Acquisition Process
Improvement in Stealth Mode:
Is it IDEAL?

Software Engineering Institute
Carnegie Mellon University
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Joe Wickless
Senior Member of the Technical Staff
Acquisition Support Program
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Agenda

Background

What do I mean by “Stealth Mode”?

Comparisons to Ideal

Real-life Examples

Summary
Some Background

The SEI supports a Program Executive Office (PEO) inside of NSA with an embedded staff member working as a PEO staff member.

Increasing focus from Senior Acquisition Executive on establishing acquisition business processes.

Additional focus from oversight bodies.

Need within the PEO to identify business processes, understand resource usage and justify performance.

SEI staff member proposes application of proven process improvement strategies.
The IDEAL℠ Model

Stimulus for Change
Set Context
Build Sponsorship
Initiating
Charter Infrastructure
Characterize Current & Desired States
Develop Recommendations
Set Priorities
Establishing
Develop Approach
Plan Actions
Pilot/Test Solution
Create Solution
Refine Solution
Implement Solution
Analyze and Validate
Propose Future Actions
Learning
Acting

℠ IDEAL is a service mark of Carnegie Mellon University.
Not the IDEAL Initiation

PEO leadership not really interested in a process improvement strategy
Interest comes from SETA staff
No ability at this point in establish the NECESSARY improvement infrastructure
The expected consequences followed
Getting Started, At Least

Gained permission to create a mid-level management group to document a “process architecture” for a portion of the PEO business activities

Met with the this group to establish an unofficial charter and to gain an initial understanding of the process

Immediately identified actions from the PEO causing dysfunction

So – we start to establish some sponsorship. Things need to change.
Diagnosis: Chaos

Continued to meet with the management group, going through the sometimes painful process of documenting a process architecture

Much time spent going through the normal stages of denial and blame

Introduced the Software Process Framework as a tool

A phased group of processes began to emerge

And then something great happened…
Process Architecture: Work in Progress
That Great Thing

New Deputy PEO assigned

Previous assignment as senior level leader in software development organization

Previous experience with CMMI-DEV®-based process improvement program

Former Management Steering Group lead and Appraisal sponsor
Getting Traction

NOW, the infrastructure is established

Process Improvement Strategy Documented

MSG Chartered

APG Chartered

Process Improvement Teams

Improvement Plans
What’s Happening Now

Seven Process Improvement Teams

Processes designed using tailored Software Process Framework in “expert mode”

All process descriptions subjected to formal peer review process

Management Steering Group review

Pilot execution with “live” programs

Deployment to web-based process descriptions and work aids
Some **IMMEDIATE** Benefits

Management Steering Group is engaged and accountable

Process Improvement is now in the top 3 priorities for the PEO

Workforce is seeing the benefits of process and buying in

Old, ad hoc processes are taking a back seat and the focus is shifting to process

Other PEOs are seeing progress and expressing interest in cross-adoption
Acquisition Process Improvement in Stealth Mode: Is It IDEAL?

Wickless, SEPG North America 2009

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Using a Framework

Purpose: Why Are We Doing It?

Roles: Who Is Doing It?

Entrance Criteria: When Can I Start?

Exit Criteria: When Am I Done?

Inputs: What Is Needed?

Outputs: What Is Produced?

Works Aids: What Tools Can We Use?

Measures: How Is It Going?

Activities: What Do We Do?
# (Software) Process Framework: Expert Mode

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process Name and Identifier</th>
<th>Process Owner</th>
<th>Version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BA53: Determine Mission Need</td>
<td>Susan Bee - BA53</td>
<td>Version 0.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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## Purpose

The purpose of this process is to adequately identify and document a customer mission need.

## Roles Involved

- **Mission Customer**: Individual external to BA53 who requests the acquisition of products and/or services through BA53.
- **BA53 Business Manager**: Works for the Chief of BA53 or a BA53 Middle Manager. Communicated with the Mission Customer and other BA53 staff (as necessary) to accurately determine the Mission Customer's needs and execute the necessary processes to generate the requirements for the acquisition and document as specified in the BA53 Acquisition Folder.
- **BA53 Manager**: Works for the Chief of BA53. Provides necessary resources, guidance and oversight to enable the BA53 Business Manager to execute the appropriate processes and activities within expectations for effort and quality.
- **PEO**: Reports to the Senior Acquisition Executive. Provides necessary resources, guidance to BA53 and provides participation and/or oversight at designated points in the process.

## Entry Criteria

This process (phase) BEGINS when a Mission Customer has contacted BA53 and initiated a request for the acquisition of products and/or services.

## Inputs

The following are necessary for the execution of this process (phase):

- Mission Customer needs
- Vendor quotes and information
- Spend Plan information (if available)

## Exit Criteria

This process (phase) ENDS when the mission need has been sufficiently understood, validated, classified by size and complexity, and documented as required.

## Outputs

This process (phase) produces the following work products:

- I think you should consider creating a very small document that captures the mission need, perhaps following the concept of a MNS.
Swim Lane Diagram

Requirements Generation (phase)

**Mission Customer**
- Communicate Mission Capability Need
- Validate BA53 Understanding

**BA53x Bus Mgr**
- Accept Mission Customer Capability Need
- Analyze Mission Customer Capability Need
  - Mission Capability Need Validated?
  - Determine Acquisition Attributes
    - Low Size/Cost/Complexity
    - High OK to Proceed?
    - Medium
    - Delineate Responsibility
  - Track Acquisition Activity

**BA53 Mgr**
- Provide Assistance on Request
- Conduct Kickoff Meeting
  - OK to Proceed?
  - Resolve Actions and Implement Decisions

**PEO**
- Conduct Kickoff Meeting
  - OK to Proceed?
  - Resolve Actions and Implement Decisions

- Acquisition Folder
- Updated Acquisition Folder
- Updated Acquisition Folder
Is It Enough?

PI Investment: Weekly and Cumulative

FTE % Investment

Weekly
Cumulative

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23
Where is this headed?

Practitioner feedback function on all process web-pages

MSG already considering next phase and next set of processes for design, pilot and deployment

Integration with new SAE policies and guidelines for acquisition process

Tell us how to improve this process!
In Summary

The IDEAL Model, when understood and tailored, is a good model for process improvement

A Process Improvement infrastructure and a well-led MSG is essential for success

Well-planned and frequent IDEAL cycles are the best strategy when possible

LISTEN to process practitioners to best understand improvement issues and INVOLVE them in improvement activities

Keep the MSG involved and accountable for all improvement plans and actions