ART OF THE POSSIBLE NEWSLETTER

AIR FORCE SUSTAINMENT CENTER

The AoP Newsletter is a monthly bulletin to communicate the latest enterprise AoP activities to the AFSC workforce. It provides updates on significant AoP institutionalization and implementation activities and tools. More detailed information is available on the AFSC AoP SharePoint site at https://cs2.eis.af.mil/sites/22197/AoP/SitePagesR/Home.aspx. If you have a question or would like to submit content for a future AoP Newsletter, please contact the POCs listed below.

Critical Path vs. Critical Chain

Poe-tay-toe vs Poe-tah-toe? You say tomato and I say tomahto? Critical path and critical chain are different but they are often confused and used interchangeably. Critical path is the optimum arrangement of dependent subtasks to complete a task (or project) in the shortest and most efficient time period in a *resource loaded*, *unconstrained* process. Basically, it's the proverbial longest pole in the process of setting up the tent provided you have all the resources you need. Critical chain is the sequence of events in a *resource constrained* process. The critical chain takes into account all the resources those pesky subtasks require to get done. This could be any resource such as people, machines, or a regulatory requirement – basically the things that can get in your way to accomplish a sub-task/task because the task must wait.

Critical path is typically a methodology of looking at a process as resource loaded, static/stable, and well-defined. Critical chain assumes the resources are limited, the process is fluid, and tasks may not be well defined. The critical chain approach may be useful in administrative or creative environments that tend to be more fluid and undefined. Critical path is useful in repeatable, somewhat stable production/repair environments.

Critical chain can become quite complicated, so AOP SMEs advise that you begin with mapping out your process as best you can and applying the critical path approach to developing your gates. Once you and your organization or team are comfortable with that, you may want to consider delving into critical chain project management.

Critical chain project management was developed by Dr. Eli Goldratt and was first introduced to the market in his theory of constraints book "Critical Chain" in 1997. It was developed in response to many projects being dogged by poor performance manifested in longer than expected durations, frequently missed deadlines, increased costs in excess of budget, and substantially less deliverables than originally promised. AFIT offers a great course Log 238: Critical Chain Project Management.

AoP SMEs Conduct AoP 301 Leadership Course at Langley AFB

The AoP team conducted a two-day AoP 301 Squadron/Division Leadership Course at Langley AFB, VA from 30-31 Oct 2018. The target audience for AoP 301-level training is squadron to branch supervisors. 39 students participated from across AFSC, AFLCMC, and the 42 FTW Laughlin AFB, Texas. Ms. June Biancalana presented the Leadership Model and emphasized the value and importance of implementing AoP across the center. In addition to standard AoP content, the AoP SMEs and students observed and discussed wall walks from two different areas; 440th Supply Chain Operations Squadron (SCOS) Variance Management, and the AFSC/LGS's Special Projects and Recurring Workload machine. Students learned how to apply AoP and how to set up process machines. The AoP team received valuable constructive feedback via its course critique process that will be used to improve future AoP training. The AoP team will be conducting an AoP 301 Leader Course at Robins AFB, GA on 29-30 Jan 2019.

NEWSLETTER POCs

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

AoP 301 Sq/Div Leadership Course

29-30 Jan 19, Robins AFB

AoP 401 Senior Leader Course

TBD

AoP Implementation Performance Review (IPR)

5 Dec 18

AoP Enterprise Monthly Call

Last Friday of the Month, 1430 EST, MMN DSN 852-9999; passcode 1103#

AoP FAQs and Misconceptions: What is a "buffer" and how will it exploit the constraint?

A *buffer* is the work in process (WIP) or time built purposefully in front of the constraint. This is not just another queue – it is a particular level of WIP that you have determined protects the constraint from going idle should the process upstream fail or stop. If the constraint is idle, you lose throughput that you can never get back.

AoP SharePoint URL:
https://cs2.eis.af.mil/sites/22197/AoP/SitePagesR/Home.aspx