

Microspeak: The triad, the ad-hoc acronyms that result, and the arithmetic problem 3×3

 devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20180306-00

March 6, 2018



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At Microsoft, you'll often encounter three letters put together to form an acronym representing what appears to be a group of people of some sort.

| Document title: Monthly meeting with CMR

| CMR will review the status of all projects in the upcoming weeks.

| **From:** Morgan

| ... email message ...

| Thanks for all your hard work,
| CMR

This acronym consists of the initials of the leaders of the three project roles: Program management, development, and quality. Collectively, this is known as the *triad*.

In this case, the people involved are named Robin, Morgan, and Chris. To choose the name for a triad, you take the three initials (in this case, R, M, and C) and play with the six ways of arranging them until you find something that sounds pleasing but doesn't create confusion with existing three-letter acronyms.

If the name one of the members of the triad begins with a vowel, then you will often find the choice made so that the resulting three-letter abbreviation is pronounceable.

When two different triads have a meeting together, this is known as a 3×3 , pronounced *three by three*. This is another case of a meeting disguised as mathematics.

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