

Refactoring

Refactoring

- Noun: “A change made to the internal structure of software to make it easier to understand and cheaper to modify without changing its observable behaviour”
- Verb: “To restructure software by applying a series of refactorings without changing its observable behaviour”

When to refactor

- All the time!
- Indications that it's time to refactor are known as code smells
- We'll examine a number of them...

Duplicated code

- Same expression in two methods of the same class
 - Use **Extract Method** refactoring
- Same expression in two methods of sibling classes
 - Use **Extract Method** and **Pull Up Method**
 - If code is similar but not same, consider **Form Template Method**
- Duplicated code in unrelated classes
 - May need to **Extract Class** or otherwise eliminate one of the versions

Long Method

- The longer a method is, the more difficult it is to understand
- Be aggressive about decomposing methods
- Use *good naming*
- 90% of the time, just **Extract Method**
- What to extract? Look for comments explaining a piece of code

Large Class

- A class that tries to do too much often has too many instance variables
- Prime breeding ground for duplicated code
- **Extract Class**
- **Extract SubClass** for some of the
- **Extract Interface** variables

Long parameter list

- Hard to understand, requires frequent changes
- In OO systems, much fewer parameters are required
- Shorten parameter lists with
 - Replace Parameter with Method**
 - Preserve Whole Object**
 - Introduce Parameter Object**

Divergent Change

- A class is commonly changed in different ways for different reasons
- “I will have to change these three methods every time I get a new database; I have to change these four methods every time there is a new financial instrument”
- **Extract Class** to alleviate this problem

Shotgun Surgery

- Every time you make a kind of change, you have to make a lot of little changes
- Easy to miss an important change
- **Move Method** and **Move Field** to put all changes into a single class
- You might even use **Inline Class**

Feature Envy

- A method seems more interested in a class other than the one it is in
 - Invokes many getter methods from another class
- **Move Method** to where it wants to be
- Strategy and Visitor design patterns result in code that has feature envy
 - Acceptable since this way we fight divergent change
- Often there are tradeoffs in fighting code smells

Data Clumps

- Bunches of data that hang around together ought to be made into their own object (**Extract Class**)
- Delete one of the data values. Do the others make sense?
- You can then slim parameter lists down with
 - Introduce Parameter Object**
 - Preserve Whole Object**

Switch statements

- Switch statements are often duplicated
- If you add a new clause, you need to find all related switch statements
- Polymorphism can solve this problem
- If switching on type code
 - Extract Method**
 - Move Method**
 - Replace Type Code with Subclasses**
 - Replace Conditional with Polymorphism**

Parallel Inheritance Hierarchies

- Special case of shotgun surgery
- Every time you make a subclass of one class, you also have to make a subclass of another
- Eliminate duplication by having instances of one hierarchy refer to instances of the other

Lazy class

- If a class is not doing enough to justify maintaining it, it should be removed
- Refactoring often results in lazy classes that can be removed with
Collapse Hierarchy
Inline Class

Speculative Generality

- Machinery added for future use that never gets implemented
- Makes system much harder to understand
- Often identified because test cases are the only users of a method of a class
- Remove unnecessary machinery with
Inline Class / **Collapse Hierarchy**
Remove Parameter / **Rename Method**

Temporary Field

- Fields that are not used (or used only in certain circumstances)
- Very difficult to determine their usefulness
- Maybe they are only used as global variables to avoid passing them around as parameters
- **Extract Class** for temporary fields

Refused Bequest

- Subclasses do not want or need methods or data of their parents
- **Push Down Method** and **Push Down Field** to move unwanted methods to siblings
- If the subclass does not want to support the interface of the superclass
Replace Inheritance with Delegation

Comments

- Comments are of course a sweet smell, but they should not be used as deodorant
- When you feel the need to write a comment, first try to refactor the code so that any comment becomes superfluous
- Can also use
Extract Method
Rename Method
Introduce Assertion

More code smells

- Primitive obsession
- Message Chains
- Middle man
- Inappropriate intimacy
- Alternative classes with different interfaces
- Incomplete library class
- Data class

Refactoring catalog

- Many different refactorings possible
- Martin Fowler lists about 80 of them in his book on Refactoring
- Other refactorings have been identified as well
- They all come with well-defined mechanisms for their application

Mechanics of Extract Method

- Create a new method, and name it after the intention of the method (what it does, not how it does it)
- Copy the extracted code from the source method to the target method
- Scan the extracted code for references to any variables that are local in scope to the source method
- See whether any temporary variables are used only within the extracted code. If so, declare them in the new method

Mechanics of Extract Method (cont.)

- See if the extracted code modifies any local-scope variables. If only one, it can be the return value of the new method. If more, extraction cannot happen as is
- Pass into the target method as parameters local-scope variables that are read from the extracted code
- Replace the extracted code in the source method with a call to the target method
- Compile and test

The first step: Testing

- In order to refactor, you need a solid suite of tests
- Tests must be automatic and self-checking
- Run tests often, after every small change
- Frameworks such as JUnit can help with the automation part (www.junit.org)