HOW'S YOUR PROJECT GOING?

DO YOU MEAN THE ONE THAT HAS...
How's your project going?

Do you mean the one that has...

...no management support, ambiguous goals, no budget, and an angry team of overworked people who want it to die?
Sometimes there isn't an "other" one.

No, the other one.

...no management support, ambiguous goals, no budget, an angry team, and overworked people who want it to die?

How's your project going?
“It is rare to discover anything in the realm of human behavior that occurs with great consistency…
Therefore, it was surprising to find that in every case, without exception, when an effectively functioning team was identified, it was described by the respondent as having a clear understanding of its objective.”

Larson and LaFasto, 1989

… although the details of requirements and design can be volatile, the overarching business goal or product vision must be clear.
**Evolution of a Project Plan**

### Product Vision
(Vision Box Elevator Test Statement)

### Project Scope
(Project Data Sheet)

- Single-page summary of key business and quality objectives, product capabilities, and project management information.
- Simple document with a powerful impact whose condensed format constantly reminds of the strategic aspects of the project.

### Release Plan
(Project)

---

**Evolution of a Project Plan**
A Releasable Product

Foundation for Agile Project success!

- **Value goal**: Build a reliable product
- **Quality goal**: Build a reliable, adaptable product
- **Constraint goal**: Achieve value and quality goals within acceptable constraints

Strategic goals… not specific requirements!

Three areas that define a releasable product:

- *A releasable product*: Product Vision Box, Project Data Sheet (PDS) – (objective statement, business objectives, capabilities, capability value)
- *A reliable, adaptable product*: PDS – Quality objectives
- **Within acceptable constraints**: PDS – Tradeoff matrix (scope, schedule, cost)
Envisioning Practices *Phase*

- What is the customer’s product vision?
- What are the key capabilities required in the product?
- What are the project’s business objectives?
- What are the project’s quality objectives?
- What are the project constraints (scope, schedule, cost)?
- Who are the right participants to include in the project community?
- How will the team deliver the product (approach)?

**Small projects**: work can be done in a single “kickoff” charting session.

**Larger projects**: chartering, req’ts-gathering, additional training, resource procurement, and architectural work may be longer.

**Medium-size projects**: normally a debate and discussion period required to obtain agreement about the vision.
Envision and Speculate phase of APM

Remember:

• Team members should constantly ask the question, “What is the barely sufficient process and documentation that we need?”

• All the practices relate to “how” a team delivers are tailored and adapted to improve performance as the project progresses.

• The project community will also evolve its teaming practices.
Four categories of practices…

1. **Product Vision**
   - Product vision box and elevator test statement
   - Product skeleton architecture and guiding principles

2. **Project Objectives and Constraints**
   - Project Data Sheet (PDS)

3. **Project Community**
   - Get the right people
   - Participation identification
   - Customer team-development team interface

4. **Approach**
   - Process and practice tailoring
1. Product Vision

A good product vision remains relatively constant, whereas the path to implement the vision needs room to wander.

“Emergent result often come from purposeful accidents…”

Design the box… a team collaboration activity

Need “four to six” bullet points

What “sells” the product?

“elevator test statement”… a couple of sentences that indicate target customer, key benefit, and competitive advantage…”
“elevator test statement”…

…an explanation of the project to someone within two minutes – takes the following format:

• For (target customer)
• Who (statement of the need or opportunity)
• The (project name) is a (product category)
• That (key benefit, compelling reason to buy)
• Unlike (primary competitive alternative)
• Our product (statement of primary differentiation)

(Moore 1991)

Vison Box and “elevator test statement” vividly depicts a product …
Product Architecture

“Architecture and design are NOT one-time activities in agile development,…

… but ongoing activities that occur every iteration as architectures and designs evolve.
The evolution must take into account the cost of change.
Example

… platform architecture decision (e.g. what DBMS to use) should not evolve, whereas database schemas would be expected to evolve.
2. Project Objectives and Constraints

Project’s scope and boundaries… documented in a single project date sheet (PDS).

“… a summary of key business and quality objectives, capabilities, and project management information.

It is a simple document with a powerful impact whose condensed format appeals to the entire project community and constantly reminds them of the strategic aspects of the project.”
# Sections in the PDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clients / customers</th>
<th>Exploration factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project leader</td>
<td>Delay cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product manager</td>
<td>Capabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Execute Sponsor</td>
<td>Quality Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project objective statement</td>
<td>Performance/quality attributers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(POS)</td>
<td>Architectural Guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business objectives</td>
<td>Issues / risks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade off matrix</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Project Objective Statement

To provide an online automated athletic membership services system that include court scheduling, billing and member service changes. The system needs to operational by 6/30/10 and cost less than $150,000.
Tradeoffs

“If a customer executive asserts that the delivery schedule is a paramount importance, then he should also be willing to prioritize other characteristics – to say, for example, that cutting features would be preferable to slipping the schedule.”
Exploration Factor

… a barometer of the uncertainty and risk of a project.

Factor of 10:
indicates highly exploration-oriented (high risk) problem domain.

Factor of 1:
indicates a very stable (low risk) problem environment

Articulating an exploration factor help considerably in managing customer and executive expectations.
## Product Technology Dimension (Table 6-2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product Requirements Dimension</th>
<th>Bleeding Edge</th>
<th>Leading Edge</th>
<th>Familiar</th>
<th>Well-known</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Erratic (version 1.0)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluctuating</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routine</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stable</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Requirements Variability / Guide

### Table 6-3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Requirements Variability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Erratic (version 1.0)</td>
<td>25 - 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluctuating</td>
<td>15 - 25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routine</td>
<td>5 - 15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stable</td>
<td>&lt; 5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Project Community

“Two factors determine whether or not a team has the ‘right’ people: capability and self-discipline.”

“Most people are coming to the understanding that process isn’t a substitute for skill.”

“Getting the right people extends to the product team as well.”

“What if we don’t get the right customer involvement or customer voice on our project?”

The easy answer – don’t do the project!
… difference between getting right person or getting the “perfect” person

The right person has the required capability or enough capability to grow!

… enough capability to grow… and the discipline and desire to grow.
“Participants”

Broad categories:

- **Customers** (end users, their managers, product specialists, product manager, executive sponsor)
- **Development team members**
- **Stakeholders** (internal participants, such as managers who are not direct customers of the product – and – external participants such as vendors)

“Big problems can occur when product team members who are not actual customers forget that they only represent the actual customers.”
Three levels of stakeholders:

**Critical**: They can prevent the project from achieving success before or after implementation; the showstoppers

**Essential**: They can delay your project from achieving success before or after implementation… although you can work around them.

**Nonessential**: They are interested parties, having no direct impact on the project, but if they are not included they can change their status to “critical”!
Project participants might include:

Executive sponsor

Project leader (charged with delivering results, focus is stakeholders and release issues)

Product manager (leads the team responsible for determining what results to deliver)

Product specialist (SME and support for Product manager)

Iteration manager (leads the development team, focusing on iteration activities and team dynamics)

Lead engineer (developer, architect) (guides technical aspects of the team’s delivery)

Management (those in charge of participant organizations, may have budget or technical decision-making authority or influence over project outcomes.)

Product team (those charged with determining needed features, prioritizing and accepting results)

Project team (members of product & development team accountable for delivering a releasable product)

Development team (those responsible for developing & testing the product)

Suppliers (external companies or others providing services or product components)

Government (agencies that require information, reports, certifications, etc.)
Defining Product Team-Development Team Interactions (Figure 6-10)

“Without a strong product manager, the worst situation arises – prioritization fails, and the development team, to keep the from bogging down, begins making the priority decisions itself.”
“One of the key lessons internal IT projects fail, or underperform, is misunderstanding the project leader and product manager roles. The product manager must come from outside the IT department.”

“How each individual interprets his or her role and how he or she interacts with others who are interpreting their own roles results in a richness of relationship that transcends our feeble attempts at role descriptions.”

“People are not only more important than process, they are more important than roles.”
4. Approach

“Self organization strategy concentrates on how people work together, how they collaborate, and the mechanisms for that collaboration. Processes and individual practices concentrate on what people actually do. Although the strategy and process seem to overlap, they are actually complementary.”

Processes and practices evolve…

… as each iteration reaches completion, the processes and practices will be adapted to the feedback from the project itself.”
Self-organizing Strategy Questions

How will we collaborate with customers?

How will members from different feature teams collaborate with each other?

How will the team in Atlanta collaborate with the team in Seattle or Bombay?

What does empowerment mean to our team?

Who needs to talk to whom when?

How are these people who talk to each other going to make decisions?

Who is accountable for what?

What practices are they going to use to facilitate the above?
Collaboration

… much more that communication.
We communicate status reports to management.
We collaborate among team members using practices such as white boarding brainstorming sessions to create a design.
Collaboration involves interaction to produce some “joint” results.
Collaboration integrates your ideas and mine into a whole.
Premise… individual capability is the cornerstone of success and individuals are unique contributors.

There are no reliable “cookie cutter” processes and practices that are a cornerstone of success.

“… rather than molding people to a set of common processes and practices, the processes and practices should be molded to the team itself.”

What the need to ask and answer:

What practices are required?
What supplementary practices do we need?
What modifications do we need to make to the selected practices?
What level of formality or ceremony should be used for documentation, approval, changes?

Ongoing retrospection -ing!
Final thought…

“Envisioning doesn’t stop after the Envisioning phase. At the beginning of each iteration, as the team meets to speculate about the next iteration, team members need to revisit the vision. The revisiting can be for the purpose of modifying the vision or to remind the team, amid the hectic daily grind, of the purpose of their endeavors.”