This week's discussion topic is designed to allow you to better understand how the cost and schedule management techniques described in this module are applied in real-world organizations and situations.

* Does your organization use cost and schedule management? If so, describe your organization’s cost and schedule management activities at a high level, including the procedures and guidelines used and the benefits to the organization.  If not, describe how you could convince your management to use it or why you feel it would not be useful to your organization. Please comment on at least two other students' responses to this question.

The organization that I work for does use cost and schedule management for mid-size to large projects. Loosely, my organization uses the 0/100 method of tracking earned value, meaning that when a task is started it is considered to be 0% complete, and when a task is complete is considered to be 100% complete. However, the method for computing the number of hours allocated to a task is slightly different than what is described in lecture.

My organization utilizes the agile methodology for our software development, and each task tracked is given a number of function points. Tracking the number of function points completed relative to the total amount of function points for the project should give a linear progression over the course of the project in terms of completed function points (assuming number of people working the project remains constant). Thus to back out the number of hours for a specific task, one could pro-rate the number of function points for the task against the entire project and the number of labor hours expected for the project.

My organization runs 2 week sprints for most projects. At the end of every 2 week sprint, we review the number of function points expected to be completed against the number of function points actually completed to get an idea of the amount of work done compared to the amount of work expected to be done over the course of the sprint. This allows us to track earned value against the budget and ensure that we are on a good course. For very large tasks (spanning more than a staff month), we break the task down into subtasks to ensure that we can maintain tracking of schedule variance and earned value for the project.