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## **Chapter II**

# **Time Management**

Time management is one of the most problematic issues to be addressed and to be understood well and transferred to the people belonging to the team.

In order to understand the meaning of time management, it is necessary to deal with the concept of time and then with the concept of the unit cost of your time for the company. During each year, you usually work (without considering extra work) between 1,600 and 1,800 hours, and then, if you divide your gross annual pay (say \$50,000), you obtain an hourly cost of your time between \$27 and \$31. Each hour you lose during your work time costs that amount of money to your company. Usually, if you are a team manager, for each hour you lose, your team in the complex loses about five times as much, and then a larger amount of money is thrown away for your company.

In order to manage your time and the time of your team in the best way, it is necessary to approach the problem basing your efforts on some values, as suggested in the following.

## **Values**

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### **Simplicity**

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Simplicity is the main value for obtaining a correct management of your time, since simple things requires a lower amount of time to be understood, shared, communicated, and then developed and tested.

The simplicity in your projects allows you to communicate to your team in a faster way the main concepts related to the tasks to be developed. Moreover, a simple concept has a higher probability to be understood in the same way by a large number of persons, allowing your team members to share the same knowledge base. Simplicity is also the basis for the relationships among team members. Usually, the team is comprised of a small number of persons, and therefore, it is not useful to create and develop complex hierarchies, at least when the number of people involved in the same team is less than 10. If the team is larger than 10 persons, maybe some vice-management functions can be identified, and therefore, people responsible for each function can be identified in order (again) to simplify the management of the team. If this is not the case, and usually it is not, responsibilities can be assigned to the team members for an interval of time that is necessary to solve a problem, by trying also to rotate people and to choose different people for different roles. The culture and skills of each person have to be carefully considered, respecting what has been evidenced in Chapter I.

This is done in order to save time, since delegation helps to save time, but if the need of responsibility roles also emerges in the team when the number of involved people is very small, it is necessary to change your approach; otherwise, you are risking losing time taking account of an unnecessary team structure.

## **Courage**

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The other aspect that is strictly related to time management is courage, since you need courage each time you have to cut or simplify part of the project in order to respect time constraints. Courage also is needed in all the situations in which you have to stop development for a meeting that you think is necessary in order to solve a problem or to create a better environment for the development of the correct solution. Courage also is needed if the time you and your team lose with the meeting could be used profitably for developing some other code.

The need for courage is also mandatory when you have to introduce new people in the team, because the time constraints do not allow your team to develop all the scheduled features on time. Often, the introduction of people not aware of the team behavior, not skilled in the particular domain of the project under the team responsibility, or simply not used to working in a team, can hit you as a

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