ISM 101, Winter 2011

This quarter we listened to presentations by managers from large technology companies, Microsoft, Hewlett-Packard and Lockheed; a medium-sized technology company, Plantronics; and a small company, Xantronics, an IT consulting company. Two themes in these presentations were Services (Hewlett-Packard, UCSC IT Services) and Cloud Computing (Hewlett-Packard, Plantronics).

We were also introduced to important ideas: The Service Oriented Enterprise (Doug Morse), Cloud Computing (Tom Gill, Harshad Sardesai), IT Services Portfolio Management (Mark Cianca), and Business Data Analytics (Kevin Ross).

Key lessons learned (mostly from your term papers)

• “During this quarter, it became very apparent that what matters most inside a business is commonly what customers never see: industry research (Roy Levin, Microsoft); Information Technology (Tom Gill, Plantronics); project portfolio management and project management (Mark Cianca, UCSC ITS).”
• Research in large-companies such as Microsoft is long-term and involves high risk. The objective of such research is to enhance existing business and products, while creating new technologies, products and services. In contrast, research in medium and smaller companies is more focused toward helping on-going product development (Roy Levin, Microsoft).
• In order for large established technology companies like Lockheed to innovate on a continuous basis, they need to “think small”, i.e., re-learn how to do small things well (James Burnham, Lockheed).
• Information Technology and/or Globalization play a major role in integrating all enterprise functions (e.g., product development, manufacturing, sales) in technology companies. There is an increasing trend toward “Unified Communication (UC)” (Tom Gill, Plantronics).
• Proper project portfolio management and project management is essential to delivering high quality information technology services to customers (both inside and outside the organization) on time (Mark Cianca, UCSC, ITS; Tom Gill, Microsoft).
• There is an increasing trend in high-tech companies (Hewlett-Packard, IBM, Microsoft) to provide integrated solutions and services rather than “bits of technology”. This trend leads to the concept of the “Services Oriented Enterprise” (Doug Morse, Services Transformation and Innovation Group). The Holy Grail is “Everything as a Service” (Harshad Sardesai, Hewlett-Packard).
• There is an increasing trend in Information Technology to “Infrastructure as a Service”, “Platform as a Service”, and “Software as a Service”. All of these trends are made possible by Cloud Computing (Harshad Sardesai, HP; Tom Gill, Plantronics; Marc Cianca, UCSC, ITS).