

Slack

"... offers some good ideas for making sure your organization has the requisite slack, which he defines as time during which people are zero percent busy."

—**Mark Henricks**
Entrepreneur

"This book will change the way you manage and understand your business."

—**David Weinberger**
Author of *The Cluetrain Manifesto*

"... the ideal tonic to the '90s craze of downsizing, restructuring, cost-cutting—all in the name of efficiency and global competition."

—**David A. Kaplan**
Author of *The Silicon Boys*

"Tom DeMarco's insights are shockingly pragmatic. Where other writers aspire to be Machiavellis of management, he is Montaigne: pithy, sharp, intimate, and wise."

—**Michael Shrage**
MIT Media Lab, Author of *Serious Play*

"... worth consideration as a rather quick read for large-corporate, small-business and individual workers—there are few limits on who can get some thoughts from this one."

—**Porter Anderson**
CNN.com

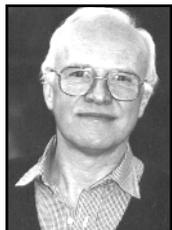
"... clears up the trade-offs between efficiency and effectiveness, between doing and planning, between switching and concentration, and shows how squeezing excess capacity out of your company can sometimes leave it terminally unresponsive."

—**Bob Metcalfe**
Inventor of the Ethernet, founder of 3COM,
Author of *Internet Collapses*

"Buy this book for your CEO or your favorite entrepreneur, or better still, buy a copy for yourself and profit from DeMarco's insights."

—**David Liddle**
General Partner, U.S. Venture Partners

About the Author



Tom DeMarco is a leading management consultant to both Fortune 500 and up-and-coming companies. His clients include Hewlett-Packard, Apple, IBM, Lucent, and many others. He is the author of four books on management and technical development methods, including *The Deadline*, and the coauthor with Timothy Lister of

Peopleware and *Waltzing with Bears*, among others.

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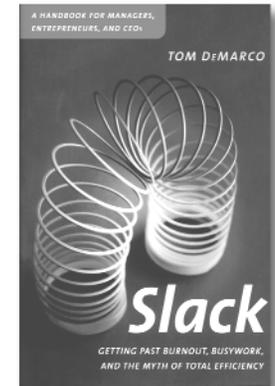
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Slack

Getting Past Burnout, Busywork, and the Myth of Total Efficiency

by Tom DeMarco



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*Use Slack—Not Overwork—
to Increase Developer Effectiveness*

To most companies, efficiency means profits and growth. But what if your "efficient" company—the one with the reduced headcount and the "stretch" goals—is actually slowing down and losing money? What if your employees are burning out doing the work of two or more people? What if your super-efficient company is suddenly falling behind?

If your real organizational goal is to become fast (responsive and agile), Tom DeMarco proposes that what you need is not more efficiency but more slack.

What is "slack"? Slack is the degree of freedom in a company that allows it to change. It could be something as simple as adding an assistant to a department, or letting high-priced talent spend less time at the photocopier and more time making key decisions. Slack could also appear in the way a company treats employees: Instead of loading them

up with overwork, a company designed with slack allows its people room to breathe, increase effectiveness, and reinvent themselves.

In thirty-three short chapters filled with creative learning tools and charts, you and your company can learn to • make sense of the Efficiency/Flexibility quandary • run directly toward risk instead of away from it • strengthen the creative role of middle management • make change and growth work together for even greater profits.

Originally published by Broadway Books and available from Dorset House for the first time, this revolutionary handbook will debunk commonly held assumptions about real-world management. You and your company will find a brand-new model for achieving and maintaining true effectiveness—and a healthier bottom line.

Read more about this book at
www.dorsethouse.com/books/slack.html