



Shorten SCAMPI Time Through Team Management Techniques

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HELPING YOU ACHIEVE YOUR STRATEGIC BUSINESS GOALS

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HELPING YOU ACHIEVE YOUR STRATEGIC BUSINESS GOALS

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History



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- I have been doing SEI model based process improvement, assessments, appraisals, and audits for organizations since 1987. I have sometimes been successful; other times, I have encountered “improvement opportunities”. These “improvement opportunities” were the catalyst for this study
- Piloting these techniques during subsequent SCAMPIs resulted in easier and faster consolidation activities and shorter overall SCAMPI times
- When the team management techniques were applied to similar behaviors occurring outside of the SCAMPI scenario, the results were also highly successful

Background



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- **SCAMPIs provide a unique, isolated, environment**
 - We get closer with our team members, we bond with our team-mates, even when we don't like them
 - Teams go through “Forming, Storming, Norming, and Performing”
 - Hopefully making it through to performing, which depends on good team leadership
- **SCAMPIs can bring out team members' best personality traits**
 - And their worst
- **I observed certain detrimental behaviors during SCAMPIs, CMM CBA IPIs, and SPAs**
 - Patterns of behaviors became apparent over time
 - You will recognize many of them in other people
 - You may identify with some (certainly very few) in your own behaviors
- **I defined the repeatable, unconstructive patterns of behavior**
- **I piloted techniques that reduce the effects of behaviors before they derailed progress and morale**

Scope

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This presentation focuses on:

- **Common behavioral problems encountered during appraisals and team situations**
- **How to recognize these behaviors and apply team management techniques to mitigate or resolve them**
 - These techniques can be applied to any interaction among 2 or more people
 - These techniques are not limited to SCAMPs; they also apply to other team situations and interpersonal relationships



Tips for Identifying Problem Situations

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- **First, identify when a discussion is leading to an argument or if an argument in progress needs intervention**
- **Determine what is productive versus non-productive behavior or conversation**
- **Know when not to interfere, when to allow a productive conversation to progress**
- **Ask yourself: Is there an obvious resolution to the issue?**
- **If you have a feeling that something's not right, it usually means that you should pay attention to that feeling and see if something or someone needs addressing**
- **Know when to interject with a resolution technique (what we'll cover today)**



Categories and Scenarios

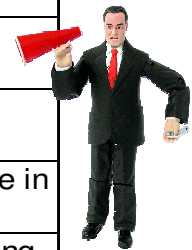
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- **Categories help to characterize the root of the problem**
- **3 Categories of Scenarios**
 1. Personality – an individual's intent is not aligned with the team's
 2. Misunderstanding – two individuals don't have a common understanding of a situation
 3. Misinformation – information is incomplete or missing
- **Some scenarios fall into multiple categories**
 - Don't get hung up if you think a scenario is pertinent to another category
- **The following three charts list these scenarios and behavioral indicators**

Personality Scenarios

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Scenario	Indicator(s)
Do anything to keep from giving a "PI" rating	Strongly argues against any weakness.
Can't back down, must save face	Sticks to opinion, even when it defies data or logic.
The Lecturer	Takes a very long time to state their opinion. Frequently shares opinions or anecdotes, often on minor or tangential points.
The Dominator	Talks over or interrupts other team members, interjects their opinion repeatedly during team discussion
Doesn't want to go home	Poor time management skills; repeatedly brings up minor issues, particularly late in the evening.
Distracted	Overly focused on their laptop or Blackberry while discussions take place. Staring off into space, involved in side conversations.
Shy or Introverted	Doesn't voice any opinion for long periods of time, or until after discussion has completed or when voting occurs. Opposition vote without any prior discussion. Side conversations (tries argument before bringing it to the team). Talks slowly and/or nervously.
The changing opinion	As a discussion gets close to resolution, one arguer shifts their position. Result is that they never reach resolution. You may get lost trying to follow this person's argument.
Helpers and Leavers	Usually from the home organization. Knows where the evidence can be obtained, knows logistics. Spend time away from the appraisal team taking care of logistics: phone calls, e-mailing, or Blackberrying. In the meantime, the group cannot make formal decisions. When the Helper/Leaver returns, the miniteam or entire team needs to revisit discussions or decisions.
The Dim-Wit	Team member who is not knowledgeable about the CMMI, the SCAMPI method, or the organization, even though they have been trained.



Mis/Understanding Scenarios

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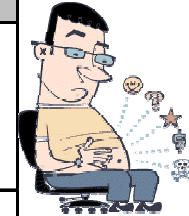
Scenario	Indicator(s)
Apples and oranges arguments	Discussion is about different topics.
Wants to solve the problems	Doesn't help develop weaknesses, argues against them. Asks for solutions repeatedly. Steers the conversation away from the point.
Ambiguous term	Two people get wrapped around the axle concerning one aspect of a discussion; a concept or term, or are implying different definitions.
Multiple issues	Statements contain more than one issue.
Violent agreement	Two people argue different points, where they actually agree with each other. They don't notice that they agree, they just argue. Or, multiple team members keep giving examples to support the point.



Mis/Information Scenarios

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Scenario	Indicator(s)
Gut feel/Nothing specific to go on	Doesn't support statement with data. Has concern about possible weakness, but lacks supporting data. Alternatively, has ideas and facts to support their position, but simply cannot thread them together in a cohesive finding
Issue spans multiple mini-teams	An argument concerning a GP or SP is related to another process area. (e.g. GP2.2, GP2.5, GP2.6, GP2.8, GP2.9)
Not enough data	There isn't sufficient evidence to know whether there is a finding/gap or not.
Doesn't understand the project/organization	Many new people on the assessment team. Misstatements about the project or organization.
Lack of CMMI knowledge	Misstatements about the CMMI. Weaknesses are too judgmental or out of scope of the CMMI.
Disparity in interpretation of how the CMMI is implemented	Appraisers have different backgrounds, different teachers, and different experience base. Therefore, they bring their own perspective to the discussion, which may be very disparate.



Team Management Techniques

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The following techniques were developed specifically to address these scenarios

- **They don't require a degree in psychology or any training**
- **They do require:**
 - Paying attention to the individual team member behaviors
 - Paying attention to your own behaviors, your words and actions
 - Using empathy and expanding your perceptiveness
 - Applying analytical skills to the behaviors you observe

The techniques are:

- Parking Lot
- Flip Chart Objectivity
- Round Robin
- Sleeping On It
- Doing Further Research/
Getting More Data
- Strategic Breaks
- Analysis and Separation of
Ideas/Thoughts
- Clarification of Purpose
- Putting the Weakness in the
Correct Place
- Exploring a Gut Feel

Team Management Techniques

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Scenario		Parking Lot	Flip Chart Objectivity	Round Robin	Sleeping on it	Further Research, Getting More Data	Strategic Breaks	Analysis And Separation	Clarification of Purpose	Put Weakness in the Correct Place	Hide the Rating	Exploring a Gut Feel
Personality Scenarios	Doesn't want to go home						X		X			
	The lecturer		X	X			X				X	
	Can't back down, must save face	X	X				X				X	
	The dominator			X			X				X	
	Shy or Introverted			X			X				X	
	Anything to prevent a "PI" rating						X				X	
	The changing opinion		X	X			X				X	
The Dim-Wit					X							
Mis/ Understanding Scenarios	Apples and Oranges	X	X		X			X				
	Wants to solve the problems	X							X			
	Gut Feel	X			X	X		X				X
	Dependency on resolution of other	X			X	X						
	Violent agreement								X			
Multiple Issues		X		X			X		X			
Mis/ Information Scenarios	Lack of project or organizational knowledge	X			X	X						
	Lack of CMMI knowledge	X			X	X						
	Not enough data	X			X	X						
	Interpretation of the CMMI	X	X		X					X		
	CMMI implementation disparity				X	X						
Circular arguers		X		X			X					

Technique: Parking Lot

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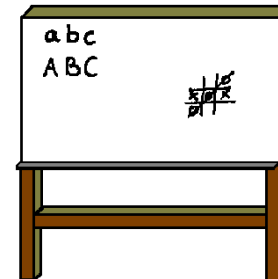
Applicable to: Wants to solve problems, Can't back down, Most of the Mis/Understanding and Mis/Information Scenarios

Parking lot gets postponable issues and items "out of the way" so that the overall discussion can continue

- Parking Lot is a flip chart or whiteboard that holds items to be noted or discussed later

Approach:

- Announce the use of the Parking Lot
- As items come up, write them on the Parking Lot (make sure you capture them correctly).
- After writing, return to the topic at hand. Don't start acting on the item (like assigning actions).
- At the end of each day (or other times as appropriate)
 - Review items on the Parking Lot
 - Ensure items are clear
 - Assign actions as necessary



Technique: Flip Chart Objectivity

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Applicable to: Lecturer, Can't Back Down Must Save Face, The Changing Opinion, Multiple Issues, Apples and Oranges, Circular Arguers, and Interpretation of CMMI

The Flip Chart technique takes subjective statements or discussions and make them objective, maintaining that objectivity through the course of discussion

Approach:

1. Team lead selects a scribe
2. Each team member relays their own perspective and understanding of issue
3. Scribe writes issue on flip chart– do not use names
4. *Nobody is allowed to debate or argue the issue*
5. Scribe writes all members' perspectives down, one team member at a time
6. Scribe checks with each team member to ensure their thought is properly recorded
7. **After all team members share thoughts, team lead gives each a chance to update**
 - If a team member wants to change what they have previously written the scribe modifies it on the flip chart
8. **If a team member continues to argue or debate the issue, the team lead asks if they have something to add to what they documented on the flip chart or if they want to change it**



Technique: Round Robin 1 of 2

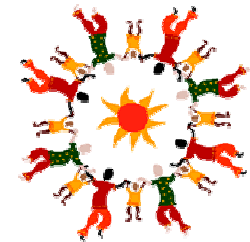
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Applicable to: Lecturer, Dominator, Shy, The Changing Opinion

The Round Robin is a structured approach to getting clear discussion from all team members on a topic of disagreement

Approach:

1. Weakness/Issue presenter explains their position
2. Go through the mini-team one by one, allowing each to add to or clarify the Weakness presenter's explanation.
 - If there is a dominator or lecturer involved, state a time limit for each person to speak
3. SCAMPI members on other mini-teams raise their hands and are called upon by the SCAMPI team leader in turn. The team lead may need to write the team members names on a white board or note pad, to remember the sequence.
4. The first person that is called upon voices their objection or request for clarification.
5. The only person allowed to respond is the Weakness presenter first, then the other mini-team members. The rest of the team is not allowed to participate other than to listen and take notes.



Technique: Round Robin 2 of 2

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(Round Robin cont.)

6. The first person is then allowed to follow-up with the Weakness presenter (and the mini-team, if necessary).
7. Only after the first person's issues are resolved by discussion with the Weakness presenter and the mini-team, or the issue is placed in the Parking Lot, then the team lead can address the 2nd team member who has questions or issues.
8. The 2nd team member deals only with the Weakness presenter and the mini-team. No other team members are allowed to interject.
9. All team members requesting to participate in the discussion can do so continuing in the manner described above.
10. This continues until the issue is resolved or Parking Lot-ed.

Technique: Sleeping On It

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Applicable to: All Mis/Understanding and Mis/information Scenarios

This is a variation on the Parking Lot technique

- Sometimes a resolution can't be seen immediately and continuing to work the issue doesn't help. It is best to identify when this is happening and place it in the Parking Lot for the time being.

Approach:

- Assign homework to team members to think about what would help them come to resolution.
- Bring up the issue the next morning during the morning team meeting, when the team is fresh.
 - A request for more evidence may help
 - Team members in disagreement may have a new understanding in the morning
- If issue is still not resolved, continue to Parking Lot it until the last possible time that it has to be decided.



Technique: Further Research, Get More Data

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Applicable to: Most of the Mis/Understanding and Mis/Information Scenarios, and Dim-wit

Approach:

- **First question you should ask when conflict arises: Is there enough information to resolve the issue?**
- **Ask the dissenting team members what would change their opinion to the opposition's**
 - “What data would you need to see?”
 - Many times this will prompt a request for more evidence.
 - The new evidence, or lack thereof, may than change one of the dissenter’s positions.
- **Verify that the dissenting team members have a complete understanding of the intent of the CMMI by reviewing the relevant portion of the CMMI aloud for your benefit and the team’s.**
 - Look up definitions in the glossary
 - This can help new team members as well as experienced members
 - All members should have their CMMI model handbooks and use them



Technique: Strategic Breaks

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Applicable to: Many of the personality scenarios

It is easy to get caught up in discussion while time passes. A team break can renew everyone's energy and spirit.

- Provides the opportunity for people to save face
- Potential for peaceful resolution during the break
- Team members can let off steam



Technique: Analysis and Separation

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Applicable to: Apples and Oranges, Multiple Issues, Ambiguous Term, Violent Agreement

This technique can help separate multiple issues or ambiguous terms or understand that two sides of an argument are actually the same

Approach:

- 1. Summarize your understanding of the point(s) in front of the group.**
 - If you suspect violent agreement, type the finding into your appraisal tool or write it on a whiteboard/flipchart so everybody can see it in black and white
- 2. Get verification from all team members that their perspective is represented**
- 3. If there is a single issue and all are on the same side, state so and move on**
- 4. Otherwise, identify any additional data or evidence that can resolve the issue.**
- 5. Parking Lotting the additional issues may be helpful until each is dealt with individually**



Technique: Clarification of Purpose

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Applicable to: Doesn't want to go home, Wants to solve the problem

Describing purpose and constraints should focus individuals and get them on track with the group

Approach:

1. Remind them that the purpose of the SCAMPI is a gap analysis

- Solutions are addressed afterwards, either by the internal process team, or with the consultant's help
- Reassure them that you will be available to help address solutions

2. Set explicit time boundaries and work to them

- State that the schedule is bounded with what must be achieved by a given time, such as, "we will work until 10:00 PM, and we must get through the next 10 Process Areas".
- Decide how to accelerate progress instead of expanding time spent



Technique: Weakness in the Correct Place

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Applicable to: Apples and Oranges, Multiple Issues, Lack of CMMI Knowledge, Interpretation of the CMMI, CMMI Implementation Disparity

Many disagreements can be resolved just by putting the weakness in the correct place.

- Sometimes there will be a disagreement about a weakness. One person may say that it doesn't address the CMMI SP or GP.

Approach:

- Check whether or not the weakness is appropriate for the SP or GP.
- Check if the weakness better addresses another SP or GP.



Technique: Hide The Ratings

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Applicable to: Anything to prevent a “PI”

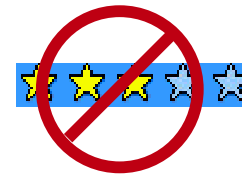
Team members may think discussion of potential weaknesses means failure of the organization or of themselves

- People have a hard time disconnecting weaknesses from ratings
- If they are from the home organization or a stakeholder in it, they may take the perception of a weakness personally
- Discussing a potential weakness may make people defensive or argumentative
- Just because they think it could be a weakness does not mean it will be after it is discussed

Approach:

• **Write weaknesses while hiding ratings**

- This allows people to discuss the weakness without having to deal with its ramifications



Technique: Exploring a “Gut Feel”

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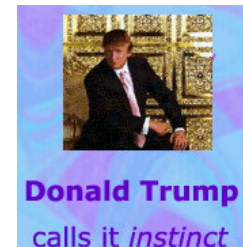
Applicable to: Gut Feel

By working with the group to understand what’s at the root of the concern, the team can bring to light more valid and useful findings.

- Gut Feel issues can indicate or be symptomatic of deeper organizational issues

Approach:

1. Don’t immediately dispel the issue
2. Ask the team member what led them to think this might be an issue.
 - Listen carefully to subtleties. Insight into the organization can be picked up by pieces of conversation and of evidence that our brains may be putting together only subconsciously.
 - One of the greatest benefits of a SCAMPI team is sharing these gut feelings, and discussing it as a team.
3. See if other team members can build on the initial thought.
 - A gut instinct may lead to exploring a process, looking at additional evidence, or asking more questions in a follow-up interview.
 - This may lead to resolution and no further weaknesses are discovered, or it may uncover a significant weakness in the organization.



Example Scenario



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(Discussing PP SP 1.1)

- **A1: This project doesn't have a WBS.
B1: Can they turn their schedule into a WBS?**
- **A2: Well, they might be able to, but it's a little late now.
B2: Can we count WBSs from other projects?**
- **A3: No.
B3: Well, what's missing from the schedule that it can't be used as a WBS?**
- **A4: For instance, work item descriptions and amount of effort.
B4: What if it's in the plan?**
- **A5: Is it in the plan?
B5: I don't know, I'm just asking.**

Example Resolution



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Problem Recognition:

- **B “Wants to Solve the Problem”**
 - B starts steering the conversation away from the point
 - This starts early, at B1, which is that there is no direct evidence of a WBS
 - People that exhibit the “Want to Solve the Problem” behavior do it repeatedly

Solution:

- **Verify the evidence for the practice, until this behavior is identified**
- **After you have clearly identified the “Want to Solve the Problem” behavior in this person, the next time it happens, tell the person, “We’re identifying gaps here. After the appraisal, we’ll develop techniques and put them in the action plans.”**

Conclusions

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- **Not only must you know the CMMI and the organization being appraised, but it helps to be a good team facilitator with good leadership skills**
- **This talk presented some common scenarios and techniques that can quickly resolve them**
 - What to look for to identify aberrant behaviors and scenarios
 - Know when and how to interject with a resolution technique
- **Leadership and team facilitation skills require:**
 - Paying attention to the individual team member behaviors
 - Paying attention to your own behaviors, your words, and actions
 - Using empathy and expanding your perceptiveness
 - Applying analytical skills to the behaviors you observe
- **Your leadership skills can remove the arguments and contentious times during SCAMPis, lead to happier team members, and shortened SCAMPI times**



Comskil is a woman owned small business headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland

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