

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear CROSSTALK Editor,

I have found CROSSTALK to be an exceptional resource. In general, CROSSTALK is a vast repository of knowledge for those in defense software engineering. Virtually every software topic has its own theme issue. One of our software engineers asked me what I knew about Agile Software Development. I immediately directed him to your April 2007 issue, themed *Agile Development*, which was easy to access on your Web site <www.stsc.hill.af.mil/crosstalk/2007/04/>.

Recent editions have also been both useful and enlightening. I really enjoyed CROSSTALK's November/December 2009 issue, focused on 21st Century Defense:

- *PKI: The DoD's Critical Supporting Infrastructure for Information Assurance* (IA) by Susan Chandler and Jerrod Loyless was a great "101"-type article on Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) and IA. It was the first time I have really understood the mechanics of both, as well as how the PKI interfaces with my Common Access Card. I now appreciate IA a whole lot more, and what goes into making it work.
 - The link to the DoD IA Certification and Accreditation Process page (see <www.stsc.hill.af.mil/crosstalk/2009/11/0911WebSites.html>) is handy to have around when IA issues come up. CROSSTALK's *Web Sites* section is an extremely valuable and relevant resource for busy managers who don't have the time to ferret out "nuggets" like this.
- I also liked the *Process Replication*-themed July/August 2009 issue:

- David P. Quinn's *Resistance as a Learning Opportunity* discussed why and how people resist process improvement (PI), and effectively showed how leaders can deal with resistance. It is often difficult for someone who is passionate about PI—and whose full-time job it is to help implement it—to understand and deal with those who are not. Quinn provided solid, practical suggestions for doing so. Just like a salesperson making a sale, PI folks need to "sell" PI with what's in it for the "resisters." It's a fine article that helps the PI movement go forward.
- Kudos to Gary Petersen for his BACKTALK article, *Raiders of the Lost Art*. Long ago, I learned the difference between "efficient" and "effective." Something that is fast and cheap may be efficient, but not effective. I read management book after management book that tried to teach people the old ways of communication pointed out in Petersen's article. I don't know if we can ever get the toothpaste back in the tube, or the genie back in the bottle, but thank you very much, Gary, for pointing out the wrong direction we are going with communication and offering good suggestions for getting society back on course. Thank you, CROSSTALK, for your diligence, dedication, and great articles!

—Al Kaniss
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