Consulting Projects

- Why Do It?
- Definition of a Project
- Estimating
- Project Execution
- Post Mortem
Why Do It?

- Size
- Complexity
- Time Spanned
- Multiple Players
- Task Dependencies
- Resource Conflicts
- Things Change
Why Do It?

• Capturing History
• Do Better Next Time
• Quality
• Skills Analysis
• Nothing Ever Goes as Planned
Why Do It?

EXPOSURE!
What If You Don't Do It

- Unclear Objectives
- Poor Planning
- Unrealistic Deadlines
- Inappropriate Resources
- Changes Causes Chaos
- Invalid Assumptions
- Missed/Inadequate Deliverables
Why Do It?

EXPOSURE!
Definition of a Project

- Requirements
- Scope
- Implied Approach
- Resultant Deliverables
- Risk Management
Requirements

• Statement of Need/Problem/Solution

• Characteristics:
  - Written?
  - By an Intermediary?
  - Initially Incomplete
  - Always Subject to Change
Requirements

- Response:
  - Review
  - Question
  - Clarify
  - Test
  - Evaluate
  - Commit (Statement of Work)
Requirements

- Watch Out For:
  - Everything of Equal Importance
  - Absolute Numbers
  - Lack of Measurability
  - Conflicting Requirements
  - Vague Terms
  - No Identified Approvers
  - Second Hand Requirements
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)
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
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
Project Planning

- Must Clearly Spell Out, in Writing:
  - What
  - Why
  - Where
  - How
  - Who
  - When
Project Planning

Objectives Should Be:
- Clear
- Precise
- Measurable
- Written
- Agreed
Project Planning

• Plan Should Include:
  - Status Review Points
  - Milestone Review Points
  - Travel Days (Especially if Billable)
  - Written Deliverables as Separate Tasks
Estimating

- Labor Billable and Non-Billable
  - (and Customer if Allocated to Project)
- Other Items of Expenditure
- Travel Days (Especially if Billable)
- Computer Time
- Administrative
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
Project Execution

- Project Manager's Role:
  - Planning
  - Controlling
  - Communicating

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

- Streamline Communications
- Minimize Overlap
- Be Sure Everyone Knows Everyone's Tasks
- Establish Governance - Clear Authority/Responsibility
Project Execution

Create and Maintain a Project Notebook:

- Status Reports
- Working Papers
- Project History
- Problem Reports
- Correspondence
- Formal Sign-offs
Project Execution

- Review/Reporting:
  - Fix Dates Ahead (Especially Customer)
  - Agree Style (Verbal/Written etc.)
  - Frequency
  - Deputies
  - Clarify Follow-up/Sign-off
  - Formal Sign-offs
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
Various

● 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
Various

- Projects Are:
  - Single Time Efforts
  - Temporary
  - The Means to Create
    - Build
    - Serve
    - Provide Self-Sufficiency
  - Change
  - Make a Difference
• 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
Various

- 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
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
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
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
A Few Proverbs

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

YOU DO!