

# Co-Managing Projects with Vendors

or

how to stay alive when the fox is in  
the hen house

# Background

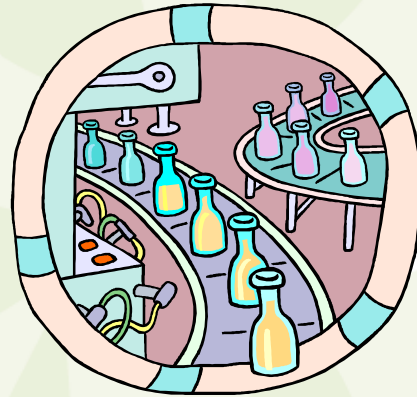
- Paul Obernuefemann
  - Lewis, Rice & Fingersh, L.C.: Director of Information Systems since 2004

# Need identified



# Requirement

# Business Reasons



**Productivity  
Improvement  
Performance**

# Project Participants



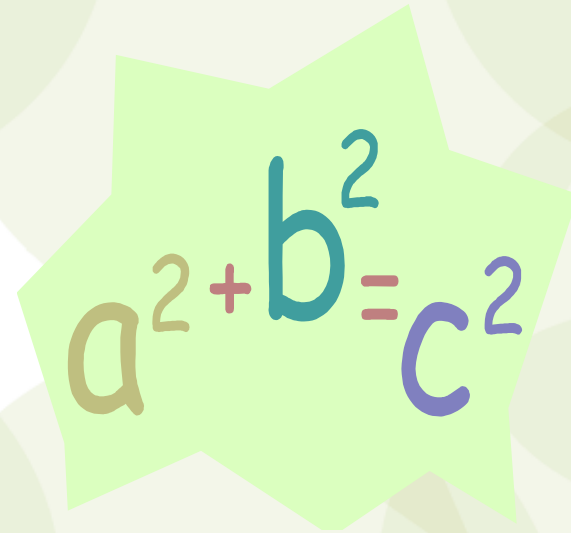
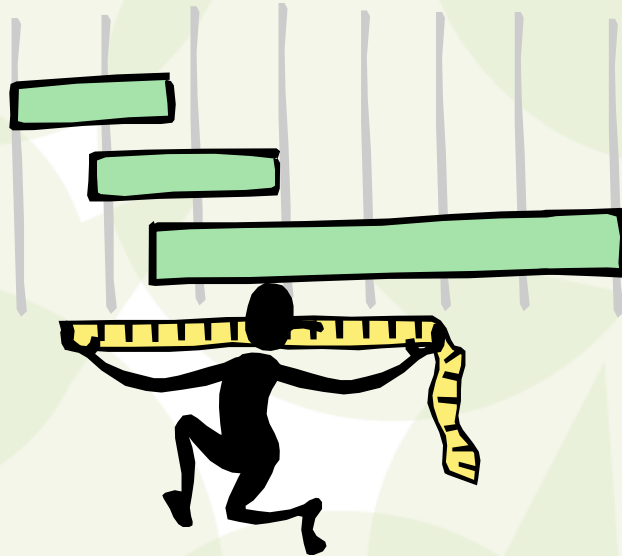
Populists  
Totalitarians  
Interlopers

# Project Priorities

Who gets what, how much and  
when ?



# Project Progression



Primary Path  
Secondary Path

# Project Choke Points



# Vendor Issues

- Credibility (Yours)
- Leverage (Theirs)
- Expertise (Ours)
- Success (Theirs)
- Failures (Yours)
- Scheduling (Ours)
- Urgency (Yours)
- Disaster Planning (Yours)

# Project Rule

- Someone has to be the Decision maker
- Vendor is a tool not the end product
- Keep your staff involved
- Knowledge transfer is always a priority
- Always look for the solution not the scapegoat
  
- Never ask your staff to perform a duty you would not

# Project Resources

- Peers
- Executive Management
- Project Management
- Networking
- Personal Relationships

# Background

- Donald Sternfeld
  - Kraft Kennedy: leader of management consulting practice group
  - Holland & Knight: CIO since April 2009
  - Implemented first PM functions at both Holland & Knight and Ropes & Gray
  - Responsible for PM at Kraft Kennedy

# Case Studies

- The control freak
- The rogue warrior
- Who's in charge?
- Extreme dedication
- It's the execution, stupid!

# The control freak

- Large metropolitan law firm had a major office move involving many different vendors
- 80% of way through project found out something wasn't quite right with one vendor
  - No cooperation
  - No sense of urgency
  - Unwilling to go the extra mile
- Talked to senior vendor contact
  - “We’re done doing you favors”

# The control freak

- What happened?
  - Primary firm contact with the vendor had been mistreating them for years
  - Vendor was “burned out” with being lambasted for what wasn’t their fault and told everything “is an emergency”
- Lessons learned
  - Maintain key vendor relationships on multiple levels
  - Meet with them twice a year – keep them close

# The rogue warrior

- Multi-office firm implementing new desktop for 500 users
- Project managed by outside vendor with technical resources
- Detailed plan put in place
- Everyone excited “we’re finally going to do one right!”

# The rogue warrior

- What happened?
  - IT Director moved end date up 45 days
  - IT Director started installing incomplete image for senior partners and technology committee members
- Lessons learned
  - Communication is key – two-way
  - Everybody needs to buy-in, especially sponsors and owners
  - PM actually saved the day

# Who's in charge?

- Multi-city international law firm undergoing a complete upgrade of the technology
- Multiple vendors and groups from within the firm
- Overall PM provided by one of the vendors
- Everything started very well

# Who's in charge?

- What happened?
  - Lack of communications between vendors and groups
  - Project meetings became increasingly infrequent
  - Teams went their own way
- Lessons learned
  - Communications is key
  - Everyone needs to know who is calling the shots, and that person better actually call them
  - Strong internal sponsorship is essential

# Extreme Dedication

- Large firm implemented VoIP, unified messaging, and completely revamped telecommunications infrastructure
- Relied on multiple external vendors: telecomm, messaging, telcos, etc.
- Highly complex project with many, many issues arising daily

# Extreme Dedication

- What happened?
  - Firm did not have PMO
  - Primary telecom vendor dedicated a single, on-site, full-time PM to the project for the duration
  - Dedicated client and vendor teams
  - Complex project executed well
- Lessons learned
  - Dedicated resources are essential

# It's the execution, stupid!

- Firm relocating data center while rolling out new desktop environment
- Brilliant project plan created by vendor providing overall management
- Everybody excited at kick-off meeting
- Expectations are high

# It's the execution, stupid!

- What happened?
  - Client never thoroughly reviewed vendor's plan
  - Communications plan not followed
  - Project managed from issues lists alone
  - Teams went their own ways
- Lessons learned
  - Take the time to review the plan
  - Manage the plan
  - Execute the plan

# Keys to survival

- Must be a collaborative process
  - Best for each party to have a PM
- Review the plan
- Emphasize communication
- Stick with the plan, or change it formally
- Formalize the decision-making process
- Focus on execution
- Identify and keep internal sponsor involved

# Questions?