

Delivery Techniques

Show and Tell

What is a Show and Tell?

- Brief demo of everything that has been 'done' this time
- Preferably working software - maybe other meaningful products
- To change manager, business stakeholders, users and anyone else interested in progress
- Provides visible demonstration of progress
- Gives opportunity for feedback
- Minimal preparation should be required
- Business stakeholder confirms on direction and approach thus far
- Project Manager signs-off on all Project management artefacts
- A chance for the team to celebrate their accomplishments



A quick word on Timeboxes

- Timeboxing a delivery Technique that incorporates a show and tell (along with other delivery techniques) into its structure
- Timeboxing will be another learning session in the near future but for now just think of it as
 - a predefined period of time
 - Of appropriate duration (2 – 4weeks)
 - Fixed; once agreed keep the boundary



Why bother?

- To provide early feedback and visibility for Business sponsors and users
- To answer the questions:
 - “are we going in the right direction?”
 - “are we building the right thing?”
 - “is this enough?”
- To build trust between business and IT
- To give IT a chance to celebrate success
- To give Business a chance to provide encouragement/motivation



When do we have one?

- When something is “done enough” so that a colleague can provide meaningful feedback on what has been created.
- There is ALWAYS something we can demonstrate after two weeks. If not ...
- ... then we are in danger of losing control.



It's a control mechanism that ...

- Demonstrates that we are in control
 - Early identification of risks and issues
- Validates we going in the right direction
 - Principle of "Fail Early"
 - Better to be two weeks "wrong" rather than 6 months "wrong"
- Asks the question "Are we there yet?"
 - Is this enough?
 - Is there enough value in what we have delivered?
 - Are we done?
- When run regularly provides a heartbeat for the project



It's a communication technique ...

- That provides
 - Early feedback and visibility to business
 - Transparency about what we are doing
- Through demonstrations of work done in this period via:
 - mock-ups;
 - Prototypes;
 - Powerpoints;
 - or whatever clearly communicates our progress.
- Allows us to “hear” Business thinking and sense-making about the work
- Encourages open dialogue and collaboration
- Validates IT's understanding of the Business communication



It's a motivational technique ...

- Imagine for a moment how powerful it is to receive feedback from the people who matter – YOUR CUSTOMERS
- Builds confidence
 - with Business that they are getting value
 - with IT that they are on the right track and delivering value
- Builds Morale and teamwork
 - through building trust and collaboration between business and IT



- Stakeholders not directly involved in the Phase/Timebox may be invited. This allows them to also see progress.
- Another opportunity for feedback, allowing the team to raise changes in priority or requirements – but control change.
- Remember results to be demo'd may include non-software outputs. For example:
 - a review of a wiki page that was created
 - a tool somebody wrote
 - a document that is important to the product
 - a description of a consulting engagement



What it's not ...

- NOT to allow the feedback to overturn the accepted/rejected status of each requirement.
 - If change is generated it should be controlled
- NOT a glitzy demo
 - It should be a simple show and tell of the results
- NOT about deep detail about the solution
 - take actions for further facilitated workshops.
- NOT a long session
 - Maximum of an hour
- NOT for justifying our position
 - Self defence: “this took two weeks because ...”
 - Describing everything we did in the Phase/Timebox

An ideal show and tell is ...

- Well communicated in advance
- Well organised (by Team Leader or equiv.)
- Progress is visible and clear
- Short but meaningful
- Engaging (from the Business perspective)
- Attended by Business



- Where could you use this technique in the next two weeks?
- What benefits could it bring:
 - For you?
 - Your stakeholders/customers?
 - What might prevent you from running one?

