

PROJECT MANAGER

The PMI Tallahassee Chapter Newsletter

January 2006,
Vol. 1, Issue 9, Page 1

The President's Corner



PMI Tallahassee Chapter Members and friends, Happy New Year:

As we move into this New Year after our December elections I want to thank our outgoing board members for their excellent service and commitment to making our Chapter successful, viable, and of service to its membership. Tim Rearick, the outgoing Vice President of Finance has been of great service in keeping the Chapter's finances in order and helping you all at check in at our Chapter meetings. Dr. Joseph Amanfu, our outgoing Vice President of Professional Development, has been a cornerstone in building the Chapter's training and educational offerings and services for the Chapter. Joe has committed to staying involved with the Professional Development Committee and working with the incoming VP of Professional Development, David Stokes, in continuing our mission to provide professional development opportunities to our members and the Tallahassee area. Thanks to Tim and Joe for all their hard work. I welcome our incoming officers and look forward to working with them this year in continuing our mission to serve our membership and the Tallahassee area in promoting professionalism in Project Management and providing a forum for the exchange of project management knowledge, ideas, and experiences. Our incoming board officers are:

First Vice President, Bebe Smith, PMP. You all know Bebe, and if you don't, you will. She has been an enthusiastic supporter of the chapter, both as a member, and in her previous service as VP of Professional Development, and a founding board member. Bebe will serve as First Vice President for 2006 as I work with her to transition the office of President to her in January 2007.

Vice President Professional Development, David Stokes, PMP. David is currently the Bureau Chief at the Department of Health for the Planning and Quality Improvement section which includes the Project Management Office, Project Review and Monitoring team, and the Process Improvement team. David has excellent ideas for Professional Development and the board is excited about bringing even more professional development options to our Chapter and the Tallahassee area. Stay tuned for our offerings for 2006.

Vice President Financial Affairs, Brenda Owens. Brenda Owens is the Chief Information Officer at Florida Department of Law Enforcement. The board is very excited to have Brenda's expertise and insight as she takes over the VP of Finance duties from Tim Rearick and look forward to working with her to continue to build the Chapter and support our mission to promote Project Management in the Tallahassee area.

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**If you have a
newsletter story,
idea, or
questions:**

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Vice President Administration, Nancy Adams. Nancy is a founding member of the Chapter and has been a continued supporter and regular attendee of our Chapter meetings. I know she looks forward to working with the Board to continue providing high quality learning opportunities and progressive services to our membership and the Tallahassee area. Her management skills and experience will assist the Board in strengthening the processes for sustaining and developing our chapter's products and services.

Free time is a scarce resource for most of us, and the commitment to devote a portion of that time to leading our Chapter and supporting the membership and missions of the Chapter is not a trivial commitment. I want to express my sincere appreciation for the incoming board members for making a commitment to serve as an officer of the Chapter, as well as to our past board members.

Welcome to a New Year

Best Regards,
Charles Coldwell
President
PMI Tallahassee Chapter
president@pmitlh.org

PMITLH New Board Members

Annual Elections were held on December 5, 2005 during our regular monthly meeting and the following are the newly elected members:

Vice President of Administration - Nancy Adams

Vice President of Financial Affairs - Brenda Owens

Vice President of Professional Development - David Stokes

First Vice President - Bebe Smith

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The PMI Library:

Our Chapter has a Library of project management-related books available for check-out by our members. Complete information, including a list of the available resources, may be found on our web site at:

<http://www.pmitlh.org/library.html>

EVMS and the Agile Framework By Thiru Bujala, BS MBA PMP

Abstract

This article is written to provide similarities existing in Earned Value and Agile development for measuring progress in software projects since most of us in the software industry treat them as Gasoline and Fire, never to be mixed. This article assumes the reader to have knowledge related to Earned Value and Agile development (XP) methodologies. Before any of the current “Agile” development methods, Earned Value Management provided information for planning and controlling complex projects by measuring how much “value” was produced for a given cost in a period of time. One shortcoming of an Agile development method is its inability to forecast the future cost and schedule of the project beyond the use of past metrics. These Agile methods assume the delivered value, “velocity” in the case of XP, is compared with the estimated value – this is a simple comparison between budget and actual cost resulting in a Cost Variance. No Schedule Variance process is directly available in XP. Earned Value Analysis provides a means of predicting future schedule and cost variances through three measurements – budgeted cost for work scheduled, actual cost for work performed, and budgeted cost for work performed (Earned Value).

Introduction

Measuring progress to plan is important no matter what business domain or software development Method is used. Extreme Programming, SCRUM, Crystal, etc. provide techniques for capturing requirements, estimating effort, developing high quality software, reporting progress to plan, and delivering value to the customer. The effectiveness of any specific Agile method in current business environments is not the topic of this article. The topic is the introduction of Agile methods into software development that uses Earned Value Management Systems as their performance reporting and management. Earned Value Management Systems (EVMS) are the means of complying with a “progress-to-plan” reporting requirement. The desire to use Agile software development methods while still maintaining compliance with reporting needs may appear to be a conflict, but it is not. The two approaches provide similar solutions to measuring progress. These include:

Earned Value	Agile Development
Big picture view of the project software	Continuous production of useable software
Accurate estimate at completion	Prediction of the next iteration’s effort
End-to-End value tracking	Iteration-to-Iteration tracking

EARNED VALUE

Earned Value provides a balance of technical (performance), cost (resources), and schedule (time) measures for complex software projects, unlike traditional cost and schedule only techniques. Earned Value is a project management technique that provides “leading” performance indicators that allow project managers to identify and control project problems before they become insurmountable. Traditional project management techniques compare planned expenditures with actual expenditures. Earned Value adds a third measure – the actual work accomplishment as a result of the expenditure. Measuring the actual work accomplished provides greater insight into potential project risks.

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Board Members:

President

Charles Coldwell, PMP

Vice President Administration

Nancy Adams, PMP

Vice President Communications

Jan Wright

Vice President Financial Affairs

Brenda Owens, PMP

Vice President Membership

Ron Falkey, PMP

Vice President Professional Development

David Stokes, PMP

Vice President Programs

Melissa Bennefield

First Vice President

Bebe Smith, PMP

Past President

BethAnn Posey, PMP

Project Management Professional (PMP) Certification

The purpose of this article is to provide a general description of the technique that I used to prepare for the Project Management Professional (PMP) Certification test. I have over forty (40) years experience in project management; however, I found this endeavor to be the most difficult that I have ever attempted. I passed the test with a composite score of 86 which may be low to some folks but I am very proud of the score. I took the test in late September 2005 which was based on the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) – 2000 Edition. I understand that the current version, PMBOK – Third Edition is an improved version that incorporates input from world wide PMI members. The technique that I used can successfully be used to achieve certification based on the revised version as well as the edition that I tested against. Before starting this method you must make the decision to dedicate yourself to the end objective and keep reminding yourself of the reward at the end of the journey. The following outlines the basic approach.

Step 1: Print a 2 sided copy of the PMBOK and place in a properly sized ringed binder. The document should contain Tabs for ease of quickly locating a specific Chapter when tracing information later on. Also, if possible, use a bright color front and end insert for the binder to make it stand out where ever it resides. This may seem like a small detail, but for the next three (3) months you will eat, sleep and drink this document. Keep it with you every chance you get.

Step 2: Read the PMBOK from cover to cover including the Appendixes, References, Glossary and Index. This may be the most difficult step to complete since most people have a tendency to let their attention span fade out somewhat as they approach the middle of a complex document and begin to loose the sharp edge of the learning process. If this happens, just stop for a while and wait until the next day if possible. Use a high-lighter (yellow preferred) to mark the sentences that you feel may contain key words for questions and answers later. Within the high-lighting, use a red pen to underline the key words themselves. Somehow this seems to file those words away in the brain for ease of retrieval later.

Step 3: Print a copy of Table 3-45. Mapping of the Project Management Processes to the Project Management Processes Groups and the Knowledge Areas found on page 70 of the PMBOK. This table serves as a road map for learning the PMBOK content. You need to be able to reproduce this table from memory and understand the processes contained in each Process Group and Knowledge Area. There are two (2) paths that you will need to take in order to achieve the knowledge level required to pass the exam. The first path is the study of each Knowledge Area and the second path is the study of each Process Group.

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The PMI Membership:

The Tallahassee PMI Chapter continues to grow! If you are interested in joining our Chapter or in joining PMI, there is a simple online registration process at www.pmi.org by selecting the membership tab at the top of the page.

Email the Vice President of Membership ypmemb@pmitlh.org if you have questions or need assistance.

Chapter membership statistics can be found at:

www.pmitlh.org/membership.html

February Meeting Preview

Resister at: <http://www.acteva.com/booking.cfm?bevoid=103373>

“Simplified Risk Management in New Product Development” will be presented by Mr. Doug Freund, the Vice President of project management for Invensys Controls. Invensys Controls is a \$1.8B a year manufacturing company specializing in Building Controls Systems, Gas Valves, Smoke Detectors and Appliance Controls. Currently, Doug has responsibility for project management and new product development for Invensys. Over the last two years he has implemented a new Program Management Office and developed a new Phased Development Process for product development. He also oversees manufacturing plant restructuring projects. Doug has a diverse background in project management. Over the past 18 years, he has managed nuclear power projects, substation control, construction, distributed generation projects. Prior to joining Invensys Controls, he owned a design build engineering company. In addition, Doug is an Air Force Reserve Engineering Officer where he is the commander of an engineering squadron at Hill Air Force Base, Utah.

In Mr. Freund’s presentation, he will discuss how new product development presents many unknowns for a business. Without proper upfront, risk assessment prior to planning, new products may not be delivered on time, missing market opportunity and thus wasting company money and resources. It is amazing how frequently people mention, identify, and know about risk, but new product development projects still miss targets and/or are overspent. It is crucial to accurately detect and manage risk that may be detrimental to a project and kill a project at any stage of the project life cycle. Even though the primary focus will be in new product development, the principals you will learn during this session apply to any project. This presentation introduces you to a risk based graded approach to risk assessment.

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Like any good methodology a set of terms unique to that method are needed. These Earned Value terms include:

Budgeted Cost for Work Scheduled (BCWS) – this is the Plan and represents the total budgeted cost. It answers the question how much do we plan to spend?

Budgeted Cost for Work Performed (BCWP) – this is the **Performance** or **Earned Value** and is the cost originally budgeted to accomplish the work that has been completed. It answers the question how much work has actually been completed?

Actual Cost for Work Performed (ACWP) – this is the *Cost of the Performance* or the *Investment* and is the actual cost to accomplish all the work that was performed. It answers the question how much did we actually spend to deliver the Earned Value?

Cost Variance – is the difference between planned cost and actual cost. $CV = ACWP - BCWS$.

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Newsletter

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Jan Wright, Vice President
Communications
Darlene Long
Sonja Guthrie
Rick Mitchell

Produced six times yearly

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Project Management Institute,
Tallahassee, Florida Chapter

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Schedule Variance – is the difference between the invested cost and the returned value. $SV=BCWP - ACWP$.

Cost and Schedule Performance Indices – are the normalized performance indices. $CPI=BCWP / ACWP$, $SPI=BCWP / BCWS$

Estimate at Completion and Estimate to Completion – are calculated values that are estimates of the total cost and cost to complete. $EAC=Cost\ to\ Date + Estimated\ Cost\ of\ Remaining\ Work$.

EVMS AND THE AGILE FRAMEWORK

Most software development methods, including Agile Methods, have a mechanism to measure progress to plan. But comparing actual cost with planned costs is simply measuring the “level of effort” consumed over a time period. This measurement does not describe the “value” delivered by the invested effort. The critical aspect of Earned Value Analysis is the determination of “value” delivered (BCWP) in exchange for hours or dollars invested (ACWP) for software projects. This earned value is the basis for determining the cost and schedule performance for a task or project.

EVMS DEVELOPMENT VALUE MEASUREMENT

All of the methods depend either on a binary event or some subjective assessment of the Progress that has been made during the reporting period. Both approaches fail the integrity test for software project management. This test asks the question – *how do we know that the software will behave as specified?* If it does behave as specified, then the development phase is complete. If not, then rework is needed. In the typical EVMS the budget for the task are used to accrue the value rather than the expected business value associated with the task’s completion.

Technical Performance Measurement

One approach to measuring value is to employ “Technical Performance Measurement.” Technical Performance Measurement is the plan for expected technical achievement. The actual progress of the project is compared using periodic measurements or tests. The difference between the planned progress and the actual progress represents a technical variance. Technical Performance Measurement is an accepted Earned Value process for assigning value to BCWP.

Testable Requirements

Within Earned Value’s Technical Performance Measurement the approach to measuring the “value” of a software component (BCWP) is the use of testable requirements as a completion criteria and a linearly adjusted monetary value for the component as a percent of BCWS. A testable requirement can be decomposed to a collection of precise, unambiguous, and indivisible set of low-level requirements. These criteria are only met if it is possible to write a test case that would validate whether the requirement has or has not been implemented correctly. This is the source of the term “testable requirement.” Testable requirements provide several benefits for an EVMS based development method, including:

- Technical performance measure for identifying progress to plan.
- A uniform metric from the software conception phase through system acceptance
- “Success oriented” metrics rather than “effort oriented.”

Integration of schedule and technical cost objectives in a single performance based metric.

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Committee Members:

Professional Development Committee

Ms. Vicki Bertoch
Dr. John DuBard
Dr. Edward Addy
Dr. Richard Kessler

Chair:

Dr. Joseph Amanfu

Communications Committee

Newsletter:

Ms. Darlene Long
Ms. Sonja Guthrie
Mr. Rick Mitchell

Web:

Mr. Nicholas Clarke
Mr. Rama Sannidhi
Mr. Kendrick Williams

Chair:

Ms. Jan Wright

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A testable requirement can be described in terms of:

1. The state of the system and the data elements that are inputs (e.g., customer number, product number)
2. The condition or action associated with the requirement (e.g., the user enters data, the order is validated, the check amount is deducted)
3. The expected or specified result described in terms of data elements (e.g., customer number must be 8 digit numeric; product quantity must be greater than zero).

AGILE DEVELOPMENT VALUE MEASUREMENT

For use of EVMS, the best approach is allotting 0% or 100% of a task as BCWP and making the task durations sufficiently small. With this simple guideline, something then happens to the EVMS “value generating” approach – it looks similar, in many respects, to an Agile software development process. With this *fine-grained* task breakdown process, all the EVMS principles are still in place, but the behavior of the management system has many of the attributes of an agile process. There are still gaps to be closed, but the two paradigms are now closer together than one would first imagine. In an XP environment “velocity” is the measure of the effort invested to produce software. BCWS and ACWP are acquired from the time card system. BCWP is defined through Stories, Tasks, and Testable Requirements. The testable Requirements are verified using Unit and Functional tests. From the point of view of EVMS these processes are “normal,” with the exception of the “fine grained” deliverables. From the point of view of XP these processes are also “normal.” An earned value management system is not a reporting system, project administration, cost analysis, accounting, or a task management system. It is a measure of the value of physical progress in a project and as such adds additional effort to the work of managing a project. Beyond the additional effort of an EVMS, care must be taken to avoid hindering the project team’s ability to use its organic management systems. With the Earned Value and Agile methods now outlined, let’s look at the similarities of each as ask *why can’t Agile methods be used in an EVMS environment?*

EVMS

Define the scope of work
Develop an integrated bottom-up estimate for performing the scope of work
Assign resources for each task in the plan
Forecast the final cost based on the current performance
Manage the remaining work

Manage changes to the base line

Agile

Scope defined in stories and tasks
Using stories, tasks, “velocity” estimates for completion and estimates at completion can be created
Resources assigned during the bi-weekly planning session
Use Earned Value (EIA-748)
Use stories and tasks in the planning sessions
Use stories and tasks in the planning sessions

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Volunteers Needed:

The Membership Committee needs volunteers.

Contact:

VPMemb@pmitlh.org if you are interested.

EIA-748 planning, reporting, and cost/schedule management process Compliance

The above table shows that many of the agile and EVMS processes share the same goal. It is likely though that each community has little understanding of the other's framework and motivations.

Three Success Factors of Final Project Results

The success of using Earned Value Management to manage software development projects is dependent on three factors:

- **The quality of the baseline.** The establishment of a measurable baseline for work to be performed is difficult in the traditional software development effort. Agile project methods focus much of their effort on defining and discovering the scope of work to be performance in iteration. Both XP and SCRUM have unique methods for capturing this scope of work.
- **The actual performance against the approved baseline.** Once the plan has been approved and implemented the second success factor comes into play – the actual performance of the project activities,
- **Management's determination to influence the results given the performance indices.** This is the most critical success factor for any project management method. Without a commitment from management to take aggressive actions based on the performance indicators to influence the outcome of the remaining work the project will fail to meet its desired outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Many would content that XP and Earned Value measurements based software development are like “gasoline and fire,” never to be mixed. It turns out that Earned Value Management Systems are very similar to XP's velocity measurement. To create a development environment that performs many of the XP practices while maintaining our reporting deliverables for EIA-748 compliance involves:

- Replacing XP's velocity with Earned Value metrics.
- Creating fine-grained measures of BCWP using “testable requirements.”
- Establishing the BCWS baseline at the beginning of each iteration.
- Capturing ACWP through a time keeping system.
- Computing Cost Variance, Schedule Variance from the three base earned value metrics
- Computing Estimate at Completion (EAC) and Estimate to Completion (ETC) from these base metrics as well.

Much of the “noise” about agile development, especially XP in the traditionalist environment, has to do with how to position these processes in a larger context. One better approach would be to use Agile (XP) is for writing code, supporting the processes for writing code, and delivery code to the customer base. There are many other activities needed to fulfill the needs of the particular business context when used.

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Membership Statistics:

TLH Members: 216

TLH PMPs: 127

New PMPs after the September 2005 Newsletter:

Kristin Green
Geraldine Harrison
Joe Allen
Vicki Bertoch
Kevin Driscoll
Nasser Hanif
Jay Waller
Teresa Fuller
Lynn D Bean
Michelle Milnes
Patricia Norris
Michael Walker
Mary Armijo
Amit Bokey
Loree Evans
Roberta Schappals Kinney
Shireen Sackreiter
Mark Slager
Cheryl Davis
Denise Duggan
Wenyuan Fleming
Linda Fuchs
Henry Parrish
Larry McClendon
Vijayakumar Muniswami
Rhonda Ballew

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Step 4: Read and study PMBOK Chapters 1 through 12 again (2nd time) and continue to high-lighting and red-lining sentences and words that could be related to a potential question on the test. During this exercise you need to make notes on the pages to flag information that you believe you need to spend more time studying later. This will keep you from getting bogged down with details that can be better reviewed later. Add some lined page sheets in each Tab in the PMBOK work book for chapter notes and sketches that can be studied to better understand the chapter subject matter.

Step 5: Prepare potential questions and answers for each Knowledge Area in Chapters 4 through 12. You will need prepare for the Knowledge Areas questions first and later on perform an in depth study of the Project Management Processes in Chapter 3. It is important to fully understand the processes prior to this step, but it is not necessary to spend the valuable time at this point on question and answer preparation on the processes. The processes will become clear as you better understand the Knowledge Areas and the flow of processes with in each area.

Note: You may elect to purchase PMP quiz questions and answers from vendors that work with PMI. If that is the path you choose, make sure that the questions are organized by Knowledge Area so you can work on one chapter at a time and not become over loaded with a too wide base of information at one time. The questions should be organized so that you can take a test of the whole PMBOK also. There may be some questions outside the PMBOK, but I did not see that situation on the test I took. These quiz packages are fairly cheap (\$50 - \$150), but they can be helpful if you are pushed for time and the method works for you. I did a mix bag of using a quiz package and a lot of questions and answers that I prepared myself.

Step 6: Starting with Chapter 4, Project Integration Management, study and quiz until you feel that you can maintain a 90 grade point average. This step will take a lot of study and quiz time and may take longer than you wish; however I do not advise moving on to the next step until this has been accomplished. You should be able to meet the grade point average goal at least 3 times before going on to the next chapter.

Step 7: Study and quiz the remaining Knowledge Areas in Chapters 5 through 12. You are complete with the Knowledge Area study path after you have consistently maintained your grade point goal in each chapter.

Step 8: Study and quiz Chapter 3, Project Management Processes for a Project until you meet the grade point average at least 3 times before going on to the next step.

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New PMPs after the September 2005 Newsletter (Continued from Page 9):

Jeff Chapman
Alexander Hall
Chris Kroll
Gay Munyon
Christian Pesantes
Rama Gopal Sannidhi
Michelle Morris
Anthony McCoy
Ron Falkey
Howard Powell
Scott Stewart
Terry Vaughn
Larry Scherr

After studying the processes and setting the information to memory as best I could, I make a working copy of the PowerPoint file and removed the words in the "Inputs / Tools & Techniques / Outputs" areas and replaced them with lines. This would tell me how many inputs, tools & techniques and outputs were applicable for each process but the description of each was blank. I then used the revised file without descriptions to test my memory of each process flow. This is a time consuming effort that I believe was one of the most helpful in passing the exam. When you are able to re-create the inputs, tools & techniques and outputs from memory and understand the rational behind the flow, then you have a high probability of passing the exam.

Step 10: Simulate the PMP exam by taking a 200 question exam. These 200 questions should cover the full spectrum of the PMBOK. The questions can be a selection of the library of questions that you created from each chapter or a purchased package of the PMP exam available from several vendors approved by PMI. The official exam allows for four (4) hours completing the test, but you should be able to complete the test in a much shorter time using this study method. You should simulate the exam three (3) times with a different set of questions each time. The last simulated exam should be performed two (2) days before the actual exam.

Step 11: The day before the exam needs to be a relaxing day and should include only one exercise. Re-create from memory the Table 3-45. Mapping of the Project Management Processes to the Project Management Processes Groups and the Knowledge Areas found on page 70 of the PMBOK. It is not important to remember the coding numbers, but it is important to confirm that you know the processes and their related Knowledge Area and Process Group.

Step 12: Get a good nights sleep (8 hours if possible) the night before. Hopefully you have a schedule for the test that fits the time period of the day that your mental energy is at its highest. There are many ideas about the best way to take a multiple choice test and you may already have your thought together on your approach, but I believe that keeping as relaxed as possible is a great aid. Some say on tough questions to eliminate the choices that you know is probably not correct and evaluate the remaining. Some folks say that if you have no idea that your first guess has the best chance of being right. You may wish to consider some of these approaches, but remember to relax and just do the very best that you can do and everything will work out for you.

Summary:

I hope that this information helps anyone who desires to earn the PMP certification. It worked for me and achieving this goal was one of the proudest moments of my career. I know that having the PMP follow my name sets me in a very special category of a professional that is recognized world wide and I am proud of the accomplishment.

Good luck to all!
Jeff Chapman, PMP

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