

PMINYC Professional Development Day  
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# Leading Accelerated Projects™

*Project Management for an Impatient Society*



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# What's the Big Deal?

- One in four IT projects are cancelled prior to completion or delivered and never used <sup>1</sup>
- On average, technology intensive projects overrun their schedule by 84% and their budgets by 56% <sup>2</sup>

**From work-in-progress (WIP) data<sup>3</sup> we know that . . .**

- Cutting the product line *variety* in half boosts productivity by 75% and cuts costs by 30%

*AP Relevance:* \_\_\_\_\_

- Management “procrastination” accounts for \_\_\_\_\_% of process inefficiency

*AP Relevance:* \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>1</sup> Standish Group, 2009

<sup>2</sup> Standish Group, 2006

<sup>3</sup> G. Stalk and T. Hout, *Competing Against Time*, 1990

# Impetus, Insights, and Inspiration for AP

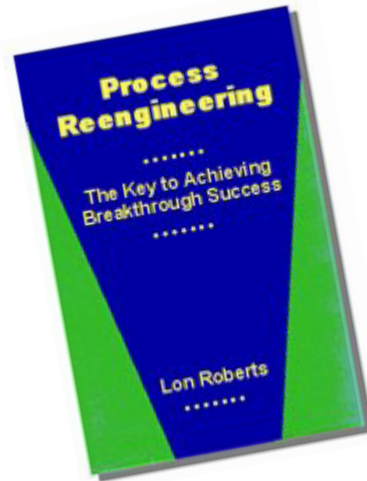
**Our clients ...**



**The marketplace ...**



**Process  
reengineering ...**



**Systems gurus ...**



# Seven Realities Shaping the AP Philosophy

1. Project delays are most often due to \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Process methodologies often don't speak to \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Project leadership is the common denominator in virtually every list of critical project success factors.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ are amplified in accelerated projects, making the need project leadership especially acute.
5. Traditional project management methods/tools say little about project leadership.
6. A project is part of a larger system, any attempt to fast-track a project that doesn't account for this can offer partial results.
7. Every accelerated project is unique.

# Contrasting Strategies for Accelerating Projects

## Structured methodologies

- Prescriptive; often geared for certain types of projects
- Process oriented
- Analytical ... focuses on the elements of the process
- Costs: learning curve; esoteric language; system suboptimization
- Benefits: \_\_\_\_\_

## Systems approach

- • Adaptive to environment and unique circumstances
- • Emphasis on \_\_\_\_\_
- • Integrative ... considers multiple dimensions and their *relationships*
- • Costs: sacred cows; change-pain; leader development
- • Benefits: OoM cycle time compression; system compatibility

## *Avoid beaver mentality ...*



# Two Classes of Accelerated Projects

## ***Crisis-Mode Acceleration***

- Driven by an urgent need or situation
- Seeks a reduction in cycle time of \_\_\_% to \_\_\_%
- High visibility ... more at stake than the stated requirements
- Willing to take risks
- Encourages creative thinking and novel solutions

## ***Planned Acceleration***

- Driven by the desire to \_\_\_\_\_
- Seeks *consistent* on-time delivery (in the case of chronically late projects) and a \_\_\_% to \_\_\_% reduction in cycle time otherwise
- Willing to take more risks than conventional projects

# What is a Project Leader?

**Each  
Accelerated  
Project is  
Unique**

**A project leader is  
what a project leader  
does!**

**Match Traits  
& Abilities to  
the Job**



# So What Does an AP Leader Do?

## ***Consider this scenario ...***

During a strategy meeting the Marketing VP announced it had been “decreed from on high” that the timeline for a certain project would need to be slashed from 12 months to 6 months. Since you assisted with the preliminary project plan, you know this will pose some serious challenges.

***What actions & interventions would likely be required of the APL given these sketchy circumstances?***

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- ...
- n.

# 10 Interventions of an AP Project Leader

1. Runs interference for the project team
2. Utilizes workarounds when necessary
3. Removes barriers and roadblocks
4. Secures external support and resources
5. Serves as the project's Chief \_\_\_\_\_
6. Ensures there are no disconnects in task handoffs
7. Manages changing requirements
8. Doesn't wait to be told what's going on
9. Intervenes when conflict arises or priorities veer off track
10. Follows the project plan, but \_\_\_\_\_

## 10 Attributes of an AP Project Leader

1. Decisive
2. Calm and cool under pressure
3. Comfortable dealing with ambiguity and taking risks
4. Comfortable dealing with \_\_\_\_\_ and conflict
5. Trusts her/his intuition
6. Not afraid to take actions that exceed his/her authority
7. Doesn't avoid bad news
8. Passionate about keeping the project moving
9. Passionate about communications
10. Has a keen sense of \_\_\_\_\_

## Questionable “Solutions” for Accelerating Projects

Crashing the project

Pressuring the project team to \_\_\_\_\_

Sloganeering

Acceleration by decree

Rigid adherence to \_\_\_\_\_

One-dimensional solutions

Primary emphasis on \_\_\_\_\_ solutions

Micromanaging the project

Compressing the schedule by excessively overlapping tasks





## Eight Acceleration Opportunity Levers™

### Process Lever

- Alter the project structure and the relationship of the elements to minimize process cycle time
- *Leader Issues: Political sensitivities; turf issues; task handoffs*

### Planning Lever

- Incorporate means for project efficiencies to offset delays and inefficiencies; Also, account for special risks that accompany APs
- *Leader Issues: Fairness issues; setting expectations*

### Policy Lever

- Removing (or working around) policies that inhibit accelerated projects
- *Leader Issues: Political sensitivities; overcoming inertia*



## Eight Acceleration Opportunity Levers™

### People Lever

- Improving communication, coordination, and cooperation between project team members; also setting team performance expectations
- *Leader Issues: Conflict intervention; conflicting priorities*

### Psychology Lever

- Improving performance, productivity, and work habits of individuals
- *Leader Issues: Energy management; task orientation styles*

### Requirements Lever

- Defining requirements and avoiding Type-III errors
- *Leader Issues: Dealing w/ internal customers; avoiding scope creep*



## Eight Acceleration Opportunity Levers™

### Technology Lever

- Taking advantage of technology tools to expedite planning and executing the project, especially tools that facilitate communications, coordination, and collaboration
- *Leader Issues: Reconciling strong differences of opinion between technical experts; avoiding analysis paralysis*

### Leadership Lever

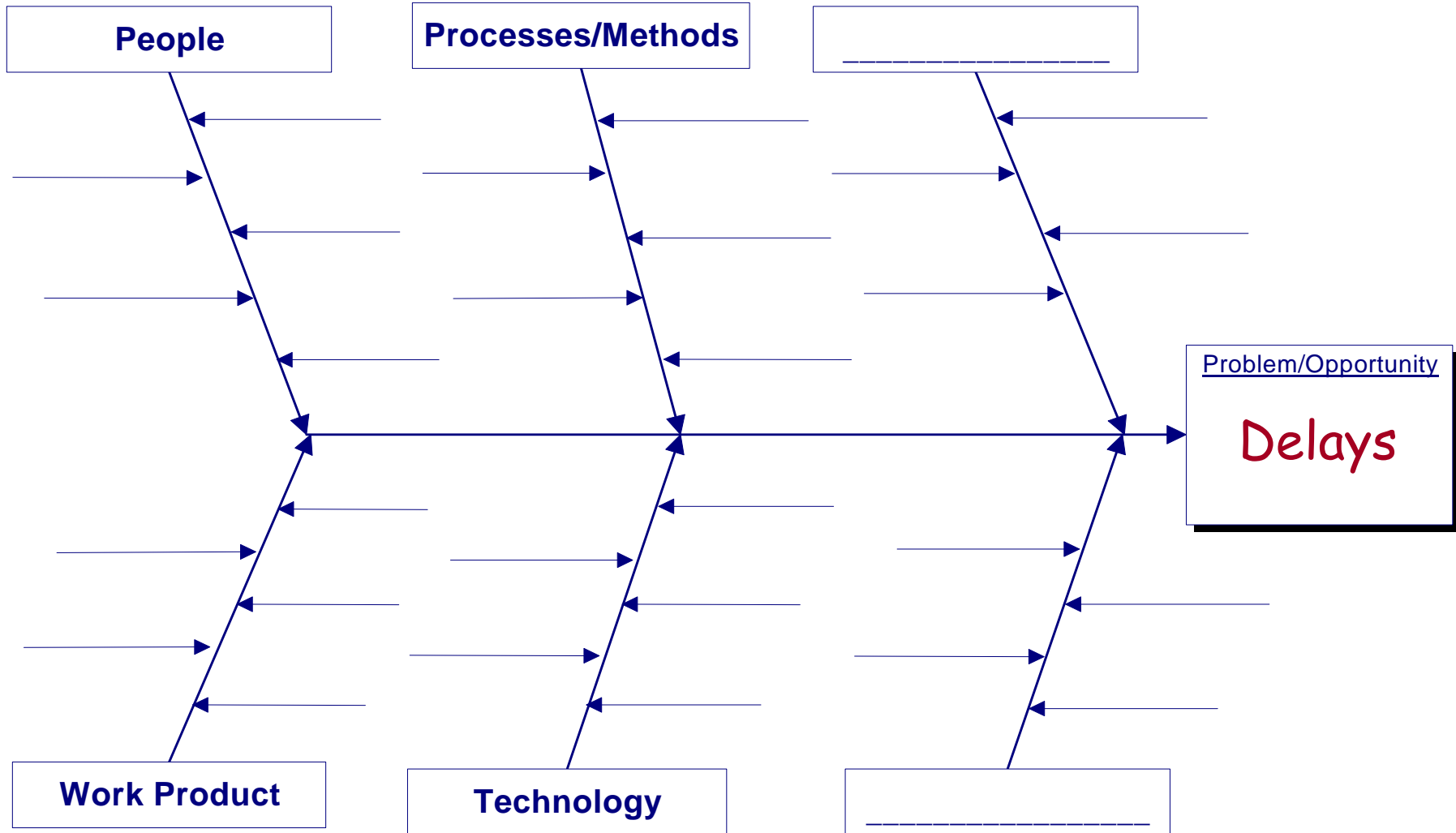
- Providing the motivating force behind the other 7 levers; executing the leader actions and interventions for accelerating the project; selecting the right leader for the job
- *Leader Issues: Executing the plan but adapting to circumstances; avoiding finger pointing; quick and decisive action*

## 8 Conditions Favorable for Type III Errors

1. Failure to consider the project vis-à-vis \_\_\_\_\_
2. Misinterpreting expressions of concern for mandates
3. Assuming the requirements, as stated, are correct
4. Assuming the requirements can be identified and articulated
5. Assuming success is limited to *Scope, Budget, and Schedule*
6. Assuming the project “solution” will be accepted
7. Mistaking \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_
8. Devising solutions that play to the designer’s expertise



# Uncovering Opportunities – Delay Analysis Fishbone

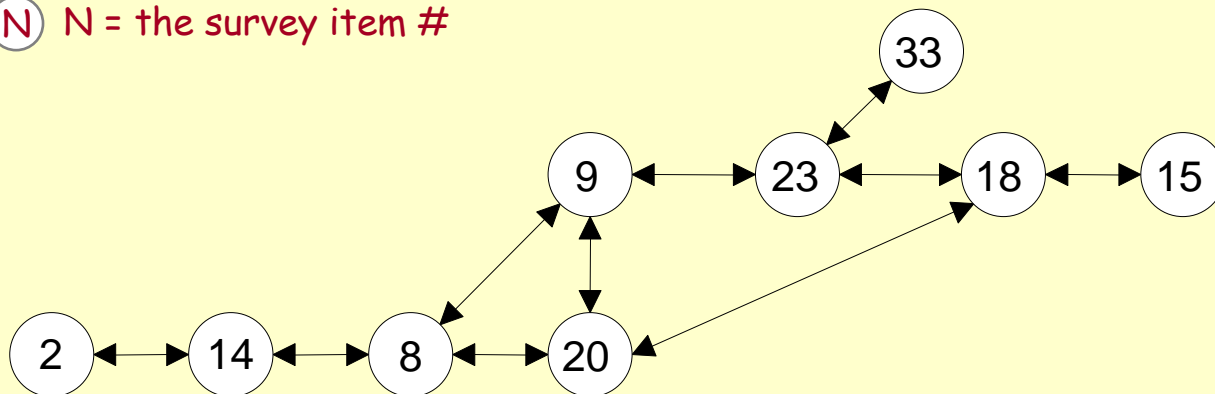


# Uncovering Opportunities – The *MAP Critical Issues Survey*™

## *A proprietary tool for surveying project stakeholders:*

- Identifies “issues” that have bearing on the ability to accelerate a particular project ... issues are related to one or more of the Eight Acceleration Opportunity Levers™
- Identifies specific incidents from the history of an organization that provide palpable evidence of a particular issue
- Uses descriptive statistics to identify the perceived magnitude of the issue and the degree that the stakeholders agree on the issue
- Identifies links between “issues” that suggest a theme or pattern

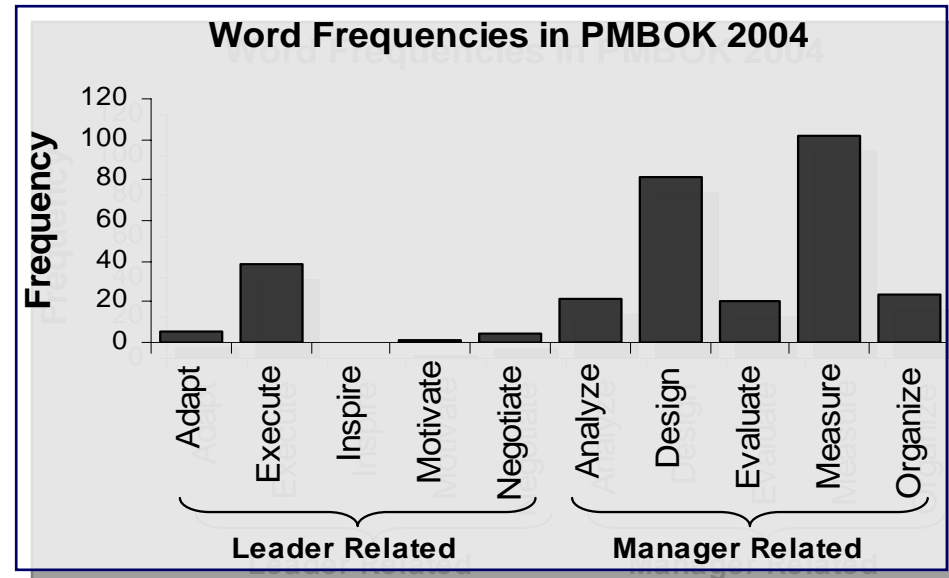
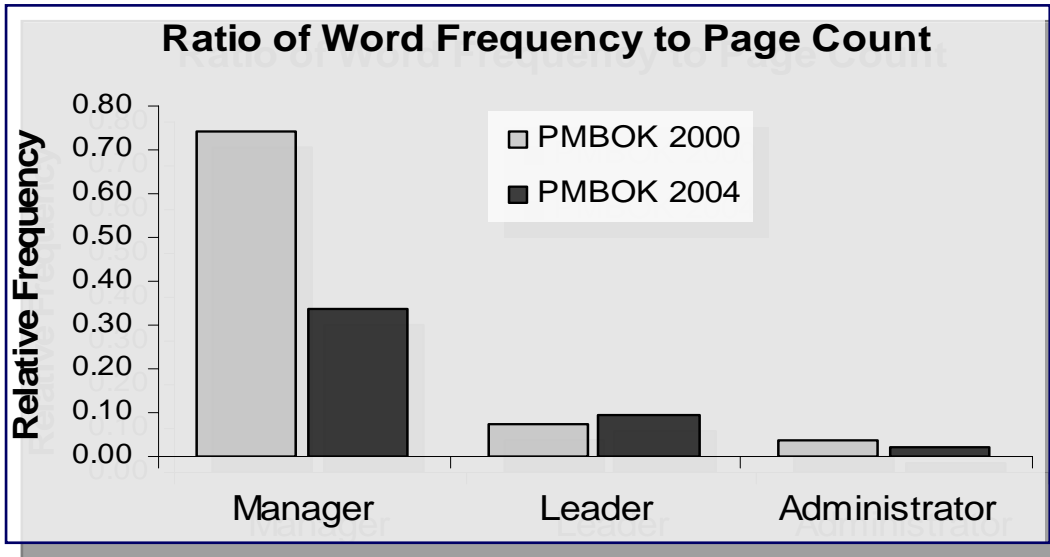
Ⓝ N = the survey item #



### Critical Factors

Risk Management  
Multitasking  
Inefficient Execution

# Call for Action – Filling the Project Leader Void



## References and Recommended Reading

*Process Reengineering: The Key to Achieving Breakthrough Success*, Lon Roberts, Quality Press, 1995.

*SPC for Right-Brain Thinkers*, Lon Roberts, Quality Press, 2005

*Organizational Communications Imperatives: Lessons of the Space Program*, Phillip K. Thompkins, Roxbury Publishing Co., 1993

*Re-Creating the Organization: A Design of Organizations for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Russell K. Ackoff, Oxford University Press, 1999

*Dirty Rotten Strategies*, Ian I. Mitroff and Abraham Silvers, Stanford Business Books, 2009

*PMBOK Guide® – Fourth Edition Changes*, Cyndi Snyder Stackpole, January 29, 2009

### Training Courses

- Leading Accelerated Projects
- Gleaning Facts From Figures
- SPC Workshop for Users
- Quantitative Tools for Project Managers
- Analytical Skills for Admin. Professionals

See descriptions at

[www.R2assoc.com/Trainp.htm](http://www.R2assoc.com/Trainp.htm)



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