BEST PRACTICES IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT

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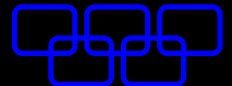### December 27, 2015

Consulting Projects

- Why Do It?

- Definition of a Project

- Estimating

- Project Execution

- Post Mortem

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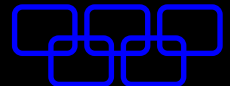Organization • Integration

Why Do It?

- Size

- Complexity

- Time Spanned

- Multiple Players

- Task Dependencies

- Resource Conflicts

- Things Change

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Why Do It?

- Capturing History

- Do Better Next Time

- Quality

- Skills Analysis

- Nothing Ever Goes as Planned

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What If You Don't Do It

- Unclear Objectives

- Poor Planning

- Unrealistic Deadlines

- Inappropriate Resources

- Changes Causes Chaos

- Invalid Assumptions

- Missed/Inadequate Deliverables

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Definition of a Project

- Requirements

- Scope

- Implied Approach

- Resultant Deliverables

- Risk Management

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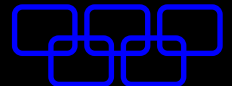
Requirements

•**Statement of Need/Problem/Solution**

•**Characteristics:**

   - Written?

   - By an Intermediary?

   - Initially Incomplete

   - Always Subject to Change

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- Response:

  - Review

  - Question

  - Clarify

  - Test

  - Evaluate

  - Commit (Statement of Work)

●**Watch Out For:**

- **Everything of Equal Importance**

- **Absolute Numbers**

- **Lack of Measurability**

- **Conflicting Requirements**

- **Vague Terms**

- **No Identified Approvers**

- **Second Hand Requirements**

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Scope (and Objectives)

- Shows the Extent to Which Project Will Respond to Requirements, Both by Item, and by Range

- Identifies the Objective of Each Scope Item

- Show the Major Steps Involved (Approach)

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Risk Management

- ●Work Within Your Area of Responsibility Which Has Some Probability of Missing Target Schedules, Objectives or Cost

- ●Work Outside Your Area of Responsibility for Which You Have a Commitment From the Responsible Party, e.g.:

    - Peers

    - Other Functional Areas

    - Customer

    - Contractor/Other Vendor

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Risk Management

- Identify:
    - Exposures
    - Dependencies
    - Risks

- Negotiate:
    - Exposures
    - Dependencies

- Monitor Dependencies

- Rank Risks High to Low
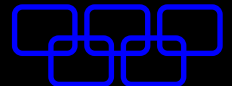
- Know How and When to Escalate

- Have a Back-up Plan

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Project Planning

● **Must Clearly Spell Out, in Writing:**

- What

- Why

- Where

- How

- Who

- When

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●**Objectives Should Be:**

- **Clear**

- **Precise**

- **Measurable**

- **Written**
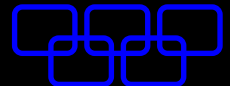
- **Agreed**

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●**Plan Should Include:**

 - **Status Review Points**

 - **Milestone Review Points**

 - **Travel Days (Especially if Billable)**

 - **Written Deliverables as Separate Tasks**

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Estimating

- Labor Billable and Non-Billable
    - (and Customer if Allocated to Project)

- Other Items of Expenditure

- Travel Days (Especially if Billable)

- Computer Time

- Administrative

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Estimating
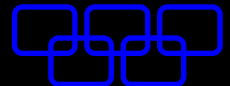
- Beware of Mythical Man-Month

- Beware the Fractional Person

- Beware the 9 Women/1 Baby Syndrome
  (9 Women cant make a baby in 1 month)

- Plan for Delays, Especially Outside Agencies

- Do Not Confuse Effort with Progress

- Identify Milestones Carefully

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Project Execution

- Project Manager's Role:

    - Planning

    - Controlling

    - Communicating

- Allow 1/2 Day for Each Project Week
  (Not Including Status and Milestone Reviews)

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●**Team Relationships:**

  - Streamline Communications

  - Minimize Overlap

  - Be Sure Everyone Knows Everyone's Tasks

 **- Establish Governance - Clear Authority/Responsibility**

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Project Execution

●**Create and Maintain a Project Notebook:**

   - Status Reports

   - Working Papers

   - Project History

   - Problem Reports

   - Correspondence

   - Formal Sign-offs

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Project Execution
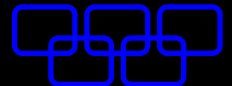
●**Review/Reporting:**

- **Fix Dates Ahead (Especially Customer)**

- **Agree Style (Verbal/Written etc.)**

- **Frequency**

- **Deputies**

- **Clarify Follow-up/Sign-off**

- **Formal Sign-offs**

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Post Mortem
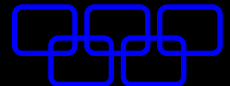
- Team Review

- Formal Review with Customer:

  - Satisfied?

  - Reference

  - Other Opportunities?

  - If a Guide Was Used, How Was It?

  - If Not, Is One Needed:
    Submit Project Requirement Spec (PRS)

  - Publicize

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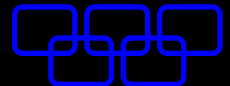
●**You Are Ready to Begin When:**

- **You Understand Requirements**

- **You and Customer Agree Objectives**

- **There Is an Agreed Start/End Date**

- **You Know the People/Skill Constraints**
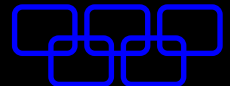
- **All Dependencies Are Known**

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Various
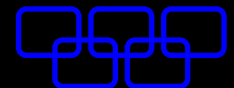
- **Projects Are:**

  - Single Time Efforts

  - Temporary

  - The Means to Create
  - **- Build**
  - **- Serve**
  - **- Provide Self-Sufficiency**
  - **- Change**
  - **- Make a Difference**

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Various
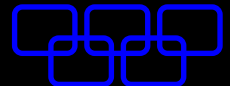
- **Project Management Is the Art of Doing What You Said You Would Do**

- **The Greater the Difficulty in Building the Plan, the Greater the Need for It**

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● **Warren McFarlan Project Characteristics**

  - Degree of Inherent "Structuredness"
  - ■ **How Well Defined are the Outputs?**
  - ■ **What Flexibility and Alternatives Exist?**

  - Degree of Client/Deliverer Technology
  - ■ **Done It Before?**
  - ■ **How Much Is New?**

  - Size of Project

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Various

- **High Structure/Low Technology**
    - **Relatively Risk-less**
    - **Minimal Customer Reviews**
    - **Formal Planning Squeezes Out Uncertainty**
    - **Formal Control Ensures Commitment**

- **High Structure/High Technology**
    - **Medium Risk, Technology Limits Precision**
    - **Needs More Customer Review**
    - **Internal Reviews Critical**
    - **Formal Planning Subservient to Reviews**
    - **Formal Control of Limited Value**

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Various
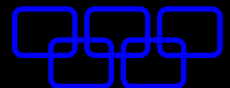
● **Low Structure/Low Technology**
- **Medium risk, Management Is Key**
- **User Reviews Critical**
- **Internal Reviews Once Way Is Clear**
- **Formal Planning Helpful If User Reviews Good**
- **Formal Control the Same**

● **Low Structure/High Technology**
- **High Risk,**
- **User Review/Early Commitment Critical**
- **Internal Reviews Critical**
- **Formal Planning Useful**
- **Formal Control Relatively Limited**

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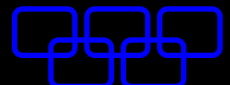
A Few Proverbs

- Same Work, Under the Same Conditions, Will Be Estimated Differently by Ten Estimators, Or by One Estimator at Ten Different Times

- The Most Valuable and Least Used Word in a Project Manager's Vocabulary is "NO"

- You Can Con a Sucker into Committing to an Unreasonable Deadline, but You Can't Bully Him into Meeting It

- The More Ridiculous the Deadline, the More It Costs to Try to Meet It

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● Too Few People on a Project Can't Solve the Problems --- Too Many Create More Problems Than They Solve

● You Can Freeze the Scope, You Need to Keep the Expectations Frozen Too

● A Frozen Scope and the Abominable Snowman Are Alike, They Are a Myth and Will Both Melt if Sufficient Heat Is Applied

● What You Do Not No CAN Hurt You

● What Is Not on Paper Has Not Been Said

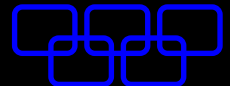People • Projects • Technology
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A Few Proverbs

- **Of Several Possible Interpretations of a Communication, the Least Convenient One Is the Only Correct One**

- **A Client Will Tell You Anything You Ask, But Probably Nothing More**

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- **Project Planning and Management Tools Do Not Plan and Manage Projects:**

YOU DO!

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