

Atlanta SPIN

Software & Systems Process Improvement Network

The Atlanta SPINnaker

July 2009

Volume 4, Issue 7



Hank & Noel
Rainwater Kierans

Quality Assurance in Offshore Development Model

Hank Rainwater & Noel Kierans

Have you ever been assigned to a hopeless business situation? One where you knew you were doomed to fail? Then you could appreciate Hank's recent dilemma as a newly assigned Business Leader. But what he did about it to deliver promised results on schedule caused us SPIN members to reconsider what is possible!

Imagine being assigned to lead the replacement of a large main-frame system with a client server application. Nothing critical, just a financial system upon which a myriad of key customers were totally dependent. Why replace it? Because somebody thought the user screens looked outdated. Replace it by when? Next year guaranteed.

Not so tough, right? Conversion

projects happen all the time. One system goes live, carrying operations, while the other is decommissioned. Why in many parts, these types of projects are almost routine ... like heart by-pass surgery. But as Hank explained, his project posed a multi-dimensional challenge.

First there was the culture. He wasn't the first Leader appointed; he was third. The CEO and CIO had been routinely removed and replaced. And the organizational structure separated the CIO/IT function from the Business Owner. Mistrust and lack of communication were the order of the day. While Hank's position reported to the Business Owner, the CIO controlled both the IT Consulting Group and the Product

(Continued on page 2)

Inside this issue:

Quality Assurance in Offshore Development Model	1
Call for suggestions on Articles and Presentations	2
Demystify your CMMI Part 3 of 3	3
Atlanta SPIN Board Members	4
Atlanta SPIN Sponsors	4
About Atlanta SPIN	4

The July meeting is CANCELLED

Next Meeting: August 19, 2009

Crashing with the Nose Up: Building a collaborative Work Environment

J. Robert Crow

Time: 6:00 PM—8:30 PM
Location: La Quinta Inn & Suites,
6260 Peachtree-Dunwoody Road,
Atlanta, GA 30328

“Quality Assurance in Offshore Development Model ” (Continued)

(Continued from page 1)

Vendor through an intermediary Project Manager. The off-shore testing group – the group whose work would determine when the project could finally complete - reported into the Product Vendor at a lower level.

That led directly into Hank’s second challenge: the schedule. It had been arbitrary. Disconnects between the project plan and test plan, along with a complete lack of metrics, precluded the ability to predict closure. And on-shore problems were manifest in the off-shore organization.

And even the work scope was relatively undefined. The mainframe’s user manual was the only source of system requirements. Myriad user, customer, third-party and other system interfaces were basically undefined. If you thought engineering was tough, Hank all but convinced us not to try re-engineering!

To say that morale was flagging was an understatement. Contributing to that was the fact that fewer people wanted to work on what was considered yesterday’s technology when the possibilities of web development beckoned. But it was when the off-shore team asked for the on-shore team’s system (integration) tests, that Hank realized his people didn’t have the skills necessary to successfully complete the job. Faced with unbreakable contracts and a lack of

motivation for the Product Vendor to change the off-shore model, Hank coined the phrase “bureaucratic viscosity” to describe the resistance to change.

Multi-dimensional problems usually require multi-dimensional solutions. Remedies included aligning the project and test plans and instituting test metrics. He amended the schedule to include interim releases with defined requirements. Perhaps most important, he created an atmosphere of coaching and good people and process management. In short, Hank described implementing management BASICS. Business Acumen meant equipping the staff with the knowledge and training to succeed. His Strategy was to embrace a vision of success to motivate change. Innovation led to leaning processes and realigning assignments. And Common Sense meant only expecting what is inspected, measured and stewarded.

With the aligned plan and revised schedule, progress could be measured to enable effective corrective action. Metrics replaced emotional assessments and decisions became fact-based. Measuring off-shore and on-shore ROI led to the ability to shift work and priorities to meet deadlines. Distributing metrics to teams and stakeholders led to better communication and the friendly competition improved morale.

Maybe the next time you are faced with an overwhelming challenge, Hank’s BASICS will inspire you to his level of success!

Call for Suggestions on Articles and Presentations

We regularly seek articles and related information that would be of interest to our readers and members. If you have a suggestion for an article please let us know by sending an email to “newsletter@atlantaspin.com”. Or better yet, if you would like to contribute an article of interest to our group, please contact us at the same email address and let’s talk about it.

Each month, the Atlanta SPIN meetings and newsletters strive to deliver real world practical approaches that can strengthen one’s abilities to succeed in the evolving and often challenging domain of software and systems development. Your feedback and ideas on the programs and supporting newsletter articles is vital and appreciated; it will help us to continue to deliver the valuable information you need for your personal career growth .We want to hear from you!

Demystify your CMMI

By Bruce Duncil

In our previous articles we discussed the history of the CMMI® and the three models derived from that work. In this final installment we discuss each constellation in a little more detail as well as give some tips on applying these models in your business.

There are obvious degrees of overlap, potential synergy as well as disconnection, between CMMI-DEV and CMMI-SVC. Both constellations use many of the same terms, some of which have been modified.

A good example for this potential confusion is the term “project”. In CMMI-DEV, a project is defined to be “a managed set of interrelated resources which delivers one or more products to a customer or end user”. While that definition was retained in CMMI-SVC, the following clarification was added: “A project has a definite beginning (i.e., project startup) and typically operates according to a plan”. This de-emphasizes the idea that a project, at least in a service context, should have a definite ending (delivery), but emphasizes instead the intent that the project must satisfy the service agreement with the customer.

Similarly, the term “service” has the same meaning in both CMMI-DEV and CMMI-SVC: “a product that is intangible and non-storable”. This, too, can be a source of confusion. In practical use, a CMMI-DEV service is more likely to be an engineering, project management or related service that fits well within the framework of a larger development project. A vendor, for example, would provide a design service for a development or integration company, producing designs that could then be implemented in software and/or hardware. In a CMMI-SVC environment, however, the concepts of capability and availability management, incident resolution and prevention, and service continuity are much more geared to volume, repetitive services such as managing a help-desk or monitoring system performance typically provided by an IT or operations organization. Applying those concepts, indeed establishing and managing such systems, in an engineering services environment can easily lead to confusion at best, and unnecessary overhead simply for model compliance sake at worst.

What’s the best approach to deciding whether CMMI can

help your business? Start with your business. Do you develop products and services? Do you acquire significant products and services from suppliers? Or does your company provide a routine set of services to customers? If so, become familiar with the affiliated constellation and its associated Process Areas. Review your current methods and practice, as well as the effectiveness of your results, against the models, their expected practices and required goals. Use the underlying informative material, including elaborations, sub-practices, typical work products, and examples to aid your understanding for context around the model practice and goal statements. Prioritize which of the models and Process Areas could help most achieve the business results you want and expect. Look for potential solutions to real problems that can bring lasting benefit, not installing overhead and systems for the sake of compliance. Then implement an effective program to improve your associated processes.

Once you know where you are and where you want to go, all it takes is discipline to harness the motivation to plan, implement and follow-through to see it happen.

Major References:

Software Engineering Institute. *The Capability Maturity Model: Guidelines for Improving the Software Process*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1995.

CMMI Product Team. *CMMI for Development, Version 1.2 (CMU/SEI-2006-TR-008)*. Pittsburgh, PA: Software Engineering Institute, Carnegie Mellon University, August 2006.

CMMI Product Team, *CMMI for Acquisition, Version 1.2 (CMU/SEI-2007-TR-017)*, Pittsburgh, PA: Software Engineering Institute, Carnegie Mellon University, November 2007.

CMMI Product Team, *CMMI for Services, Version 1.2 (CMU/SEI-2009-TR-001)*, Pittsburgh, PA: Software Engineering Institute, Carnegie Mellon University, February 2009.

Software Engineering Institute. *Software Acquisition Capability Maturity Model (SA-CMM) Version 1.03 (CMU/SEI-2002-TR-010, ADA399794)*. Pittsburgh, PA: Software Engineering Institute, Carnegie Mellon University, March 2002.

International Organization for Standardization and International Electrotechnical Commission. *ISO/IEC 20000-1 Information Technology—Service Management, Part 1: Specification; ISO/IEC 20000-2 Information Technology—Service Management, Part 2: Code of Practice*, 2005.

IT Governance Institute. *CobiT 4.0*. Rolling Meadows, IL: IT Governance Institute, 2005.

Atlanta SPIN Board of Directors

Director	Role
Bruce Duncil	President
Fred Haigh	Vice President
Mike Sweeney	Treasurer
Bill Reister	Secretary
Scott Banks	Director, Membership
Tarun Talwar	Director, Programs
Gray Karnes	Director, Marketing
Donna Simmons	Director, Sponsorship
Vivian Viverito	Director, Technology Services
Stephen Burlingame	Director, Logistics
Abi Salimi	Director at Large
Larry Hyde	Director at Large

The Atlanta SPINnaker

Email: newsletter@atlantaspin.org

Contributor to this issue:

- Bruce Duncil

Atlanta SPIN Sponsors

They Make Our Efforts Possible!

Platinum SPONSORS**Gold SPONSORS****Other SPIN Contributors**

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-relationships@sei.cmu.edu

About Atlanta SPIN, Incorporated

www.atlantaspin.org

The Atlanta SPIN organization was chartered in 1994. 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. Atlanta SPIN is a 501C3 non-profit corporation. Your contributions may be tax deductible and qualify for corporate matching contributions from your company.