

# Early Warning Signs of IT Project Derailment



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MANAGEMENT  
CONSULTING

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# Agenda

1. What is Virtual Lunch & Learn
2. Your Expectations from this Webinar
3. Introduction – Myself
4. Early Warning Signs of IT Project Derailment
  - a. Lack of Executive Support
  - b. Lack of Stakeholder Engagement
  - c. Expectations Mismatch Between Stakeholder / Team
  - d. Frequently Missed Deadlines
  - e. Ineffective Change Control
5. Upcoming Learning Opportunities from RefineM
6. How to get 1 PDU for this Webinar?
7. Rewarding Our Loyal Attendees
8. Q & A

# RefineM's Virtual Lunch & Learn

**This is a monthly webinar delivered during the lunch hour in the first week (Wednesdays) of every month.**

**It's designed to help you learn while you eat lunch, providing a relaxed environment to enhance your experience.**

**The monthly webinars will cover a variety of Project Management / Agile topics.**

# Your Expectations

What are your expectations from this webinar?

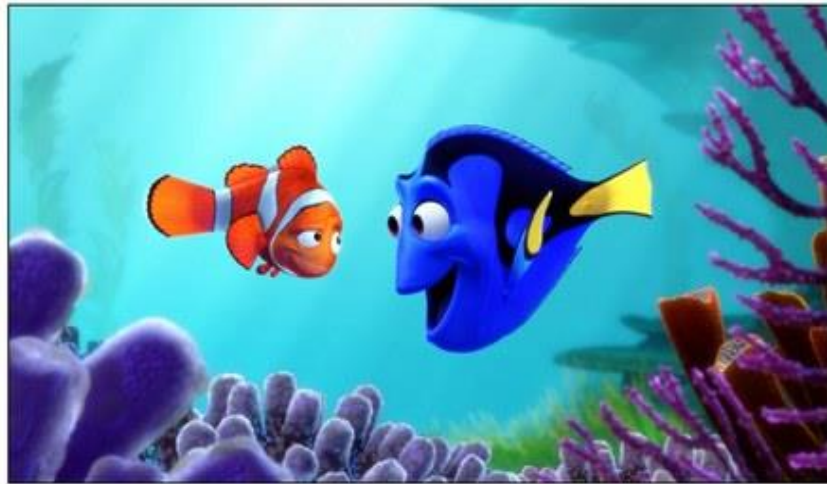
Why are you here today?

## RefineM

Helping organizations turn their project management capability into a *competitive advantage*

- \* CEO/Consultant since Dec 2011
- \* Agile Coaching/Adoption
- \* Project Management/ Process Improvement Consulting and Training
- \* Project Management Toolkits (for PMs, Executives and Agile Practitioners)

My professional journey b/f RefineM



- \* 20+ years of Successful Project Leadership
- \* Led 100s of projects of all sizes, successfully
- \* Recovered many projects, saved millions of \$
- \* Implemented numerous process improvements
- \* Coached/mentored 100s of PMs, and some executives
- \* Board Member – SWMO PMI Chapter (2008-2014)

# Early Warning Signs of IT Project Derailment



- Lack of Executive Support
- Lack of Stakeholder Engagement
- Expectations Mismatch Between Stakeholder / Team
- Frequently Missed Deadlines
- Ineffective Change Control

# What Makes IT Projects Risky?

- \* New technology
- \* Compatibility issues with existing technology
- \* New languages / architectures to learn
- \* Product can be changed at any moment
- \* Increased need to deliver to market quickly

***How can you tell if the project is on track?***

# Five Common Signs

1. Lack of Executive Support
2. Lack of Stakeholder Engagement
3. Expectations Mismatch Between Stakeholder / Team
4. Frequently Missed Deadlines
5. Ineffective Change Control

[Review white paper on Early Warning Signs for others](#)



# Lack of Executive Support



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# Lack of Executive Support

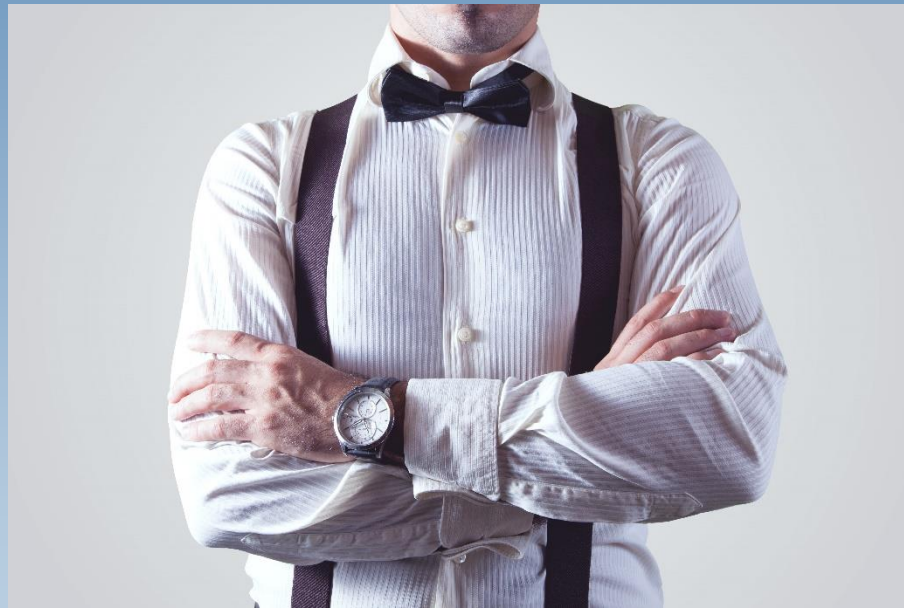
- \* Executive support is critical to any project's success
- \* Executives can help a project:
  - ✓ Indirectly, by communicating its value to their stakeholders
  - ✓ Directly, by providing resources and support to remove barriers
- \* Executives can threaten a project:
  - ✓ Indirectly, by tying up needed resources or speaking out negatively
  - ✓ Directly, by killing the project

***How do you get and keep executives on board?***

# How to Overcome

- \* Keep executives engaged
  - ✓ Stakeholder management integrated with communication plan
- \* Show the impact of decisions
  - ✓ If resources are pulled, what does that do to the schedule?
  - ✓ Data helps executives make decisions
- \* Encourage a stakeholder to be a project champion
  - ✓ That person can help communicate the value to executives

# Lack of Stakeholder Engagement



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# Lack of Stakeholder Engagement

- \* Stakeholders drive project resources
  - ✓ Not just executives
  - ✓ Functional managers, middle managers, subject matter experts
- \* Consequences of lack of engagement:
  - ✓ Missed opportunities
    - Additional resources
    - Experience to help in project planning and execution
  - ✓ Increased risk
    - May be missing someone who needs to give input
    - Someone who feels left out can become a barrier

***How do you keep stakeholders engaged?***

# How to Overcome

- \* Make sure ALL stakeholders are identified
  - ✓ No one who affects or is affected by the project should be missing
- \* Use an engagement matrix
  - ✓ Unaware, Resistant, Neutral, Supportive, Leading
  - ✓ Current Level of Engagement vs. Desired Level of Engagement
- \* Plan a strategy to engage the stakeholders
  - ✓ Keep them in the loop
  - ✓ Work with them to improve engagement levels

# Stakeholder Engagement Matrix

#	FirstName	LastName	Unaware	Resistant	Neutral	Supportive	Leading
1	NK	Shrivastava					C,D
3	Andrew	Young				C	D
4	Gene	Fuller			C		D
5	George?	Costanza		C	?	D	
6	Cosmo?	Kremer		C	?	D	
7	Jerry?	Little		C	D		
8	Debbie?	King			C	D	
9	Robin	George	C			D	
10	Bernie	Taylor					C,D

# Subject Matter Experts

- \* Subject matter experts (SMEs) are commonly overloaded
  - ✓ This presents another risk since their input is vital
- \* Make sure for each subject matter expert, you know:
  - ✓ What their schedule is
  - ✓ What you need from them
  - ✓ When you need it

***These steps help improve SME engagement***



# Expectations Mismatch Between Stakeholder / Team



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# Expectations Mismatch

- \* Expectations mismatch can cause two problems:
  - ✓ Project work stalls because developers don't know what to do
    - Leads to delays
  - ✓ Developers don't code the right solution
    - Leads to frustration among stakeholders, expensive rework
  
- \* Expectations mismatch commonly results from:
  - ✓ Lack of effective scope documentation
  - ✓ Missing / underrepresented stakeholders
  - ✓ Lack of code or design review

***How can you clarify scope and minimize rework?***

# How to Overcome

- \* Make sure stakeholder expectations are communicated
- \* Make sure the scope is understood *and* validated
  - ✓ Understood by team, accepted by customer
- \* Conduct code / design reviews
  - ✓ Have stakeholders present if possible so they can give feedback

# Frequently Missed Deadlines



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# Frequently Missed Deadlines

- \* When the team consistently misses its deadlines:
  - ✓ Team morale slips
  - ✓ Executives and other stakeholders get more anxious
  - ✓ Costs increase due to extra time and budgets are overrun
  - ✓ Other projects can be impacted

***How can you get your project back on track?***

# How to Overcome

- \* Perform root cause analysis
  - ✓ To avoid future problems, find out what caused current problems
  - ✓ Without this step, problems could continue
- \* Follow up with team daily
  - ✓ Team and PM need to know what's slipping, what new dates are
  - ✓ What issues are arising that the project manager can address?
- \* Report weekly to stakeholders
  - ✓ Stakeholders need to know project status and be reassured
  - ✓ Reports will help them communicate with their superiors

# Ineffective Change Control



# Ineffective Change Control

- \* Changes should be expected on any project
  - ✓ Especially IT with software products that are intangible
- \* Changes can come on an IT project for many reasons:
  - ✓ Incompatibility with legacy systems / vendor products
  - ✓ Compliance with regulations
  - ✓ Discovery of critical / showstopper issues during testing
- \* Ineffective change control results in confusion

***How can you make change control more effective?***



# How to Overcome

- \* Develop a strong change control process
  - ✓ Make sure everyone knows how to submit a change request
  - ✓ Verify the chain of command for approving change requests
  - ✓ Create strong documentation for changes
  
- \* Consider agile
  - ✓ Agile welcomes changes, even late
  - ✓ Need to determine if organization is strong fit

# Other Challenges

- \* Ineffective / weak project manager
- \* Weak commitment of project team
- \* Team members lack knowledge and skills
- \* Lack of documented requirements, success criteria
- \* Ineffective schedule planning / management
- \* Resources assigned to a higher priority project
- \* No business case for the project

*Source: Kappelman, L., McKeeman, R. and Zhang, L. (2006). Early warning signs of IT project failure: the dominant dozen. Information Systems Management, Fall 2006.*

# Conclusion

- \* Many other challenges
  - ✓ Read the paper on [Early Warning Signs of IT Project Failures in RefineM's Knowledge Base](#)
- \* Addressing these challenges is important to:
  - ✓ Improve time to market
  - ✓ Reduce or eliminate waste due to rework
  - ✓ Improve effectiveness of team

***Take your IT projects to the next level***

# More Training Opportunities From RefineM

Training Title	Springfield, MO	Overland Park, KS	Regina, SK, Canada	Atlanta, GA
<a href="#"><u>Agile Fundamentals</u></a>		Oct 27-28		
<a href="#"><u>PMI-ACP® Exam Prep</u></a>		Oct 27-29		
<a href="#"><u>Agile Foundation</u></a>	Nov 17			
<a href="#"><u>Leading SAFe® Course (SA training)</u></a>	Nov 18-19	Nov 09-10		
<a href="#"><u>PMP® Exam Prep</u></a>	Dec 07-10			
<a href="#"><u>Do More With Less: Delivering Projects Successfully with Only 8 PM Processes</u></a>			Nov 05	
<a href="#"><u>Earned Value Management</u></a>				Nov 07

Visit <https://refinem.com/trainings/> for more details

# Online Training Opportunities From RefineM

Training Title	Instructor-Led Online	Free Webinar
<a href="#"><u>Ace Your PMP® Exam: Final Review</u></a>	Nov 12	
<a href="#"><u>Project Challenges and Successes of 2015</u></a>		Dec 02

Visit <https://refinem.com/trainings/> for more details

# RefineM Customized Training

***We also offer customized trainings, On-site & Virtual***

## ***Topics include***

- \* Agile,***
- \* Project Management,***
- \* Process Improvement,***
- \* Leadership and***
- \* PMI & SAFe Certifications.***



**More info at <http://refinem.com/trainings/>**

**Contact us at [Contact@RefineM.com](mailto:Contact@RefineM.com)**

# Next Lunch and Learn

- \* ***Project Challenges and Successes of 2015***
  - ✓ What are some struggles from high-profile projects?
  - ✓ What are some triumphs from high-profile projects?
  - ✓ What lessons can we learn for 2016 projects?
- \* ***Wednesday, December 2, 12:00-1:00 PM Central***

**Register Today - Don't wait for the last Minute**

# How to Claim 1 PDU for this Webinar?

- \* PDU Category – B, Continuing Education
- \* Program Title – Webinar on “Early Warning Signs of IT Project Derailment”
- \* Date Started – Today’s date
- \* Date Completed – Today’s date
- \* Hours Completed – 1.00
- \* Provider
  - ✓ Name – RefineM
  - ✓ Phone # 417-414-9886
  - ✓ Email – [nks@refinem.com](mailto:nks@refinem.com)
- \* PDUs Claimed – 1.00



# Rewarding Our Loyal Attendees

- \* Anyone who attends 3 Lunch and Learn Webinars in a row is a Star Attendee and is eligible for a prize drawing for a \$10 Amazon gift card.



**Congratulations to the winner!**  
**Stay tuned for our next drawing in December.**

# Questions?



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