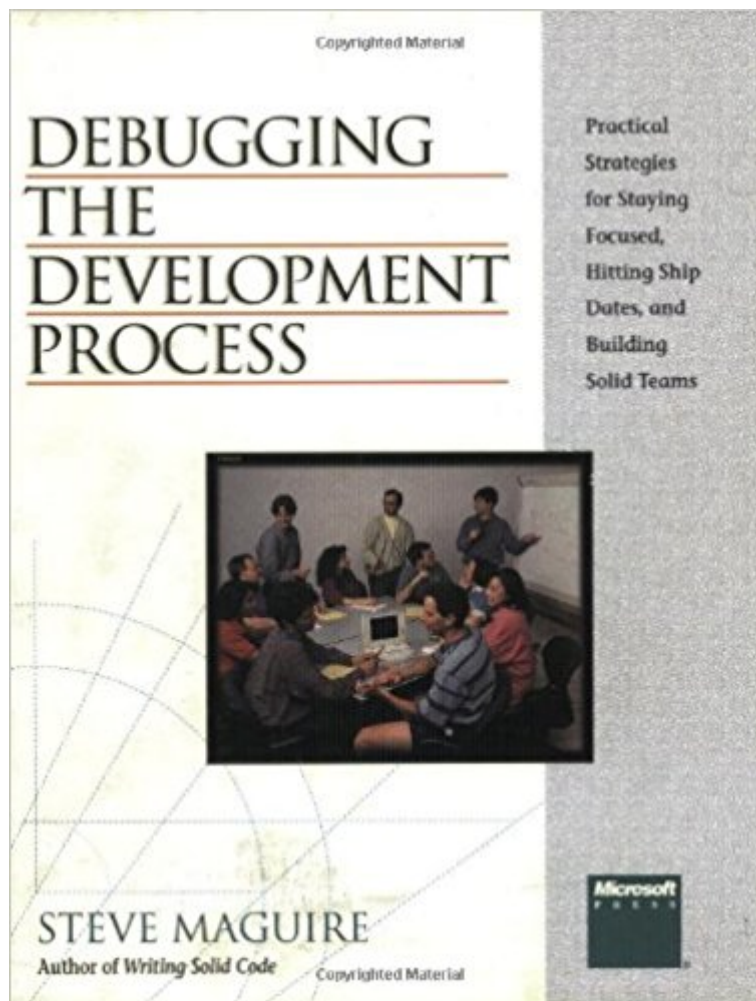


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Debugging The Development Process: Practical Strategies For Staying Focused, Hitting Ship Dates, And Building Solid Teams



Synopsis

In *Debugging the Development Process*, Maguire describes the sometimes controversial but always effective practices that enabled his software teams at Microsoft to develop high-quality software - on schedule. With the refreshing candor reviewers admired in *Writing Solid Code*, Maguire talks about what did and what didn't work at Microsoft and tells you how to energize software teams to work effectively - and to enjoy their work; why you might want to kick your star programmer off your team; how to avoid corporate snares and overblown corporate processes; which tiny changes produce major results; how to deliver on schedule and without overwork; how to pull twice the value out of everything you do; how to get your team going on a creative roll; and how to raise the average programmer level at your company.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars Â See all reviews Â (28 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Maguire's book is a very gentle handbook to guiding software projects. Relatively light and fast-paced, it can be read in just a few hours. His insights and tips about team management are definitely helpful, but my feeling is that he never attacks the difficult problems of management. In a nutshell, his advice is to 1) free up the engineers' time by reducing unnecessary paperwork, 2) eliminate any unnecessary features, 3) slip ship dates to ensure quality, and 4) increasing training for under-performing engineers. He advises against 1) adding extra engineers when the project looks to be in trouble, 2) forcing engineers to work long hours to hit ship dates, 3) schedule development activities without a clear milestone plan in mind, and 4) holding on to superstar

engineers who need room to grow. These ideas are very good, of course. It's important to keep engineers from being overworked and to keep product quality as high as possible. But there is a limit to how far Maguire's tips can take you. Schedule slips and dropped features seem like an easy thing to do when you're just talking about it, but what can you do when the command comes down from the upper echelons of management that you must ship or die trying? Maguire does get one thing right on this count, he describes teams where a third of the engineers (the best ones, of course) quit the company after the project completes. What happens when an engineer is severely underperforming and is holding the team back? Continue providing that person training? Maguire's teams, luckily for him, are made up of well-trained, highly focused engineers who, given the chance, can work on a product for 8 hours a day.

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