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Ten Simple Ways to Screw-up a Good Project
The most deadly & common ways a project can go wrong

Joe Perzel, PMP

GTS
educational events
Engage. Inspire. Inform.

December 12, 2019

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Speaker | Presenter | Workshop Leader

11/27/2019 9:21 AM

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Agenda

- Administriva and Background
- Ten Simple Ways
- Joe's Truisms
- Final Thoughts
- Questions?

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Administrivia

- Cell phones on stun
- Questions and sharing are encouraged and rewarded
- We may "park" a topic to help us stay on task
- More information is contained in the Addendum when you see an @
- Evaluation at end – please fill-out with comments
  - Content
  - Delivery
  - Examples
  - Anything else
- At least 1 Lesson Learned

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3

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My Background

- Software development since 1979, Business Analysis and Project Management since 1982, Staff Management since 1983
- 18 Years in Corporate
- 5 Years in Not-for-profit
- 2 Years in Government
- 17 Years in Consulting & Staffing
- Worked in HealthCare, Government, K-12, Higher-Education, Financial, Agri-business, Services, Manufacturing, Insurance, Consulting, Software, Audit/Compliance
- Business
  - ✓ New Product Development – Ideate through Deployment
  - ✓ Operational Process Improvement
  - ✓ My own 40 person company for 17 years
- Technology
  - ✓ Development – Custom and Package
  - ✓ Operations
  - ✓ Security

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My Background

Some of the Larger, More Complex Projects

- The 7 month project to create and roll out a family of business products for a healthcare company
- The management of a 2 year rewrite of a custom Sales and Marketing automation system for a global reinsurance company
- The development of a PMO office and corresponding polices, processes and artifacts for a Higher Ed organization
- The design and implementation of a data center move for a Fortune 500 company to an out of state location requiring no business hours downtime
- Planning, RFP creation, product selection, deployment and support of a 3 year ITIL and monitoring operations system for a company requiring 99.96% uptime
- The package selection, customization and deployment of all infrastructure, back-office and on-site systems for a 20-location, Fortune 500 distribution business
- The 3-year custom development project to design and create a multi-state workers compensation system that would be available for future "sale"

5

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My Background

Some of my presentations include:

- The Dark Arts of Project Management: Influence and Politics
- How to be a Chameleon: a Key to Enterprise Project Success
- Ten Simple Ways to Screw-up a Good Project
- How to Train your Dragon: a Project Sponsor Primer
- Project Stakeholders: Dealing with Sleeping Giants to Saboteurs
- Joeisms: Leadership Concepts and Other Sage Words of Advice
- Managing Change and Surviving to Talk about it
- Managing Innovation in a Project Management World
- Yes, and… Advanced Negotiations in a Project World
- Everyone is in Sales: Successful Tools & Techniques for Project Leaders
- A "Surefire" way to Ensure Schedule Performance!

This should tell you a couple of things…

- I find titles market & attract attention - which leads to project success
- I can be irreverent, sarcastic and love debates; comments/opinions appreciated
- I focus on the soft skills in project management

6

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Introductions

- Who here is a Project Manager? Scrum Master? Product Owner? Portfolio? Program? Staff Manager? Other roles?
- Who here is from Construction/Engineering, IT, Operations, Business?
- Who has over 5 yrs. of PM experience?
- Who has a sponsor on all their present project(s)?
- Who here has set-up the project, built the perfect plan and then have it take a "left turn" and become "interesting"?
- Who here currently has a project "Going Wrong"?
- Who is here just because of the presentation title?

7

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Assumptions

- Successful journey from start to finish of a project is not linear, clean, forecastable or easy
- Everyone has an agenda – not always the same agenda as yours, or the project Sponsor's
- Your interest is to deliver the project on time, on budget, with all the proposed features - with a smile on everyone's face
- All companies, departments and teams have their own politics
- You can't change the way people communicate
- It takes <8 hours to learn how to use a tool to manage a project and a lifetime to learn the art of successfully running a project
- No 2 projects are the same – no matter how hard you try to make them the same

8

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Any QUESTIONS

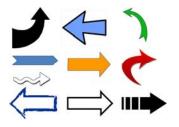## Before we dive-in?

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Ten Simple Ways

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#10 - Changes in Technology or Infrastructure

- Not tied back to the project goals and vision
- Not driven by measurable business value
- Not reflected in the requirements or the plan
- Made for the sake of change

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#9 – Muddled Project Vision and Objectives

- The goals, objectives and requirements are not gathered, firm and/or communicated to **_ALL_** parties
- Agreement from key areas is not achieved
- Benefits and deliverables are not identified and agreed upon
- Project Goal not aligned with Business Unit, Company, etc. goals and vision

➢ What is project ROI??

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#8 – Poor Project Sponsorship

- Not providing strategic direction
- Not involved and/or ready to make the tough decisions
- Their visibility within the project is non-existent
- Not helping with the politics across the enterprise
- Doesn't have proper span of authority

13

#7 - Frequent Changes to Key Resources

- Functional/Business experts
- Project sponsor, BA, project manager, team leads
- Hardware, software tools
- Vendor partners

➤ Assumes these resources were in place initially

14

#6 - Poor Change Management Control

- Approval processes undefined or non-existent
- Time not taken to get the requirements right in the first place
- Scope Creep not effectively managed
- Approval processes not fitting the situation

15

#5 – Project Deadlines impossible to meet

- Deadlines set by "desire", without looking at realities
- No one questions the deadline when it appears too tight
- Project buy-in from the team is lost

16

#4 - Project is not properly Funded

- You don't take the time to properly review and estimate costs

- Your team doesn't have the expertise to make a "good enough" estimate

- Key cost drivers are overlooked
  - ✓ Soft costs
  - ✓ External costs
  - ✓ "Research" costs

- There is no room for error

#3 – Poor or Non-Existent Communication

- You or the team perceives you don't have time to communicate properly

- There is an assumption that everyone knows what is going on

- There isn't a plan for communicating with all the interested parties
  - ✓ Application Development
  - ✓ Infrastructure/Operations
  - ✓ Management
  - ✓ Business
  - ✓ Don't forget external partners

- Communication isn't at the proper level of detail

#2 – A Bad Plan

- Plan was created, but put on a shelf after it is approved

- Plan was not effectively communicated and agreed to by all parties (including external)

- Deadlines with no room for errors, additions or changes

- Team member's roles and relationships are not defined, understood and communicated

- Project activities have long durations between defined deliverables

- Agile or Waterfall processes become Wagile – unintentionally

- What Plan??

#2 – A Bad Plan

#1 – Not Understanding all of the Above

Management Team, Business Leaders, Project Manager or Project Team that does not understand any or all of the above ways a project can go bad

Ten Simple Ways to Screw-up a Good Project

Note:

➢ How many of the problems are caused by what PMI terms technical type issues vs. leadership or strategic issues?

- ✓ #10 Changes in Technology
- ✓ #9 Muddled Vision
- ✓ #8 Poor Sponsorship
- ✓ #7 Changes to Resources
- ✓ #6 Poor Change Control
- ✓ #5 Impossible Deadlines
- ✓ #4 Insufficient Funding
- ✓ #3 Poor Communications
- ✓ #2 Bad Planning
- ✓ #1 All the Above

Ten Simple Ways to Screw-up a Good Project

Any QUESTIONS

Before we dive-in?

Ten Simple Ways to Screw-up a Good Project

Joe's Truisms

Key Elements

- Sponsor Management
- Planning and Execution
- Communications
- Best Practices

25

Joe's Truisms – Sponsor Management

- Make sure Sponsor is engaged and educated on expectations
- Running a project is a partnership
  - ✓ Needs vs. Wants
  - ✓ Benefits > Investment
- Make sure project goals are clear and globally understood
- Plan for team building, it will pay-off in the end
- ~~Make sure~~ Try to take key resources out of their normal jobs
- "Themes" are effective communication tools
- Price, Pace, Perfection – Pick 2

26

Joe's Truisms – Planning & Execution

"1 hour of preparation saves 200+ hours of execution"
➤ Carey Lohrenz, first female Navy Fighter Pilot
http://carylohrenz.com

27

Joe's Truisms – Planning & Execution

- Target project deliverables of 2-3 weeks or less and update as you go
- Double $$ and durations where areas are unclear
- Costs escalate exponentially with respect to how tight the deadline is set, so give yourself room when you are able
- Right Size your processes: the bigger the project, the more formal
  - ✓ Requirements Analysis
  - ✓ Change Management
  - ✓ Project Toolset
  - ✓ Documentation
  - ✓ Issue Management
  - ✓ Communications
- Sometimes money will reduce project duration or allow you to buy your way out of a situation

28

Joe's Truisms - Communications

- You can't Communicate too much
- Different communication styles for different audiences
- When having a conversation, who needs to adjust their style?
- Communication starts before the kick-off, and ends after the final celebration

  - ✓ Business Stakeholders
  - ✓ Management
  - ✓ Sponsor
  - ✓ Team
  - ✓ External Resources
  - ✓ Vendors

  - ✓ Requirements
  - ✓ Status
  - ✓ Executive/Overview
  - ✓ Issue Logs
  - ✓ Minutes from Meetings
  - ✓ Exception/Change Control

Joe's Truisms – Best Practices

- Separate support from development resources
- No two projects are the same – you must be able to adapt
- "Research" is a black-hole, you can't estimate high enough
- Plan for the unexpected – it WILL happen
- Never assume anything that is important to project success

Ten Simple Ways to Screw-up a Good Project

You know what they say when you ASSUME….

Summary

- ✓ Success requires an active Sponsor with the proper authority
- ✓ Everyone must understand the project's goals and objectives
- ✓ Take the time to do it right the first time – and get buy-in
- ✓ Use the correct toolset
- ✓ Manage change, risk and issues
- ✓ Manage everyone's expectations
- ✓ Think ahead to plan for the unexpected

If you only remember 3 things…

- ✓ Communicate, Communicate, Communicate
- ✓ Assume at your own risk
- ✓ No 2 projects are the same – there is no magic bullet or script that fits all projects – so you need to plan that way and adapt   @

Joe's **Final** Truism

Project success is **80% Art** and **20% Science**
- so pay attention to the soft-side of the project

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Questions, Evaluations & 1 Lesson Learned

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Email Joe to offer **feedback** or request a full **copy of any presentation**

Project Management Essentials
- ✓ Project Management for the Beginner – the minimum you need to know to thrive
- ✓ The PM/BA Conundrum
- ✓ Building your Essential PM Soft skills
- ✓ Top Ten Ways to Screw-up a Good Project
- ✓ Using MS Project – the minimum you need to know to thrive

The Dark Arts of Project Management Series
- ✓ Yes, And… Advanced Negotiations in a Project World
- ✓ The Dark Arts of Project Management: Influence and Politics
- ✓ How to be a Chameleon: a Key to Enterprise Project Success
- ✓ How to Train Your Dragon: a Project Sponsor Primer
- ✓ The Art of Sales and Selling: Tools & Techniques Everyone Needs to Know
- ✓ Selling the Value of the PMO and Project Management
- ✓ A "Surefire" way to Ensure Schedule Performance!
- ✓ Leadership: The Making of a Professional, Enterprise PM
- ✓ Managing Change and Surviving to Talk about it
- ✓ Managing Innovation in a Project Management World

Case Studies
- ✓ Best Practices in Building out a Security Program
- ✓ Building out SCSU's PMO
- ✓ itSMF ITIL Deployment

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Ten Simple Ways to Screw-up a Good Project

Addendum

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Definitions

- **ABC: (**Always Be Closing): a term referencing that all good "salespeople" should always be closing the "sale" at all times
- **QNC** (Qualify-Negotiate-Close): a term referencing the typical sales cycle from Qualifying the "opportunity" through Negotiating details to Closing the "sale"
- **ROI:** Return on Investment
- **CBA:** Cost Benefit Analysis
- **POC**: Proof of Concept
- **SME**: Subject Matter Expert
- **OBE:** Overtaken by Events: forced to be changed because of something that has suddenly and unexpectedly happened
- **SDLC:** System Development Life Cycle
- **TLA**: Three Letter Acronym, something the world has too many of these days

37

Definitions

- **Project:** a temporary endeavor with a defined beginning and end
- **Process:** a process is a set of activities that interact to achieve a result
- **Project Management**: the discipline of planning, organizing, motivating, and controlling resources to achieve specific goals
- **Project Manager**: the person responsible for accomplishing the stated project objectives. (on time, on budget and with everyone smiling – jp)
- **Program Management:** the application of knowledge, skills, tools, & techniques to a group of related projects
- **Portfolio Management:** the centralized management of one or more portfolios to achieve strategic objectives
- **Project Sponsor:** a person or group who provides resources and support for the project, program, or portfolio who is accountable for enabling success
- **Partner**: One associated with another especially in an action: associate or colleague - one of two or more persons who play together
- **Resource**: Everyone (or thing) that assists you with your project

38

Definitions

- **PMO**: a group within a business, agency or enterprise that defines and maintains standards for project management within the organization. The PMO strives to standardize and introduce economies of repetition in the execution of projects
  - ✓ enterprise PMO
  - ✓ organizational (departmental) PMO
  - ✓ special purpose PMO
- **Project Charter**: A statement of the scope, objectives, and participants in a project.
- **RAID**: Risk, Assumptions, Issues and Decisions
- **Triple Constraint**: Price/Pace/Perfection – cost/time/requirements or features
- **Table Stakes:** the minimum rigor required to handle the **mechanics** for a project
- **Disruptive Innovation:** causing a major change in a company and/or market place (think the first social media apps, creating the bridal registry)
- **Incremental Innovation**: causing a minor change in a company and/or market place (think converting bridal registry to all digital)

39

Definitions

- **Innovation Disrupters**: The 20% of an Organization that causes change in the Organization - You!
- **Stakeholder:** an individual, group, or organization, who may affect, be affected by, or perceive itself to be affected by a decision, activity, or outcome of a project
- **Stakeholder analysis**: systematic gathering and analyzing of qualitative data to determine whose interests should be taken into account when developing and/or implementing a project, program, policy/process update
- **Empathy**: the feeling that you understand and share another person's emotions; the ability to share someone else's feelings
- **Table Stakes:** The minimum rigor required to handle the **mechanics** for a project
- **Adapting**: to change (something) so that it functions better or is better suited for a purpose
- **Inductive vs. Deductive**: thinking styles that are Bottom-up vs. Top-down

40

Definitions

- **Waterfall Methodology:** a sequential design process in which progress flows steadily downwards through the phases of conception, initiation, analysis, design, construction, testing, implementation and maintenance
- **Phase/Activity/Task**: Various levels of a schedule/plan
- **Dependency**: Required predecessor/successor
- **Critical Path:** determined by identifying the longest stretch of dependent activities & measuring the time required to complete from start to finish
- **Slack time**: The built-in time in your project where you have excess capacity or duration
- **Crashing a Project Plan**: Optimizing the project tasks for quickest delivery
- **T-shirt sizing:** Ball-park estimating of the size of effort to accomplish something

41

Definitions

- **Agile Methodology:** Software development under which requirements and solutions evolve through the collaborative effort of self-organizing and cross-functional teams and their customers/end users
- **Wagile**: Doing a lot of short waterfalls and calling it agile
- **Agile Scrum:** iterative and incremental agile software development framework for managing product development. It defines "a flexible, holistic product development strategy where a development team works as a unit to reach a common goal", and enables teams to self-organize by encouraging close online collaboration of all team members
- **Agile Kanban:** method for managing knowledge work which balances demands for work with the available capacity for new work. Work items are visualized to give participants a view of progress and process, from task definition to customer delivery. Team members "pull" work as capacity permits, rather than work being "pushed" into the process when requested
- **User Story:** informal, natural language description of one or more features of a software system. User stories are often written from the perspective of an end user or user of a system

42

Definitions

- **Epic:** a large user story in software development and product management
- **Story points:** Effort level assigned to the work to complete a Story
- **Scrum Master:** resource who is accountable for removing impediments to the ability of the team to deliver the product goals and deliverables and acts as a buffer between the team and any distracting influences while facilitating key sessions and encouraging the team to improve
- **Product Manager:** owner of the business strategy behind a product
- **Product Owner:** represents the product's stakeholders and is responsible for delivering good business results
- **Stand-up:** a short, focused, timely meeting where all team members disseminate information – often held daily

43

Definitions

- **Project Mechanics:** The normal, day-in, day-out tasks associated with running a project
  - Setting-up a Charter, RAID, Communication plan, etc.
  - Setting-up meetings & creating agendas
  - Taking notes or meeting minutes
  - Creating project plans and updating them
  - Reporting project status
- **Joe's Definitions of the Multiple Types of Project Managers:**
  - Project Coordinator: great at mechanics of the project
  - Technical Project Lead: focuses on managing the technical team
  - Application Project Manager: handles projects under $500k and 10 people
  - Enterprise Project Manager: handles projects over $1M and 20 people

44

Definitions

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45

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Project "Mechanics"

The normal, day-in, day-out tasks associated with running a project

- Setting-up a Charter, RAID, Communication plan, etc.
- Setting-up meetings & creating agendas
- Taking notes or meeting minutes
- Creating project plans and updating them
- Reporting project status

46

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