

PMI Breakfast Roundtable – NW Minutes

12/09/05

Priority **TOPICS Identified**

- 1** **3RD Party Software Packages**
- Vendor management
 - Scope control

- 2** **Lack of Commitment from Upper Management**
- How to effectively obtain & maintain?

Other Topics – add to Parking Lot:

- Financial analysis at project initiation (ROI)
- Clarify between analysis and design

3rd PARTY SOFTWARE PACKAGES

- Planning for the unknown
- Not having enough info from vendor
- Don't know and can't estimate how much time (effort/duration)
- Assume upgrades will work but they don't – no penalty for vendor
- Include language in vendor contract to guard against this
- Aggressive vendor management
- Know who you are working with, get past the salesperson
- Talk to vendor tech leads/estimating experts, etc.
- Pay attention to vendor practices/reputation prior to signing up with them
- Have baseline tests established – run them at each new release
- Vendor success is dependent on project success too – need detailed SOW's
- Pay by deliverable – Phase Gate/Stage Gate
- Develop partnership with vendor, know and understand the vendor organization, who's who and who has responsibility for what
- Understand what the vendor considers a win and work toward a win-win
- Alter business processes to work with package rather than forcing package to work with business process
- Working under a support agreement is significantly different than an SOW
- Trying to define requirements up front can be extremely difficult
- SLA's with vendor during support period
- Know when to escalate, don't let them push you off – experience with vendor helps
- Anticipate vendor issues and plan for them
- Tap user groups who have been through it

- Don't be the first to adopt new vendor technology
- Engage upper management (who are they?)

LACK OF COMMITMENT FROM UPPER MANAGEMENT

- Trying to get upper management to commit is sometimes difficult – they don't feel like they report to you
- Send confirming documentation
- Need to embrace PMBOK – a project doesn't exist until you have signed off
- Know your audience and present salient points to gain buy-off (don't expect they will read detailed requirements)
- Push project info to execs – don't wait for pull
- Make sure execs know enough about your project to be able to support you
- Recognize projects – even if they are small – and seek appropriate level sign-off, sponsorship
- Project must fit into strategy