

Atlanta SPIN

Software & Systems Process Improvement Network

The Atlanta SPINnaker

September 2008

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Fred Jewell

Applied Influence

Getting Things Done, Whether You Are In Charge Or Not

Fred Jewell, Accenture

In the August meeting, our members were treated to a topic slightly different from the normal process methodology fare. Fred Jewell’s topic was “Applied Influence – Getting Things Done, Whether You Are In Charge, Or Not”. It is a common situation that we all find ourselves in. More often than not, we are not in charge. But regardless of who is in charge, getting things done takes leadership. Everyone is capable of showing leadership. For the benefit of your project, more leadership is better than less.

Fred brought his daughter, Maddie, a freshman in high school, along for the presentation. She took on the role of time keeper and thoroughly enjoyed telling her dad when it was time for him to stop talking. Fred also brought a lot of anecdotes and personal experiences into the presentation. Some were even from his family like their game for discouraging the use of negative words.

Fred’s presentation started out addressing the concept of “being the person others want to help.” People have a natural desire to help others. By capitalizing on that desire you can

get a lot done. You have to convince people in order to have any success. You have to change an organization one person at a time. To do this, you need to get people to WANT to help you. First, you need to be respectful of others, their time and their talents. Don’t try to win an argument. It’s okay to be passionate but don’t be over passionate or you will scare people. Avoid embarrassing others by asking hard questions. Be careful about displaying your anger. It should be focused on the problem not the people. Be careful about speaking in the heat of passion. Sometimes it is better to write down our feelings and then come back to them later. Evaluate WHAT you are trying to say and HOW you are saying it. You will often re-write it. Always use positive words in order to come across in a positive light with a bonus of taking fewer words to get the point across. Using words like “not” and “never” take longer and leave the reader with a negative feeling.

Next, Fred went into relationship building. He stressed the importance of creating the

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Next Meeting: September 17, 2008



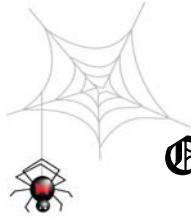
Fred Haigh

Process Improvement Alphabet Soup

Fred Haigh, AMERICAN SYSTEMS

Time: 6:00 PM—8:30 PM

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



Atlanta SPIN

October Horror Stories Presentation Guidelines



In the October meeting, you will have an opportunity to share your personal project horror story with the rest of our members. An Atlanta SPIN board member will moderate a panel of volunteer presenters. If you haven't already volunteered and wish to present, please contact a board member in person or via e-mail posted on the Atlanta SPIN web site. We have allocated 5-7 minutes for each presenter. Following the presentations, there will be Q&A, commiseration and lessons learned discussions. Besides having fun, the presenter should cover the following four areas.

Problem

Describe the problem. Was it technical, resource,

requirements, etc.

Action

What actions did you or the team initiate? Did the project continue on the death march or were steps taken to salvage the project?

Resolution

What was the final resolution of the problem? Did the actions help or hinder?

Lessons Learned

What lessons learned did you take away from the experience?



Applied Influence (Continued)

best first impression, mastering the introduction (remember their name), listening to the other person and playing the role of "talk show host" by letting the other person talk and share their knowledge and understanding of the situation. The next aspect of relationship building was asking for a favor. People like to be helpful: ask a small favor (ask to borrow a book) and admit when you admire something (ask for the name of their decorator). It opens doors and impresses people with your need for them. Adapt to the style and culture that you are in. Finally, remember important facts and events in the lives of others.

Next Fred shifted gears and discussed some tips on motivating action. Tips included eliminating tedium (make things simple for people), creating urgency (establish time limits), give choices but limit the choices to 2 or 3 and make it appear simple. Other ideas for motivating action were: make it THEIR idea (give credit to others), trade favors (if necessary) to get things done, manage objections by exploring options and problem boundaries, and be persistent.

Ensuring follow through involves several keys. Make them say it. By vocalizing commitments people are more likely to follow through. Help them visualize WHAT they are going to do. This puts more depth into the planning. Ask for a time commitment and follow up along the way. Let them know that you and the project are depending on their contribution by putting it on the critical path. Don't be afraid to say "Thank you". As a leader you have multiple responsibilities including looking for what's missing (understand what you are reviewing and what you would do), learning from others (if you don't know, ask!), making decisions based on data and facts and explaining how you made your decision, and taking responsibility for getting others to act (help them to succeed).

Finally, Fred observed that you are responsible for your organization, and you are also dependant on the actions of others. He recommended that you be courageous and bold. Most people get in trouble for being complacent.

Spotlight on Sponsors: International Institute for Software Testing

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](#).



International Institute for Software Testing
Promoting Disciplined Software Testing Practices

The International Institute for Software Testing (IIST) is an educational and professional development organization that has been founded to meet the following goal:

To promote a disciplined approach to software testing and to caution against ad hoc testing by non-qualified individuals and groups.

- To promote and provide education and certification of software testing professionals around the world.
- To create a pool of qualified software testing professionals to meet the needs of testing organizations.
- To provide assistance and guidance to members, both corporate and individuals, performing testing of all types of software systems.
- To provide a framework for assessing organizational testing practices and procedures.
- To partner with different software quality groups around

the world to assure continuity of information flow among testing professionals.

- To serve as a clearinghouse of services, methods, and tools supporting the discipline of software testing.
- To provide an open forum for discussing different testing issues.
- In order to follow its charter, IIST will rely on the support of its Founding Sponsors (organizations providing support to IIST during its first year of operation and every year thereafter). IIST is a membership-based organization that provides membership to organizations of all types. The direction and operation of IIST will be the responsibility of its Chairman and CEO with significant input from an Advisory Board. The Advisory Board will be formed of practitioners from the Founding Sponsor organizations as well as other invited practitioners and experts in the field.

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:

- September — Fred Haigh — “Process Improvement Alphabet Soup”
- October — 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
- November — Iraj Hirmanpour — “Testing Capability Model (TCM) - *What Is It, Why is It Needed, How Is It Used?*”

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International Institute for Software Testing
 Promoting Disciplined Software Testing Practices



And our many Contributing Members!



www.informit.com/usergroups

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.