

In-the-SPIN

Newsletter of the **BostonSPIN**
Software Process Improvement Network

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Editors: **Judi Brodman**
Sheila Lynch

Editorial

Challenge to Improve

As we approach the end of our 2001-2002 season, let's take a moment to reflect on this past year. There is no question that it was a year that changed all of our lives. Most of you know that our Program Chair for this year, Anna Allison, was killed on September 11th. She was on AA Flight # 11, one of the two planes that was hijacked and flown into the World Trade Center. Anna was a software process improvement advocate, known to many of us for her enthusiasm and dedication. She had just finalized our speaker program for this year. And what a program she gave us – internationally acclaimed software experts Tom DeMarco, Tim Lister, Ed Yourdon, Watts Humphrey, James Bach and local notables Rick Brenner, Linda McInnis, Donna Johnson and Judi Brodman.

We are challenged to improve upon Anna's program – perhaps that is her legacy to BostonSPIN. Over the summer, we are determined to come up with an equally impressive set of speakers for our 2002-2003 program.

To meet this challenge, we need dedicated, energetic software process improvement professionals on the Boston SPIN Steering Committee to guide our organization. The annual election of the Steering Committee Officers takes place at our June 18 meeting.

Please come and vote. At this time, the following SPINners have been nominated for office:

Chair	Linda McInnis Barbara Purchia
Vice Chair	Richard Green Caroline Starita
Secretary	Michael Brother
Treasurer	Ron Kay
At Large	Rick Brenner John Brtis David Heimann Jay Portnoy



Nominations will also be welcomed from the floor the night of the election.

In addition to our elected officers, we have positions of Chairs and members of committees that our Steering Committee appoints. Please let any Steering Committee member know if you have an interest in becoming more active in your Boston SPIN. Volunteers are the backbone of this organization and

new faces are always welcome. Help us to meet the challenge that Anna left us!

We are already excited about our coming year. In the fall we begin celebrating our 10th year! Over the summer, we hope to document the history of our SPIN chapter and distribute it to you in the Fall issue of *In the SPIN*. If you would like to share some of your memories of the last 10 years of the Boston SPIN, please contact the newsletter co-editors. We are particularly interested in stories and photos you might have.



A special event will mark our tenth anniversary year. The Software Engineering Process Group Conference (SEPG) 2003 is coming to Boston on February 24 to 27. Mark your calendars now! We are considered the "host SPIN" for this prestigious event – and there will be many opportunities for us to be involved. Check out the SEPG web page at <http://www.sei.cmu.edu/sepg/>. If you would like to be an active participant, abstracts are due on July 1. We're hoping BostonSPIN will be well represented at the SEPG. You'll be hearing more about SEPG Conference volunteer opportunities in subsequent issues of *In the SPIN*.

Sheila Lynch, Co-editor, *In-the-SPIN*,
email comments to salynch@mitre.org

BostonSPIN Established January 1993
Software Process Improvement Network

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Letter from the Chair

When I think of these times we're living through, I am reminded of Charles Dickens in Tale of Two Cities.

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way--in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only."

We are in an age of amazing developments and yet in the midst of this prosperity there are a large number of talented, creative technologists who can't find work. We need their wisdom and experience but why aren't they being called on? Why are some people working 80 and 90 hours a week and others zero?

We'd like to hear your opinion on the current job situation, and tell us your experience, please send it to Boston_SPIN@yahoo.com

As always, if you like or dislike something SPIN is doing, please tell us that, too!

Regards,

Linda McInnis
Chair, BostonSPIN



Speaker Spotlight

'CMM in Stealth Mode'

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When an organization starts a software process improvement (SPI) program, it chooses a model to follow, a reference document that will provide guidance to the organization – a model such as the Software Engineering Institute's (SEI) Software Capability Maturity Model (CMM). To aid in the implementation of the model, the organization sets up a Software Engineering Process Group (SEPG), the composition of which can be the key to a successful or failed SPI program. Because the purpose of the SEPG is to provide guidance to the organization in areas that need to be improved or activities that need to be introduced based on the chosen model, most members of the SEPG should be chosen because they are respected members of the development staff assigned to on-going projects, making the understanding and adoption of improvements easier for the organization.

One member of the SEPG should be an expert on the model being followed by the organization – a person with knowledge

of the CMM so intimate that he/she can make a decision on whether or not a practice is needed in the organization in order to meet a goal of a specific Key Process Area (KPA). The



CMM expert becomes the translator between the organization's process, activities and artifacts, and the CMM's goals and practices. The expert learns through participating in the SEPG what the organization does, how it does it and what documentation it possesses that

describes or supports the processes and practices that exist in the organization. Initially, during SEPG meetings, the members will bring up activities that have been hampering their work and that need to be fixed in the organization. Some of these activities may have nothing to do with the CMM but they need to be fixed. By fixing these activities first, the SEPG shows the organization and staff that SPI means improving/fixing things that are broken. This first step is very important in gaining the confidence of the organization and staff. All the while, the expert is mapping the changes and improvements to CMM KPA goals and practices.

The expert continues to gather the information needed to guide the organization and fulfill the goals of the CMM by asking some of the following questions of project managers and developers, in English not CMM terminology: tell me how you start a project, do you generate any estimates, how do you generate the estimates, do you save the estimates, where are they stored, how can you find the latest document, code, build, how do you know what is the latest version, or what happens when something has to change. The information received is mapped to the CMM and improvements continue under the guidance of the expert.

As this process information is gathered, mapped, and holes are filled, it's time to begin to train the organization. But, as above, the training emphasis is not on the CMM but rather on the process used in the organization for a specific KPA, and the procedures to be followed to implement the process. For example, for the Configuration Management (CM) training, the following subjects are covered: what project artifacts are controlled, how is a project artifact controlled, how is a change made to a controlled artifact and when is a project artifact placed under control. In the above CM example, it is not necessary for all the staff to become knowledgeable in the Goals, Commitments, Abilities, Practices, Measurements, and Verifications of the Configuration Management KPA; but it is necessary for all the staff to be knowledgeable in the CM

procedures and practices they must follow to perform Configuration Management on their projects and within the organization. Thus the CMM remains in the 'stealth mode'.



The 'stealth mode' approach yields excellent SPI results. It enables an organization to achieve its goals of reaching maturity Levels 2 and 3

quickly and without disrupting the organization or its on-going projects. The organization spends its time and dollars on filling holes that exist in the process while adding value to the software development process, in training the development and management staff in the organization's software

management and development processes which its own staff developed. It does not spend its time and dollars on training the staff to be experts in the CMM – the goals and practices. I have used the ‘stealth’ mode successfully for a number of years and I see that I am not alone - both speakers and members of the SEI used the term “CMM in Stealth Mode” during the SEPG Conference in Phoenix this year.

Dear SPIN Doctor

Comments from Readers on ‘Agile’

by Judi Brodman © 2002

Dear SPINners:

In my last column, I discussed a number of articles I had come across that discussed Agile Methodologies. These articles continue to appear each month in almost every software magazine. I hope you continue to read these articles over the summer months as I will certainly do. Let’s continue this discussion in the Fall.

I’d like to share with you the following note I received from a reader:

“I entirely agree with your viewpoint regarding agile methodologies. A good & developer friendly process is like a Steering Wheel that guides you to do the right things first. In fact a good process would not direct stopping changes early in the Project but tracking changes and applying them systematically by understanding the impact.

A good process is like a sophisticated Navigator that gives you proper directions to reach your goal effectively via the best route.

If Software Development means only writing code and changing it day in day out without any Process Methods, one can imagine the chaos that would be generated. The biggest and most valuable question of ‘Maintainability’ of the software will be at stake. What we need are simple, sound and effective Processes.”



And now, my usual pre-summer closing...

"Here in the North, summer means a less "formal" way of life, fewer rigid "plans and procedures" - a less "institutionalized" way of life - more cookouts, long walks on the beach at Cape Cod, summer nights of gardening, midnight swims, picnics by a waterfall in Vermont.... I guess life reverts to "Level 1" for us for a few months.... Enjoyably "chaotic" !!!"

Have a wonderful and safe summer.

This column is for you; let's make a difference! Send your comments and questions to "Dear SPIN Doctor" at brodman@LOGOS-Intl.com. Sign them or use a "pen-name" – I respect your confidentiality.

"The SPIN Doctor"

April Meeting Synopsis

“Secrets of Agile Organizations”

Speaker: Tom DeMarco

Submitted by Barbara Purchia, Boston SPIN Vice-Chair; Quality Engineering Director, Configuration Management Business Unit, Rational Software

Our joint meetings with ASQ-Boston and the Boston SPIN are becoming a much anticipated and enjoyable annual event. Great speakers are one of the reasons for the success of these meetings and Tom DeMarco was no exception. He was wonderful this evening and as engaging as ever.



Tom focused on what’s different today:

- Faster! Faster! Faster!
- Harder! Harder! Harder!
- Quality matters more (or less) than ever.
- The demographics are killing us.

Tom started talking about how our business has changed over the decades. The 1990’s brought a sea change with the Internet. The Japanese, who were so strong and quality focused in the 80’s, didn’t make it onto the Internet as quickly as the United States. They were very efficient but they couldn’t “turn on a dime” and adapt to this new technology. And now, they are very much behind.

According to Tom, in this tough economy with lots of down sizing and restructuring, “Expectations are the only things that are growing.” If you want to be faster and you are over-optimized, re-invention is the only thing that matters. The industrial economy is gone and the information economy is the most important component. Efficiency makes it hard for you to change. Getting more efficient was a mistake. It has given people no slack time and thus no time to be flexible and adaptive to change.

Tom used one of the examples from his book, Slack, Getting Past Burnout, Busywork, and the Myth of Total Efficiency, to demonstrate his point. Have you ever played one of those puzzle games that has a set of eight tiles in a grid with one open space? You need to move the tiles around using the one free space in order to effect a perfect ordering. If instead you have a game with nine tiles and no open spaces, you have improved the efficiency of this layout by 11.1 percent (since the wasted space is gone and all the squares are 100 percent in use.) Efficiency is improved but there is no ability to effect change. Tom has called the open space *Slack* or the degree of freedom (in time and budget and manpower and space, etc.) necessary to make change possible.

Middle management is where re-invention takes place. It’s also where upper management tends to reduce. Upper management is not courageous and is afraid to lose. They pile on the projects. However, when you add another project to a stack of projects, all the delivery dates move out. The key is to rank order and prioritize your projects, and then staff each project optimally. Put projects on hold when the priority

doesn't justify doing them. The trick to being fast is to pick the top projects and do them really fast.

If your project is risk free, you can't afford to do it, because "everything easy has already been done." The ability to get things done is dependent on conflict resolution (According to Tom, this is the essence of business.)

We need lighter process. Code inspections take up too much time; inspect designs instead! (Code inspections are done because there is no design!) We need to focus on being non-documentary (producing less than 1/10th of the total paperwork than today!). We need to invest in our human capital. We need to prioritize and choose projects carefully. What not to build is as important as what is to build. He quoted Tim Lister: "Whenever I hear people talking about process I think they've got it all wrong. What we need is not so much a process for doing projects as a thoughtful and well-designed process for deciding which ones to do at all."

In terms of being harder, the systems we tend to build today are characterized by more stakeholders, more conflict, shorter schedules, tighter budgets, more visibility, and more risk. Most of all, modern day systems are harder because we built all the easy ones years ago.



What is quality? Tom described his experience with Photoshop as a tool that he feels is the best. He selected this for a variety of reasons in priority order:

- It was unique
- It redefined the whole notion of photo processing
- It redefined how he thought about photos
- It allowed him to do things that were unimaginable before
- It was fully implemented
- It's human interface sticks in the mind; he rarely needed a manual
- It was revolutionary in affording an interface for third party add-ons
- It was solid as a rock

Tom's point is that product quality had almost nothing to do with defects or their lack. Real quality is more what it does and changes than whether it's full of flaws.

The demographics are changing. Today, there is a 10 to 1 structural deficit in the future. Previously there has been three new sources of supply of IT workers:

- The baby boom
- Introduction of women into the workforce
- Increasing educational levels of the post-war generation

According to Bruce Taylor, Publisher of KM World, "We may never have enough knowledge workers again."

In order to be successful in the future we need to:

- Become less efficient
- Lighten process (strive for light process and heavy skills)
- Learn to Prioritize

Choose your projects very wisely; what you decide not to build is more important than how you build.



Invest in human capital.

Tom believes in practicing what he preaches. He took the summer off and wrote Dark Harbor House, a departure from his normal books. He felt he had a production mentality and that everything new is risky. He has to be good at being a novice in whatever he does. He has now reinvented himself and his company.

May Meeting Synopsis

Why Nobody in Our Business Can Estimate

Speaker, Tim Lister: the Atlantic Systems Guild, Inc.

Submitted by Dolores McCarthy, Boston SPIN Secretary, Quality Manager at Computer Sciences Corporation, Cambridge

Little did the SPIN audience suspect we were getting two-for-one this evening in Tim Lister, respected industry consultant/author, and Tim Lister, the stand-up comedian. Although the subject matter of projects running over budget and beyond schedule is a serious issue, Tim regaled us with his wonderfully expressive anecdotes and stories of why this is so. The truth is, for the most part, our estimating skills are notoriously bad, and Tim has the experience to prove it, as an arbitrator for the American Arbitration Association, arbitrating disputes involving software and software services.



Most organizations cannot answer simple questions like, "When will you be done?" and "How much is it going to cost?" so they have lost all credibility with their clients. Estimates are so bad that projects are consistently late and only a small percentage are on time. Tim's mathematically oriented father pointed out that there is a third possibility, "Early!"

So how did this situation come about? Tim explained that the fast-evolving industry has not given us a chance to improve our estimating skills. Another reason is that people set goals instead of doing real estimation, and we become preempted by the pseudo-estimate, such as, "We need it by December." Then, if someone tries to do a real job of estimation and says it will take 5 more months than that, the client's answer will likely be, "That's an unhappy number. Go rework your numbers." In effect, a good estimate is a crummy goal. So the developer falls in line to keep the client happy. It's much more important to make a commitment than to keep it.

What's to be done about this situation? Tim stated there are rules to remember. Make a public display of the estimation. Re-estimate whenever you have the information. Late projects don't make up the time. Let developers update the schedule. They are the most experienced in knowing how much time it will take. No project ever runs to plan. Allow for contingencies.

We can't control what we don't measure. Tim drew a graph of Estimation Quality Factor (EQF) vs. Time. It showed the area of deviation from perfection based on actuals. Over time, with practice, estimations get better. We have two managers – ourselves and time. We, not time, must be making the decisions. Bad news only gets worse with time. Tim stated that estimation is our job and we should use EQF on anything that matters.



For Tim's complete presentation, link to the SPIN web site: www.bostonspin.org

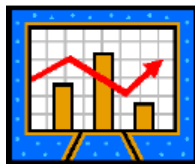
Tim is co-author of *Software Risk Management, 2002* with Tom DeMarco. He may be contacted at lister@acm.org

Roundtable: Managing with Mini-Lifecycles

Facilitator and Scribe, John Britis, BostonSPIN Steering Committee At Large Member, The MITRE Corporation

The group discussed the topic that was presented in feature article of the April Boston SPIN Newsletter. The discussion centered primarily around the visual presentation of the mini-lifecycle, and how it fit in with other project management tools. A few of the highlights follow:

- Using a color coded mini-lifecycle matrix to visualize the status of the project can be very helpful. It gives the team a sense of where things stand, what needs to be done, and how things fit together.
- The mini-lifecycle matrix works best on projects where dependencies among various activities are minimal, and there are few long, linear strings of dependent activity. Luckily, current programming practices, especially web development and agile techniques allow this.
- The use of the mini-lifecycle matrix does not eliminate the need for Gantt charts to present high level status to management and customers.
- In projects where task dependencies are complex, the use of the mini-life cycle matrix does not eliminate the need for a representation of dependencies. The use of some precedence diagramming method is still needed.
- Mini-lifecycle monitoring allows for "inch-pebbles" to be stasured in an objective, binary fashion. (Note: This requires a well understood exit criteria so that everyone knows what completion means.) This can eliminate much of the ambiguity of status reporting. The status of the mini-life cycle inch-pebbles can then be aggregated (weighted by estimated effort) to provide large scale status information and can be



used to provide accurate input to earned value analysis.

- It was noted that the mini-lifecycle matrix does not do a good job of portraying calendar information. It was agreed that a high level Gantt chart is probably needed to fill this hole.
- The mini-lifecycle can be a valuable tool when applied to appropriate projects.

Roundtable: Software Process Improvement (SPI)

How to start and anchor your SPI movement

Facilitator and Scribe, Judi Brodman, Co-editor of the Boston SPIN Newsletter, In-the-SPIN; Process Consultant, LOGOS International, Inc.



We had a large group whose members were very interactive and were able to discuss many SPI issues.

A little statistical analysis on the attendees yielded the following information about the level of maturity of the their organizations:

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	N/E*
92%	0%	0%	0%	0%	8%

*N/E = Not employed

To start the Roundtable off, everyone introduced him or herself and stated why they were attending this Roundtable. Discussion ensued on a number of topics as described below.

Should you be defining the process end-to-end or starting with a 'lite' weight one?

Discussion started on this topic by stating that you need to define what your SPI goals are – Level 2? Level 3? Just improving what you do? Start by defining the corporate goals and work towards those setting SPI goals to flow from corporate goals.

The following ideas were put forth to aid those just starting out in SPI:

- ⇒ Start lite
- ⇒ Build a 'corral' around what you are doing
- ⇒ Don't try to have everyone join the 'big process'
- ⇒ Start some metrics.

The group was reminded that at Level 2 of the SW-CMM not all projects had to do everything the same way; they did have to do the same things but not the same way – example, estimation has to be done by all projects but they can each use a different estimation method. A comment was made that it still helps to have guidelines and templates in place to help the inexperienced Project Manager. All projects should define a Work Breakdown Structure (WBS).

Project Managers need to document what they are doing for an assessment and to guide the team. At Level 2, most PMs use the Software Development Plan (SDP) to capture this information.



The group was reminded that the term 'process improvement' means just that – you are improving your existing process. You are not defining a NEW process. You are documenting what you do and finding the holes that need definition/work. Only when you know what your existing process is can you begin to improve it. A suggestion was made that you can ask questions of the PMs and staff – “What’s the problem?” Ask the question at all levels – management and staff.

How do you start?

Start by fixing the problems that the staff knows exist. One suggestion was to look at a single phase of a lifecycle across your projects and capture the current process, what works – what isn't working. It was further suggested that the staff vote on the top three items to be fixed in the organization and the SEPG and staff start with the top priority items. Participants were also reminded that projects can be defined differently in different organizations so define what a project is in your organization. It was stated that having an SEPG at the beginning of the SPI initiative is a great benefit to the organization – gives guidance, project participation, etc.



It was also suggested that you could start by a 'post-facto' implementation – test readiness review. Develop a checklist of everything that should exist and/or be completed by test. Make sure the checklist is signed off.

What about buy-in?

A suggestion was raised that SPI should be part of everyone's performance objectives. It was also stated that not everyone can be won over. Try to make the organization see the successes and early changes and the benefits. Make everyone want to participate.

What about tools?

The usefulness of workflow tools was discussed. Also participants were warned that buying tools too early in the SPI process could be a waste. Tools should support your process – they are NOT your process. So you need to know what your process is to select the correct tools. The comment was made that “a fool with a tool is still a fool”. Choose tools carefully.

Conclusion – Should SPI Roundtable continue?

Attendees agreed that this Roundtable was useful and they elected to meet again and continue to discuss solutions to the problems that attendees brought up. Therefore this Roundtable will meet next in June. Please join us!

Roundtable: SPIN Jobs Forum

Facilitator, BostonSPIN member Michael Brother
Scribe, BostonSPIN member Dolores Ryser

The Jobseekers Forum welcomed new members to SPIN and to the SPIN Hiring Initiative. Several individual resumes were reviewed by the group and general topics such as cover letter styles and networking strategies were discussed. Members exchanged information about unemployment compensation, certification programs, training opportunities and other networking groups. The next Hiring Initiative meeting will be held on June 11 to present the Entrepreneurial Training Program from the Mass. Department of Education and Training.



Roundtable: Software Test Forum

Facilitator and Scribe, BostonSPIN member Paul Piper

The topic for discussion was How to Write a Test Plan without having application specifications. The forum participants discussed this from 6 PM to 6:55 PM, before the main meeting.

The consensus belief was the test function has to obtain the best information available through discussion with the key players, especially the developers and marketing. The test team should find out what are the most important features and functionalities of the application. Also, exploratory testing of the product was recommended.

A technique that could be used is to write "use cases." Then, write the test plan. Finally, the test plan should be reviewed with the developers and marketing. It is important to try to get them to sign off on it.

May Book Club

Facilitator and Scribe, Barbara Purchia, Boston SPIN Vice-Chair; Quality Engineering Director, Configuration Management Business Unit, Rational Software



Our May SPIN Book Club selection was *Peopleware: Productive Projects and Teams* by Tom DeMarco and Timothy Lister. Tim Lister, our May guest speaker, joined us for part of the meeting for an extra special treat!! He autographed our books too.

Our discussion group reviewed some of the chapter and key points and began discussing some of them. These are some of the interesting points we discussed:

- From the chapter on Brain Time Versus Body Time, we talked about *flow*. Flow is when you are totally in tune with what you are doing. There is no consciousness of effort and the work seems to...flow! The problem is

when you're in the flow state and you're interrupted. These interruptions take time and then you need reimmersion time to get back into the flow state. So a five-minute phone call many require a fifteen-minute reimmersion time, causing a twenty-minute loss. One person talked about Continuous Partial Attention, the ability to multi-process, like reading email and talking at the same time. A person can think faster than talk but the mind can easily drop into a thrashing mode when multi-tasking. Some people said that once they were interrupted, that had a very difficult re-entry and in some cases, they could not re-establish the flow state.

- We talked about the section on "The Office Environment." One participant said that one large company redid the office space, getting input on the optimum cube size and did all the right things. In this study, they found that cube size was bi-modal. At some point, if you make a cube bigger, it doesn't make the occupant more efficient. However, if you make it less than a certain size, efficiency falls off dramatically.
- "Growing Productive Teams" was the next area we discussed. We talked about the "Black Team" (and you'll have to read the book to find out about them ☺). There were several counter examples of how not to build a team. One occurred at a team building training meeting. The team building was happening outside the meeting, however, the team building facilitator was inflexible to the needs of the attendees.



SPIN Book Clubs give you a good reason to read those books you've been putting off and offer the opportunity to talk with others who have read similar thought provoking books related to the work you're doing or would like to do.

June Meeting

Achieving CMM Level 2 and Beyond

Speakers: Judi Brodman & Steve Hannigan

Since late 1998, the Battelle Cambridge Office (BCA), with the help of LOGOS International, Inc. (LOGOS), has been working towards achieving a Level 2/Level 3 maturity rating using the CMMSM, the Software Engineering Institute's model for software process improvement. BCA is a small organization with diverse types of software projects - Level-of-Effort, fixed price, maintenance upgrades, and new developments. How did such a diverse, small organization reach Level 2 and beyond? In this presentation, Battelle will outline the road that was taken starting with a mini-assessment, including training, process capture and development, process rollout to the organization, tool support, and, finally, further improvement steps. LOGOS will discuss use of assessments (mini, gap, CBA-IPI); lessons learned - starting with someone else's process artifacts, setting up an

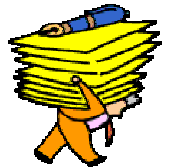
SEPG in a Level 1 organization, using training to hone the process; cultural change - what causes it; reaching for Level 3 from Level 1. The above experiences, presented from both Battelle's and LOGOS' perspective, should aid attendees in making informed choices along the way to higher levels of maturity, to learn what techniques/tools accelerate or decelerate the maturity process, to learn how to inspire the organization to strive for a disciplined process and improvement.

Roundtable: Software Process Improvement Issues surrounding your SPI activities

Facilitators: Judi Brodman and Brian Munier

This month's SPI roundtable will discuss the process problems that attendees bring to the Roundtable. We will discuss solutions to the problems based on the facilitator's experience as well as the attendees' experience. Bring your process experience and lessons learned - what worked, what didn't work - when you were faced with initiating and/or continuing your process improvement activities.

In addition, we will have a guest facilitator who will help you decide what organizational procedures are helpful, what should be included in a procedure, what can you write as a practice, and what is a guideline. Brian's company, Battelle, has published a book on procedure writing, *Procedure Writing - Principles and Practices*. Come and add your experience or learn from others!



Roundtable: Selling Developers

Facilitator, H. S. Lahman



New technologies, practices, and paradigms appear in our industry with dizzying regularity. When an organization wants to adopt something new it needs to persuade developers that they should adapt to it. This roundtable would focus on techniques for getting developers on board for changes in the development environment.

Roundtable: The Team Software Process, Personal Software Process and the Challenge of Cultural Change.

Facilitator, J. Erik Hemdal

The Team Software Process developed as a "next-step" for organizations that adopted PSP. It's an extension of the Level 5 PSP process, adapted for team use. The roundtable will discuss questions, experiences, advice, and lessons learned about applying TSP.

Discussion items:

- Who has tried TSP "on top of" PSP??"
- Anyone gone straight to TSP?
- Arguments for and against TSP
- Successes and failures with TSP



- Suggestions/advice/discussion about applying TSP.

The facilitator will create a "note sheet" about TSP for those who are unfamiliar with the Team Software Process in order to give them a little jump start.

Bookclub: *Surviving the Top Ten Challenges of Software Testing (A People-Oriented Approach)*

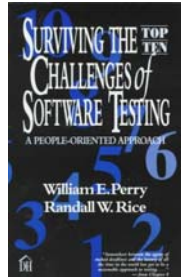
by William Perry and Randall Rice

Facilitator, Barb Purchia

Note: The Software Test Forum is combined with the book club this month.

Book Description

Software testers require people-oriented skills to survive what can often be a lose-lose relationship with developers and managers. *Surviving the Top Ten Challenges of Software Testing* goes beyond the technical skill sets required for effective testing to address the political realities that can't be solved by technical knowledge alone.



Authors Perry and Rice compile a "top ten" list of the challenges faced by testers and offer tactics for success. The challenges illustrate the way testing fits into the context of software development and how testers can manage expectations and improve communication with managers, developers, and customers. The text features a self-assessment for testing skills and an action plan for improving the testing process.

Topics include training, acquiring management support, obtaining tools, communicating with customers, managing changing requirements, marketing the importance of testing, testing what's thrown over the wall, controlling the scope of testing, teaching developers to test, and handling the delicate situation of reporting defects.

The Top Ten People Challenges Facing Testers Are:

- Challenge #10: Getting Trained in Testing
- Challenge #9: Building Relationships with Developers
- Challenge #8: Testing Without Tools
- Challenge #7: Explaining Testing to Managers
- Challenge #6: Communicating with Customers -- And Users
- Challenge #5: Making Time for Testing
- Challenge #4: Testing What's Thrown Over the Wall
- Challenge #3: Hitting a Moving Target
- Challenge #2: Fighting a Lose-Lose Situation
- Challenge #1: Having to Say No

Donate Your 'Used' Books

Those of you who attend our monthly meetings know that we raffle off at least one book at each meeting if we can. We have been fortunate that the speakers who are authors have been so generous and have donated a signed copy of their books to be raffled.

But we have held meetings where we did not have a book to raffle. We know that many of you have books that you have bought, stored and maybe even read, that you no longer need or want.

PLEASE think about donating some of those 'dust catchers' to us so that we can raffle them off and another SPINner can benefit from reading the books. Continue to make the power of SPIN (Software Process Improvement Network) continue through the sharing of your technical books!!!



Order Your Book Club



Don't forget that Boston SPIN is bringing you more convenience for your book club selections. You can now order Book Club selections and your purchase benefits SPIN. We receive a percentage of every

purchase made by linking to Amazon.com from our site.

Book Titles are linked to their reviews on Amazon. Go to the This Month's Meeting or Book Club Schedule pages on our website, <http://www.bostonspin.org/>, where you can read an abstract of this month's Book Club. From there it is just a single click to the Amazon.com website to purchase it!

SPIN Information

The Boston SPIN is a forum for the free and open exchange of software process improvement experiences and ideas. Meetings are usually held on third Tuesdays, September - June. Boston SPIN welcomes volunteers and sponsors. There is no charge to attend the meetings. Additional information about the Boston SPIN can be found at our WEB HOME PAGE: <http://www.bostonspin.org/>.

For more information about our programs and events contact Barry Mirrer, Program Chair, bmirrer@alum.mit.edu.

Cancellations (including weather)

Starting at 3pm, we'll notify you via email to the SPIN distribution list, we'll post the notice on the SPIN web page, and we'll send the cancellation announcement to Channel 7 TV and WRKO AM 680.

SPIN Meeting Location

Boston SPIN meetings are held at The MITRE Corporation in Bedford.

Please be aware that MITRE has advised us that, due to increased security concerns, you will need a Picture ID for admission to the SPIN meetings. We encourage you to leave all carrying bags, backpacks, and briefcases behind (i.e., in your car). Otherwise, you should be prepared to have these opened and inspected upon arrival.

MITRE's campus is located at 202 Burlington Road (Route 62), Bedford. SPIN meetings are held in the 'S' building. Directions can be found on our Web site: <http://www.bostonspin.org/>.

Sponsors

The following organizations/individuals support the Boston SPIN:

- ② The MITRE Corporation <http://www.mitre.org/>
- ② Raytheon Company <http://www.raytheon.com/>
- ② Edelman & Associates <http://www.edeltech.com/>
- ② Quality Search <http://qualsearch.com/>

Email Lists

To receive Boston SPIN specific notices, send an email to: jwithall@onebeacon.com

Future Programs

We welcome your suggestions for future Boston SPIN programs. Program suggestion forms can be found on the Boston SPIN web site. We are always looking for interesting speakers. If you'd like to speak at Boston SPIN, please review the criteria specified on the Boston SPIN web site before sending an abstract to Barry Mirrer at bmirrer@alum.mit.edu.

Newsletter Call for Articles

The *In-the-SPIN Newsletter* is always in need of new and interesting articles dealing with Process Improvement, software development methodologies, Project Management and other related subjects that may be of interest to our readership. Please send any articles that you would like to have considered for publication in the Newsletter to either of the editors listed below.

Send letters-to-the-editor, and general correspondence to:

- ② Judi Brodman, Co-editor of In-the-SPIN, brodman@logos-intl.com
- ② Sheila Lynch, Co-editor of In-the-SPIN, salynch@mitre.org

Back issues of the *In-the-SPIN Newsletter* can be found on the Boston SPIN web site: <http://www.bostonspin.org/>.

