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CMMI®

The SCAMPI Appraisal Method: Top Ten Misperceptions (V1103)

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MYTHS - Overview

Presented in no particular order

No scientific or statistical methodology

Candidate “myths” originated from one or more of the following:

- SEI observations of SCAMPIs,
- inquiries made to SEI (phone, email),
- questions from students attending SEI classes (Intro to CMMI, Intermediate CMMI, SCAMPI Lead Appraiser Training).

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MYTHS - Scope

Many suggestions provided were not included as they did not pertain (primarily) to the SCAMPI appraisal method.

- Process improvement based on CMM or CMMI is necessarily document intensive and bureaucratic
- You cannot include hardware engineering in a SCAMPI
- CMMI is a quality model and does not consider the business needs of an organization.

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Myth 1: Findings are required to be reported at the sub-practice level

Findings may be reported at the sub-practice level if requested by the appraisal sponsor.

Typically, however, findings are reported out as goal-level statements that summarize gaps in practice implementation.

These statements must be abstracted to the level of the organizational unit, and cannot focus on individual projects (unless the tailoring option for project-specific findings has been agreed upon during planning).

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Myth 2: The Appraisal Disclosure Statement is optional

The ADS is a required part of the SCAMPI method; it is typically prepared by the SCAMPI Lead Appraiser and must be provided to the appraisal sponsor as well as the CMMI Steward.

The SCAMPI Lead Appraiser affirms that the information in the ADS is accurate and that the appraisal was conducted in full accordance with the requirements of the SCAMPI V1.1 Appraisal Method and the provisions of their authorization as a SCAMPI V1.1 Lead Appraiser.

The ADS is intended to serve as a common basis for the disclosure of SCAMPI appraisal results.

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Myth 3: SCAMPI appraisal team members must be trained in CMMI within 60 days of the appraisal onsite.

SCAMPI appraisal team members must receive Introduction to CMMI model training from an SEI-authorized model instructor at any time prior to participation as a team member.

There are currently no requirements for renewal or refresher training.

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Myth 4: SCAMPI cannot be used in discovery mode

Discovery mode, in which little or none of the needed objective evidence is readily accessible by the appraisal team, is an acceptable mode of use for SCAMPI.

However, this mode of use is the most expensive and time consuming.

Further, excessive or repeated employment of this mode of use may be suggestive of an organization which is not managing its process improvement efforts in a way which provides appropriate visibility to management. The whole idea of PIIDs is that these constitute a valuable resource for the organization itself whether they ever conduct a formla appraisal or not.

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Myth 5: Having two direct artifacts obviates the need for indirect or affirmation objective evidence.

This is a result of misunderstanding the significance of a direct artifact as well as the purpose of the requirement for indirect and or affirmation objective evidence

The number of direct artifacts appropriate to a particular practice depends on the practice as well as its implementation in an organization; thus, *two* direct artifacts may be the minimum number needed.

The requirement for indirect and/or affirmation objective evidence addresses the ARC requirement for corroborating objective evidence.

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Myth 6: Alternative practices must be 1-1 replacements for model practices.

In the CMMI Product Suite the term “alternative practice” is defined to mean “A practice that is a substitute for one or more generic or specific practices contained in CMMI models that achieves an equivalent effect toward satisfying the generic or specific goal associated with model practices. Alternative practices are not necessarily one-for-one replacements for the generic or specific practices.”

Thus, it may be that an organization is able to achieve a goal with a different number of practices than is expected by the CMMI models.

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Myth 7: If we conduct a SCAMPI appraisal using the staged representation then we must report a maturity level.

The SCAMPI method requires that, as a minimum, goal ratings be performed; there is no requirement that any further rating activities be performed.

In addition, even if additional ratings are rendered by the appraisal team, it is the appraisal sponsor's decision as to whom they are communicated to in the organization.

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Myth 8: If we use the staged representation then we must examine all process areas up to and at the target maturity level.

The model scope of a SCAMPI appraisal is governed by the appraisal outputs selected by the appraisal sponsor and the inherent relationships between CMMI process areas. If a maturity level rating is not selected as an appraisal output then the model scope could be as small as one process area, irrespective of the representation chosen.

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Myth 9: Appraisal team members retain full productivity until 4am.

No one's interests are served by agreeing to unrealistic appraisal plans.

The SCAMPI Lead Appraiser has primary responsibility for ensuring that the appraisal plan is realistic.

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Myth 10 (1/2): If all of the goals are satisfied during an ARC class B then why can't a maturity level rating be rendered.

First, ARC class B appraisals do not produce goal ratings; that is, the Appraisal Requirements for CMMI do not sanction goal ratings as an output of a class B appraisal. Ratings are reserved for ARC class A appraisals and *the CMMI community has invested significantly in a standard appraisal method for this purpose* – SCAMPI.

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Myth 10 (2/2)

Second, class B appraisal methods are exempt from some key ARC requirements pertaining to data consolidation and validation, thus providing less confidence (than an ARC class A method) in the accuracy of the resulting findings. Thus, it was the considered option of the CMMI PDT that the rendering of Ratings is not warranted for class B or C methods.

Finally, it was believed that allowing appraisal methods with significantly varying degrees of confidence to produce Ratings would eventually result in an erosion of confidence and support for ARC class B and C methods, thus depriving these classes of appraisal methods of their useful role in genuine process improvement.

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Myth 11: There are only 10 SCAMPI myths.

Just a little humor!

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Myth 12: Periodic progress reviews are mandatory for maintaining a maturity level rating.

A variation of this myth is that a SCAMPI appraisal must be repeated every two years in order to be “valid.”

While there are currently no formal requirements for periodic progress or status reviews (or appraisals) this is a common practice in related areas (e.g. ISO 9000); furthermore, if widely adopted, it could lead to a rational basis for continuing confidence in the results of a SCAMPI appraisal overtime without incurring the cost of repeated SCAMPI appraisals.

At this time there is no SEI position on “shelf-life” for SCAMPI appraisal outputs.

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Myth 13: Formal structured FAR interviews carry more “weight” in a SCAMPI than informal opportunistic interviews.

Wrong – it is less disruptive and far less expensive to conduct interviews as needed (this is encouraged by the SCAMPI method) rather than pro forma.

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Myth 14: Every SCAMPI Lead Appraiser can deliver all training that appraisal team members need.

SCAMPI Lead Appraisers are not automatically authorized to deliver Introduction to CMMI training.

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SCAMPI Myths II

Send me your favorites!!

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