Software Productivity

“Years ago, when I first started to hear of Harlan Mills and his ideas, I gave them short shrift. . . . It was an act of pure prejudice, not against Iowa farm boys or baseball fans, but against mathematicians. . . .

“It was my loss, as I discovered when I was finally shamed into reading some of his actual work. . . . What I discovered was a thinker with a remarkable gift for exposing the origin and development of his ideas, and for taking the reader on the same intellectual voyage he himself had taken.

“Of course, if the ideas had not been absolutely first-rate, the voyage would not have been worth the fare, regardless of Harlan’s talents as a writer. But, as you well know, they were first-rate ideas—ideas that have had a profound influence on software productivity all over the world. . . .

“In Software Productivity, we have not merely the development of one significant idea, but the development of a whole set of interrelated ideas. . . . It is a chance to see into the mind of one of the profound thinkers of our industry—or any industry. By following this chronological development of ideas, the reader’s problem-solving style will be subtly changed. Mine was. I may not have learned much from those other mathematicians, but Harlan Mills has been my real teacher. You are lucky that he can now be yours.”

—Gerald M. Weinberg

About the Author

The late Harlan D. Mills was widely recognized for his contribution as a mathematician concerned with bringing more rigor into systems and software development. Among his many awards were the DPMA Distinguished Information Science Award in 1985 and the J-D. Warnier Prize in 1987. At the time of his death in 1996, he was the Director of the Information Systems Institute in Vero Beach, Florida. He had previously worked at IBM from 1964 to 1987. He was an IBM Fellow for fifteen years, Director of Software Engineering and Technology for the Federal Systems Division, and a member of the IBM Corporate Technical Committee. At IBM, he received the Outstanding Contribution Award and was the principal architect for the curriculum of the IBM Software Engineering Institute, an internal educational facility with a worldwide faculty.

In this book, Harlan D. Mills has been my real teacher. You are lucky that he can now be yours.