

# Process and Product

Nobody asked but ...

I agree wholeheartedly with James Walpole in his blog post, “Being Late Is for Slaves”. But I must admit that I misread the headline. I have had a few jobs where obsessive clock-watching by a supervisor may have helped the process but not the product. Remember the object of a process is the *product*. The product is the be-all-and-end-all without which there would be no process (except fictional ones, like a Potemkin village). The purpose of punctuality is procedural, not production. In the end, there must be a product, factually, that fulfills its function well, regardless of whom was at their workstation promptly, during its processing.

Bureaucracy tends to emphasize the process, often while fictionalizing the product. The Pentagon is great at this subterfuge. Defense is their decoy product (while allowing 9/11 to happen), then they fooled all of us into believing that interdicting WMD was the product (cherrypicking was the process — selectively revealing so-called intelligence to aid the ruse). But this has always been the case, the Military Industrial Bureaucratic Political Complex has specialized in straw men all along, to underwrite the constant need for more and better *materiel*.

In the long run, it makes no difference which employees were there on time, or even which employees were there at all. All that is necessary is buy-in among the positions filled. The Manhattan Project was an example of buy-in sufficient to reach a goal — Hiroshima and Nagasaki — that satisfied the agenda of those who saw self-gain possible. T. C. Mits did not know about this secret goal. Have you ever seen any attendance records from Los Alamos?

I will not leave before lauding the point(s) that James Walpole has made, in his post linked above. I’m still not all in with the headline, but I finally understood the point — understand the requirements of the real world around you. Take responsibility for the requirements. Master them. Being on time is your deal, not some bureaucrat’s. Not some current employer’s.

— Kilgore Forelle