
		<p>January 2003</p>
<p>The following is a series of articles addressing construction projects whose delivery dates are slipping.</p>		<p>Article 3 of 6</p>
<p>Program & Project Management</p> <p>Dispute Avoidance & Resolution</p> <p>Real Property Advisory Services</p> <p>Headquartered in Phoenix, PinnacleOne regional operations are located in Irvine, Los Angeles, Sacramento, and Hartford, CT.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>WHEN WILL MY PROJECT FINISH?</p> </div> <p>The two emotions which generally drive a person to an attorney are fear or anger. Construction is both expensive and risky. The hint of late delivery can evoke either emotional response. These series of articles address some practical remedies to alleviate or mitigate the damage that late deliveries can bring.</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">ANALYSIS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted. <i>- Albert Einstein -</i></p> <p>Once the status of the project has been determined the fundamental mistake which commonly occurs is not spending the time to understand why the project is in trouble. Indeed, there are strong reasons for those in charge to hide the underlying difficulties or identify them with platitudes. Spending a short time examining what information has been garnered in the Project History and Status steps of the process greatly enhance the probability that the recovery plan will be successful.</p> <p>There are two parts in the analysis: Examine the management and examine the schedule. The following is germane:</p> <p><u>MANAGEMENT</u></p> <p>1) EXAMINE YOUR MANAGEMENT – The single most important function of a human endeavor is management. The in-place management should have solved this</p>	 <p>Peter J. Scavello, P.E., Senior Project Manager with PinnacleOne, is an expert in construction. He is often called upon by public and private owners to determine the project status and recommend solutions to delivery. Scavello has testified as an expert on such matters in numerous venues including the US Federal Court of Claims and has advised both public and private owners on solutions to these problems.</p>

problem or at least have concrete ideas of how to solve what is wrong. They may lack the authority to take the steps necessary. Critical examination of the management team is necessary prior to any further steps in the process.

The reason why you are undertaking this analysis of the issue of slow project completion is that the original plan isn't working. Identification of whether the plan is flawed or that those who were given the authority to implement the plan are the wrong people is the first step in analyzing the problem.

Like the Einstein quote above, it is easy to measure what can be counted but what needs to be measured requires judgment. Real wisdom and courage need to be demonstrated if mitigation of the damage being caused to the project is to happen.

2) EVALUATE YOUR LEADERSHIP – The most important part of management is leadership. In today's world often what is identified as management lacks either the authority or the innate ability to lead. The single most important step in analyzing what may be the cause of slippage of the delivery date for your project may be the poor leadership of the management/manager who is supposed to be running it. Managers are the activating element for any human endeavor.

I once was summoned to the job site of a major Public Sector project which I was running. The project was a \$70 million renovation of an occupied Federal Office building. Not a job for the fainthearted to manage. In no uncertain terms I was told that my project manager couldn't do the job. Uncertain terms here are a polite euphemism for screaming and shouting.

Upon looking into the problem I interviewed the project manager who had been relocated from an international site to run my project. To my chagrin the first thing he told me was that there was no way he could manage the project since it was so unlike what he had been doing overseas for the last 15 years. It took 15 minutes on the phone with the president of the company for which I was working for me to get authorization to solve the problem. In one week I had found a more suitable position for the project manager and in six weeks I had found a manager who was qualified to handle the job. From that point the project proceeded like clockwork and completed on time.

3) WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PARTIES? – When projects get

delayed the normal human desire to perform well and “fix what’s broken” often gets damaged. The owners/representative/project manager, designer and contractor must work as a team to get things done. Generally the relationship between the parties has also dissolved, when projects go into free fall. The old saying that money can come between friends is never more applicable to a job site. Conflicts over change orders, the entitlement to the change order and their pricing are usually at the heart of what clouds the relationship.

SCHEDULE

While the schedule may no longer be tracking the work, only used for project payments, or even not updated at all, it can still provide significant information. The following are targeted areas of focus:

1) ADDRESS THE STALLED MILESTONE – The status of the project (See Article 2 of this series) should readily identify the “next step” which is occurring at a much slower than planned pace. When the Space Shuttle was being prepared for its first launch the issue of the adhesion of the external heat tiles to the craft led to hand gluing of the tiles to the ship. This was a readily identifiable delay.

The issues delaying a milestone date can be varied. Design problems, procurement problems, subcontractor production are some of the many. In any case it should be relatively easy.

2) WHAT ARE THE DURATIONS AND SEQUENCES OF THE UNTOUCHED ACTIVITIES? – Examination of the current schedule and comparing the durations of those activities left to perform with the original durations may be significant. It may reveal that there has been a reduction in the planned duration of the follow on activities. Also the number of activities that were planned to be sequential are now parallel can be an issue. There is a limit on how much this can be done and still produce improved results.

3) WHAT ARE THE CHANGES? – Careful consideration must be given to the changes which have occurred on the project. The review of these changes can be a significant guidepost in the analysis. Issues such as how many change orders have been issued, their nature, processing time and when in the project they were issued bear weight

regarding both where the project is and what must be considered to develop a realistic recovery plan.

PinnacleOne | 4199 Campus Dr. #650 | Irvine, CA 92612 | Phone (949) 854-5237 | www.PinnacleOne.com

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