Measurement provides insight into processes, products, and projects and decision makers by providing meaningful information regarding the quality, adequacy, and evolutionary progress of processes, products, and projects. Measurement offers the insight needed to plan, control, manage, and improve:

- the product technical adequacy and performance.
- its schedule and progress.
- resources and cost.
- growth and stability.
- product quality.
- lifecycle process performance.

In today's Department of Defense (DoD) "acquisition reform and outsourcing" environment, defense organizations and project offices are encountering more complex risk management responsibilities, diminishing organic resources, and more reliance on commercial products and processes. Information technology legal requirements demand results-based mission improvement and process improvement. Integrated program management is needed, and it is best supported by a measurement program shared by the acquiring and delivering organizations.

How measurement and analysis is represented in any Capability Maturity Model® (CMM®) that guides process improvement is of vital concern. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), working with the Software Engineering Institute to integrate software, systems engineering, and acquisition disciplines into a single model (dubbed iCMM), has specified M&A as a separate process area. The Office of the Secretary of Defense—Integrated program shared by the acquiring and delivering organizations.

Regardless of what model might be used, the explicit incorporation of M&A as a distinct process area should provide the management visibility and focus that organizations have needed to guide their process improvement efforts. Use of M&A, as a separate process area with practices emphasized early in project, product, and process evolution, should enable organizations to more quickly achieve quantitatively managed processes and better products.
Beware the Unacknowledged Source

I recently spoke with Bob Grady, who showed me a letter he had written to you regarding my article “Metrics Problem Solved?” (CROSSTALK, December 1997). He pointed out the similarity of the “Codex Metrics” in my article to his Figure 10-3, “Software Metrics Etiquette,” Practical Software Metrics for Project Management and Process Improvement (Prentice-Hall, Upper Saddle River, N.J., 1992). I acknowledge that his work is undoubtedly the original source of this information and to say that I was extremely embarrassed and shocked is an understatement. I had no idea I had plagiarized his work. By necessity, we build on the work of those who come before. The credit to an author is the insight that they bring to previously published work or words, not in stealing from other authors. The problem is that I am exposed to so much information that after a while I am not sure how or where a concept originated. But because of the obvious similarity between my words and the original, it appears that I am the perpetrator of metaplagiarism.

My Victorian forebears would call this a cautionary tale, worth repeating for CROSSTALK readers and contributors alike. The message is, “beware the unacknowledged source.” I concur with Mr. Grady’s words (which I paraphrase slightly): An unacknowledged reference, much less a restatement of the essence of any work without proper framing of how such a restatement adds to the original contribution, belittles the original.

I apologize to Mr. Grady for my infraction.

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