

Do's and Don'ts of Process Improvement

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March, 2004



Acknowledgments

Terms like these are often used in the following material:

CMM® Framework IDEALSM Model

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"Primary" Lessons Learned

- Secure Senior Management Sponsorship
- Treat SPI as a Project
- Engage Internal Staff.



OK, what now?

- Yeah, but what do we DO?
- And is there anything we should AVOID doing?



Caveat

- Weinberg's Organizational Dichotomy
 - No two organizations are entirely the same
 - No two organizations are completely different
- Weinberg's Law of Raspberry Jam
 - The broader you spread it, the thinner it gets
- This tutorial covers 32 specific Do's and Don'ts

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- Assume about a 20% "raspberry jam" rate
- The rest is intended for "a friend of yours."



Do's and Don'ts

- Senior Management
- **CMM(I)**
- Measurement
- Process
- Behavioral Change
- •(K)PA Specific
- Message from our Sponsor

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Do's and Don'ts: Senior Management

"Sponsorship" is nice, *Proactive Leadership* is better!

- Don't Treat the Level as the Goal
- Do Establish "Alignment Principle"
- Do Take Time Getting Faster
- Do Align the Reward System
- Do Ask Different Questions
- Do/Don't Lead by Example



Don't Treat the Level as the Goal

- What are you <u>really</u> trying to achieve?
 - -What is the business imperative?
 - -How do your customers evaluate your products?
 - -Why do potential customers keep buying your competitor's products?
- Which would be better:
 - -Achieve Level 2, but NOT the business objectives
 - -Achieve the business objectives, but NOT Level 2?
- So what's the REAL goal?



Don't Treat the Level as the Goal

- Maximize the VALUE, not the LEVEL!
 - -Problem: Focusing on the level establishes conflict between the SPI project and the software projects

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- -Solution: Focusing on the <u>business imperative</u> produces harmony
 - Well, at least it reduces the conflict!
 - Lends credibility to the SPI program
 - Changes discussion from "if" to "how."



Do Establish "Alignment Principle"

- Faster, Better, Cheaper pick ONE!
 - -If you could improve in only 1 area, which would it be?
 - Which "number one priority" is really on top?
 - Remember Deming's "constancy of purpose"?



Do Establish "Alignment Principle"

- Example:
 - -"Achieve an annual, sustainable 10% reduction in field reported defects without degrading current levels of cost, schedule, and functional variance."
- Align business, project, and SPI goals
 - -SPI becomes "Software Project Improvement"
- Communicate this broadly
- Focus with a passion!



Do Take Time Getting Faster

- Why would your customer believe 6 months when they don't believe 8?
 - -Do YOU believe it?
 - -Have you seen the plan?
 - -Is it credible?
 - -Remember: A wish is NOT a plan!
- How will the troops respond to this goal?

 $12 \hspace{1.5cm} \hbox{Do's and Don'ts-v1.0}$

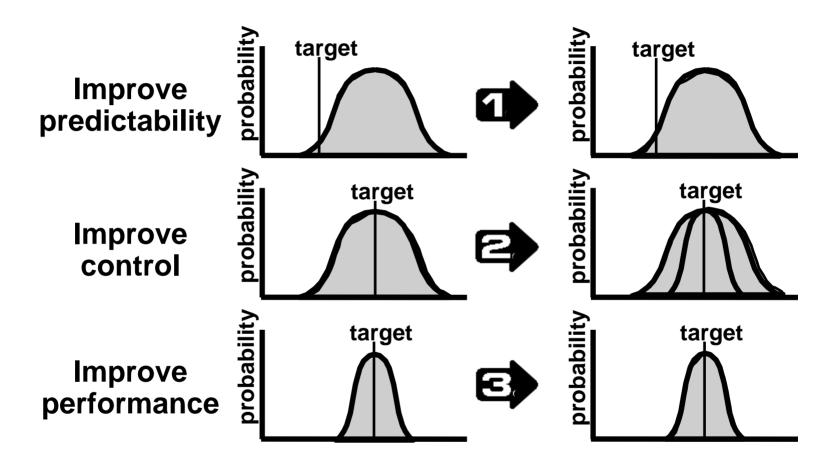


Do Take Time Getting Faster

- Despite what they SAY, most customers WANT predictability they want to <u>believe</u>
 - -Applies equally well to:
 - Internal customers (Product Mgt / Marketing)
 - External customers
- Prerequisite: enhance the credibility of your estimates
 - The troops want to be believed!
 - -It's a matter of professional integrity.



Improving Capability



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Do Align the Reward System

- What behavior do you reward today?
 - -Who received the last few achievement awards?
 - -Why did they receive them?
 - -Why do people *perceive* they received them?
 - Perception is reality to the perceiver
 - -Are the reward system and the Alignment Principle aligned?



Do Align the Reward System

- The behavior you reward is the behavior you get
 - -Stop rewarding process arson and fire fighting
 - -Start rewarding disciplined planning & execution

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- Not all rewards are monetary
 - -Atta-boys
 - -Success stories published
 - -Executive recognition
 - -Promotions
- But money's nice too!



Do Ask Different Questions

- What do you ask about in project reviews today?
 - –Is the project on schedule?
 - –Is the project on budget?
 - -Whose fault is it?
 - -Why don't I see anybody in here on Saturday?
- Do you ask any questions related to process or process improvement?

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Do Ask Different Questions

- The power of the executive question:
 - -Management can:
 - influence behavior by asking different questions
 - change behavior by insisting on getting the answers!
- Try asking:
 - -Is SPI helping you achieve our alignment principle?
 - -What improvements are you piloting?
 - -What SPI suggestions have you made recently?
 - -What are the pain points in the current way of doing things?



Do/Don't Lead By Example

- What are <u>YOU</u> doing to become more process disciplined?
 - -Are any of your processes documented?
 - -Does anyone verify that you are following them?

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- -Are you trying to improve them over time?
- Are <u>you</u> sending the message, "Do as I say, not as I do"?



Do/Don't Lead By Example

- Consider documenting the Organizational Commitment Process first
 - -"How does our organization commit to doing work on behalf of a customer?"
 - -Involve peers in Marketing/Product Management
 - -Pilot the process
 - -Have SQA verify adherence
- Demonstrate <u>your personal commitment</u> to process discipline and process improvement
- Sponsorship is nice; proactive leadership is better!



Exercise

- Do's and Don'ts: Senior Management
 - **–Don't** Treat the Level as the Goal
 - -Do Establish "Alignment Principle"
 - -Do Take Time Getting Faster
 - -Do Align the Reward System
 - **–Do Ask Different Questions**
 - -Do/Don't Lead by Example
- What now?
 - -Which would help <u>your</u> organization the most?
 - -What are you going to do when you get back?
 - -Are there other Senior Mgt Do's and Don'ts?



Do's and Don'ts

- Senior Management
- **CMM(I)**
- Measurement
- Process
- Behavioral Change
- •(K)PA Specific
- Message from our Sponsor



Do's and Don'ts: CMM(I)

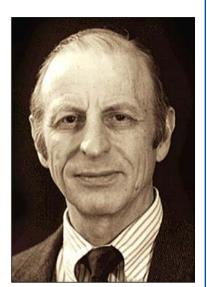
"All models are wrong; some models are useful"

- Don't Treat the CMM(I) as the Bible
- Don't Train the Masses on CMM(I)
- Do Become a Stronger Maturity Level 1
- Don't Skip Over Maturity Level 2
- Don't Use Appraisals for Diagnosis
- Don't Use the Continuous Representation
- Don't Use the Staged Representation



Don't Treat the CMM(I) as the Bible

- Does Watts really look that much like Moses?
 - -The CMM(I) is a good book but it's not THE good book!
 - -1000+ suggested changes submitted



- It's just a model!
 - -Goals sound engineering/management principles
 - -Practices one way to accomplish the goals
 - -Subpractices insight into the practices.



Don't Treat the CMM(I) as the Bible

- Don't have one policy per (K)PA!
 - -Apply CMM(I) with your brain in "ON" position
 - -Consider policies for:
 - Project Management Stuff
 - Engineering Stuff
 - Process Stuff
 - -Write the policy LAST
- Look elsewhere for additional guidance
 - -IEEE standards, ITIL, ISO, Baldridge
 - -Books, periodicals, employees, Dilbert, etc.



Don't Train the Masses on CMM(I)

- Have you heard the expressions:
 - -Here we go again?
 - -The next silver bullet?
 - -Yet another flavor of the month?
 - -This too shall pass?
- Have you ever read the CMM(I) like a novice?
 - -"System requirements allocated to software"?
 - -"Software process database"?
 - -"Organization(al) Process Focus"?
 - -"Instantiation"???



Don't Train the Masses on CMM(I)

- What should you do?
 - -Train the SEPG on the CMM(I)
 - -Train Process Action Teams on relevant portions
 - -Train the unwashed masses on THEIR process
 - -Consider providing CMM(I) orientation after:
 - Initial value has been proven
 - Momentum has been established
- Translate CMM(I)ese into local jargon
 - -In order to influence behavior, folks have to understand it!

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Do Become a Stronger Level 1

- How many Process Action Team do you have?
 - -Do you have a PAT for each of the Level 2 KPAs?
 - Is your "process pain" equally distributed?
 - Can projects absorb all of these concurrent changes?
- Are the project managers, the SEPG's customers, actively involved in establishing SPI requirements and priorities?



Do Become a Stronger Level 1

- Treat Level 1 as a continuum, not a point value
 - -Improve in a few areas to gain:
 - Experience
 - Credibility
 - Momentum
 - Process discipline
 - -One or two improvements per target audience
 - -It's OK to improve in non-CMM(I) areas
- It's the education, not the degree, that makes you smarter.



Don't Skip Over Level 2

- Level 2 approach:
 - -Document the "as is" practices
 - -Basis for improvement and sharing good practice
- There is no "CMM(I) Level 2 In-a-Box"
 - -It's not the process documentation, Stupid!
 - -The process documentation is NOT the process
- •Believe it or not, it's a BEHAVIORAL model.



Don't Use Appraisals for Diagnosis

- Diagnosis implies sickness/disease
 - -Nobody enjoys going to the doctor
- An appraisal should be more like a health check
 - -"Health" is our overall feeling of well-being
 - Many people do enjoy going to the health club
 - -Assume that the patient is already healthy
 - "Seeking opportunities to make the organization even better than it already is"
 - Assume that the patient wants to get even healthier
 - -However, IHEAL sounds worse than IDEAL!

Don't Use Appraisals for Diagnosis

- It's not about levels, it's about capability
 - -Process improvement is a *tactical* approach to achieve a *strategic* business objective
 - -When the map and the terrain disagree, always believe the terrain
 - The process documentation is the map
 - The process as performed is the terrain
 - -Alternatively:
 - The level is the map
 - The behavior is the terrain.

Don't Use the Staged Representation Don't Use the Continuous Representation

- Staged representation
 - -Prescribed ordering with proven results
 - -Organizational change model
- Continuous Representation
 - -Feel the pain/fix the pain
 - -More granular level of information
 - -Encouragement to consider quantitative management in any/all process areas
- Don't use either Do use both.



Maturity Level 2 Example

	Staged at	1/1/03						
	Maturity	MSA	1Q04	2Q04		3Q04	4Q(04
	Level	Act	Plan	Plan	Act	Plan	Plan	Act
Project Mgt:								
PP	2	2	2	2		2	2	
PMC	2	1	1	2		2	2	
SAM	2	0	1	1		2	2	
Engineering:								
RM	2	1	2	2		2	2	
Support:								
СМ	2	2	2	2		2	2	
PPQA	2	2	2	2		2	2	
MA	2	0	0	1		1	2	

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Maturity Level 3 Example

	Staged at	1/1/04												
	Maturity	MSA	1Q04	2Q04		3Q04	4Q04		1Q05	2Q05		3Q05	4Q(05
	Level	Act	Plan	Plan		Plan	Plan		Plan	Plan			Plan	
Dunnan Mad	LOVOI	ACL	1 Idii	1 Iaii	ACI	1 Idii	1 Idii	ACL	ı ıaıı	1 Idii	ACL	1 Idii	1 Idii	ACL
Process Mgt:														
OPF	3	1	1	2		2	2		2	3		3	3	
OPD	3	0	1	1		1	2		2	2		3	3	
OT	3	1	1	1		1	2		2	2		3	3	
Project Mgt:														
PP	2	2	2	2		3	3		3	3		3	3	
PMC	2	1	1	2		2	2		3	3		3	3	
SAM	2	0	1	1		2	2		2	3		3	3	
IPM	3	0	0	0		0	1		1	1		2	3	
RskM	3	1	1	1		1	1		1	2		2	3	
ISM	3	0	0	0		0	1		1	2		2	3	
Engineering:														
RM	2	1	2	2		2	2		3	3		3	3	
RD	3	1	2	2		2	2		2	3		3	3	
TS	3	1	1	1		1	1		1	2		2	3	
PI	3	1	1	1		1	1		2	2		2	3	
Ver	3	1	1	1		1	1		2	2		3	3	
Val	3	0	0	1		1	1		2	2		3	3	
Support:														
СМ	2	2	2	2		2	2		3	3		3	3	
PPQA	2	2	2	2		3	3		3	3		3	3	
MA	2	0	0	1		1	2		2	2		3	3	
DAR	3	0	0	0		1	1		1	2		2	3	

 $35 \hspace{1.5cm} \hbox{Do's and Don'ts - v1.0}$



Do's and Don'ts

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Do's and Don'ts: Measurement

"In God we trust, all others bring data"

- Do Employ Basic Measures NOW!
- Don't Collect Data You Don't Use
- Do Enhance Data Integrity



Picture by Bill Riddle (Used with permission)

Do's and Don'ts - v1.0



Do Employ Basic Measures NOW!

- You don't have a current baseline?
 - —If you don't start now, you'll be saying the same thing two years from now
 - -Remember saying it two years ago?!
- What to measure?
 - -Look to
 - The Alignment Principle
 - The goals of the process improvement program
 - -Defects, effort, schedule.

Do Employ Basic Measures NOW!

- There is no physics in software
 - -You can't say, "It can't be done"
 - -You should be able to say, "We can't do it"
- Management's gut is typically bigger than yours.

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Don't Collect Data You Don't Use

- Do you have "write-only" databases?
 - -Do you use your:
 - Historical data to improve your estimates?
 - Inspection and risk data to detect trends?
 - Etc.
- Are your people "surveyed to death"?
 - -Are your surveys valid?
 - -Do things change based on the results?
 - Would the survey participants answer the same way?



Don't Collect Data You Don't Use

- Use it or lose it!
 - -Data collection is an expensive investment
 - -There is no ROI if the data is not used
- Don't conduct appraisals if nothing is to change

- -Same for Employee Satisfaction Surveys, etc.
- Better yet USE THE DATA!



Do Enhance Data Integrity

- Data =>Information =>Action/Decisions =>Results
 - -Many organizations have "numbers", not data
 - -Many others have "stuff", not even numbers
- Define data for consistency
 - -Operational definition or some other technique
 - Unambiguous definitions
 - -Automate data collection whenever possible.



Do Enhance Data Integrity

- Track actuals at the same level you estimate
 - -Don't throw darts in the dark
 - -Track actuals to *motivate* corrective action
- Providers of data must be consumers of the data
 - -WIIFM?
 - -Predictability/control/professional integrity/\$100
- Adopt Grady's Rules of Data Etiquette
 - -Private vs. public data
 - -Don't misuse the data.



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Do's and Don'ts: Process

It's NOT the process documentation, Stupid!

- Don't Over-Engineer Processes
- Don't Target Mega-Projects First
- Do Standardize Process, Not Procedure
- Do Establish a Process Architecture
- Don't Make Gurus Write Processes
- Do Think "Good" Not "Best" Practice



Don't Over-Engineer Processes

- Engineers thrive on detail & elegance
- The "accordion effect" may be unavoidable
 - -Typically start with very little in place
 - -Develop thick process
 - Generate consensus
 - Train personnel
 - -Developed abridged versions
 - Thin to win!
 - Experienced practitioner's cheat sheet

- SQA/PPQA's review checklist
- "Decomplexification."



Don't Over-Engineer Processes

- Differentiate between:
 - -Process documentation
 - -Training material
- Don't give Process Action Teams too much time

- -Parkinson's Law is sure to creep in
- Have "good case examples" for guidance.



- Many groups build the "standard process" to address their largest projects
 - -Theory is: easier to eliminate, than to add
 - -Problem: Projects have to "justify" scaling down
 - -Question: If it were built small=>large, would it be fundamentally different?

 $48 \hspace{1.5cm} \hbox{Do's and Don'ts - v1.0}$

Don't Target Mega-Projects First

- Build thin process layer for medium projects
 - -Scrutinize/rationalize changes as it's scaled up
 - -Scale to accommodate additional:
 - Complexity
 - Coordination
 - Communication
 - Control
- Remember that the process serves the projects, not vice versa!

Do Standardize Process, Not Procedure

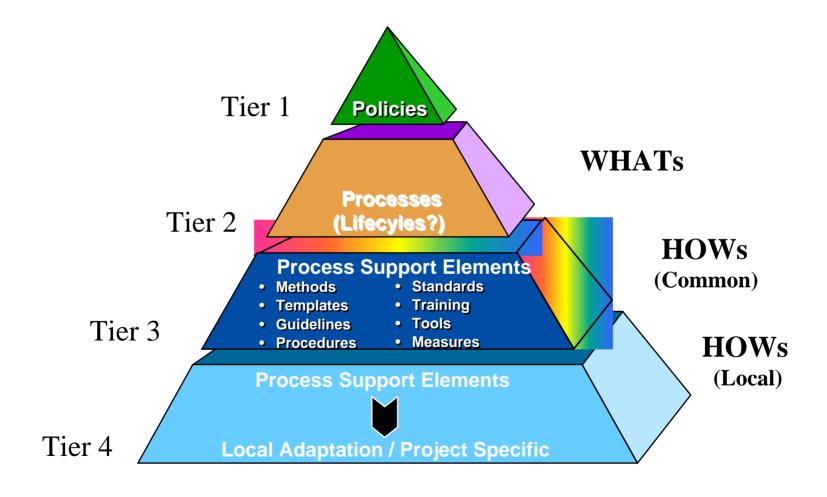
- Level 3: Organization Std Software Process
 - -Process defines "what" is done
 - -Procedure defines "how" it is done
- Localized procedures make sense for different:
 - -Technologies/environments
 - -Size/complexity of projects
 - -Practices that are achieving success!
- Level 3 requires standardized <u>processes</u>, not <u>procedures</u>!

Do Establish a Process Architecture

- Organizes process elements
 - -Policies
 - -Processes
 - -Process support elements
- Assists with navigation
- Leads to common process-related jargon.



Process Architecture



Do's and Don'ts - v1.0

Don't Make Gurus Write Processes

- •SEPG can interview the guru
 - -Have them "think out loud" as they work
 - -Generate a rough draft of the current process
 - -Work with the guru to sand down rough edges
- Tech writers can apply doc standards/packaging
 - -Present tense
 - -Active voice
 - -Each step begins with responsible role
 - -Standard acronyms/roles, no split infinitives, etc.



Don't Make Gurus Write Processes

- Subject process element to peer review
 - -Involve other subject matter experts
 - -Changes "your process" to "our process"
 - -Build in "voice of the customer"
 - -Introduces peer reviews on "safe" work products
- Make changes based on their feedback
 - -Don't collect data you're not going to use!
 - -Gets their fingerprints on the process element
 - -Further enhances buy-in.

Do Think "Good" not "Best" Practice

- Avoid religious warfare for a 2% improvement
 - -"Just because I do it differently doesn't mean I do it wrong"
 - -Consistency is good, but weigh the cost/benefit
- Don't exercise stupidity in the name of consistency!



Exercise

- Do's and Don'ts: CMM, Measurement, Process
 - Don't Treat the CMM as the Bible
 - Don't Train the Masses on CMM
 - **− Do Become a Stronger Level 1**
 - Don't Skip Over Level 2
 - Don't Use Assessments for Diagnosis
 - -Do Employ Basic Measures NOW!
 - Don't Collect Data You Don't Use
 - Do Enhance Data Integrity
 - Don't Over-Engineer Processes
 - Don't Target Mega-Projects First
 - **Do Standardize Process, Not Procedure**
 - Do Establish a Process Architecture
 - **Don't Make Gurus Write Processes**
 - Do Think "Good" Not "Best" Practice



Exercise

- What now?
 - -Which would help your organization the most?
 - -What are you going to do when you get back?
 - -Are there other CMM, Measurement, or Process Do's and Don'ts?

Do's and Don'ts - v1.0



Do's and Don'ts

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Do's and Don'ts: Behavioral Change

If it isn't helping the projects succeed, the SEPG is failing!

- Do Eliminate Low-Value-Added Tasks
- Do Pilot Early and Often
- Do Make Friday SPI-day
- Do Become a Learning Organization
- Don't Ignore the Adoption Curve

Do Eliminate Low-Value-Add Tasks

- Seek and eliminate some useless administrivia
 - -The plate is only so big!
- Do this early and make some friends
- Helps avoid the "process weenie" tag.

Do's and Don'ts - v1.0



Do Pilot Early and Often

- Don't debate issues in the ivory tower
 - -Wastes a lot of time
 - -Chances are, both sides are wrong!
- Run "alpha pilots" to test competing theories
 - -Seek feedback from the process executors
 - Value vs. overhead/disruption
 - Skills and cultural fit
 - Toolability
- Run "beta pilots" to demonstrate readiness.



Do Make Friday SPI-day

- If you allocate part-time SEPG/PAT members:
 - -Less than 20% is useless
 - -Remember the Law of Raspberry Jam
 - The broader you spread it the thinner it gets
 - Don't spread it out allocate a full day for SPI work
 - Friday is a lousy day pick Wednesday instead!
 - -Hold SPI people accountable for:
 - Achieving their SPI milestones and deliverables

- Renegotiating their SPI commitments
- -Make it part of their performance review.

Do Become a Learning Organization

- Most organizations are Learning Organizations
 - -But, most are Forgetting Organizations as well
- Don't just cram for the final exam use quizzes
 - -At the end of each *phase*, ask:
 - What went right; why?
 - What went wrong; how could it have been avoided?
 - What problems escaped from previous phases?
 - -Recommit to next phase work products/processes
 - Review "lessons identified"
 - From your last project
 - From other projects.

Do Become a Learning Organization

- The flip side of every assumption is a risk
 - -And the flip side of every risk is an opportunity!
- Every problem is a risk that was overlooked
 - -How can you gain better foresight next time?
 - -Establish triggers indicating, "Here we go again!"
- Learn from other projects
 - -Each project exploits organizational knowledge
 - **–Each project contributes as well**
 - -Flag data from "less than successful" projects
 - Otherwise, those who study history are bound to repeat it!

Don't Ignore the Adoption Curve

- You will NOT convert the unwashed masses
 - -Don't waste cycles on the late majority/laggards
 - -Target the innovators and early adopters
 - -Prove the value and capture the early majority
- Senior management must exercise "tough love"
 - -Apply pressure on the late majority
 - -Apply sanctions on the laggards
 - -Ultimately, compliance becomes part of the "salary continuation program."

Do's and Don'ts - v1.0



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Do's and Don'ts: (K)PA Specific

- Do Implement Value-Added SQA
- Do Evolve SQA's Role
- Do Implement Peer Reviews Slowly
- Do Reinvigorate Your Peer Reviews

Do's and Don'ts - v1.0



- Invest your best and brightest
 - -Train them to serve as project coaches/mentors
 - -Consult on the selection of process elements
- First focus on process adoption not compliance
 - -Assist projects in adopting the process and deriving the intended value
 - Ask about the value of the process and LISTEN!
 - Solicit feedback on administrivia/improvements
 - -Are there resources/skills issues to be addressed?
 - -Help them Obiwan, you're their only hope!

Do's and Don'ts - v1.0

Do Implement Value-Added SQA

- The first two audits of a new process are freebies
 - -First one is "understanding"
 - -Second one is "alignment"
 - -Third one is for real
- Differentiate non-compliances by severity
 - -Tailor reporting and escalation accordingly
- Consider naming SQA "Process Assurance"
 - -Don't use full Process Assurance until you have:
 - Defined process
 - Work product standards.



Do Evolve SQA's Role

- Level 1: SQA instills process discipline
 - -Assists with process adoption
 - -Compliance based on "fear of the audit"
- Level 2: SQA detects process erosion
 - -Sampling is fine! Selection based on:
 - Most critical items
 - Systemic problems
 - Items selected at random
 - -If major non-compliances, then conduct full audit
 - -Perform trend analysis to detect process erosion.

Do Introduce Peer Reviews Slowly

- Peer reviews have huge potential payback
 - -Provide higher quality products at a lower cost
 - -Achieve application/technical cross-training
- Start with no more than 3 work products
 - -Favor early life cycle work products
 - -Requirements, design, high-complexity code?
- Add new work products slowly and judiciously
 - -Sampling is OK!
 - -Establish the process, value, buy-in, and culture.

Do Introduce Peer Reviews Slowly

- Conduct data analysis
 - -Determine how data will be used
 - Work product defect density
 - Defect phase containment
 - -Establish how data will NOT be used
- Softer, gentler approach
 - -"Saves" and "escapes" vs. defects
- Inject defects to gauge review effectiveness
 - -Hawthorne effect kicks in as well
- Make the team co-responsible for the quality of the work product.



Exercise

- Do's and Don'ts: Behavior and (K)PA Specific
 - -Do Eliminate Low-Value-Added Tasks
 - **−Do Pilot Early and Often**
 - -Do Make Friday SPI-day
 - -Do Become a Learning Organization
 - -Do Implement Value-Added SQA
 - **−Do Evolve SQA's Role**
 - -Do Implement Peer Reviews Slowly
 - -Don't Ignore the Adoption Curve
- What now?
 - -Which would help <u>your</u> organization the most?
 - -What are you going to do when you get back?
 - -Are there other Behavior or KPA Do's and Don'ts?



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Do Participate in Your Local SPIN

- Learn from others' experience
- Get consultation on your issues
- Provide consultation on their issues
- Expand your network
- All for one low price of admission!



Questions?

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