

DevEx disasters...

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Coming soon....

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Developer Experience != Developer Productivity

♪ More than a metric.... ♪

Experience is the **Cause**

Productivity is the **Effect**



The Roots: DevEx

The daily journey: tools, processes, cognitive load, and flow state.



The Fruit: Productivity

The outcome: high-quality, impactful software that drives business value.

Developer Experience: Concept and Definition

Fabian Fagerholm, Jürgen Münch

New ways of working such as globally distributed development or the integration of self-motivated external developers into software ecosystems will require a better and more comprehensive understanding of developers' feelings, perceptions, motivations and identification with their tasks in their respective project environments. User experience is a concept that captures how persons feel about products, systems and services. It evolved from disciplines such as interaction design and usability to a much richer scope that includes feelings, motivations, and satisfaction. Similarly, developer experience could be defined as a means for capturing how developers think and feel about their activities within their working environments, with the assumption that an improvement of the developer experience has positive impacts on characteristics such as sustained team and project performance. This article motivates the importance of developer experience, sketches related approaches from other domains, proposes a definition of developer experience that is derived from similar concepts in other domains, describes an ongoing empirical study to better understand developer experience, and finally gives an outlook on planned future research activities.

Comments: 5 pages. The final publication is available at [this http URL](#)

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DevEx isn't new

"...developer experience could be defined as a means for capturing how developers think and feel about their activities within their working environments, with the assumption that an improvement of the developer experience has positive impacts on characteristics such as sustained team and project performance."

REF: F. Fagerholm and J. Münch, "Developer experience: Concept and definition. 2012."

From Lines of Code to Value Streams

!!!

Leaders agree that traditional metrics like LOC are ineffective.

1st

Principle of modern measurement:
Focus on systems, not just individuals.

3

Prominent frameworks now guide the industry: DORA, SPACE, and GetDX Core 4.

Comparing the Developer Productivity Frameworks

DORA

Scope:

Narrow. The software delivery pipeline (commit to deploy).

Philosophy:

Prescriptive. A clear recipe of 4 key metrics.

Audience:

Technical Leaders. DevOps, SREs, Engineering Managers.

Data:

Quantitative. System data from CI/CD, Git, etc.

SPACE

Scope:

Broad. The entire socio-technical system.

Philosophy:

Flexible. A menu of dimensions to choose from.

Audience:

Engineering Management. Fosters empathetic conversations.

Data:

Hybrid. System data plus qualitative surveys.

GetDX Core 4

Scope:

Hybrid. Bridges engineering activity to business impact.

Philosophy:

Prescriptive. A unified recipe of 4 pillars.

Audience:

The Entire Org. A shared language for engineers and C-suite.

Data:

Hybrid. System data, surveys, and financial data.

The Three Pillars of World-Class DevEx

Fast, High-Quality Feedback Loops

Slow, ambiguous feedback is a primary source of frustration. The speed of the inner loop (local build/test) and outer loop (CI/CD, code review) is critical for maintaining momentum and iterating with confidence.

Low Cognitive Load

Human working memory is limited. When developers must wrestle with complex systems or poor documentation, less mental energy is available for creating solutions. High rework is a strong signal of high cognitive load.

Enabled "Flow State"

Flow, or being "in the zone," is where deep, creative work happens. It requires clear goals, immediate feedback, and protection from interruptions. It can take over 15 minutes to regain focus after a single interruption.

So what do we measure?

Avoid the Gamification Trap

Use Metrics for Improvement, Not Judgment

"when a measure becomes a target, it ceases to be a good measure."

-Goodhart's Law

So what do we measure?

- Cycle Time
- PR Review Time
- Rework Rate
- Meeting Load
- Time to First Commit
- Perceived Focus Time

These are not one-size-fits-all metrics, but a starting point.

Practitioner-Centric Scorecard



Cycle Time

Commit to Production

Decreasing Trend



PR Review Time

Open to Reviewed

< 3 Hours



Rework Rate

Code Churned Post-Commit

< 15%



Meeting Load

Time for Deep Work

Low & Stable



Time to First Commit

New Hire Onboarding

Hours, not Weeks



Perceived Focus Time

Uninterrupted Time

High & Protected

These are suggested benchmarks only. Establish a baseline then iterate.

Build a Healthy Measurement Culture

- No framework is a silver bullet
- Continuous improvement, not judgment
- Communicate the 'why'
- Involve your team
- Focus on trends, not absolutes
- Combine quantitative data with qualitative human insights

Conclusion



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If your company does not already have a process for gathering feedback (internal & external) on your product and/or the tools you use, you will not have a good Developer Experience ([#DevEx](#)), and I seriously question the commitment to it.

November 18, 2024 at 4:38 PM  Everybody can reply [↗](#)

DevEx is...

"ruthlessly eliminating barriers (and blockers) that keep your practitioners from being successful"

Thank you!



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END