CMMI SERVICES MODEL
INTERPRETING SERVICE DELIVERY, SERVICE CONTINUITY AND INCIDENCE RESOLUTION AND PREVENTION

By Neil Potter and Mary Sakry

Introduction

The CMMI services model[1] consists of Process Areas (PA) to help service organizations improve their performance and consistency. In this newsletter, which is a continuation from a recent Tidbit article on interpreting PP and PMC[2], we will look at examples of three of the service-specific Process Areas.

To explain the goals of these PAs, we have described a hypothetical financial services group.

Process Area Goal	Service Delivery (SD) *The purpose of Service Delivery is to deliver services in accordance with service agreements.* Example Implementation
SD Specific Goal (SG) 1: Service agreements are established and maintained.	The previous 12 months of service delivery data are analyzed to determine the overall effort required to deliver services based on different projects being supported. This is used to determine staff and service levels for new work.
	At the beginning of a company project, the finance group establishes an agreement that states what services will be provided to the project, including the setting up of the financial tracking system, roles and responsibilities and the specific dates for financial reports.

Table 1 – Example goal implementation

1 http://www.sei.cmu.edu/cmmi/tools/svc/download.cfm

2 http://www.processgroup.com/monthlytidbits.html#tidbit6

The group:

- Consists of 15 people.
- Provides project cost and budget tracking services for its business area.
- Tracks the costs of 5-6 large projects at any one time.

In Table 1 we list the Process Area goals and the group's implementation of them.

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ARE YOU SCRUMMING TOO MUCH?

By Neil Potter

Scrum is a defined set of project management activities to plan and manage a project (see March 2009 newsletter).

In recent discussions with some Scrum teams around the globe I have seen examples of team members walking away from Scrum because they saw the process as micro-managing the project team. After some investigation, I determined a lesson that teams were not learning. Here is the observation.

One Scrum practice is the Daily Standup meeting. The purpose is to track progress, keep team member commitments visible, identify problems, and reshuffle work as needed. However, experienced engineers don't want or need to be supervised daily. Some see this 24-hour review as micro-managing. (Imagine your mother calling you every 24 hours to checkup on you, even though you are 43 with 3 kids!)

Instead, reduce the frequency based on a) team experience and b) project risk. Consider meeting every 2, 3 or 5 days. This maintains the intent of Scrum without losing the benefits.

Process Area Goal	Service Delivery (SD) Example Implementation
SD SG 2: Preparation for service delivery is conducted.	The approach for providing financial services is defined in a standard checklist based on the Sarbanes-Oxley (SOX) guidelines for financial reporting. The project and financial representatives sign a letter of agreement when financial reporting activities are ready to begin. This letter states that the service group is ready to provide services, and that the project is ready to use them. Requests for service are received by phone and email. Each request is stored in a secure website.
SD SG 3: Services are delivered in accordance with service agreements.	As the requests for service are received, resources are allocated to provide the required level of service. A service agreement and letter of agreement states the commitments of both parties. A quarterly report is generated stating errors found in tools and financial data during the course of the project. These errors are combined with group-level lessons learned and the standard checklist of service activities is revised.
SD Generic Goal (GG) 2: The process is institutionalized as a managed process.	Policy and plan: A roles and responsibilities document states the overall strategy and typical tasks performed when providing financial services on each project. Additional common tasks are defined by government regulatory financial procedures. Resources: The effort needed to support all projects for the fiscal year is estimated, based on the number of projects, the complexity of each project and the financial services required. Internal company financial and SOX audits are conducted of all financial practices. Audit results are sent to management.

Process Area Goal	Service Continuity (SCON) *The purpose of Service Continuity is to establish and maintain plans to ensure continuity of services during and following any significant disruption of normal operations.* Example Implementation
SCON SG 1: The essential functions and resources on which services depend are identified and documented.	A continuity plan exists stating the services that are critical to the group's mission and the services that should be maintained if there is a disruption to any aspect of the financial services group. The critical services are those that, when disrupted, would stop the project, (i.e., onsite financial data collection for a project, data analysis and reporting activities). All other activities, such as the synchronization of local data with the corporate server, reporting to senior management and quarterly tax reporting are less critical and can be disrupted for at least one week before there is any significant impact.
SCON SG 2: Preparations are made for service continuity.	For each critical service activity, the continuity plan lists: - Alternate resources that will step in should the primary resource become unavailable. - Alternate computer devices that can be used locally should the corporate server fail.

	The members of the financial group are trained in these procedures so that they know what to do in the event of a service failure. Each person is tested to verify his or her understanding.
SCON SG 3: The service continuity plan is verified and validated.	A component of the continuity training class is for students to use the alternative tools provided to collect and report financial data. This is practiced in class and repeated for two weeks on a real project in parallel with the primary service being performed. This allows each group member to become fluent in the backup procedures and to ensure that the data collected are consistent with the primary system. Analysis is conducted at the end of the two-week period to determine that the continuity plan functioned correctly and that reporting accuracy was maintained.

Process Area Goal	Incident Resolution and Prevention (IRP)
	The purpose of Incident Resolution and Prevention is to ensure timely and effective resolution of service incidents and prevention of service incidents as appropriate. Example Implementation
IRP SG 1: Preparation for incident resolution and prevention is conducted.	An approach is defined for receiving, evaluating, resolving and communicating service-level incidents. Incidents can include: computer failure, data corruption, data loss and non-compliance findings from financial audits. Any service provider or service user can log incidents into a central web portal. The portal contains a list of contact information and provides periodic notification to relevant stakeholders involved in the project. All incidents, whether submitted verbally or otherwise, are logged into the website.
IRP SG 2: Incidents are identified, controlled, and addressed.	Incidents are collected in the web portal as they arrive. Every morning the group manager reviews the list and determines actions that need to be taken. These actions are entered into the system and become part of the report to the stakeholders. Actions are assigned to group members and are tracked to closure. The system provides an aging report to determine which actions are outstanding. Incidents remain open until: - The last action is complete and the resolution has been provided. - The person who submitted the incidence has verified that the resolution is satisfactory. The web portal provides a list of known workarounds that can be selected for the type of incident reported. These workarounds become part of the action plan that is tracked by the system.
IRP SG 3: Approaches to address selected incidents are defined to prevent the future occurrence of incidents or mitigate their impact.	The incidence system generates weekly reports showing a log of incidents organized by criticality and frequency. The underlying causes of the most important incidents are investigated in the lessons-learned sessions. Resolutions that have not been used before are entered in to the system's default list of workarounds.

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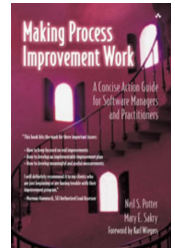
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Here is the book's Table of Contents:

Foreword by Karl Wiegers

Preface

Acknowledgments

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