



# How to Introduce New Management Philosophies

A DISCUSSION ABOUT SOFT SKILLS

# Christopher Sherman's Bio

- ▶ Graduated 1985 with a Bachelor of Technology from Ryerson University
- ▶ Practiced in Commercial, Industrial, and Aerospace industries
- ▶ Design Engineer, Project Engineer, and Project Management
- ▶ Operated a consultancy for 7 years
- ▶ A keen interest in Business Operations and Engineering Process management
- ▶ I earned my PMP certification in February 2014
- ▶ My career focus is to practice practical application of fundamental principles in Project Management to balance creative Engineering and business objectives
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# Session Introduction

- ▶ Organized as Parallel Team Brainstorming
  - ▶ One topic simultaneously tackled by multiple teams
- ▶ Brainstorming Q-Cards provided to collect Team Brainstorming
- ▶ Team Thoughts collected, collated and distributed on Meet-Up
- ▶ Open discussion following the teaming sessions....time permitting

# Consider the Adversity Quotient

- ▶ Adversity Quotient (AQ) is a measurement of an individual's ability to manage adversity
  - ▶ Developed by Dr. Paul Stoltz
  - ▶ For more information, follow this url: [http://www.peaklearning.com/about\\_peak-learning\\_principals\\_stoltz.php](http://www.peaklearning.com/about_peak-learning_principals_stoltz.php)
  - ▶ Three basic character types
    - ▶ Climbers
    - ▶ Campers
    - ▶ Quitters
- ▶ Intellectual Quotient (IQ) is the most recognized differentiating metric
- ▶ Emotional Quotient (EQ) is another metric

# Structured Brainstorming Format

- ▶ Each Team's Q-Card is structured like this:
  - ▶ Brainstorming Topic
    - ▶ 1.0 Define Problem
    - ▶ 2.0 Potential Solutions
    - ▶ 3.0 Barriers
    - ▶ 4.0 Action Planning

# Selected Brainstorming Topic

- ▶ **How to Introduce a more Structured Project Management Philosophy without constraining individual Group Operations**
- ▶ Some common issues that often prevail prompting PM involvement
  - ▶ How to be a more effective language translator
  - ▶ How to empower cross functional teams
  - ▶ How to improve collaboration
  - ▶ How to improve communications
  - ▶ How to optimize work flow
  - ▶ How to stay focused on the primary project scope baseline

# Problem Statements

- ▶ A targeted list of problems pertaining to hypothetical events
  - ▶ Communication between Functional Teams is strained
  - ▶ Cross-Functional Deliverables are often considered incomplete
  - ▶ Cross-Functional Teams are blaming each other for poor performance
  - ▶ Functional Team Processes are Inconsistent with Project Objectives
  - ▶ Functional Team Reports don't adequately explain Project Metrics
  - ▶ Inter-Team Language Barrier
  - ▶ Period Reports from various Functional Teams lack required Data / Information

# Potential Solution Statements

- ▶ Add Value ASAP so the Group sees that you're there to Help Not add Work
- ▶ Better understanding of roles/procedures
- ▶ Bring in an outside Consultant / Expert
  - ▶ Analyze and provide broad knowledge base + assurances on way to implement
- ▶ Demonstrate rather than Dictate Solution
- ▶ Develop Self Awareness
- ▶ Discover Alliance among Group Leads
  - ▶ discover champion from tech team that is willing to embrace PM process
- ▶ Encourage Group Members to contribute to Knowledge Share System
- ▶ Engage Group members to create a home made solution
  - ▶ The new method must mesh with the way the group works



# Potential Solutions...continued

- ▶ Engage small/appropriate members from groups
- ▶ Feedback Lessons Learned
- ▶ Good Faith effort to customized framework for individual groups
  - ▶ Versus large overall Big Picture
- ▶ Implement in Phases
- ▶ Listen more than speak to gain trust
- ▶ Manage without Interfering in Group (Servant Leadership)
- ▶ Pick a Project to Pilot
  - ▶ Pick a Friendly group that sees the benefit of what you're trying to achieve
- ▶ Reassure this won't change the world overnight
- ▶ Use lessons learned and the Group Pain Points as Buy-in
- ▶ Use Visual tools and Workflow

# Barrier Statements

- ▶ Additional Overhead (Paperwork & Oversight)
- ▶ Camper's - What's in it for ME
- ▶ Criticism
- ▶ Denial that a problem exists
- ▶ Feeling of being overloaded
- ▶ Job Security Concerns
- ▶ Lack of Trust
- ▶ Learning Barrier -> Training needed
- ▶ Need a Senior level Stakeholder to be on-board with need for change
  - ▶ Must be someone with recognized authority

# Barriers...continued

- ▶ Reluctance to communicate
- ▶ Reluctance to give up freedom
- ▶ Reluctance to outside intervention external to Group (old boys club)
- ▶ Reluctance to participate
- ▶ Thinking that problem will simply go away on its own
- ▶ Thought of Change with No Gain
- ▶ Thought that PM Doesn't understand Group Objective
- ▶ Thought that PM wants to be "Task Master"
- ▶ Thought that we're only doing this because we were told to

# Action Statements

- ▶ Acknowledge objections
  - ▶ Agree and seek ways to make it better -> to build on and use lessons learned
- ▶ Add Champion from tech Team on Project Management Team (PMT)
- ▶ Assign Tasks and Decision Makers
- ▶ Build a Knowledge Share System
- ▶ Celebrate the Past
- ▶ Clearly Define Problem at hand
- ▶ Develop Kinship to be accepted as a Peer
- ▶ Discover Outside Focus / Reference Group
  - ▶ This outside group can be either within or external to the corporate family
- ▶ Gain agreement on the path and roadmap

# Action Statements...continued

- ▶ Get Buy-in that there really is a problem to solve
- ▶ Have a Build rather than Change mentality
- ▶ Learn the "Group" Language
- ▶ Learn the Domain so you know what the Group is going through
- ▶ Reach out to Individual Groups to understand their Pain Points
- ▶ Recruit Advocates
- ▶ Schedule Follow up Review Sessions
- ▶ Show Accomplishments
- ▶ Show Problem -> Demonstrate Value to Group
- ▶ Sit with Individuals to understand who they are not just their Job Function
- ▶ Start with Why -> Make sure everyone understands why the change is necessary
- ▶ Take good notes to prevent having to re-ask the same question multiple times
- ▶ Up Front clear dialogue

# Conflicting Statements

- ▶ During the aggregation of Q-Card inputs, some divergence of thought was noted
- ▶ On the topic of dealing directly with the problem
  - ▶ Avoiding the issue and emphasizing improvement was one train of thought
  - ▶ Overemphasizing the problem and mandating change was also tabled
  - ▶ An alternate unbiased viewpoint revealed the problem and demonstrated the value of improvement
- ▶ On the topic of scaling the approach
  - ▶ Incremental and targeted approach was one train of thought
  - ▶ Full Onslaught was the alternate view point
- ▶ The following slides detail the team Q-Card conflicting statements

# Conflicting Statements...continued

- ▶ How to deal with Prevailing Group Problem(s)?
- ▶ **Recommended Action Statement**
  - ▶ Show Problem -> Demonstrate Value to Group
- ▶ **Avoidance Action Statements**
  - ▶ Avoid criticizing what the Group is currently doing
  - ▶ Figure out How to Help-> Don't Judge what they're doing
    - ▶ Don't ask what they're doing; Ask How you can Help
- ▶ **Overbearing Action Statements**
  - ▶ Demonstrate Value <=> Show Inefficiencies in what they're doing
    - ▶ Show the inefficiencies of what they are doing
    - ▶ Bring Hammer Down -> Mandate

# Conflicting Statements...continued

- ▶ On What Scale Should we approach the Problem?
- ▶ **Recommended Action**
  - ▶ Implement in Phases
    - ▶ Pick a Group to Pilot
      - ▶ Pick a Friendly group that sees the benefit of what you're trying to achieve
- ▶ **Cautioned Action**
  - ▶ Pilot Project -> Full Onslaught



# Conclusions

- ▶ This exercise provides a great starting point for a PM to:
  - ▶ Organize a collaborative brainstorming event
  - ▶ Structure contributions from the Project Team and Stakeholders
  - ▶ Permit analysis of Cohesion / Alignment / Divergence from the collected responses
- ▶ As a rough guideline, a brainstorming session should not exceed 30 minutes
  - ▶ A structured and organized session will obtain valuable information in a short period of time
    - ▶ Great ROI
- ▶ **Recommended Reading: Just Listen by Dr. Mark Goulston**

# Upcoming PM Connect Seminars

- ▶ Stage-Gate® Work flow Model
  - ▶ 15-Apr-2016
- ▶ Setting Gate Expectations
  - ▶ 20-May-2016
- ▶ Working with Stakeholders
  - ▶ 17-Jun-2016