Small Organizations are Different?

NDIA/SEI CMMI Technology Conference

18 November 2003

Martha I Johnson

marthaijohnson@yahoo.com
310-378-2522

Topics

- What is a small organization?
  - Small project?
- Process Improvement Start up challenges
- CMMI tailoring
- Special Needs

© Copyright, 2003, Martha I. Johnson Consulting, unpublished work. All rights reserved.

What is a small organization? Small project?

- Organizations with less than 30 people – commercial or government
  - Maybe a small company
  - Maybe a part of a LARGE corporation
- Projects which are staffed with less than 5 engineers, sometimes 1
  - Short cycle time – 6 months or less
  - Research, development, maintenance, services

© Copyright, 2003, Martha I. Johnson Consulting, unpublished work. All rights reserved.

Common Laments

- We are ISO certified already, we should be able to be CMMI *certified* very quickly
- We're a team, we all work together
- We don't have time for all this documentation
- We don't need training, we only hire the best people
- We're small enough that we just talk to the person if we need to solve a problem

© Copyright, 2003, Martha I. Johnson Consulting, unpublished work. All rights reserved.

Process Improvement Start up challenges

- Senior management support
  - Lack of awareness of what it takes to implement process improvement
  - Misconception that achieving a Maturity or Capability level is easy
- Resources, resources, resources
  - Little infrastructure to support development of common process improvement solutions
  - Not aware of where to get help
    - Little knowledge of where to obtain information, experiences
  - Training, tools, methods
  - Budgets to perform QA (GP2.9)

© Copyright, 2003, Martha I. Johnson Consulting, unpublished work. All rights reserved.

CMMI tailoring

- Simplicity is key
- Tailoring is adjusting the implementation "degree of formality"
  - Number of lines of communication drives detail level of processes
  - Meet intent of practices
    - Tasks combined
    - Shared roles and responsibilities
    - Alternate approaches

© Copyright, 2003, Martha I. Johnson Consulting, unpublished work. All rights reserved.

Special Needs

- Senior management awareness training
  - Guidance in management roles and responsibilities
  - Guidance in how to monitor process improvement process
- Early training in model, appraisal method to key people
- On-going support from experienced model and appraisal expert
  - Experienced working with small organizations or projects
  - Flexible approach

© Copyright, 2003, Martha I. Johnson Consulting, unpublished work. All rights reserved.

Special Needs

- Mini-appraisals (Class C or B) to measure progress towards process improvement goals
  - Recommend at least quarterly
- More focus on organization processes to support small projects
  - Standard processes, methods, tools
  - Data management (PP) and configuration management (CM and GP2.6)
  - PPQA (GP2.9)

© Copyright, 2003, Martha I. Johnson Consulting, unpublished work. All rights reserved.

Special needs of small projects

- Because of short schedule and very limited resources, small projects require more organization level infrastructure (e.g. EPG)
  - Easy, simple templates, tools, methods, aids
  - Easy, simple measurement approaches
  - Guidance on appropriate tailoring
- Centralized PPQA and CM

© Copyright, 2003, Martha I. Johnson Consulting, unpublished work. All rights reserved.