

Atlanta SPIN

Software & Systems Process Improvement Network

The Atlanta SPINaker

May 2008

Volume 3, Issue 5



Girish Seshagiri

Lessons Learned In Seamless Integration of CMMI, TSP, and PSP—Why All Three Are Needed

.Presented by Girish Seshagiri, Advanced Information Services Inc.

“Do you need to improve any more?” That was the question of the evening on April 16 as Girish Seshagiri opened his presentation to a full house at the Atlanta SPIN meeting. “Does your company need to improve?” The resounding opinion from the assembled group was “YES!” Girish responded with the proposition that, for companies engaged in software development all three SEI products are necessary: CMMI, TSP and PSP.

Quoting from the father of CMMI, Watts Humphrey, “In today’s marketplace, the principle focus is on cost, schedule, and function; quality is lost in the noise. This is unfortunate since poor quality performance is the root cause of most software cost and schedule problems.” This was quickly followed by a

discussion of the types of irrational behavior engaged in by both management and development professionals alike. Managers make unreasonable requests for early delivery dates and low costs and then accept schedule commitments when developers offer no evidence that they can meet those commitments. All this is a symptom of “Management Malpractice”: not having a top-management sponsored continuous improvement initiative in place.

Girish then presented a short overview and history of CMM and CMMI. This was followed by some dramatic charts showing the clear advantages to a company for instituting a CMMI based

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Next Meeting: May 21, 2008

Implementation Assurance: Quality in the Age of Packaged Software and SaaS

Michael Yudanin, Conflair

Time: 6:00 PM—8:30 PM

Location: La Quinta Inn & Suites,
6260 Peachtree-Dunwoody Road,
Atlanta, GA 30328

Spotlight on Sponsors: *Unsung Heroes and Stealth Sponsors*



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](#).

Over the years, we have thanked a number of individuals and companies who have helped Atlanta SPIN get where we are today. This month, we will take a look at some of those unsung heroes and stealth sponsors that must be recognized more than they have been.

Some, like BellSouth and Georgia Tech, helped us get started. Included in that group were some former SEI staff like Dawna Baird and Purvis Jackson, Mike

McCracken of Georgia Tech, Bill Graham of BellSouth and our own Jean Swank of GTRI and Larry Hyde who are currently on the Atlanta SPIN Board of Directors. Along the way, a number of companies have provided space for board meetings and general meetings. Some of those companies are Sun Microsystems, Oracle, Cox Enterprises, Microsoft, Roundbox Global and Georgia Tech.

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Lessons Learned In Seamless Integration of CMMI, TSP, and PSP— Why All Three Are Needed (Continued)

improvement program. The focus then shifted to the problems of CMMI including the underlying problem of CMMI focusing on WHAT to do and not providing much in the way of HOW to do it. What is needed is a CMMI level 5 process targeted at the individual!

The answer to this dilemma is the PSP – Personal Software Process. Girish described the content of the PSP course and how it is designed to have the software developer understand how to review their own work and develop a statistical basis for estimating their capability to do similar work in the future. Additionally, the developers understand their propensity to make certain types of errors and build a mechanism to catch those errors before they make it into testing. The advantage of having level 5 performance at an individual level was demonstrated with data from Girish's company over a period of more than 12 years. Now the problem becomes one of turning highly trained individuals into a smoothly functioning team.

Here is where the third element of the trio comes in: TSP – Team Software Process. Girish discussed the characteristics of “jelled teams.” These are teams that are comprised of highly trained individuals who have the added advantage of working closely together so that they function as more than just the sum of their individual parts. The TSP process is used to help the jelling process of the team and here is where the

performance really takes off. Girish showed some more data from his company. This time the data was stunning. The number of defects per thousand lines of code was almost nil even when compared to that of a company operating at CMMI maturity level 5. Additionally, the amount of schedule deviation went from over 100% to less than 8% and held at that level for over 10 years even with staff turnover taken into account. Cost performance was even better, at 4% over the same period (down from a high of 85%). The composition of the teams changed over 10 years but the performance persisted with the use of TSP.

Girish had several slides worth of lessons learned, far too much detail to recount here. For all the lessons you are invited to download his presentation from the Atlanta SPIN website. Just go to the Meeting Information page where you will find the slides for presentations over the last several years.

Summing up, Girish presented some quotes from real clients. The message is this - just because a company has been rated at CMMI Maturity Level 5 does not guarantee that they will perform consistently at that level. It may not even be necessary to implement CMMI first. Benefits may be better realized by implementing PSP and TSP before attempting to rollout CMMI. Certainly, it takes tools like TSP and PSP working together with CMMI to address implementation and institutionalization issues at all levels. Only then will you have highly trained individuals performing as a jelled team and achieving consistent Maturity Level 5 performance.

Spotlight on Sponsors: (Continued)

Many companies have signed up for either gold or platinum sponsorship levels. We continue to celebrate their involvement by putting their logo and web site links on our web site and newsletters, and introducing them at every meeting and event that we hold. Many individuals have also signed up as sponsors. We are grateful to all those who sponsor us through funding and will continue appreciating and recognizing them at meetings and in newsletter articles.

There is yet another group of individuals and companies that deserve our recognition. Those are the ones who have donated, or provided at a discount, goods and services that allow you to offer additional benefits to our members.

There are two publishing companies who have given us books to give away as door prizes at our monthly meetings. O'Reilly Media and their User Group Coordinator, Marsee Hennon have been supporting us for over five years by providing books to Atlanta SPIN. Many of these books are new titles, just hitting the streets. Their user group program provides books at a reduced rate and even will provide you with a free book in exchange for a review of the book. <http://www.oreilly.com>. Our other stealth sponsor in publishing is Pearson Education (www.pearson.com), an international media company with world-leading businesses in education, business information and consumer publishing. Pearson has been helping us for the last two years.

La Quinta has been our general meeting venue for more than a year. Ever since we outgrew our space at Oracle, La Quinta has provided us with a great meeting space at a very reasonable rate and with great service. Having La Quinta conveniently available in the area near Perimeter Mall is something to be grateful for. **La Quinta Inns & Suites Atlanta Perimeter Medical.** <http://www.lq.com>

Our newest unsung hero is Aldo's Italian Restaurant and owner / manager Alex Kazemi. The board has been able to meet monthly in a private room in this quaint Sandy Springs restaurant for no charge. We now hold Board meetings in a comfortable setting with the availability of a great meal, full bar, and wonderful service. Even if you are not having a meeting, try Aldo's for dinner one night and tell them that the Atlanta SPIN recommended them. <http://www.aldosofitaly.com/>

Finally, Software Engineering Institute (SEI), www.sei.cmu.edu, has been very generous in providing speakers and sending us various tokens to share with our members. We would like to thank Shane McGraw, the SPIN coordinator at SEI, who has been helping us in any way possible.

As we continue to provide you with the kind of meetings and presentations that you like, these unsung heroes and stealth sponsors, along with our platinum, gold and individual sponsors will continue to make all of this possible.

Upcoming Speakers

In the next few months we have secured some terrific speakers. Here are some of the confirmed speakers for the next few months:

- June — Michael Nearman, AGSI— “Overcoming Process Improvement Inertia”
- August — Fred Jewell, Accenture — “Applied Influence”
- November — Iraj Hirmanpour — “Testing Capability Model (TCM) - *What Is It, Why is It Needed, How Is It Used?*”
- A Special Halloween treat (no tricks) for our October meeting “Process Horror Stories” — We need your horror stories for this panel story telling session. Send your ideas and experiences to Newsletter@atlantaspin.org and you may be selected to share your story with the group.

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And our many 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.