



Tips for the Process Lead and Cohorts

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Background



- Projects usually are under schedule pressure from management to simultaneously "get the Level n" while producing top quality products and providing excellent customer service
- Senior management has the pressure of achieving a Maturity Level yesterday, at minimal to no cost, not using overhead dollars, and with minimal impact on project resources
- In short, the Process Lead must pull off a miracle



Scope



HELPING YOU ACHIEVE YOUR STRATEGIC BUSINESS GOALS

This presentation covers:

- Common obstacles encountered by Process Leads
- Applicable organizational change management approaches
- How to get the project staff engaged and productive in implementing the process
- How to obtain strong management buy-in

The principles addressed here can also be applied to ISO implementation and other organizational initiatives







- Why is the industry average 18-24 months for achieving CMMI level 2?
 - Why so long?
- What can be done to reduce the time?









- The CMMI is complex and challenging, but that's not why it takes so long
- The challenge is changing the organization's way of operating
- The Process Lead can:
 - Manage the organizational change aspects that you can control
 - Provide information about what is not in your hands
 - Be clear about what you have no impact on
 - Be clear about what management needs to do



Process Lead Skill Set



- To facilitate organizational change, the Process Leader needs:
 - A strong personality
 - Management, technical, and interpersonal communication skills
 - In-depth knowledge of the CMMI
- In fact, CMMI expertise may be the easiest part of the job
- The more challenging aspects of a Process Leader's job are:
 - Staying organized, positive, and decisive
 - Communicating a lot of information to a time challenged, other focused audience
 - Knowing when to spend money and when not to, when to get training or not, when to call the consultant or not
 - Getting executive management's active involvement and leadership regarding CMMI implementation







- The Process Lead
- The Sponsor
- The Organization
- The Consultant





Common Obstacles - The Sponsor

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The Sponsor:

- May have unrealistically high expectations of the process lead
- Not leading the CMMI effort by example, no time for CMMI, always on travel, not taking minutes in their meetings, relies on the grass roots effort
- Holds the wrong person, the process lead, responsible for implementation (responsibility without authority)
- Sets a a bad example, e.g., the sponsor won't follow the process, then no one else does either
- Views CMMI process as separate from the everyday business
- Doesn't have sufficient funding and/or staff for PI
- Won't acknowledge the issues, is defensive, ...
- Sponsor won't:
 - Make decisions
 - Implement change
 - Discuss process status at the senior status meetings
 - Re-organize when needed
 - Assign people to key positions such as QA and CM



Common Obstacles- Process Lead

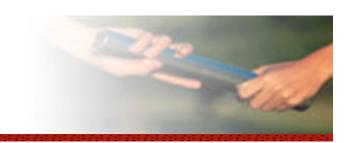
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The Process Lead:

- Has no authority
- Doesn't or won't use the consultant in order to save money
- Develops a "unique" scale for measuring progress, not necessarily consistent with the CMMI
- Reports "Everything is on track" even though it isn't, to save face
- Doesn't heed consultant's advice, guidance, and direction
 - Uses the consultant only after the fact, to review what the process lead has done



Common Obstacles - The Organization



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The Organization (in general):

- Roles and responsibilities of the organization are not clearly defined
- Have tried process improvement for the past 3 years
- "My last company"...
- "We have great processes, they're just not documented"
- Resources are limited and have competing responsibilities



Common Obstacles - The Consultant

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The Consultant:

- May have a bad attitude
 - "Do everything I tell you and don't ask questions"
 - "I'm the consultant, therefore I know all"
 - "One interpretation is correct, mine"
 - "Fix with the same methods that I have always used"
- The consultant doesn't understand your unique organization
- Limited budget for using the consultant





Common Organizational Obstacles - Excuses

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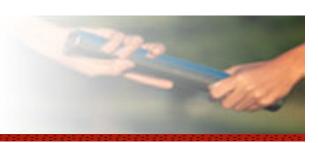
Excuses voiced from throughout the organization:

- "The last consultant said that we didn't have to document anything and we could still get a level 2"
- "You said..." (and proceed to conveniently misquote you and take everything you've said out of context)
- "I'm a project management/CM/QA expert. I was on a project where it was done"
- "You don't understand my project, we're very complex"
- Every project is "special"; "CMMI doesn't apply to my project"
- "Our customer won't let us do CMMI; our customer won't pay for QA; our customer doesn't want us spending our time doing CMMI" and so on...









- Many issues are straightforward and can be addressed directly
 - With the sponsor
 - With the consultant
 - With the individuals in the organization or in group training
- Others may be political or sensitive
 - A re-org or buy-out is about to happen
- Having the courage to address issues can be difficult
- Not doing it can lead to negative consequences, e.g., never achieving Level 2, getting to Level 2 with minimal to no ROI
- Some issues are better left alone
 - Choose your battles



Tips for Overcoming the Obstacles - Sponsor

- Plan for meetings with your sponsor during the first couple of months to address and resolve any organizational obstacles
 - Obtain (request) required resources
 - CM Lead
 - Quality Manager
 - Ensure you have the time to lead
 - Ensure you have the appropriate skill set, get CMMI training
 - Ensure you have the authority or work closely with those that do in order to affect change
- Succinctly document your key points before speaking with the sponsor and executive team
 - Respect their time



Tips for Overcoming the Obstacles - Process Lead

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Problem: Responsibility without authority

Solution:

- Do accept responsibility for developing processes and providing implementation guidance
- Don't accept responsibility for actions that you don't have the authority to achieve, such as implementation
 - Management must take the responsibility for implementation
- Don't try to change the organization, this is the sponsor's responsibility; provide recommendations for changing the organization
- Be clear in your process improvement plan, schedule, and presentations what you can and cannot do



Tips for Overcoming the Obstacles - Process Lead

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Problem: Lack of management buy-in

Solution:

- Make expectations clear; not the generic "management must buy-in"
 - Have senior management hold middle management accountable for process change on their projects
 - Report on their own progress and be held accountable
- Provide management with succinct tasks, not fuzzy tasks
- Provide management with templates and checklists for what tasks they need to do and by when they need to do them
- Provide the templates for middle management to use for reporting and the agenda for senior management
- Show dependencies on the schedule and the CMMI appraisal date if senior management doesn't hold middle management accountable for implementation



Tips for Overcoming the Obstacles - Organization

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Problem: Projects try to opt-out of CMMI

Solution: Clearly define what the scope is and make your position known

- Work with the sponsor to clearly and concisely define the scope of the CMMI effort
- Work with the sponsor for "one voice" message
 - "All projects are special, but, ... all projects must follow CMMI"
- Address project implementation details and issues on a case by case basis
 - Sit down with each project manager and identify their issues and challenges
 - Customer
 - Lifecycle phase
 - Type of project, whether maintenance, development, partial software, etc.
 - Work together with the manager to develop an implementation strategy for their project



Tips for Overcoming the Obstacles - Organization

- Problem: Overly committed resources
- Solution: Plan for and use process staff wisely
 - Identify hours and dates that you require from process staff and work the schedule with them as well as their management
 - Start with a detailed schedule and personnel requirements
 - Arrange an escalation and resolution process to address availability issues;
 don't wait for them to happen, we know it will, plan for it and manage to it
 - Don't baby-sit the process staff; use the process, use your steering committee
 - Meet with your process staff regularly and use an agenda and action item list
 - Keep the action item list up to date and accessible, not hidden on a directory where only you know where it is
 - Report on individuals' progress, give them credit, and report on their lack of progress and impact to the schedule and milestones if individuals aren't available



Tips for Overcoming the Obstacles - Consultant

- When you can do things internally, e.g., editing processes for grammar, then do so
- Use your consultant for guidance and direction
 - Collaborate with your consultant
 - Ask questions and listen to the answers
- Manage the process improvement program
 - Use the CMMI principles
 - Take minutes and track action items
 - Don't rely on the consultant for basic project management of the process improvement program; that is your job







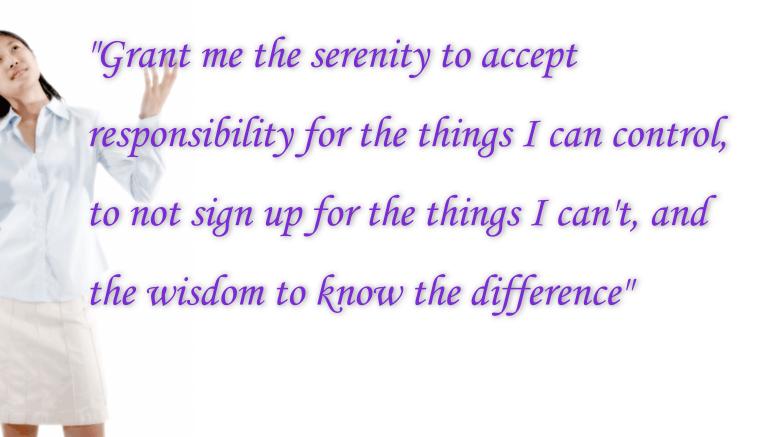


- Not only must you know the CMMI and your organization, you need to be a good team facilitator with good leadership skills
- Knowing the obstacles and managing them early in the program can make the difference between meeting a schedule or not, and can alter the environment from an adversarial uphill battle to a challenging but rewarding success story
- Make it easy for management and staff to know what needs to be done, when it needs to be done, and who has to do it
- Use the CMMI principals to manage the process improvement program
- Despite the challenges a Process Leader must overcome, using common sense and a little chutzpah, success is very achievable



The Process Lead's Invocation











Comskil is a woman owned small business headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland

- Galina Knopman, President
 - SEI authorized lead SCAMPI and CBA IPI appraiser
 - SEI authorized Intro to CMMI and CMMII instructor
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 - Sales
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