

COMP 8081 - Risk Management Case Study

Overview

- You work for WidgetDev Inc., a small and growing cloud software provider
- Your company has just been acquired by SAC Inc., a private equity firm
- The first WidgetDev product (WD Core) has been available for a while
- Customer uptake of WD Core has been really good, surpassing expectations
- There is already a steady stream of suggestions for improvements and new features for the product
- There is also a steady stream of comments on social media and the support portal from customers concerned about how the SAC acquisition will disrupt the development of WD Core
- The WidgetDev team has just completed the inception phase of its new project, WD Next, which will address new markets and opportunities that will further accelerate growth
- A large and mature corporate “beta customer” has already been brought on board by SAC to “provide timely and strategic feedback and guidance” to the WD Core and Next development teams
- This customer has been promised a large say in the direction of Core and Next by SAC, and they have made a very long list of requests for development, all of which are high priority

Development Team

- The Development team is eager to keep moving on the WD Next project to explore different possibilities, but no target release date has been set
- The team wants to refine key features and optimize performance before a release date is set
- Saying it was due to recent growth, the new management team is adding a consultant to support the development team with WD Next
- The consultant has already proposed a new platform for WD Next that she says will improve capabilities and reduce development time by at least 25%
- She seems to spend more time in the office of the new Managing Director doing “alignment” than in doing development
- The Marketing team is keen to use the momentum building around WD Core and is already pushing the Dev team to include as many customer-demanded features as possible, as quickly as possible

Management/Marketing Team

- The new management team from SAC Inc. has a mandate to achieve synergies and maximize the ROI from the WidgetDev acquisition
- The new owners want WD Next out the door ASAP so they can start generating revenue and get to work on the product backlogs plus mobile apps and other potential new products
- The new management team has made it clear that they want shortened time lines and earlier release dates for products generally, and they have indicated that they believe that too much time was allowed for beta testing of WD Core and that the lack of a target date for WD Next is unacceptable

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The Scene

The new management team is pulling the Dev team into a meeting to set scheduled release dates for the WD products

You and the rest of the Dev team have decided to be proactive and to come up with a plan so that you can begin to set what you feel are realistic expectations about dates with the new management team.

Questions

- What are the top 3 risks do you see in the project using McConnell's 10 most common schedule risks? How do you know?
- What RM level and RM category is this organization at?
- Which risk resolution approach (5.5) would you recommend for each risk?
- Which risk mitigation (table 5.6) is recommended?