

Atlanta SPIN

Software & Systems Process Improvement Network

The Atlanta SPINnaker

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Fred Haigh

Process Improvement Alphabet Soup Making Sense Out Of All Those Letters

Fred Haigh, AMERICAN SYSTEMS

“How many Process Improvement models or frameworks are you familiar with and do you know which one is best for your company?” The consensus from the crowd on Wednesday, September 17, was that while each person was familiar with one or more, there was a lot of confusion as to which was the best one to use in a specific situation. That was the starting point that our speaker Fred Haigh, Sr. Process Architect at AMERICAN SYSTEMS, had to deal with.

Fred started by outlining six of the most well known models. The range of models included CMMI (the development model with a brief mention of the Acquisition and Services models), ISO9000-2000, ITIL, CobiT, Six Sigma, and the Malcolm Baldrige Award. The companies that these models were suited for ranged from manufacturing to systems (hardware and software) development, and other businesses in virtually any industry.

Due to the broad scope of the models it was necessary to present profiles touching on a few specific aspects. Each profile covered a brief outline of the origins of the model, the concept

of certifications (how does anyone know if you are following the model), and what process areas are covered by the model. After covering the details of the profiles, Fred covered some concerns relating to where each model might be used.

First, Fred presented a table describing some typical environments where quality programs might be found. He included a few specific companies by name as appropriate to make the point that some companies that may be in one specific industry, as their primary focus, may have whole departments that are engaged in a very different business. For example, some retail businesses do a significant amount of internally used software development. For each environment Fred specified some models that might typically be used as a basis for a quality and process improvement program.

Next, Fred looked at coverage of the process area in the six models under discussion. He found that in some areas there was a lot of

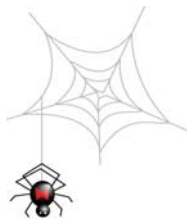
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Next Meeting: October 15, 2008

Halloween Special Meeting Process Improvement Horror Stories



Time: 6:00 PM—8:30 PM
Location: La Quinta Inn & Suites,
6260 Peachtree-Dunwoody Road,



Atlanta SPIN – Call for 2009 Board Members



We are getting to that time of year when people are thinking about their commitments and maybe considering making some changes in their activities for the new year: taking on new responsibilities or reducing them. It is also the time of year when some of our board members let us know that they will not be able to make as large a commitment next year as they made this year. While we would like to keep all of our valuable board members, sometimes it is inevitable that they move on.

In order to keep the board fresh and energized we have an annual “Call for New Board Members.” This is an open call for anyone who thinks that they would like to contribute some time and energy toward continuing to keep Atlanta SPIN a high quality organization. In addition to the typical officer positions that any organization would have (President, VP, Secretary,

Treasurer) we have needs in standing committees like Membership, Sponsorship, and Program (arranging speakers for general meetings). There are also other activities like Technology (keeping the web site up and running), our newsletter, marketing, and other special committees that are established for specific purposes like coordinating our annual signature event. If you are interested in observing an actual board meeting you are more than welcome. Just contact any board member for the date and time of the next meeting. Normally these meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month from 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm at Aldo’s restaurant in Sandy Springs.

If you think that we are talking about YOU, you might be right. The only way you can be sure is to step up and make yourself known to the board. Apply for membership on the board. Here is how to do it. Go to the www.AtlantaSPIN.org web site and look for the link on the home page “2009 Call for Board Members.” This link will take you to the details on submitting your information for consideration by the current board. All applications are due no later than midnight November 21, 2008. The Board will review all applications at the December Board of Directors meeting and notify all candidates of the results at the December 10, 2008 general meeting.

Process Improvement Alphabet Soup (Continued)

overlap: most models for example, dealt with Configuration Management and Change Management in some fashion. In other process areas there was little overlap. Another example came from The Malcolm Baldrige Award requirements in the area of Financial and Market Outcomes. This was found to be a major concern only in that model.

Next the subject of certifications was discussed in relation to all the models. Some have rigorous certification or rating programs to ensure an objective third party review of the enterprise. Others have no formal third party program and rely on self appraisal to determine compliance with the model practices.

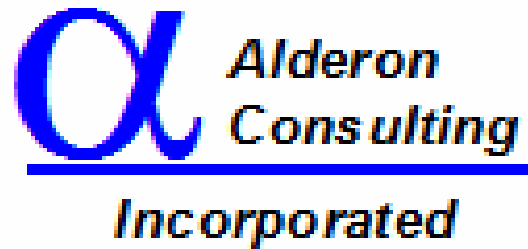
This all leads into the question of what is the best model for a company. Fred suggested that companies use a “roll your own” philosophy. For those who have no government or customer imposed model to deal with, they should take appropriate pieces from one or more models and institute a program that implants those “industry best practices” into

the culture. Fred suggests that companies use practices that add value and reduce waste in such a way that they support the corporate goals and objectives. Additionally, a strong measurements program was defined as a critical success factor. Without a solid metrics program you have no idea where you are and will find it hard to get anywhere reliably. Fred’s final piece of advice was to get help in the form of well seasoned and experienced people to build and sustain the program. These people can either be consultants (for a quick start) or hired-in full time employees with experience to give the program more permanent roots in the organization.

Fred completed the presentation by sharing some of his favorite books (which he brought in for the audience members to look through). He also included some web site links to help people get started in their own research into the best program for their company. A number of people were interested in questioning Fred after the meeting. Fred is available for additional questions by email at: fred.haigh@americansystems.com.

Spotlight on 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](#).



Alderon Consulting, Inc. (Alderon) is a leading world-wide provider of systems and software expertise to companies developing and delivering solutions meeting their customer's evolving needs. Alderon's mission is to help our clients increase their overall profitability by optimizing their business performance through the effective use of industry standard best practices. The company specializes in training and applying standard models (such as SW-CMM, CMMI, SA-CMM, PMBOK, eSCM, IEEE, Six Sigma, and others) and appraisal methods (including CBA IPI, SCE, SCAMPI, eSCM, and others). Expertise extends to the development and deployment of proprietary business models and benchmarking frameworks. Alderon is a Transition Partner of Carnegie Mellon University/Software Engineering Institute.

Founded by Bruce Duncil, Alderon leverages more than two decades experience in operations, engineering, quality, engineering management and project management. "Since 1994," Bruce notes, "executives, managers and practitioners have been enabled to effectively apply engineering and management principles to achieve their financial, customer, and internal business objectives."

Alderon's practice spans commercial, IT, government contractor, and research organizations at all maturity levels across a broad array of industries and markets. "Success always has and continues to be a direct result of placing achievement of client goals first and providing exemplary service based on leading expertise in adherence with our core principles and values."

To our clients, solving their customer's problems is the heart and soul of modern product development. Creating profitable solutions is often highly complex, with dynamic and tight cost and time constraints, and can span the globe. Uncompromising quality in both the solution and the delivery experience are paramount. "Alderon began with a vision to 'elevate state-of-the-practice to state-of-the-art'. This means," Bruce says, "helping our client individuals and teams learn the latest methods and put them quickly into effective practice. It's all about transferring capability to the client. Alderon is fully committed," he adds, "to ensuring that our clients compete successfully in the global marketplace."

Upcoming Speakers

In the next few months we have secured some terrific speakers. Here is our speaker and topic for November 2008.

- November — Iraj Hirmanpour — "Testing Capability Model (TCM) - *What Is It, Why is It Needed, How Is It Used?*"

Atlanta SPIN Board of Directors

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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.