Effective vs efficient

Tom Rochette <tom.rochette@coreteks.org>

September 1, 2025 — ff9411a2

In software development, understanding the difference between being effective and being efficient is crucial for delivering high-quality products.

Effectiveness is about doing the right things - choosing the correct features to implement, solving the right problems, and aligning development efforts with business goals. An effective developer ensures that their work has a meaningful impact and contributes to the project's success.

Efficiency, on the other hand, is about doing things right - optimizing code, reducing resource usage, and minimizing development time. Efficient developers focus on speed and resource management, ensuring that solutions are implemented with minimal waste.

Balancing effectiveness and efficiency leads to better outcomes. For example, writing highly optimized code for a feature that users don't need is efficient but not effective. Conversely, delivering valuable features slowly or with unnecessary complexity may be effective but not efficient.

In summary, successful software development requires both: building the right solutions (effectiveness) and building them well (efficiency).