



Atlanta SPIN

Software Process Improvement Network

The Atlanta SPINaker

December 2007 Volume 2, Issue 12



David Longstreet

Agile Methods and Other Fairy Tales

Just in case you thought you knew everything there is to know about Agile methods from last month's presentation, along comes David Longstreet to shatter your dreams and show you the flip side of the coin. David's presentation "Agile Methods and Other Fairy Tales" was the subject of Atlanta SPIN's November meeting. The members who attended last month's meeting were treated to a very accomplished consultant as well as a very animated discussion of a normally dry topic.

David is an international consultant with clients all over the globe. His presentation contains data gleaned from these clients and their projects over many years. The presentation made liberal use of photographs and images designed to draw clear analogies and leave lasting impressions on the audience.

David made several strong points regarding Agile Methods. Agile architects and proponents mix terminology leading to confusion. Pair Programming has fundamental fallacies.

He makes another point regarding the

concept of specialization in the software field. In fact, with the direction of most firms embracing off-shoring for coding efforts, software developers need to consider whether they want to specialize. This specialization falls into two categories - into a design and architecture role or to a semi-skilled position of coder or tester.

Regarding change management, there is a further misunderstanding on the part of the "Agilista's". According to Agile, requirements teams develop software in the face of vague and rapidly changing requirements. In fact, and based on David's data, requirements are always being changed, expanded and uncovered from earlier mis-definitions. Rarely are they "new". Best in class organizations spend time early in projects to flush out and clarify requirements rather than let them be uncovered later in the development as Agile acknowledges.

Another key to success of projects is obtaining a fundamental knowledge of

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A 2008 SEI Individual Membership, valued at \$350 bucks. (<http://www.sei.cmu.edu/membership/benefits.htm>)

At the close of our December 12th meeting there will be a drawing to determine a winner. To be entered in the drawing, become a **contributing member** between now and up to the time of the drawing. If you are already a contributing member, renew and we'll add the additional year to your contributing member status. You need not be present to win, *but it would be a whole bunch cooler if you were.*

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Next Meeting: December 12, 2007

Communications in Software Development Projects

Presented by Frank Tsui
Time: 6:00 PM—8:30 PM
Location: Dunwoody Library
5339 Chamblee-Dunwoody Road,
Dunwoody, GA

Agile Methods and Other Fairy Tales - Continued

the business context of the project. The farther away the key project architects and designers are from the business the more translation is required to get an understanding of the requirements. In Agile this is solved by including the customer on the project. David recommends that the project team members acquire this fundamental knowledge to allow them to

become further specialized.

In summary, David feels that Agile is a classic example of treating the symptoms of a problem instead of attacking the root causes. Programming is becoming a craft and not a profession. And finally, learning about the business helps to solve the “requirements problem”.

On the Boardwalk: Stewart Forscher, Sponsorship Committee

The Boardwalk is a regular feature of the SPINnaker. Our board members take this opportunity to give you some insight into their views about being on the SPIN Board of Directors.



Stewart Forscher

What experience do you have in the software development lifecycle or technology?

I have experiences in all SDLC phases. Early in my career, I started out as a developer who was heavily involved in all phases from requirements analysis to interoperability testing and deployment. More recently, my career has shifted toward automated testing. I believe participating in all phases makes life interesting and helps one understand the big picture of the project.

What process improvement related activities have you personally been involved with?

In the past, I have been involved in software development process creation for a large-scale software development project. Most recently, I co-authored a test script code review process and review guidelines for a team of test automation engineers.

How did you get involved in Atlanta SPIN?

In 2002, my job was eliminated as part of a division closure. Having moved back to Atlanta only nine months prior after five years in Chicago, I was looking for ways to keep my career moving forward and expand my professional network. While in Chicago, I had heard of C-SPIN but never had a chance to attend because of work and graduate school demands. Then was a perfect time to join Atlanta SPIN.

What benefits have you personally derived from participation in SPIN?

My current role does not require a lot of formal process in the sense that it is not mandated by internal or external customers. However, process improvement is important for my test automation group in terms of finding ways to help our organization evolve and operate more efficiently. Participation in SPIN helps me have a process-improvement mindset to help facilitate this evolution.

What motivated you to join the Atlanta SPIN Board?

A former president, Gregory Losik, invited me to join the Board. I was honored by the invitation and viewed it as a great learning opportunity. I have enjoyed working on the Board over the years.

What do you hope to achieve by participating on the Atlanta SPIN Board?

My latest achievement is helping to strengthen our sponsorship relationships and income. I hope to continue working with our sponsors and other board members to maintain win-win engagements between Atlanta SPIN and its sponsors.

SEPG North America 2008: Shaping the Future of Quality Systems and Software



In 1988, the Carnegie Mellon Software Engineering Institute started the first SEPG North America Conference with just one track. Twenty years later, SEPG North America has exploded into the industry's premier gathering of the best and brightest in software and systems process improvement with eight tracks, over 170 sessions, 65 exhibitors and 2,000 plus attendees.

Join us in Tampa March 17-20 as we celebrate the 20th Anniversary of SEPG North America . Whether you're just getting started in process improvement, involved in a high-maturity project or somewhere in between, there's something for everyone. (<http://www.sei.cmu.edu/sepg/2008/>)

Discover models that will guide you through improving processes in your organization. Learn from experts in your field. Network with your peers. Share ideas and experiences. Hear real case studies that illustrate innovative solutions that really work-ones you can take back and apply in your organization for an immediate impact.

Register for SEPG North America today. Come to Tampa and find out how you can lead the wave of process improvement in your own organization.

Spotlight on Sponsors: Tech Discovery




The Spotlight is a regular feature of the SPINnaker. This feature helps you understand who are sponsors are. Maybe you or your company would like to sponsor Atlanta SPIN. (<http://www.atlantaspin.org/sponsorinfo.htm>)

TechDiscovery develops applications for world-class software and technology-based services companies – companies whose business depends on commercial-grade software delivered on time and on budget.

Our team's proven experience in building successful technology businesses provides the foundation for delivering a comprehensive set of software development services. Our TDFlex methodology leverages the learning of hundreds of projects in numerous industries, and provides our clients with a framework for success.

We're TechDiscovery... Capturing ideas. Delivering software.

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The Atlanta SPINnaker

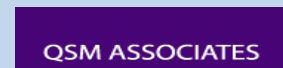
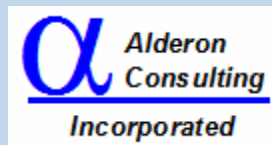
Email: newsletter@atlantaspin.org

Contributors to this issue:

- Stewart Forscher

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And our 18 Contributing Members!

Process Improvement Sites:**Software Engineering Information Repository**

<http://seir.sei.cmu.edu>, has over 30,000 registered users and is a forum used to contribute and exchange information about software engineering improvement activities, including CMMI.

The CMMI Process Improvement Yahoo! discussion group

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cmmi_process_improvement/ is a forum used to contribute and exchange ideas about CMMI-based improvement.

BSCW Shared Workspace <https://bscw.sei.cmu.edu/pub/bscw.cgi/0/79783> is a forum used to contribute and exchange CMMI-related materials.

Information courtesy of SEI Customer Relations. Find out more about SEI Membership online at

www.sei.cmu.edu/membership
customer-relations@sei.cmu.edu

About Atlanta SPIN, Incorporated

www.atlantaspin.org

The Atlanta SPIN organization was chartered in 1991. This group has been a force for software process improvement in the Atlanta area since then. The organization has a growing membership list that currently numbers 850+ members. The group typically meets every third Wednesday of the month. Our meetings typically attract audiences of 40 – 50 people. These meetings provide a forum for like-minded people, interested in learning from others and sharing their own experiences. There is time allowed before and after the meeting for networking among the participants, including a review from the audience of any job openings that are available. The Board, through its work with Sponsors, ensures that food and drinks are also available at no cost to the membership.