

Fall 2018

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CS 428 –
Webster readings #1

“The Real Software Crisis” (BYTE, 1996)

- ◆ Study and experienced observers agree: people matter most in affecting regarding IT project success or failure
- ◆ Core issue: a lot of that is natural talent (cf. music, math, art, athletics), and not that many people are inherently good at IT
- ◆ Over the past 70 years, demand for IT personnel had massively outstripped supply
- ◆ That trend will continue
- ◆ Observations and experiences?

“TEPES” (2008)

- ◇ Follow-up to “Real Software Crisis” – identifies five essential qualities to look for in hiring IT personnel
 - ◇ Talent: inherent IT-related talents (not a single talent, not a single yes/no)
 - ◇ Experience: our most painful experiences are usually our most informative
 - ◇ Professionalism: be reliable, be reasonable, get your work done
 - ◇ Education: those with education in CS/IT have an advantage over those without
 - ◇ Skills: honed skills in specific languages, methodologies, technologies
- ◇ Observations and experience?

“The Dead Sea Effect” (2008)

- ◇ In dysfunctional IT organizations, your best people tend to depart quickly, leaving behind the less talented, less skilled, less competent
- ◇ Overall quality of IT organization declines over time and becomes hard to improve
- ◇ It's not unique to IT (though IT is very sensitive to it)
- ◇ It's not true of all IT organizations; just dysfunctional ones or those heading towards dysfunction
- ◇ Not everyone left behind is necessarily incompetent
- ◇ Observations and experience?