is alluring. The sound of the words captivates the imagination: pay for what you get; get what you pay for; motivate people to do their best, for their own good. The effect is exactly the opposite of what the words promise. Everyone propels himself forward, or tries to, for his own good, on his own life preserver. The organization is the loser. The merit rating rewards people that conform to the system. It does not reward attempts to improve the system. Don't rock the boat." – W. Edwards Deming, "The Merit System: The Annual Appraisal: Destroyer of People," 1986.
- "We learn from history that man can never learn anything from history." – George Bernard Shaw.
- "There's technical debt, then there's technical subprime mortgages with exploding balloon payments." – Mark Imbriaco (@markimbriaco) via Steve Wingard
- "We are working on everything but we can guarantee you that it will not be delivered any earlier than if we were not working on it at all." – Don Reinertsen
- "You don't get more planes to land at an airport by insisting on putting more planes in the air." "The Big Ideas Behind Lean Product Development"
- "Any fool can write code a computer can understand, but it takes real genius to write code a human will understand." – Martin Fowler.
- "If done well, management is a tough job, which is why the pay is premium. However, there will always be those managers who want to get paid for the hard parts of management work without actually doing them." Jerry Weinberg "Managing Teams Congruently"
- "The reasonable man adapts himself to the world: the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore all progress depends on the unreasonable man." – George Bernard Shaw, Man and Superman

- “Worried that TDD will slow down your programmers? Don't. They probably need slowing down.” – J. B. Rainsberger
- “In particular I always argue that high-level tests are there as a second line of test defense. If you get a failure in a high level test, not just do you have a bug in your functional code, you also have a missing unit test. Thus whenever you fix a failing end–to–end test, you should be adding unit tests too.” – Martin Fowler
- “It's not the practices; its the culture that makes you want to use these practices.” Boeing Exec to Joe Justice.
- “The secret of getting ahead is getting started. The secret of getting started is breaking your complex overwhelming tasks into smaller manageable tasks, and then starting on the first one.” – Mark Twain via Brun, Brian J
- “Any fool can make something complicated. It takes a genius to make it simple.” – Woody Guthrie
- “Keeping the system working is more important than doing work” – Jez Humble on the attitude required for continuous integration and continuous delivery.
- “People under time pressure don't think faster” – Tim Lister.
- “The surest way to mismanage a project and jeopardize a product is to put too much emphasis on the schedule as it demoralizes the team and drives them to make stupid decisions despite their better judgments.” – Steve Maguire “Debugging the Development Process”
- “While working with these teams, I discovered that they were all making the same fundamental errors and they were perpetually repeating those errors … In every group I worked with, I found the project leads were spending nearly all their time writing code and almost none of their time thinking about the project. The leads didn't spend time trying to keep schedules on track, they didn't look for foreseeable problems so they could circumvent them, they didn't work to protect other team members from unnecessary work, they didn't pay particular attention to training other team members, they didn't set detailed project goals or create effective attack plans. The leads were spending too much time working when they should have been thinking.” – in preface by Steve Maguire “Debugging the Development Process”.
- “It is better to use imprecise measures of what is wanted than precise measures of what is not.” – Russell L. Ackoff
- “Develop on Cadence. Deliver on Demand.” – Dean Leffingwell
- “Never attribute to malice that which is adequately explained by stupidity” – Hanlon's Razor
- “FEATURE” – license plate seen on a Volkswagen Beetle.
- “A single-point estimate is usually a target masquerading as an estimate.” – Steve McConnell
- “There is a limit to how well a project can go but no limit to how many problems can occur.” – Steve McConnell
- “A company shouldn't get addicted to being shiny, because shiny doesn't last.” – Jeff Bezos on complacency
- “I think frugality drives innovation, just like other constraints do. One of the only ways to get out of a tight box is to invent your way out.” – Jeff Bezos on innovation.
- “If you are competitor-focused, you have to wait until there is a competitor doing something. Being customer–focused allows you to be more pioneering.” – Jeff Bezos on progress.
- “All businesses need to be young forever. If your customer base ages with you, you're Woolworth's.” – Jeff Bezos – on growth.
- “Smart people learn from their mistakes. But the real sharp ones learn from the mistakes of others.” – Brandon Mull via Devraj, Sujata.
- “Opacity when inspecting an Increment is like covering a thermostat with a cold, wet washcloth. The thermostat doesn’t have the correct understanding of the actual room temperature, and would incorrectly initiate heating when it should be cooling.” – Ken Schwaber and David Starr on

Definition of Done.
- “Scrum is not a silver bullet; Scrum is a silver mirror” – Mike Dwyer
- “I smell fried brains” – Tim Lister at afternoon keynote speech at Agile 2013
- “The deal with engineering goes like this. Product management takes 20% of the capacity right off the top and gives this to engineering to spend as they see fit … I get nervous when I find teams that think they can get away with much less than 20%.” – Marty Kagan, Inspired
- “Do painful things more frequently, so you can make it less painful…” – Adrian Cockcroft, Architect, Netflix.
- “Having a developer add a monitoring metric shouldn’t feel like a schema change.” – John Allspaw, SVP Tech Ops, Etsy
- “We found that when we woke up developers at 2am, defects got fixed faster than ever” – Patrick Lightbody, CEO, BrowserMob
- “If people don't understand the model they won't let it influence their behavior” – Unknown
- “You don't have to ask permission to do your job well” – attributed to Larry Constantine
- “Lead people, manage things.” – Peter Drucker
- “If the actions of management signal that meeting specifications is satisfactory, the product invariably falls short.” – Donald J Wheeler and David S Chambers in “Understanding Statistical Process Control”.
- “If you don't think it's going to work, it's already a waste of time. Your experiment can only fail if you believe in a specific outcome.” – Eric Ries tweet.
- “Value is rare, extreme and obvious in retrospect” – Joshua J. Arnold (see Cost of Delay)
- “Estimate is just one additional metric that helps us make decisions, forecast and model the future.” – Michael Dubakov from “Estimates in Software Development. New Frontiers.”
- “If you don't like change, you are going to like irrelevance even less.” – General Eric Shinseki
- “Don't be taken in by the Dopeler Effect. The tendency of stupid ideas to seem smarter when they come at you rapidly.” – Terry Jones, On Innovation.
- “The key, though, is not to manage by metrics but to use the metrics to understand where to have conversations about what is not getting done.” Gary Gruver et al, “The Practical Approach to Large–scale Agile Development.”
- “Computers are useless. They can only give you answers.” – Pablo Picasso
- “It is useful to do detail planning, but you always want to use it with a short time horizon because detailed planning is very perishable. You do not want to hold a large inventory of detailed planning because you are throwing money away when you do that.” – Don Reinersten.
- “Yes, estimation is fraught. It is inaccurate, and politically dangerous. But we do have some knowledge and the project deserves to have it.” – Ron Jeffries tweet 2013–03–18.
- “Agile is about simplicity. Agile is not simple. If you think it's simple, wait and see.” – Ron Jeffries
- “The First Law of Wisdom Acquisition – It is much easier to identify another's foolishness than to recognize one's own.” – Norman Keith from “Project Retrospectives”
- “If you want people to act like adults, you need to treat them like adults.” – R. Semler
- “If it’s hard but important to do, do it more often!” – Unknown
- “Agile, Scrum, XP, Kanban, Lean: The same elephant, different points of view” – Ron Jefferies
- “Innovation simply doesn't happen in the tiny shards of time in the midst of incredibly busy work lives.” – Gary Hamel “ARE YOU REALLY SERIOUS ABOUT INNOVATION?”
- “And I find it little bit odd that a 50 year old woman in Bangladesh often has an easier time getting experimental capital than the average first line employee in a global 1000 company.” 1000's of microfinance projects are being done with no collateral, and little paperwork.
- “We say that code is of high quality when productivity remains high in the presence of change in team and goals.” Ward Cunningham

- “Technical debt is the stuff around code that keeps it from being quality code – that makes it hard to change.” – Dan Rawsthorne
- “If you can't do it with a card you'll really mess it up with a tool” – Dave Thomas, Keynote at Agile 2010
- “Simple, clear purpose and principles give rise to complex, intelligent behavior. Complex rules and regulations give rise to simple, stupid behavior.” Dee Hock, founder and former CEO of Visa
- “There is no such things as as an IT project; there are only business project that involve IT.” – UK Cabinet Office Permanent Secretary.
- “If you’re thinking people don’t like to make changes to their behaviors, just watch a teenage girl get her first cell phone. The changes in her life will be profound and dramatic. And she’ll enjoy every moment of it.” – B.J. Fogg on perception that people don't like change. To which Jared Spool adds:
- “If people love change, why do our users complain when we make changes to our designs? Well, it’s not because of their aversion. It’s because we did it wrong.” – Jared Spool
- “The define/build/test component team is the fractal on which agile development is based.” – Dean Leffingwell through Dan Wuescher.
- “A computer does not substitute for judgment any more than a pencil substitutes for literacy.” – Robert McNamara
- “A hallucination is a fact, not an error; what is erroneous is a judgment based upon it.” – Bertrand Russell
- “Clean code is simple and direct. Clean code reads like well–written prose. Clean code never obscures the designer’s intent but rather is full of crisp abstractions and straightforward lines of control.” Grady Booch
- “I could list all of the qualities that I notice in clean code, but there is one overarching quality that leads to all of them. Clean code always looks like it was written by someone who cares. There is nothing obvious that you can do to make it better. All of those things were thought about by the code’s author, and if you try to imagine improvements, you’re led back to where you are, sitting in appreciation of the code someone left for you—code left by someone who cares deeply about the craft.” – Michael Feathers
- “You know you are working on clean code when each routine you read turns out to be pretty much what you expected. You can call it beautiful code when the code also makes it look like the language was made for the problem.” Ward Cunningham
- “Clean code is not written by following a set of rules. You don’t become a software craftsman by learning a list of heuristics. Professionalism and craftsmanship come from values that drive disciplines.” – Robert “Uncle Bob” Martin
- “Cost cutting is just one of the steps in the process toward extinction.” – Haiko Meelis
- “If you don’t care about the number of defects, I can get it done on any schedule you’d like!” – Robert “Uncle Bob” Martin
- “For success, like happiness cannot be pursued; it must ensue and it only does so as an unattended consequence of ones personal dedication to a cause greater than oneself.” – Victor Frankl – Neurologist and Psychologist.
- “Your project, the whole project, has a binary deliverable. On scheduled completion day, the project has either delivered a system that is accepted by the user, or it hasn’t. Everyone knows the result on that day. The object of building a project model is to divide the project into component pieces, each of which has this same characteristic: Each activity must be defined by a deliverable with objective completion criteria. The deliverables are demonstrably done or not done.” – Tom Demarco – Controlling Software Projects (1982)
- “Focusing is saying yes, right? No. Focusing is about saying no. You've got to say, no, no, no,” –

Steve Jobs
- “Never mistake motion for action.” – Ernest Hemingway
- “Testing is the infinite process of comparing the invisible to the ambiguous in order to avoid the unthinkable happening to the anonymous.” – James Bach
- “I have always wished that my computer would be as easy to use as my telephone. My wish has come true. I no longer know how to use my telephone.” – Bjarne Stroustrup, the designer and original implementor of C++.
- “Do or do not. There is no try.” – Yoda.
- “The conversation surrounding the estimation process is as (or more) important, than the actual estimate.” – Dean Leffingwell.
- “Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication” – Leonardo daVinci
- “We need to make sure that our people weed their own garden.” – Mike McQuery, CEO Mindspring.
- “Again, you can't connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards. So you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future. You have to trust in something – your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever. This approach has never let me down, and it has made all the difference in my life.” – Steve Jobs
- “When lost in the woods, if the map doesn't agree with the terrain, in all cases believe the terrain.” – Swiss Army Survival Guide
- “Product Management is like have 100 children at Christmas, but only 1 present under the tree – you are going to leave 99 children unhappy.” – Cory Von Wallenstein, Dyn Inc
- “Management is not focusing on Technical Debt and probably won't until it is too late. And we have seen what happens when people in charge don't focus on debt haven't we?.” – Dan West.
- “A little debt speeds development so long as it is paid back promptly with a rewrite.” – Ward Cunningham, developer or the Technical Debt metaphor. Note that this is not necessarily a negative thing, only when you don't repay quickly is it a problem.
- “Fallor ergo sum” – St Augustine. “I err, therefore I am”.
- “Inertia is the residue of past innovation efforts. Left un–managed, it consumes the resources required to find the next generation innovation.” – Geoffrey Moore, Dealing with Darwin
- “Cost cutting is just one of the steps in the process toward extinction.” – Haiko Meelis
- “We can always shoot ourselves in the foot. The amazing thing is how quick we are able to reload and do it again.” – Bob Thurber
- “You can fight reality and lose, but only 100% of the time.” Byron Katie
- “Things are the way they are because they got that way.” – Gerry Weinberg
- “So much of what we call management consists of making it difficult for people to work.” – Peter Drucker
- “If you call a tail a leg, how many legs has a dog? Five? No, calling a tail a leg don’t make it a leg.” – Abraham Lincoln.
- “No matter what, the cost of addressing technical debt increases with time.” – Chris Sterling
- “We're more likely to get it 'right' the third time.” – Chris Sterling
- “Software and cathedrals are much the same – first we build them, then we pray.” – Sam Redwine 1988
- “Prediction is very difficult, especially about the future.” – Niels Bohr, Danish Physicist (1885 – 1962)
- “No is easier to do. Yes is easier to say.” – Unknown. Quoted at 37 Signals.
- “Most software today is very much like an Egyptian pyramid with millions of bricks piled on top of each other, with no structural integrity, but just done by brute force and thousands of slaves.” – Alan Kay
- “There is nothing so useless as doing more efficiently what should not be done at all.” – Peter

Drucker.

- "… manage for the normal and treat the exceptions as exceptional." – W Edwards Demming.
- "In the business world, the rear-view mirror is always clearer than the windshield." – Warren Buffett
- "It is a mistake to look too far ahead. Only one link in the chain of destiny can be handled at a time." – Winston Churchill
- "… as we know, there are known knowns; there are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns – the ones we don't know we don't know." – Donald Rumsfeld on the unknowns we don't know.
- "Doing it better is not hard, it's easier, so do it better. Increase in code skill means code is better, so your job is easier." – Ron Jeffries @ Agile 2010
- "Many people outsource to a country that is further away than the space station – does this make sense?" – Chet Hendrickson @ Agile 2010
- "The difference between a methodologist and a terrorist is that you can reason with a terrorist" – Dave West @ Agile 2010
- "Calling a group of people a 'team' does not make it so." – Esther Derby @ Agile 2010
- "Law of crappy systems - if you have a crappy system even brilliant people will never be more that mediocre." – Esther Derby @ Agile 2010
- "Attempts to force non-deterministic systems to operate at greater than 80% efficiency will cause short bursts of stabilization followed by extreme periods of destructive and unpredictable variations from that goal." – W. Edwards Deming.
- "The problem with single point estimate is that it says there is 100% chance that this will happen. It's a target masquerading as an estimate." – Arin Sime @ Agile 2010
- "Only certification drowned in waterfalls." – Dave Thomas Agile 2010 Conference Keynote speech, Tuesday 10th August 2010
- "If you can't do it on a card, then you will only do it worse in a tool." – Dave Thomas Agile 2010 Conference Keynote speech, Tuesday 10th August 2010
- "Don't show other people the back of your computer! Its rude …" – Dave Thomas Agile 2010 Conference Keynote speech, Tuesday 10th August 2010
- "Agile is FrAgile as it depends on sustainable leadership and discipline." – Unknown
- "'Technical success' is a euphemism for failure." – Mary Poppendieck on tying goals of a team to goals of a business @ Agile 2010
- "In preparing for battle, I have always found that plans are useless but planning is indispensable." Dwight D. Eisenhower.
- "No battle plan survives contact with the enemy." – Field Marshall Helmuth von Moltke.
- "The hardest thing to explain is the glaringly evident which everyone has decided not to see." – Ayn Rand.
- "People don't want a quarter inch drill. They want a quarter inch hole". – Theordore Levitt.
- "We know this is a useful number because there is a decimal point in it." – Dave Nicolette
- "Managers who don't know how to measure what they want settle for wanting what they can measure" – Russel Ackoff
- "Tell me how you will measure me and I will tell you how I behave." – Eli Goldratt (1990)
- "Poor management can increase software cost more rapidly than any other factor." – Barry Boehm, Software Engineering Economics, 1981
- "Self-organization does not mean that workers instead of managers engineer an organization design. It does not mean letting people do whatever they want to do. It means management commits to guiding the evolution of behaviors that emerge from the interactions of independent agents instead of specifying in advance what effective behavior is." – Philip Anderson, The Biology

of Business
- “Self-organizing is about the team determining how they will respond to their environment (and managers / leaders can influence that environment.” – Mike Cohn
- “What is the simplest thing that could possibly work?” – Kent Beck on a good design
- “Direction set in advance of experience has an especially short half life.” – Kent Beck
- “I have made this letter longer than usual because I lack the time to make it shorter.” – Blaise Pascal 1657
- “I have not failed. I have just found 10,000 ways that won't work.” – Thomas Edison on experimentation.
- “Change your organization, or change your organization” – Martin Fowler
- ”… we all safely interpret dangerous things in ways that don’t require us to change our lives.“ — Orson Scott Card
- “When you want your boat to go fast it is easier to cut anchors than to add horsepower.” – Luke Hohmann
- “They must understand, within the context of their specific product, the difference between excellence and perfection. No company can afford a perfect product, but building a product that delivers customer value and maintains technical integrity is essential to commercial success.” – Jim Highsmith from Agile Project Management
- “Be quick, but don't hurry.” – John Wooden
- “Life, like basketball, must be played fast – but never out of control.” – John Wooden
- “The agile triangle: value (releasable product), quality (reliable, adaptable) product, & constraints (cost, schedule, scope)” – Jim Highsmith
- “Bad news does not get better with age” – Joe Little from his “agile principles”
- “I know it when I see it.” – Judge Potter Stewart
- “Without data, all managers can do is 'Motivate', and cross their fingers. When 'Motivation' fails, “Mandation” often follows. With little effect.” – Uncle Bob Martin (1995)
- “If a test is worth writing, it’s worth automating, and it must always pass in the future … When the CI breaks, the team should stop the line and get it green.” – Lisa Crispin
- “We are risk adverse when we might gain.” – Piattelli-Palmarini
- “If you never erase the whiteboards, you might as well write on walls.” – Ron Jeffries
- “A mess is not technical debt. A mess is just a mess.” – “Uncle” Bob Martin
- “To be uncertain is to be uncomfortable but to be certain is to be ridiculous.” – Chinese proverb
- “Remember the law of accumulation: the sum of many little collaboration efforts isn't little” – Dan Zadra
- “Perfection is reached not when there is nothing left to add, but when there is nothing left to take away.” — Antoine de Saint–Exupéry
- “No one has to change. Survival is optional”, W Edwards Demming.
- “Plans based on average assumptions are wrong on average!” – Sam Savage from “The Flaw of Averages”
- “This leads us to the odd conclusion that strict control is something that matters a lot on relatively useless projects and much less on useful projects. It suggests that the more you focus on control, the more likely you’re working on a project that’s striving to deliver something of relatively minor value.” – Tom DeMarco in “Software Engineering: Idea Whose Time Has Come And Gone”
- “No matter how far down the wrong road you’ve gone, turn back.” – Turkish proverb
- “Bubbles don't crash.” – Bertrand Meyer.
- “If you think you have a new idea, you are wrong. Someone probably already had it. This idea isn't original either; I stole it from someone else.” – Bob Sutton
- “Instead of being interested in what is new, we should be interested in what is true.” – Jeffrey

Pfeffer

- “Brooks's law is a principle in software development which says that “adding manpower to a late software project makes it later”. – Fred Brooks in his 1975 book The Mythical Man–Month.
- “Here is Edward Bear, coming downstairs now, bump, bump, bump, on the back of his head. It is, as far as he knows, the only way of coming downstairs, but sometimes he feels that there really is another way, if only he could stop bumping for a moment and think of it. And then he feels that perhaps there isn't.” – A. A. Milne
- “Ah well! I am their leader, I really ought to follow them!” – Alexandre Auguste Ledru–Rollin on servant leadership.
- “Customers can now have what they want at the project end, after they’ve learned, instead of getting what they wanted at the project start.” – Kent Beck & Dave Cleal on “Optional Scope Contracts”
- “There are two kinds of inspection: 1. Inspection after the defect occurs 2. Inspection to prevent defects.” – Shigeo Shingo
- “It is better to prepare and prevent than to repair and repent.” Harvey Mackay
- “How come we believe bad news and data immediately but we don't believe any good news”. – John Simpson
- “Partnerships are not about cost reduction, they are not about risk reduction, nor are they about adding capacity. The fundamental reason for partnerships is synergy, people – and companies – can achieve better results through cooperation than they can achieve individually.” – Mary Poppendieck from “Implementing Lean Software Development”
- “A world class 'varsity eight' (plus coxswain) can cover 2000 meters over the water in about 5.5 minutes. However, a single sculler can at best row the same distance in about 7 minutes. The difference is synergy, and if rowing faster were a matter of survival, the cooperators would be the fittest.” – Peter A Corning, from “The Synergism Hypothesis: In the Concept of Synergy and Its Role in the Evolution of Complex Systems”.
- “It’s hard for Americans to understand the idea that a business organization cannot improve its long term financial results by working to improve its financial results. But the only way to ensure satisfactory and stable long term financial results is to work on improving the system from which those results emerge.” – H. Thomas Johnson, winner of the Deming Medal of honor.
- “Purely people factors predict project trajectories quite well, overriding choice of process or technology. I found no interesting correlation in the projects that I studied among processes, language, or tools and project success. I found success and failures with all sorts of processes, languages and tools. A well–functioning team of adequate people will complete a project almost regardless of the process or technology they are asked to use (although the process and technology might help or hinder them along the way).” – Alistair Cockburn, “Agile Software Development”, 2002
- “For a new software system, the requirements will not be completely known until after the users have used it” – This is the “Humphrey's requirements uncertainty principle”. Watts S. Humphrey. A Discipline for Software Engineering. SEI Series in Software Engineering. Addison–Wesley, 1995.
- “Just because Scrum doesn’t say anything about breakfast doesn’t mean you have to go hungry!” – Pete Deemer & Gabrielle Benefield Yahoo, 2006
- “A well functioning Scrum will deliver highest business value features first and avoid building features that will never be used by the customer. Since industry data shows over half of the software features developed are never used, development can be completed in half the time by avoiding waste, or unnecessary work.” – Jeff Sutherland 2006 – “The Nuts and Bolts of Scrum”
- “In most companies, development is slowed down by impediments identified during the daily meetings or planning and review meetings. When these impediments are prioritized and

systematically removed, further increases in productivity and quality are the result. Well run Scrums achieve the Toyota effect – four times industry average productivity and 12 times better quality." – Jeff Sutherland 2006 – "The Nuts and Bolts of Scrum"

- "I believe that the prevailing system of management is, at its core, dedicated to mediocrity, It forces people to work harder and harder to compensate for failing to tap the spirit and collective intelligence that characterizes working together at its best." – Peter Senge, MIT on traditional command and control approaches to management.
- "Any piece of software reflects the organizational structure that produced it." – Conway's Law.
- "Sit down with your team and have a dialog. Dialogs work better with 2 people. Dialogs with one person requires medication." – Kent Beck on overcoming communication barriers.
- "Glory and success are not a destination, they are a point of origin" – Chef Baglio. This is a comment of software craftsmanship and the attitude required to get better."
- "A stronger 'definition of done' will always increase velocity and improve quality". Jeff Sutherland at Agile 2008: Jeff Sutherland: Reaching Hyper–Productivity with Outsourced Development Teams
- "When it comes to code it never pays to rush." – Marick's law
- "The task is then to refine the code base to better meet customer need. If that is not clear, the programmers should not write a line of code. Every line of code costs money to write and more money to support. It is better for developers to be surfing than writing code that won't be needed. If they write code that ultimately is not used, I will be paying for that code for the life of the system, which is typically longer than my professional life. If they went surfing, they would have fun, and I would have a less expensive system and fewer headaches to maintain." – Jeff Sutherland, quoted from object–technology@yahoogroups.com Message 121
- "Predictable outcomes are one of the key expectations that the marketplace imposes on companies … Unfortunately, software development has a notorious reputation for being unpredictable, so there is great pressure to make it more predictable. The paradox is that in our zeal to improve the productivity of software development, we have institutionalized practices that have the opposite effect." – Mary and Tom Poppendieck, from "Implementing Lean Software Development" (pg 31–32).
- "Everybody has a plan until they get punched in the mouth." - Mike Tyson
- "We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them." – Einstein
- "We never have time to do it right; we always have time to do it twice." – Unknown
- "Unit testing is spell checking the word, not validating the sentence." – Unknown
- "Plans are an ongoing dynamic activity that peers into the future for indications as to where the solution might emerge and treats the plan as a complex situation, adapting to an emerging solution." – Mike Dwyer, IT Program Manager, American Healthways, Westborough, MA
- "One is a thug's game, played by gentlemen, and the other a gentleman's game, played by thugs." – Old quote comparing Rugby with Soccer.
- "You will pay for the cost of a face–to–face meeting regardless of whether you have it or not." – Ken Pugh speech at Agile 2008.
- "Later = Never". – LeBlanc's law
- "The best measure of clean code? The number of WTF's per minute when reading code." – Robert Martin, keynote speech at Agile 2008.
- "A change in requirement late in the development cycle is a competitive advantage provided you can act on it." – Mary Poppendieck
- "Design, development, test and documentation are activities NOT people." – Bob Schatz during sprint planning training.
- "If you already know the project is going to fail, then a lot of traditional documentation in a project

is about figuring out ‘who to blame'” – Bob Schatz during sprint planning training
- “User stories are not use cases” – Mike Cohn
- “Scrum is just the result of software developers going through a midlife crisis” – Unknown
- “Waterfall is a software development process which works as if it were designed for the convenience of lawyers” – Unknown
- “It is amazing how much can be accomplished if no one cares who gets the credit.” – John Wooden, on team performance
- ”… if a build is not breaking then it is doubtful the team is pushing itself hard enough and concerns should be raised” – Troy Magennis on the “continuous build / integration” process
- “Trying to improve software quality by increasing the amount of testing is like trying to lose weight by weighing yourself more often. … If you want to lose weight, don't buy a new scale; change your diet. If you want to improve your software, don't test more; develop better.” – Steve C McConnell, “Code Complete: A Practical Handbook of Software Construction”, 1993
- “It is typical to adopt the defined (theoretical) modeling approach when the underlying mechanisms by which a process operates are reasonably well understood. When the process is too complicated for the defined approach, the empirical approach is the appropriate choice.” – B.A. Ogunnaike and W.H. Ray (Process Dynamics, Modeling and Control)
- “Of the organizations that are attempting to implement Scrum, probably 30–35% will successfully implement it. And that's because of this core problem. Most organizations don't want to be faced with what they don't want to see. And this puts it up there and says 'are you going to do something about it, or not'?” – Scrum et al by Ken Schwaber talking at Google.
- “One of the industry statistics is that over 65% of the functionality that is delivered and then has to be maintained and sustained is rarely or never used” – Scrum et al by Ken Schwaber talking at Google. Quote refers to a study by the Standish Group.
- “Scrum is a “lean” approach to software development.” – Jeff Sutherland 2006

funny, quote

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