

ARE YOUR TOOLS KEEPING UP? UNCLOG YOUR DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



I was having trouble with a clogged bathroom sink and tried my old drain snake, which had seen much use over the years but was now broken. I kept thinking, “Oh, I can make this work; it used to work great.” But the truth was staring me in the face—it wouldn’t work now, and I was wasting time trying to force it to do something it couldn’t. After an hour struggling with trying to get it to break up the clog, I sat back and thought about the problem: I wasn’t getting the right twist. I used to be able to get my trusty snake to work, but it was worn out now. I could defeat this clog if only I had the right tool.

I thought about the fancier snakes with crank handles and wondered if one might help. I researched them and watched videos on their use. I could see that this improved snake would solve the problem I had. I went out and bought it, and in minutes I was able to unclog the drain. All that time wasted trying to force the wrong tool to work and all those memories of it working, thinking, “It used to be ok, so it should be now. I can make this work!” were now flushed down like water in the newly unclogged drain.

This caused me to wonder about other things in life we treat the same way. What ill-fitting solutions do we accept as normal when a better alternative is available, affordable, and would unclog our development process? Are we too accepting of our current SCM and Deploy solution? Have we taken a hard look at alternatives? Just as I did with my drain snake, it’s useful to take a step back and evaluate whether your current tools can clear clogs in the development process.

It is part of the Agile/DevOps mindset to always look for improvements. Unfortunately, many mainframe shops continue to use tools and processes that hold back development teams and the

companies they serve. In a [Forrester survey](#) commissioned by BMC, eight out of ten respondents said that their organization's development tools needed significant improvement to be more effective. To make truly meaningful changes, though, you must assess what is "broken" and determine which replacement works best for your specific needs.

Let's look at things to consider as you evaluate your tools and processes:

- Look for clogs in your development process by focusing on pain points. This is where having good metrics from [BMC AMI zAdviser](#) will help.
- Ask yourself—Are you wasting time trying to get something to work, forcing it, when it should just work naturally?
- You might find that you have to acknowledge that your current tool isn't working for you. Don't rest on the past. Yes, it may have been a miracle solution that solved a problem 5, 10, or 20 years ago, but the questions are, how is it working for you today, and how will it work in the future? The decision you made in the past might have been ok at the time, but this is today.
- Consider alternatives. Do the research, open your eyes, see what others are doing, and get facts. Learn the best practices so you can benefit from them.
- Don't let the fear of having to spend money stop you. Often an investment now is preferable to costlier alternatives down the line. For me, spending a little on a new auger was far cheaper than hiring a plumber, my only other option.

So don't keep struggling like I did. Stop, take a look, and realize there may be a better way to clear your clogs—a way that can save you time and increase efficiency which, in the end, saves you money.