New Directions in Risk Management at the SEI

Ray C. Williams
Software Engineering Institute
Carnegie Mellon University
Pittsburgh, PA 15213-3890

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The Software Engineering Institute

- A unit of Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA
  - A Federally-Funded Research and Development Center (FFRDC)
  - Established 1984
  - Predominantly supports the DoD, but also civil agencies of the Federal Government (e.g., NASA, IRS, FAA) and a few corporate entities
  - FFRDC business model similar to MIT’s Lincoln Labs, mostly funded by clients on as-needed basis

- Primarily focused on improving the development and acquisition of software-intensive systems
  - Process improvement (SW-CMM®, CMMI®, PSP®, risk management)
  - Diagnostics (architecture, COTS, software risk evaluation, network assets)

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History of SEI Risk Management


- Risk Program Initiated
- Interviews
  - focus on practice of risk management
- Workshops
  - focus on needs of community and practice of risk management
- Early Risk Assessments
  - focus on risk identification and analysis
- Field Tests
  - focus on evolution of the Software Development Taxonomy and Taxonomy-Based Questionnaire

- Appraisal Report [Kirkpatrick 92]
- Taxonomy Report [Carr 93]
- TRM Report [Higuera 94]
- SRE Report [Sisti 94]
- Draft TRM Guidebook
- CRM Guidebook [Dorofee 96]

Software Risk Evaluations (SREs)
- focus on risk identification, analysis, and planning (baseline)

Team Risk Management (TRM)
- focus on customer-supplier risk management activities

Continuous Risk Management (CRM)
- focus on continuous activities to identify, analyze, plan, track, control, and communicate risk

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History of SEI Risk Management

1996

- NASA/SEI CRM Course Dev't
- Risk Program Disbanded

1997

- SRE MD [Williams 99]

1998

- CMMI V1.02

1999

- ASP Program Established

2000

2001

2002

2003

Software Risk Evaluations (SREs)
- focus on small dev’t teams
- maintain, promote, transition

Team Risk Management (TRM)

Continuous Risk Management (CRM)
- focus on teaching CRM course, Guidebook maintenance
- focus on aligning with CMMI

Risk Identification & Analysis
- document & restart

Risk Process Checks
- additional pilots, document, transition
New Directions in Continuous Risk Management (CRM)

- Aligning with the Capability Maturity Model Integration (CMMI) process area on Risk Management
- Moving away from the idea that the objects in risk management databases (risk repositories) are “risks”
- Maximizing the number of objects that are fed into risk repositories
- Building the capability of the risk management process to handle a ten-fold (or more) increase in input through classification into “risk areas”
Risk Management Process Area (CMMI)

Goal 1: Prepare for Risk Management
- Determine Risk Sources and Categories
- Define Risk Parameters
- Establish and Maintain a Risk Management Strategy

Goal 2: Identify and Analyze Risks
- Identify Risks
- Evaluate, Categorize, and Prioritize Risks

Goal 3: Mitigate Risks
- Implement Risk Mitigation Plans
- Develop Risk Mitigation Plans

Risk Repository

From Project Planning and Project Monitoring and Control
The Risk Statement

A “standard” format for risk statements provides:
- clarity
- consistency
- a basis for future risk processing

A good Risk Statement is
- fact-based
- actionable
- brief
New Directions in Risk Identification and Analysis (RI&A)

• Incorporating other RI&A methods, e.g.
  - Architectural Tradeoff Analysis Method (ATAM)
  - COTS Usage Risk Evaluation (CURE)
  - Software Quality Attribute Exercise (SQAE – developed by MITRE)
  - Independent Technical Evaluations (ITAs)

• Following a medical diagnostic analogy
  - Providing tools to let SEI Chief Engineers function like Personal Care Physicians (PCPs)
  - Creating a “roadmap” for risk identification that provides at least 3 entry points:
    ▶ The “Thermometer” (self diagnosis)
    ▶ The “Routine Physical”
    ▶ The “Emergency Room”
The Healthcare Analogy

Three types of diagnostic approaches

- Self diagnosis
- Routine physical
- Emergency room/triage
Rejuvenating Team (“Joint”) Risk Management

• Team Risk Management (TRM) is the discipline of Identifying, Analyzing, Planning, Tracking, and Controlling risks is a larger government program context.

• It focuses on breaking down the risk communications barriers between
  - A government program office and its prime contractor(s)
  - The primes and their subcontractors
  - Multiple co-equal programs that are linked together for overall government acquisition or strategic success

* We’re considering changing the name from “Team” to “Joint” because of confusion with other initiatives, e.g. Team Software Process, Integrated Product and Process Development teams.
Seven Principles of Risk Management

- Forward-Looking View
- Shared Product Vision
- Open Communication
- Teamwork
- Integrated Management
- Global Perspective
- Continuous Process
Rejuvenating Team Risk Management

- The SEI’s (and NASA’s) Continuous Risk Management approach is focused on the development team, which is expected to have clear understanding of *Shared Product Vision*, *Global Perspective*, and *Forward-Looking View*.

- TRM was designed to address the cases when these perspectives are not shared between organizations.

- There were signal successes in TRM up to 1998—in the Navy E6 program, Navy CPMU program, and in the NRO IMINT Directorate—but since then the effort has languished from lack of collaborative opportunities.

- The key documentation for the TRM discipline has never been published (the original concept was for a *Team Risk Management Guidebook* to be a bookshelf companion to the *Continuous Risk Management Guidebook*).
New Concept: The *Risk Process Check*

- Application: A large, multilevel DoD program
- We were asked, “How well does our risk management process work?”
- Created a “model-less” evaluation approach
  - Creation of initial, explicit “mental model” of how we are told the risk management process operates
  - Site visits, interviews, survey instruments
  - Application of the “Green Engineer” test
  - Revision of the “mental model” to reflect how the risk process really operates
- Later applied in two NRO contractor locations
- Currently inactive for lack of sponsorship and collaborations
The “Green Engineer” Test

Assume a “green” engineer in any of the program’s organizations (someone at the bottom of the program’s decision-making hierarchy) stumbles onto a “show-stopper” risk in the current technical approach.

How quickly and how accurately will the following happen?

• The risk is recognized
• The risk is recorded in the risk management system
• The risk makes it to the appropriate decision-making level in the program
• An appropriate risk mitigation strategy is determined and jointly agreed upon
Final Mental Model

- PMO
- Prime Contractor
- Subcontractor 1
- Subcontractor 2
- Program Risk DB
- Real Life
- Technical Challenges
- User Representatives
- Undocumented Issues
- Some Undocumented Issues
- Local Risk DB
- Risks
“Insight” or “Oversight’’?

Project/ Program Riskiness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>High</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Healthy Adequate</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate Ineffective</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Low: 1, 2, 3 (Healthy Adequate) - Depend on “Insight”
- Medium: 2, 3, 4 (Adequate Ineffective) - Watch
- High: 4, 5 (Ineffective) - “Oversight” needed!
Summary

• SEI risk management work was curtailed in 1998, but has continued at more modest level and in other forms

• Under the Acquisition Support Program, we are beginning to revitalize SEI risk management work focusing on *Risk Identification & Analysis* and *Team (“Joint”) Risk Management*

• *Continuous Risk Management* is mostly in maintenance mode, with some new directions emerging in the SEI’s version of the CRM course

• *Risk Process Checks* show real promise as a new tool to help programs assess and improve the effectiveness of their risk management, but this initiative is currently shelved for lack of sponsorship and piloting opportunities
Contact Information

Telephone  412 / 268-5800
FAX  412 / 268-5758
Internet  customer-relations@sei.cmu.edu
World Wide Web  http://www.sei.cmu.edu
U.S. mail  Customer Relations
Software Engineering Institute
Carnegie Mellon University
Pittsburgh, PA  15213-3890