Final Project Retrospective:
From the Audience’s Viewpoint

- Key questions in your mind as you were watching the other team present and demo:

Final Project Retrospective:
From Other Critical Viewpoints

- Key questions in the customer’s mind:
  - Would you buy this product?
  - Would you hire this team?
  - Would you acquire this team’s assets?

- Key questions in the manager’s mind:
  - Would this product sell / make a profit?
  - Would this project burn out my team?
  - Would this product help position our company in a market niche we want to be in?

- The answers to these questions are orthogonal.

Legend:
OS = OpEnSpaCe
TF = TeamForge

Final Release Retrospective

Sustain: 

Improve:

Lecture 23:
Conflict Management (Part II)
(with quotes of wisdom)

"Every problem is also an opportunity."

Outline

- Conflict defined
- Benefits and downsides of conflict
- Sources of conflict: at work, at school
- Ideas for preventing and resolving conflict
  - Internal
  - Inter-personal

Resources

- "Rapid Development”, by Steve McConnell
  - Ch. 29: “Principled Negotiation”
  - "Speech Acts”(handout)

- "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People”, by Steven Covey
- "When Conflict Helps Learning”, by David Socha and Valentin Razmov
- "Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything”, by Steven Levitt and Stephen Dubner
**What We Mean by Conflict (reminder)**

- Definition (according to Merriam-Webster):
  - 1: fight, battle, war
  - 2a: competitive or opposing action of incompatibles: antagonistic state or action (as of divergent ideas, interests, or persons)
  - 2b: mental struggle resulting from incompatible or opposing needs, drives, wishes, or external or internal demands
  - 3: the opposition of persons or forces that gives rise to the dramatic action in a drama or fiction

**Origins of Conflict (reminder)**

- Misaligned incentives
- Ungrounded expectations
  - "Expectations are a premeditated resentment.”
  -- Louis Fox
- Scarce resources
  - Time
  - Money
  - Decision power
  - Information
  - etc.

**Experiences of Conflict You Have Had at Work**

- Most frequent sources of conflict you reported experiencing with managers / supervisors / advisors:
  - 50% a) Micro-management; not giving people ownership in the tasks they do
  - 50% b) Penny pinching
  - 50% c) Setting false expectations; not following through on expectations
  - 38% d) Perception of differing interests ("Win-Lose", Us vs. Them, etc.)
  - 25% e) Exercising authority for decisions without first getting a buy-in from everyone
  - 25% f) Skewed reward structure and preferential treatment
    - Including being taken for granted
  - 13% g) Not devoting proper mindshare to projects of importance to you
    - E.g.: professional development opportunities
  - 13% h) Taking ownership of what you have done

**Ideas for Preventing (Too Much) Internal Conflict**

- Don't take it personally (because it rarely is so)
  - "Whenever anyone has offended me, I try to raise my soul so high that the offense cannot reach it.”
  -- Rene Descartes, philosopher and mathematician
- Ask questions to clarify, don't assume you're under attack
  - I've had many troubles most of which have never happened.
- Learn to use the multiple possible responses to a request
  - Agreement ("Yes")
  - Disagreement ("No")
  - Counter-offer ("How about we do X instead?")
  - Commit to commit ("I'll get back to you by tomorrow.")
- Learn to say 'No' – it takes practice.
  - If 'No' is not a possible answer, then what does 'Yes' really mean?
  - "I don't know the key to success, but the key to failure is trying to please everybody." -- Bill Cosby
  - "It is kindness immediately to refuse what you intend to deny.”
  -- Publilius Syrus
  - "Half the truth is often a great lie.” -- Benjamin Franklin

**Ideas for Preventing Inter-Personal Conflict (1/2)**

- If someone offers you a gift and you decline to accept it, to whom does the gift belong?" -- Buddha
- "Freedom is what you do with what's been done to you,”
  -- Jean-Paul Sartre
- Recognize that there are many possible views on an issue
  - The views may depend on people’s backgrounds, personalities, etc.
- Make the most liberal assumption about the intentions of others
- Encourage open and honest conversations with everyone
  - Including open channels between employees and management
  - Safety is a critical issue for people to honestly speak up their minds
  - Uncertainty and lack of clarity breed rumors, often leading to conflict
- Dismantle the scarcity mentality

**Ideas for Preventing Inter-Personal Conflict (2/2)**

- Ask questions and propose alternatives
  - Use open-ended questions to explore the space of possibilities, involve others’ perspectives, and **not put anyone on the defensive**
  - "What do you think caused the daily build to break?" vs. "Did you break the daily build?"
  - Avoid the word "should"
  - "Let's work together to fix this.” vs. "You should fix this asap.”
- Give those around you some slack: we are all humans and make mistakes
  - Be careful with the expectations you have of others (performance, etc.)
  - "Love truth, but pardon error.” -- Voltaire, philosopher and writer
- Don't be right; be kind
  - "Today I bent the truth to be kind, and I have no regret, for I am far surer of what is kind than I am of what is true.”
  -- Robert Brault, software developer, writer
Ideas for Resolving Inter-Personal Conflict

- "Lower your voice and strengthen your argument." -- Lebanese proverb
- **Act quickly** and decisively
  - To discover and correct the fault, and to address the failure consequences
  - "Behavior that is rewarded shall be repeated."
- Don’t take it personally: **stick to facts** and objective info
  - Conflict itself is an instance of a "failure"; you need to find the "fault"
- **Seek out the root cause of the problem**
  - Don't jump to solutions before everyone has been heard
  - "You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view." -- Harper Lee, writer
  - "The greatest compliment that was ever paid me was when one asked me what I thought, and attended to my answer." -- Henry David Thoreau, naturalist and author
- Escape the "win-lose" mentality; seek "win-win" solutions

Sources of Conflict between Students Who Work in Teams (reminder)

- The most frequent sources of conflict we have observed in student teams:
  - "free riding", unequal work distribution
  - making commitments but not following through on them
  - ignoring the contributions of peers
  - power struggles
  - ego showing: (over)emphasizing one’s perceived technical superiority

Ideas Students Have Used to Resolve Conflict and Motivate Peers

- Strive to be a role model for everyone.
- Don’t bottle it all up within you – **speak up**!
- Ask and listen; seek to understand and empathize.
- Don’t blame or put the person on the defensive – instead, **be positive** and offer to help.
- Express interest in what they do, make them feel that you **count on them** as a team member.
- Acknowledge the contributions and impact this person has made.
- Apply peer pressure.
- Don’t do these over email – **face to face** is important.

In the End...

"Everything will be okay in the end. *If it’s not okay, it’s not the end.*"
Motivation behind Intellectual Property Protection

**What:** Protecting intangible assets

**Why:** To foster creativity and encourage (technological) progress

**How:** By providing temporary monopoly as an incentive for creators to do intellectual work for a living

- Must be balanced against need to not stifle (shut out) competition completely and for all times

Types of Intellectual Property Protection

- **Patents**
- **Copyrights**
- **Trade secrets**
- **Trademarks**
- **Licenses and Contracts**
- **Other**

Differ in what they protect, the length of protection, the qualification criteria, etc.

- The protection regimes generally differ between countries.

Patents

- **Protect:** inventions (processes, machines, products, models, improvements, etc.)
  - Protected against: others making, using, selling invention, even if they independently came up with the same invention
  - Excluded: natural laws and phenomena, abstract ideas
  - Requirements: novel, useful, non-obvious; must file patent application (generally) before public disclosure
  - Term: 20 years from filing
  - Cost: relatively high, in both time and money
  - Problems:
    - Patent officers are paid by number of issued patents.
    - Full disclosure is not enforced.
    - Overreaching patents effectively lead to monopolies.
    - Gradual expansion of what is patentable

Resources

- Lecture from csep590tu “Information Technology and Public Policy” (autumn 2004: 09/30)
- Lectures from cse590so “Society and Technology” seminar (spring 2005)
- SBE workshop as part of the UW Business Plan Competition program (winter 2004)