

THE STUDY OF PRODUCT TEAM PERFORMANCE 2015

PRESENTED BY ACTUATION CONSULTING, LLC.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Four New Key Performance Indicators

Actuation Consulting conducted the fourth annual global study of product teams with the goal of continuously improving our understanding of why some product teams excel while others struggle. We also sought to expand our growing knowledge of the factors that drive or influence the best outcomes. Since 2012 we have consistently identified statistically significant elements that correlate with top performance. Not all factors carry the same weight and our regression analysis of findings has enabled us to develop a weighted scale to help organizations prioritize their activities more effectively.

The survey itself is unique in that, since its inception in 2012, it has received support from a constellation of leading industry associations and market players – groups that generally don’t collaborate on such endeavors.

We designed the 2015 study to further explore the dynamics of high-performing product teams by pursuing three interconnected threads. The first thread lays the groundwork with demographic information, helping us understand respondent profiles, spans of responsibility, size of company, and market segment served.

While the *Study of Product Team Performance* has always been global, it is worth noting that there was a significant increase in international responses this year. In fact, roughly a third of respondents came from outside the United States. This increase in international response reflects the global nature of multi-national companies and the increasingly borderless world within which products are developed and compete.

The second thread focuses on performance which we broke into three subcategories: product team performance, product management performance, and user experience. Last year’s study identified the increasing importance of user experience in the product development process. This year we take a closer look at how user experience relates to product team performance.

In the third and final thread, we more deeply explore the key factors that distinguish high performance teams from all others.

This year we made some improvements in our survey techniques and our regression analysis. We changed survey instruments to enable us to examine the data with an increased level of flexibility. While our survey instrument changed, the distribution approach remained the same: we sent direct mail invitations to our subscriber database, and our sponsors and traditional promotional partners sent invitations to participate in the survey, as well. Participants were given ample time to complete the survey, and after the survey closed, we provided the results to our statistician who conducted regression analysis. This consistency enables longitudinal trending of key performance drivers. Additionally, we are pleased to announce we are initiating correlation of financial success into our regression analysis.

Through this statistical analysis, we identified four new factors that contribute to the success of high-performing teams:

1. **Strategic Decision-Making Aptitude:** Our latest analysis shows that organizations that develop their strategic decision-making capabilities, and have the discipline to stay the course, have a significant marketplace advantage.
2. **Standup Frequency:** In short, we found that standup meeting frequency matters. Organizations that regularly conduct effective standups are more likely to perform at a high level.
3. **Quick Problem Recovery:** All product teams experience unexpected problems. Team performance directly correlates with how quickly product teams can move past these issues.
4. **User Experience's Integration in the Product Development Process:** Product teams that successfully integrate user experience professionals into the product development process are more likely to perform at a high level.

In addition to this year's four indicators of high performance, the study continues to build upon the last several years' exploration of the most popular product development methodologies. By retaining the methodology question, we are able to clearly understand the methods product teams are using and the resulting outcomes. Since we began asking this follow-on profitability question in 2013, teams have consistently identified Agile as the route to product profitability in numbers far greater than are actually using Agile. That trend continues in this year's data.

Additionally, we explored several new questions this year. New topics include: backlog ownership and prioritization, job satisfaction and turnover impact, innovation leadership, the size of core product teams, the amount of time spent directly engaging with customers, and product manager accountability metrics.

Survey Development and Implementation

Actuation Consulting, in partnership with the contributing authors, defined the themes, content, and survey questions. Together we also developed the web-based survey tool, collected and aggregated responses, and provided high-level analysis of responses. Upon completion of the study, survey data was provided to a professional statistician for rigorous analysis.



Professionals with the following titles were invited to complete the survey:

- Brand manager
- Business analyst
- Development manager
- Engineer
- Product manager
- Product marketing manager
- Product owner
- Program manager
- Project manager
- User experience professional

In the invitation, all respondents were assured that they and their responses would remain anonymous.

This year's survey was sponsored by:



Additional promotional partners include:

Boston Product Management Association (BPMA)

Chicago Product Management Association (ChiPMA)

International Project Management Association (IPMA) and asapm

Orange County Product Managers (OCPM)

Product Development and Management Association (PDMA)

Silicon Valley Code Camp

The Software and Information Industry Association (SIIA)

Respondent Profile

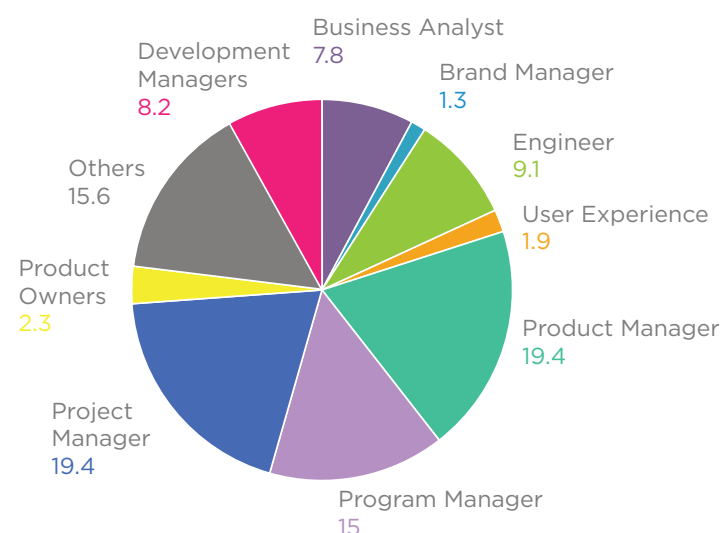
34% of respondents to our survey describe themselves as project or program managers, while 22% are product owners or product managers. Another 17% are engineers and engineering managers. Nearly 8% serve as business analysts for their organizations. (Figure 1)

92% of respondents play an active role in creating or enhancing their organization's products or services.

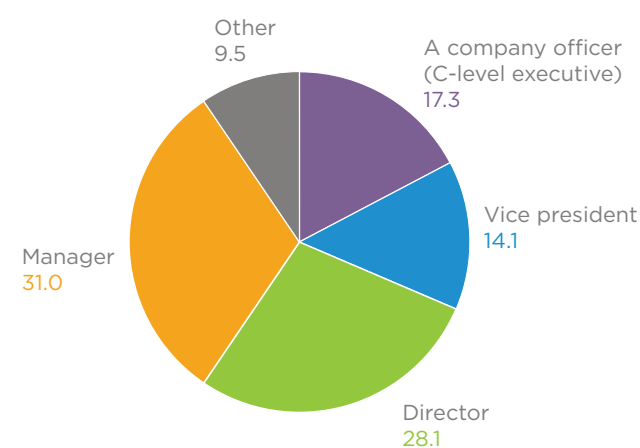
Nearly 60% of respondents to the 2015 survey report to a director, vice president or company officer. Another 31% report to a manager. (Figure 2)

Figure 1. Which of the following titles best describes your primary role?

Figure 2. Which of the following titles do you directly report to?

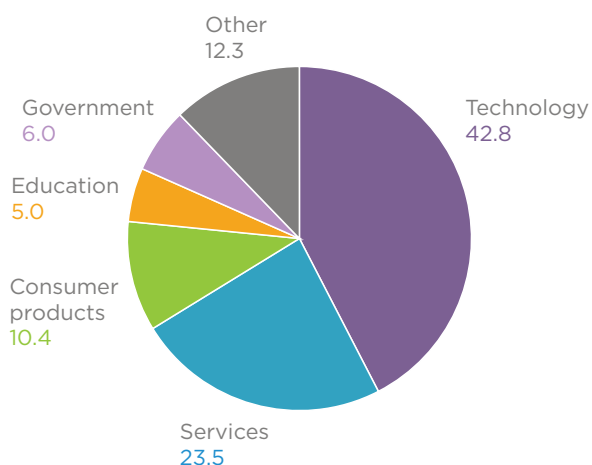


* Other includes Agile coaches, architects, business systems consultants, chief product officers, program directors and other such titles.



* Other includes analysts, board members, branch chiefs, deputy directors, project leads, founders, consultants and other such positions.

Figure 3. Which of the following best describes your organization's primary business focus?



A full 42.8% of our respondents report working for organizations with a primary focus on technology. Others list their organizational business focus as services (23.5%), consumer products (10.4%), education (5.0%) or government (6.0%). (Figure 3)

Finally, the largest group of respondents (33.3%) report working for organizations with annual revenues of less than \$50 million. The remaining respondents are divided between organizations that annually earn: \$50 to \$499 million (24.5%), \$500 million to \$2 billion (15.7%) and more than \$2 billion (26.5%).

A Closer Look at the Four New Factors Contributing to Product Team Success in 2015

Since 2012, the annual *Study of Product Team Performance* has continued to unearth key factors that differentiate high-performance product teams from their less successful counterparts. With the addition of this year's four indicators of high performance we have now identified twenty statistically significant contributors to the effectiveness of successful product teams.

Factor One: Strategic Decision-Making Aptitude

The first new indicator of high performance identified in the 2015 data analysis points to the importance of effective strategic decision-making as well as the ability to stay the course. Our regression analysis clearly indicates that organizations able to develop this aptitude meaningfully outperform their counterparts.

Unfortunately, the data shows that barely a third of product teams have this core aptitude: Only 37% of respondents indicate that their organizations have developed the organizational discipline to create and stick with a strategy.

This is not the first time the importance of strategy has shown up in our continuing research into product team performance. In fact, strategy first appeared in the 2012 and 2013 studies where we documented the importance of maintaining strong alignment between an organization's goals and objectives and the product team's strategy and activities. Organizations that tightly align product strategy with company goals and objectives are more likely to outperform their counterparts.

It is also necessary to emphasize the importance of staying the course. Not all organizations capable of developing a strong product strategy are equally adept at sticking to their strategy decisions. Some will argue their markets are too dynamic to hold with forecasts. But barring major market movements, good strategy should require only incremental change to remain directionally correct.

Bottom line, organizations with a strategic decision-making aptitude for setting and sticking with product strategies that are well aligned with company goals and objectives are more likely to outperform their counterparts.

Factor Two: Standup Meeting Frequency

Analysis of this year's data reveals the importance of regularly conducting effective standup meetings. In fact, the more frequently standup meetings are held, the more likely product teams are to achieve high performance.

When asked to share their experiences with standups, product team members clearly value well run and regularly conducted standups. Forty percent of respondents report that regularly conducted standups are an effective cornerstone of the product development process.

These best-in-class organizations are followed by another 41% that report standups are effective, but not conducted on a regular basis. Unfortunately 19% of survey respondents indicate that standups are either ineffective or contentious and a waste of time.

Reflecting back on findings from past studies, we know that 20% of product teams report issues with cross-functional handoffs and transitions. Analysis from the 2013 study revealed that while some handoffs are more problematic than others, poor handoffs and transitions are responsible for degradation in team performance.

The regression analysis demonstrates that standup meetings are vital to effective product team communication and help eliminate or reduce issues that impede high performance. It also shows that product teams that invest the time and energy necessary to make standups both effective and part of their daily routine will see significant performance benefits.

Factor Three: Quick Problem Recovery

The third indicator of high performance is the ability to quickly recover from unforeseen problems encountered in the product development process. All teams experience unforeseen problems, but organizations respond to them quite differently. Almost two-thirds of product teams struggle to get past unforeseen issues. The majority of these struggling organizations (49%) indicate that their product teams take a while to move past unforeseen issues. Another 13% of struggling teams indicate they may or may not ever get past these issues, and the remaining 3% rarely get past them.

While only 35% of product teams are able to quickly rally and nimbly handle unforeseen issues, our analysis shows that it's these product teams that consistently overachieve.

Problem recovery is an essential skill for product teams that draws from the fabric of the company's culture, talent pool, leadership, and creative thinking. Teams that take unforeseen problems in stride produce better results.

Factor Four: Active User Experience (UX) Involvement in the Product Development Process

User experience first emerged as a statistically significant factor in our 2014 study when we discovered that strong product teams had a user experience professional embedded. So it does not come as a surprise that user experience has shown up in our regression analysis again this year. Our 2015 data reveals that when user experience professionals are actively involved in the product development process and working closely with the product team, superior results follow.

It is worth noting that survey respondents indicate that user experience professionals have the greatest value at the frontend of the product development process.

User experience professionals are most frequently actively involved in the development phase (65%), followed closely by product planning (61%). Respondents also indicate user experience is actively involved in product testing (53%) and product conception (51%). Only 33% of survey respondents indicate user experience is engaged in product launch.

While it is likely that organizations would benefit from user experience being actively involved in improving existing products, only a minority of organizations (33%) utilize UX resources in this manner.

Looking at this data, it is clear that user experience resources are scarce in most organizations, leading management to direct their user experience professionals to the upstream activities of the product development process and focus on new product development rather than on existing products.

Product team members also provided insight into challenges organizations have integrating UX into their hierarchies. 30% of respondents indicate that user experience currently reports to the Engineering or Development function. But when asked where UX should report to be most effective, survey respondents by a wide margin (56%) pointed to product management or the Chief Product Officer.

Conclusion

This year's study clearly reveals that high-performing organizations need to pay attention to both the strategic and the tactical aspects of the product development process. Organizations have a tendency to knowingly, or unknowingly, stress the tactical.

There is no denying the importance of excellent tactical execution, particularly when you consider the impact that well-run and frequent standup meetings can have. However, the strategic side of product development is equally important. Organizations seeking to meaningfully differentiate from their competition need to either possess this aptitude or develop it. Only a third of product teams state that they are effective at being strategic. This gap presents a clear opportunity for organizations to provide needed context and define appropriate boundaries for tactical decision-making.

Finally, trends such as the emergent role of user experience bear close attention. Ever since Apple dropped a rock in the pond with its slick user interfaces and attention to detail, the ripples from their unswerving work have reset every end user's expectation about what a product should look like and how customers should be able to interact with it. User experience's increasing importance spanning product design to product development will continue to bring meaningful change to product teams.

SURVEY RESULTS

Table 1. How many people are on your core product team?

Survey Answer	Percentage Response
One to four	25%
Five to nine	35.7%
Ten to thirty	25.9%
Thirty or more	13.4%

The sizes of the core product teams in our respondents' organizations vary greatly. Core product teams of five to nine members – a size often cited as the ideal team size – hold the largest percentage (35.7%). Percentages for those teams having one to four members and those with ten to thirty members are nearly identical at 25% and 25.9% respectively. Core product teams consisting of thirty or more employees are decidedly in the minority, representing just 13.4% of respondents' companies.

The data also shows that the majority (42%) of companies with under \$50M in annualized revenue are composed of one to four team members. Companies with \$50M to \$499M in revenue indicate their teams are comprised of 10 to 30 team members (36.5%). Companies with over \$500M in revenue favor teams with between five to nine members, as do companies over \$2B.

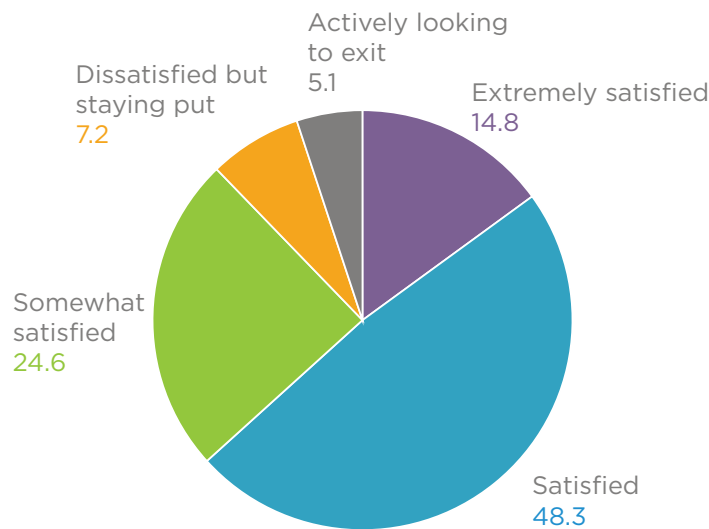
Table 2. Which of these statements best describes your view of your core product team's performance against organizational expectations?

Survey Answer	Percentage Response
We deliver value consistently on scope, schedule and cost	38.7%
We deliver value but lack consistency	47.3%
We are hit or miss	11.2%
We miss more than we hit	2.8%

The vast majority of respondents believe strongly that their core product team delivers value. The issue is one of consistency: a solid 38.7% believe they are consistent in fulfilling the scope and schedule planned for projects and delivering results within budget; unfortunately, nearly half (47.3%) believe their team lacks consistency in meeting organizational expectations. The remaining 14% of respondents state their teams do not deliver value: 11.2% own up to meeting expectations only sporadically while 2.8% acknowledge falling short of expectations more often than not.

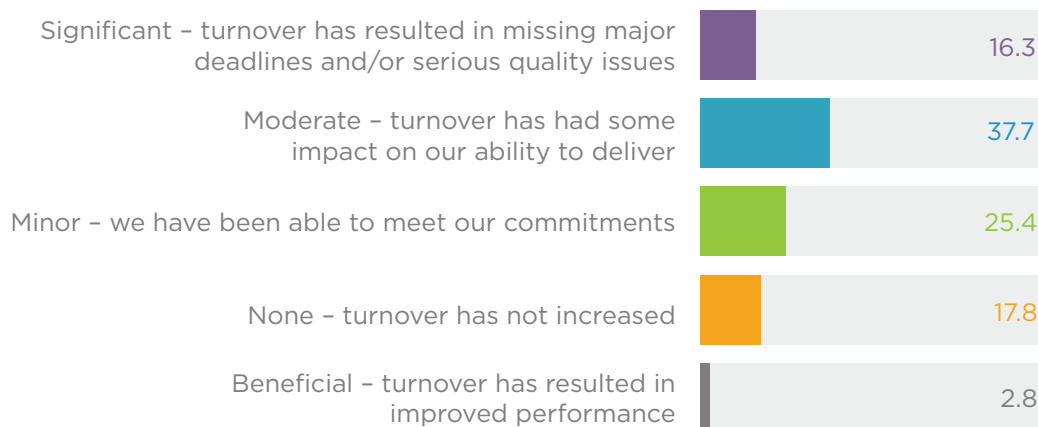
38.7% of product team members believe they consistently fulfill the scope and schedule planned for projects and deliver results within budget.

Figure 4. How would you characterize your job satisfaction?



Overall, those responding to the survey are satisfied with their positions. More than 63% indicate that they are either satisfied (48.3%) or extremely satisfied (14.8%) in their work. An additional 24.6% experience some level of satisfaction with their positions. Only 12.3% responded that they are dissatisfied with their jobs, including 5.1% who are actively looking for employment in another organization.

Figure 5. How would you characterize the impact that personnel turnover is having on delivering products to market?



Does turnover matter? Yes, according to a majority of our survey responders. 54% of respondents believe that team turnover has had a moderate to significant impact on their team's ability to meet commitments and deliver products on time. This percentage includes 16.3% who believe turnover has had a damaging effect on the ability to deliver a quality product on time and 37.7% who feel turnover has moderately affected the team's ability to deliver expected results.

Table 3. Do you feel that your organization does an effective job of decision-making in order for the product team to successfully develop products? (Select all that apply.)

Survey Answer	Percentage Response
We are good at making and sticking with strategic decisions	36.9%
We are good at making and sticking with product requirement decisions	44.9%
We are good at making and sticking with technical decisions	49.6%
We are good at making and sticking with go-to-market decisions	29.5%
We struggle in all these areas	29.7%

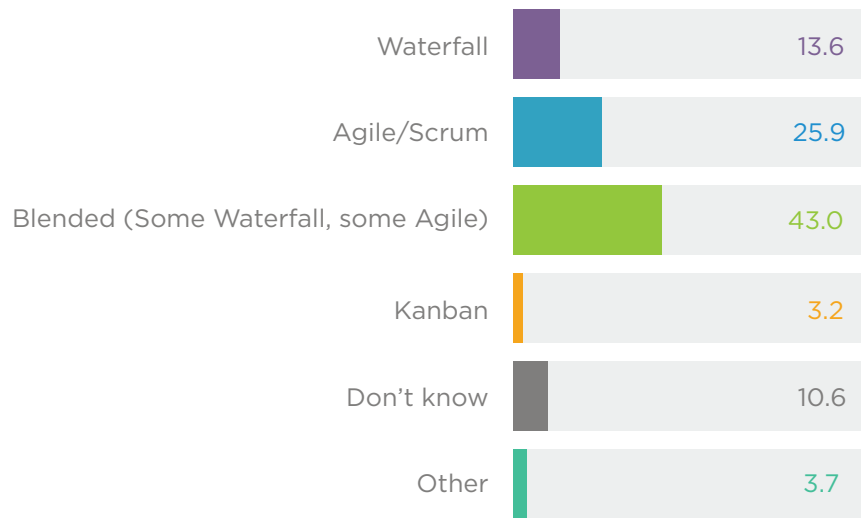
Making and sticking with decisions can be an important component of organizational success. Yet, in no category of decision-making represented by our survey answers did more than 50% of survey responders indicate that they were good at making and sticking with decisions. Furthermore, nearly 30% of respondents (29.7%) report that they struggle with making and sticking with decisions in all areas mentioned in the survey. Product team members perceive efforts in the area of technical decisions most positively giving them the highest marks at 49.6% while perceiving the making of and adherence to go-to-market decisions at the lowest level (29.5%).

Table 4. How does your company's culture react when unforeseen issues are encountered in the product development process?

Survey Answer	Percentage Response
We quickly rally and move past unforeseen issues	35.4%
We rally but it takes a while before we can move past unforeseen issues	48.7%
We get hung up on unforeseen issues and may or may not get past them	13.1%
We don't react well to unforeseen issues and rarely get past them	2.8%

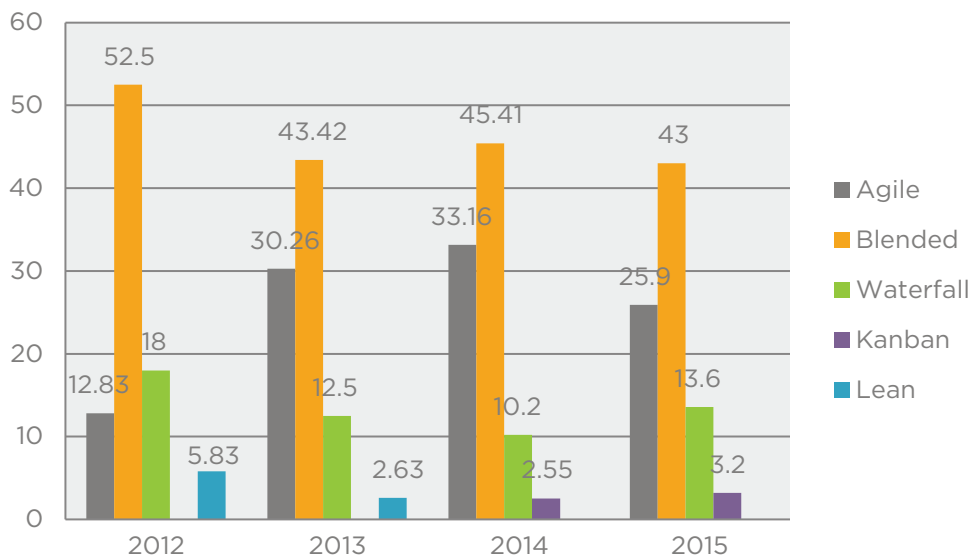
How a company's culture prepares its employees to handle and move past inevitable, unforeseen organizational issues is vital to staying competitive. According to our survey respondents, more than a third (35.4%) of their companies are able to respond quickly to difficulties and move past them. Nearly half of respondents (48.7%) indicate that they eventually do move past unforeseen difficulties, but that it can take time. While 13.1% of respondents admit that their companies can get hung up on unforeseen issues and struggle to get past them, only 2.8% feel their organizations are ill equipped to face unforeseen issues and can rarely move past them to get on with the job at hand.

Figure 6. Which of the following methodologies best describes the way your organization develops products?



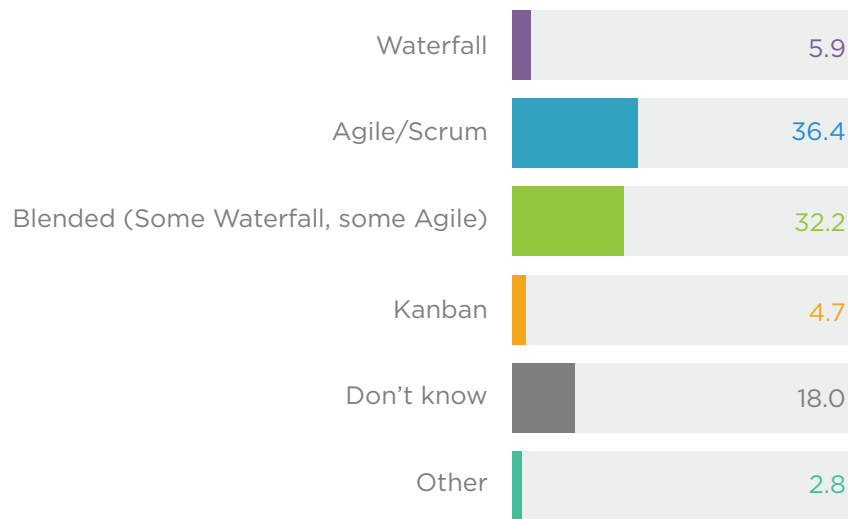
43% of survey responders – by far the highest percentage – indicate that their company utilizes a Blended approach to product development that combines both Waterfall and Agile methodologies. Agile/Scrum is the second most recorded answer, representing slightly more than a fourth of responses at 25.9%. Waterfall, with 13.6% of responses, is a trailing third. Nearly as many respondents (10.6%) indicate they did not know the methodology their organization employs in the development of products. Kanban, representing just 3.2% of responses, came in last among preferred methodologies listed. Of those who responded that their organization utilizes a different, not listed methodology, answers include such methods as RUP.

Figure 7. Historical Methodology Adoption Rates



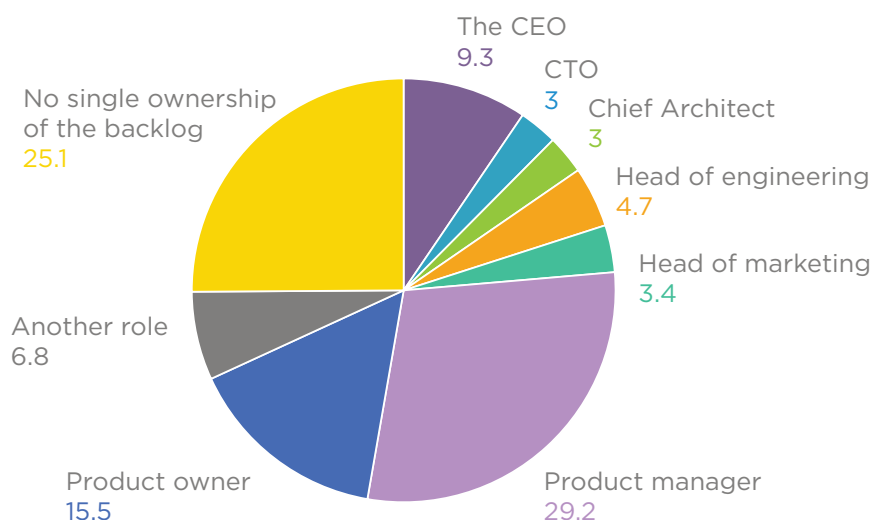
2015 survey respondents are on teams using slightly more Waterfall and Kanban than in previous years and less Agile methods. Those using Blended methods remained more-or-less consistent with the last several years' results.

Figure 8. Which of the following methodologies do you associate with increasing your product's profitability?



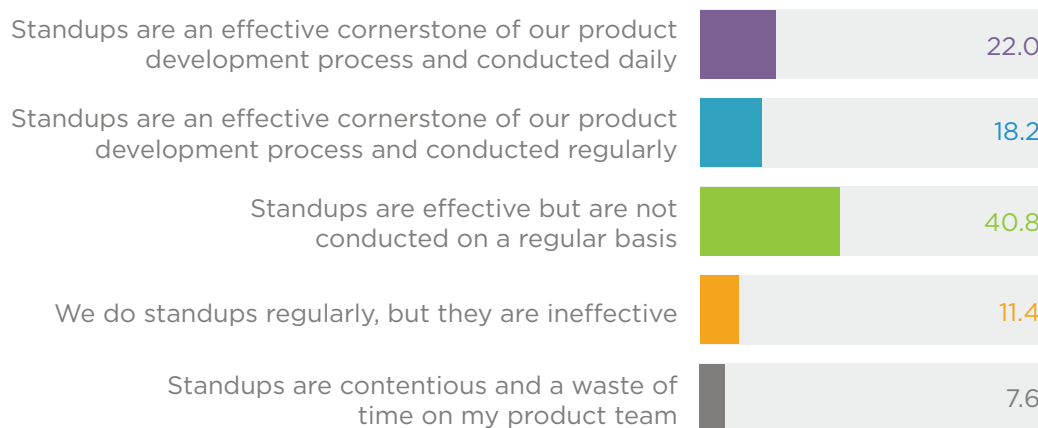
For the third year in a row, dramatically more respondents (36.4%) believe Agile/Scrum would increase their product's profitability than actually use it (25.9%, see Figure 6). There are also more who believe Kanban would increase their product's profitability than actually use it. Over half of Waterfall users would choose something else. With a third of Blended users opting for something else for profitability's sake, it's clear they think it is not the best method when the measure is profitability.

Figure 9. Who prioritizes the requirements backlog?



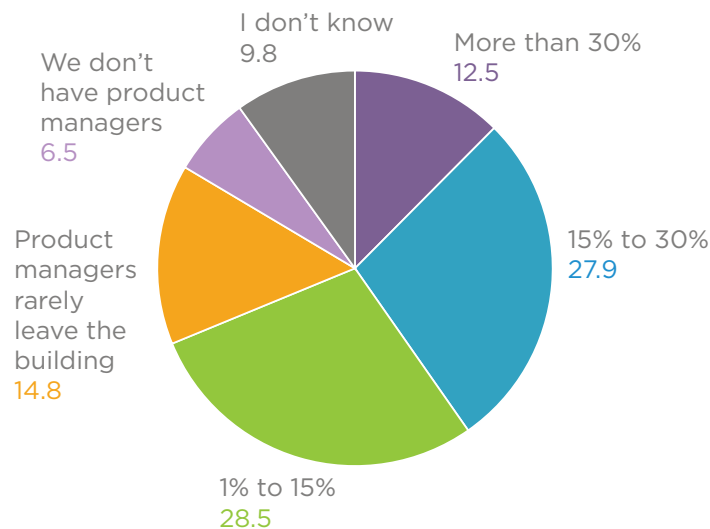
According to our respondents, Product Managers and Product Owners are most often assigned responsibility for prioritizing the requirements backlog (29.2% and 15.5% respectively). Interestingly, a quarter of teams assign no single title responsibility for the backlog (25.1%). Also receiving a significant number of responses is the CEO at 9.3%.

Figure 10. How effective are standups in your organization?



Over four-fifths of respondents indicate that standups are a strong and effective part of the product development process, but only 22% say their companies conduct them daily. A significant 18.2% of responders agree that their regular-but-not-daily standups are vital to product development. Another 40.8% agree that standups are effective, but concede that their companies do not conduct them on a regular basis. Only 7.6% of respondents see no value in conducting standups.

Figure 11. How much time do product managers spend in the field in your organization? (Talking to customers, conducting market research, attending tradeshow, etc.)



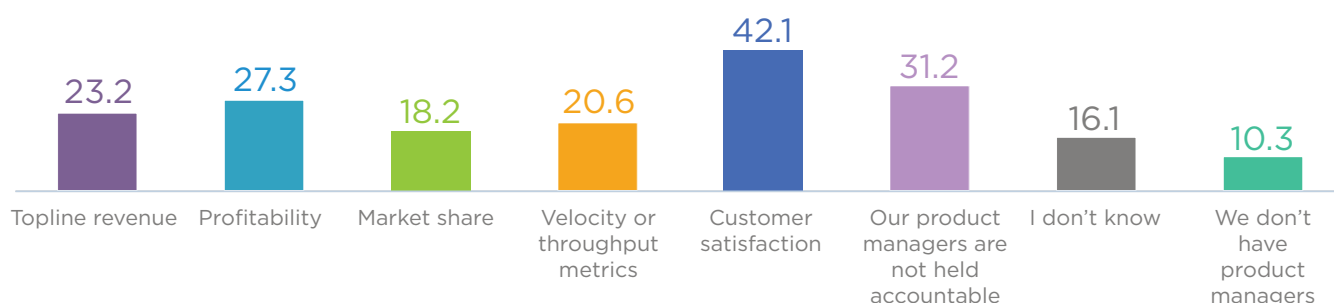
Respondents surveyed indicate that more than 40% of their product managers spend at least 15% of their time in the field and 12.5% of this group believe their product managers devote more than 30% of their time to fieldwork where they talk to customers, conduct market research, attend tradeshow and interact with others in the field. On the other hand, more than 43% of respondents – a slightly larger group – see product managers (43.3%) spending 15% or less of their time in the field, a good portion of this group (14.8%) seeing their product managers rarely leaving the building at all.

Table 5. How much time do product managers and owners actually spend in the field in your organization? (Survey responses gathered strictly from product managers and owners)

Survey Answer	Percentage Response
30% or more	7%
15% - 30%	26%
1% - 15%	44%
Product managers rarely leave the building	23%

Interestingly, when we tallied the answers from product managers alone, it turns out that product team members believe product managers are more actively engaged in the field than they actually are. In fact, 67% of product managers and product owners say they spend 15% or less of their time in the field – at two-thirds, the clear majority – and in stark contrast to product team members’ perceptions (43%, see Figure 11). Roughly 26% indicate that they spend 15% to 30% of their time in the field. Only 7% hold that they spend 30% or more of their time engaging with customers.

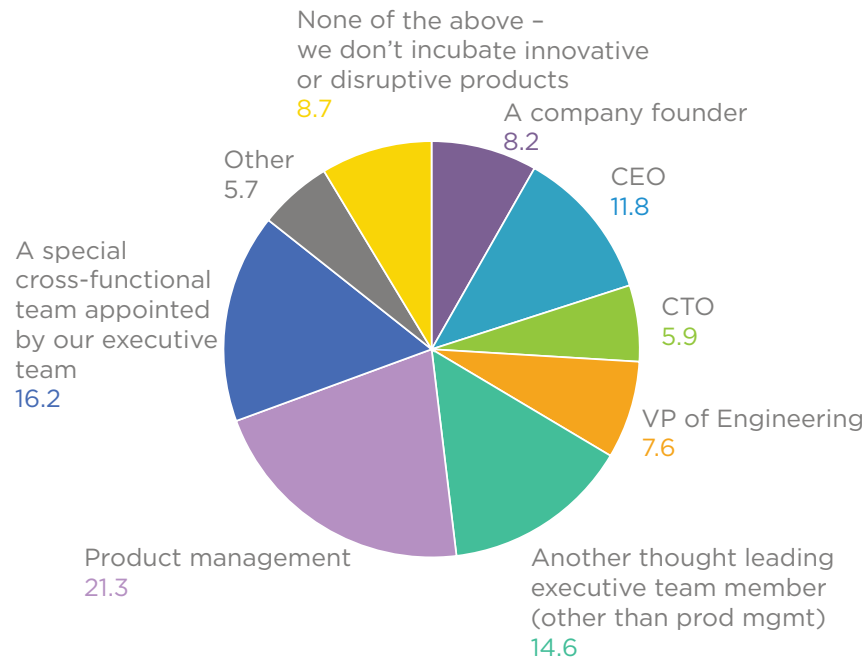
Figure 12. To what metrics are product managers in your organization held accountable? (Select all that apply.)



Nearly 42% of survey respondents report that customer satisfaction, more than any other metric, is the standard to which product managers are held accountable. The answer receiving the next most responses at 31.2% is that product managers are not held accountable in any measurable way. Of the remaining accountability measures, profitability ranked next with slightly over 27% of responses, followed closely by topline revenue (23.2%).

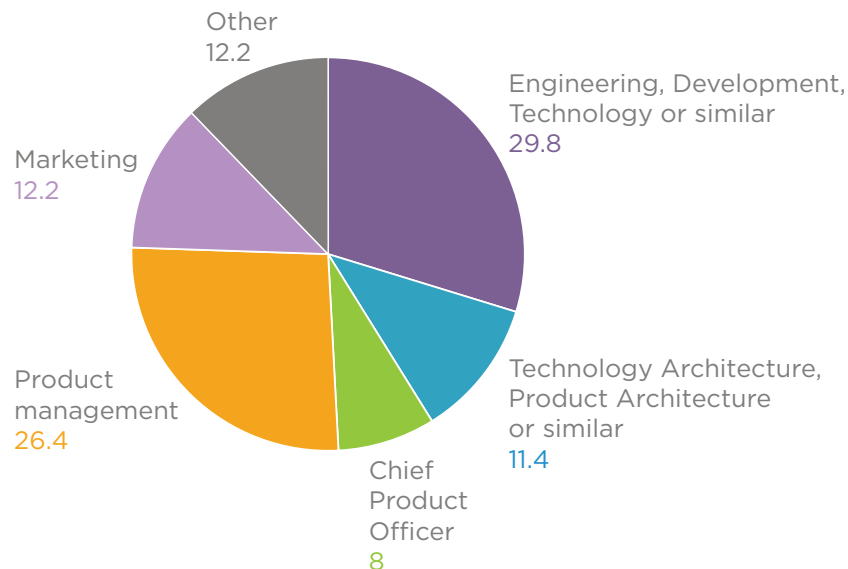
More than 80% of respondents believe that standups are an effective cornerstone of the product development process.

Figure 13. Who is responsible for incubating and leading the definition and development of innovative or disruptive products in your organization?



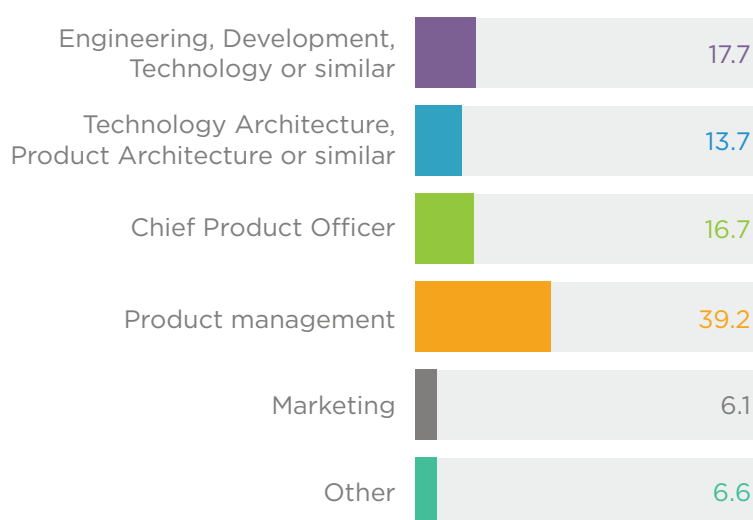
Nearly half of respondents (48.1%) said the responsibility for incubating and defining innovative or disruptive product ideas falls to a member of Executive Management. This ranges from the company founder (8.2%), CEO (11.8%) or CTO (5.9%) to the VP of Engineering (7.6%) or another thought-leading executive team member (14.6%). Nearly a fourth of respondents (21.3%) indicate that Product Management holds responsibility for this important activity. Surprisingly, more than 8% said no one in their organization is responsible for the incubation of innovative or disruptive product ideas.

Figure 14. User experience is perceived as becoming increasingly important to the design and development of successful products. Where does user experience report in your organization?



The importance of user experience to an organization's products grows each year. Customers want to be heard and savvy organizations are listening. So where does user experience report? According to our survey, user experience reports to Engineering, Development, Technology or a similar department in nearly a third (29.8%) of companies surveyed. In slightly more than one-fourth (26.4%) of organizations user experience reports into Product Management, with another 8% reporting directly to the Chief Product Officer. The remaining responses are split fairly evenly between reports going to Technology Architecture, Product Architecture or a similar department (11.4%); Marketing (12.2%); or "Other" (12.2%). Included among the "Other" responses are a wide variety of departments and titles including CEO, Chief Content Officer, COO, Consumer and Public Affairs Unit, Client Services and many more.

Figure 15. Where do you think user experience should report in order to be the most effective?



To better understand the significance of answers to this question, we need to compare them to the reality of the current workplace as expressed in responses to the previous survey question. What our survey responders believe should be happening is somewhat different from workplace reality. The highest percentage difference is evident on the Product Management response. Nearly 40% (39.2%) believe Product Management should be accountable for user experience, yet the reality is that only slightly more than a quarter (26.4 %) of companies represented in the survey actually place this responsibility with Product Management. Similarly, 16.7% believe user experience should report directly to the Chief Product Officer, compared to the 8% who acknowledge their companies actually do. Also similarly, 17.7% of our survey respondents indicate that they believe Engineering, Development, Technology or a similar department should be held accountable for user experience. Only Engineering, Development, Technology or similar department (29.8%), Marketing (12.2%) and "Other" (another 12.2%) are more frequently held responsible for UX than our respondents (17.7%, 6.1% and 6.6% respectively) feel they should be.

Table 6. At what phase or phases of the product development process does UX work with product management in your organization? (Select all that apply.)

Survey Answer	Percentage Response
Conception of a product	50.9%
Planning of a product	60.8%
Development of a product	64.6%
Testing of a product	53.0%
Launch of a product	33.3%
In-market iteration of a product	32.8%
None of the above	13.6%

Responses were high for user experience involvement in the product process, indicating many companies involve user experience at multiple points. The answer receiving the highest percentage of responses was the Development phase. Nearly two-thirds (64.6%) of our respondents' companies integrate user experience into the process at this point. More than half of respondents report involvement during Conception of a product (50.9%), Planning of a product (60.8%) and Testing of a product (53%).

Table 7. Did your organization successfully achieve its financial goals in 2014?

Survey Answer	Percentage Response
Yes	71.1%
No	28.9%

According to survey respondents' answers, 71.1% of companies represented in the survey achieved their financial goals during 2014 but nearly 30% (28.9%) fell short. There are a number of factors that contribute to the financial successes evident in these responses and these are explored in the Executive Summary.

MEET THE STUDY AUTHORS

Lead Author: Greg Geracie, President, Actuation Consulting

Greg Geracie is a globally recognized thought leader in the field of product management and the President of Actuation Consulting, the leading global provider of product management consulting, training, and advisory services. Our clients include many of the world's most well-known organizations such as The American Hospital Association, Clear Edge Filtration, FLSmidth, Johnson & Johnson, Lebara, PointClickCare, Tactio Health Group, and other organizations. Actuation Consulting provides popular training courses for product managers and product teams and publishes *The Study of Product Team Performance* annually.

Greg is also the author of the global best seller *Take Charge Product Management* and led the development of *The Guide to the Product Management and Marketing Body of Knowledge* as editor-in-chief with MIT professor Steven Eppinger. Greg is an adjunct professor at DePaul University's College of Computing and Digital Media where he teaches graduate and undergraduate courses on high-tech and digital product management.

He is a regular contributor to a wide variety of industry publications and a former board member of the Business Architecture Guild. As a Guild member, Greg actively contributed to the BIZBOK Guide. Greg has also been asked to contribute his product management expertise to a growing list of other professional bodies of knowledge, including the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) first ITBOK and the latest BABOK Guide.

Learn more about Greg and Actuation Consulting at ActuationConsulting.com.

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David Heidt is the past President of the IIBA Chicagoland Chapter. As a consultant, David works with clients to drive program initiatives, process definition, organizational change, product and technology enhancements, performance metrics, and rapid solution development. In 2011, David, along with his team members at Sears Holding Corporation, were recipients of the 2011 PMI Distinguished Project Award. He is an adjunct-faculty member at DePaul University and the lead instructor within their Business Analysis and Business Process Management Certificate Programs. He holds certifications as a Certified Business Analysis Professional (CBAP) and a Certified Business Process Professional (CBPP). He is also a contributing author to *The Guide to the Product Management and Marketing Body of Knowledge*.

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Matt specializes in high-risk projects as well as operational and project turnarounds for software companies. During his 15 years in practice, Matt has served clients such as Microsoft, Corbis, Casey Family Program, Thompson Healthcare, Precor, Vertafore and Amazon. In addition to his consulting work, he has written for Fawcett Technical publications and served as an expert reviewer of the Project Management section of *The Guide to the Product Management and Marketing Body of Knowledge*.

Ron Lichty, Principal, Ron Lichty Consulting

Ron Lichty advises companies and consults with software organizations on how to make their software development “hum”. He often takes on the role of acting and interim Vice President of Engineering to untangle the knots in their software development processes. He frequently trains and coaches teams and managers in Agile, a development methodology about which he is an expert. Ron is also the co-author of the acclaimed Addison-Wesley book, *Managing the Unmanageable: Rules, Tools, and Insights for Managing Software, People and Teams*. You can learn more about Ron at www.ronlichty.com.

Sean Van Tyne, Principal, Van Tyne Group

Sean Van Tyne is an author, speaker and advisor on such topics as customer experience, experience design and design thinking. He is the President of the Customer Experience Special Interest Group, founding board member of The Customer Experience Institute and an adviser on numerous professional and corporate boards. Sean is the author of *The Customer Experience Revolution*.

ABOUT ACTUATION CONSULTING

Actuation Consulting is the leading global provider of product management consulting, training, and advisory services. Our clients include many of the world's most well-known organizations such as The American Hospital Association, Clear Edge Filtration, FLSmidth, Johnson & Johnson, Lebara, PointClickCare, Tactio Health Group, and other organizations.

CONSULTING SERVICES

- **Professional Assessment Services** – As a product management consulting and training organization we conduct continuous market research to discover the factors that differentiate high performance product teams from the rest of the pack. Our data-driven approach to product management allows us to accurately assess your product management function and your product team's performance.

We offer a full range of product management and product team assessments. Let us help you identify your product management team's strengths and developmental opportunities and lay the baseline for continuous improvement.

- **Product Management Advisory Services** – Some product management challenges do not require full onsite support. Our seasoned consultants are experienced at collaborating with executives and team members remotely. Let us share our knowledge of industry best practices to augment your team and improve results.

We offer a full range of product management advisory services ranging from coaching and mentoring to advice on how to overcome a particular business challenge.

- **Onsite Product Management Consulting** – Today's product management challenges are as urgent as they have ever been. Many organizations struggle to optimize their product management team's performance and implement processes and best practices that will drive sustainable results. Our product management consultants can help you overcome these challenges and improve your product management team's performance so you achieve better business results.

We offer a full suite of product management services ranging from interim product management leadership to consultation on a particular business challenge.

TRAINING COURSES AND WORKSHOPS

- **Take Charge Product Management for Product Managers** – Specifically designed for product management professionals, this training course focuses on improving your effectiveness as a product manager. Our expert instructors explain critical components of product management, define and clarify the role of a product manager, provide tools and techniques that are proven to increase product managers' performance, and help them effectively engage with their product team counterparts. The class includes a comprehensive workbook, graduation certificate, and our best-selling Take Charge Product Management Toolkit®. This toolkit ensures that you can easily implement what you've learned when you return to your organization.

Corporate clients frequently choose this course because it clarifies the role of a product manager, helps create a common lexicon, and provides a framework for organizing the entire product management team.

- **Software and Digital Media Product Management** – We developed this course specifically to address the unique challenges faced by software and digital media product management professionals. The class clarifies the role of a product manager, helps create a common lexicon, and provides a framework for organizing the entire product management team in a high-tech environment.

This class includes a comprehensive workbook, graduation certificate, and our best-selling Take Charge Product Management Toolkit®. The toolkit is an invaluable resource that will help you implement key course concepts when you return to your organization.

WORKSHOPS

Agile
Creating Value Through
Collaboration
Designing an Effective Product
Management Process
Effective Product Roadmap
Development
Managing Software People and
Teams
Metrics-Driven Product
Management
Optimizing User Experience
Within the Product Organization
Prioritizing Requirements
Product Strategy Development

TOOLKITS

Take Charge Product
Management Toolkit
Product Management Essentials
Multi-Year Product Strategy
Clarifying Roles and Handoffs
Project Management Survival
Toolkit
Project Management Essentials

BOOKS

*Take Charge Product
Management* by Greg Geracie
*The Guide to the Product
Management and Marketing
Body of Knowledge* by Greg
Geracie and Steven Eppinger
*Managing the Unmanageable:
Rules, Tools, and Insights for
Managing Software People and
Teams* by Ron Lichty and Mikey
Mantle