

# Capstone Project Selection: *Next Steps*

# Selecting Your Project

- (Some) Reasons for selecting a project
  - It's an easy one
  - It uses the \_\_\_\_\_ operating system
  - We already have some expertise in the domain or technology so we could do a good job
  - We don't have expertise in the domain or technology and would like to learn about it
  - It sounds like a cool application
  - The sponsor inspired us

# Point of Contact

- Teams are large and sponsors are busy - more than one person contacting the sponsor will become confusing.
- Contact the sponsor as soon as possible and introduce yourself as the point of contact .
- Provide a reliable e-mail address that is checked daily and always use that address when contacting them – an .edu address is less likely to get filtered into the junk folder than a hotmail, yahoo or gmail address.

# Duties of the POC

- The POC's job is to coordinate information flow and set customer expectations.
  - Organize meetings between the sponsor and the team members
  - Make requests of the sponsors
  - Field questions from the sponsor
- The POC's job is *not* to gather requirements, negotiate deadlines/features, or deal with the sponsor's ISP.
- The very first task is to set up a kick-off meeting.

# The Kick-Off Meeting

- The sponsor meets the entire team and the team has an opportunity to meet other members of the sponsoring organization who may have some involvement in the project.
- The goal of a kick off meeting is to make introductions, discuss the process to be followed and establish expectations for both yourselves and the sponsor.
- The goal of the kick-off meeting is *not* to gather detailed requirements

# Establishing Expectations

- It is important the sponsor and the team agree on how things are going to work. Are you going to provide bi-weekly prototypes? Show up once and come back in three months?
- Will you develop on a server at PSU and port it over to their server at the end, or do your development on their server? Is their server a Server 2003 machine? Or Apache on a Linux box?
- Discuss issues you can anticipate within your team before you go there so you're all on the same page.

# The Agenda

- Prepare an agenda before the meeting – while the kick-off meeting is light and social, it is also important to get whatever business you need to transact covered – *write it down, or you'll forget it!*
- Make one person a note taker so you have a reliable record of what went on at the meeting. When you're done, the POC should e-mail the sponsor and summarize the points that were discussed to confirm that the sponsor is in agreement.
- You don't want a sponsor wondering when they're going to hear from you next or what the next step is

# Follow On Meetings

- Trying to coordinate seven (at least) schedules to meet with the sponsor will be tough.
- After the initial kick off meeting, limit meetings with the sponsor to only two or three team members at a time – only those who need to be involved in the meeting.
- The POC should, in general, organize these meetings – but they don' t have to attend
- Always have at least two team members attend a meeting – *have an agenda and take notes*