

Are Developers A Commodity????

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I often hear the phrase "**Developers are a commodity**". Statements such as this are supported with reasoning along the lines of "**The architects /experts will do the analysis & design, while the developers just cut code.**" The developer is therefore seen as a pseudo disposable entity, with no key differentiators amongst peers; low skilled and readily interchangeable. It is easy to see how these ideas have evolved, especially when we compare our industry to others. However, these metaphors feel fundamentally flawed. For some industries other than IT, the low level of detail provided in plans yield quasi-robotic implementation, especially as the design can only be interpreted and realised in one way. In IT, whatever methodology / framework you choose, the developer invariably has to make choices. So, maybe there is room for some commoditisation? However, is the industry as a whole making a large sweeping judgement, followed by misguided, potentially costly decisions, when referring to IT developers as a commodity?