

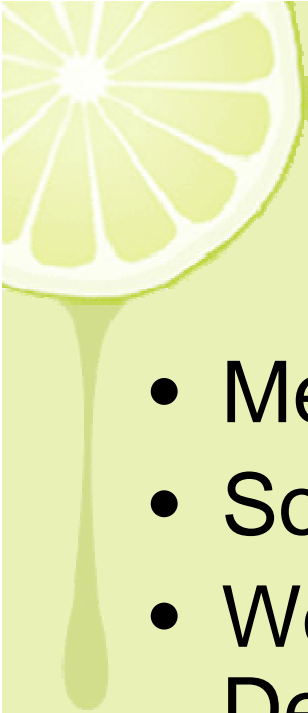


Geek Project Management

Refresh Edinburgh

6 April 2007





Who Am I?

- Meri Williams
- South African, moved to UK in 2001
- Work @ P&G as an Information & Decision Solutions Manager (since 2002)
- Recently started up Make Me A Speaker! wiki & blog (makemeaspeaker.com)
- Blog at:
 - <http://blog.merwilliams.com>
 - <http://blog.geekmanager.co.uk>



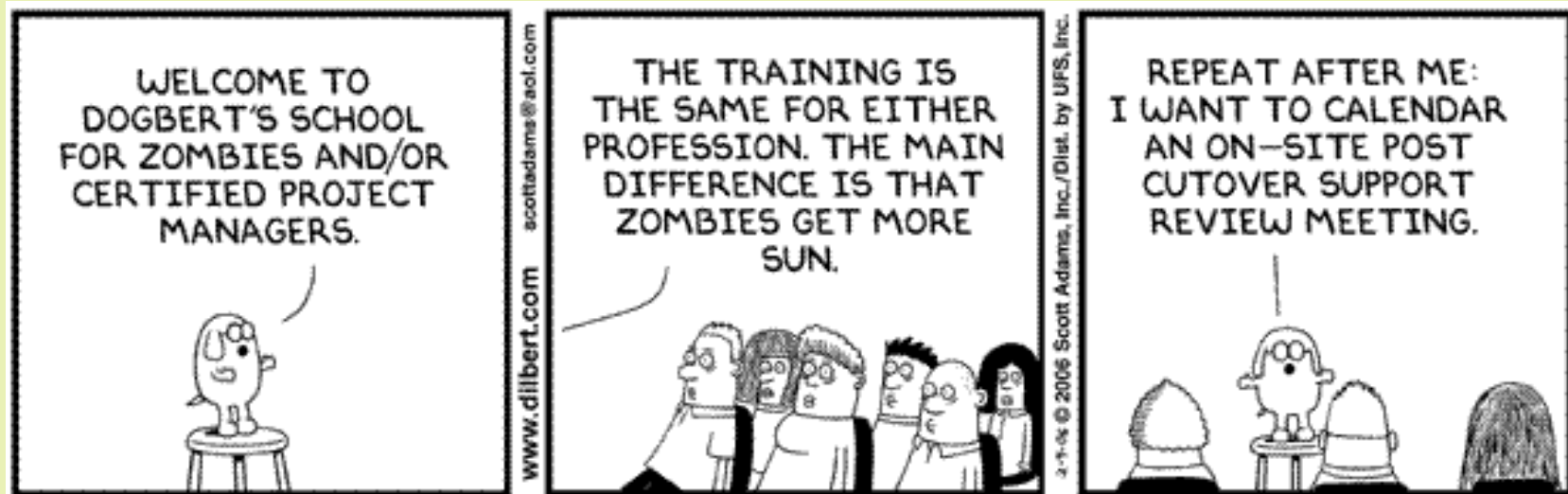


What Do People Think Of Project Management?



Boring Much?

- Isn't "Project Manager" just another word for "zombie"?



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The Bigger Issue

We can all put up with boring things...

But no one likes to be distracted from their “real work”

Unfortunately, without good project management, the “real work” is doomed





Balance

TOO MUCH project management can be boring and feel like a distraction

It's important to balance the “science” of Project Management (what you “should” do) with the “art” of PM (what you actually NEED to do)

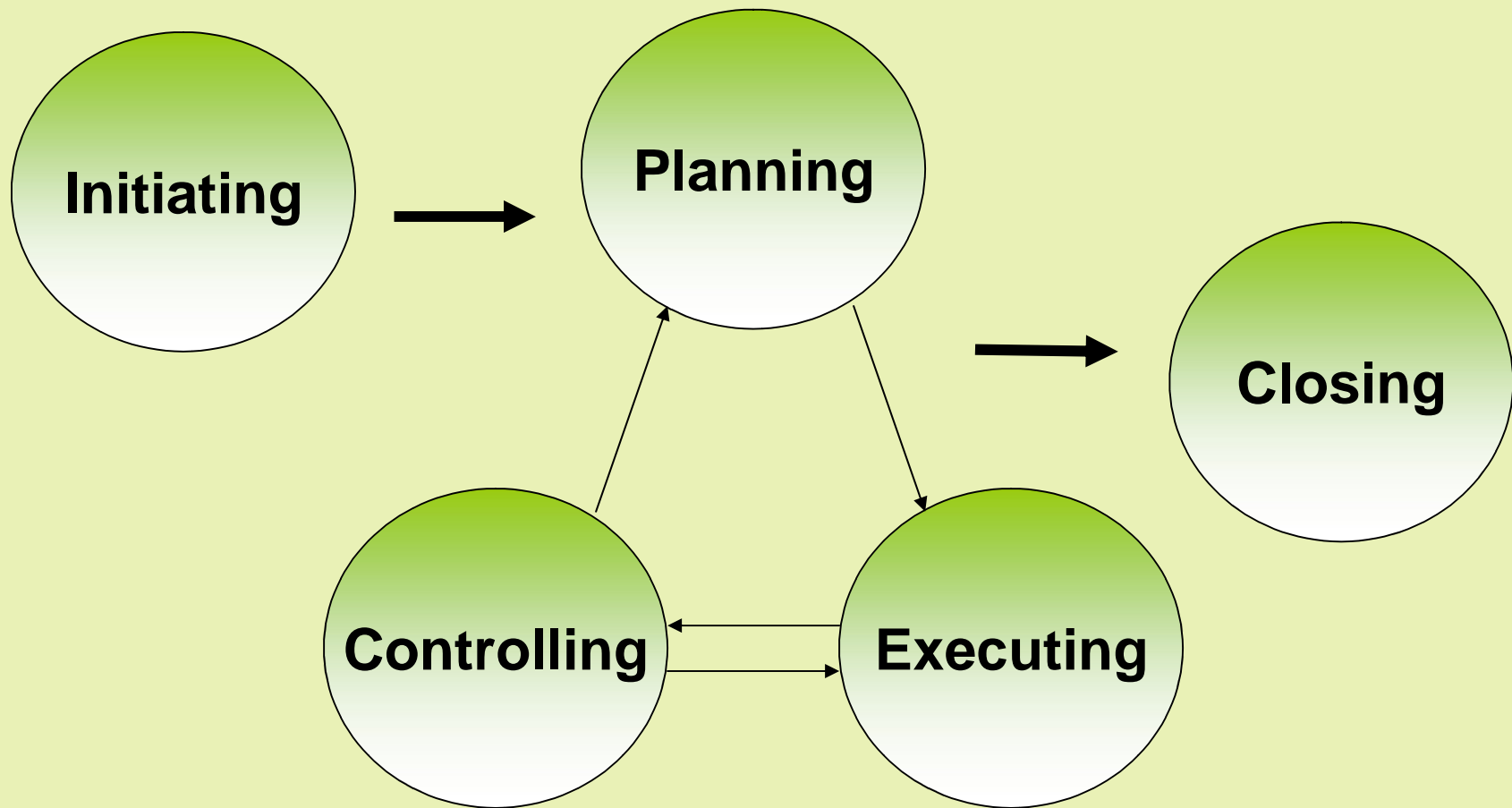




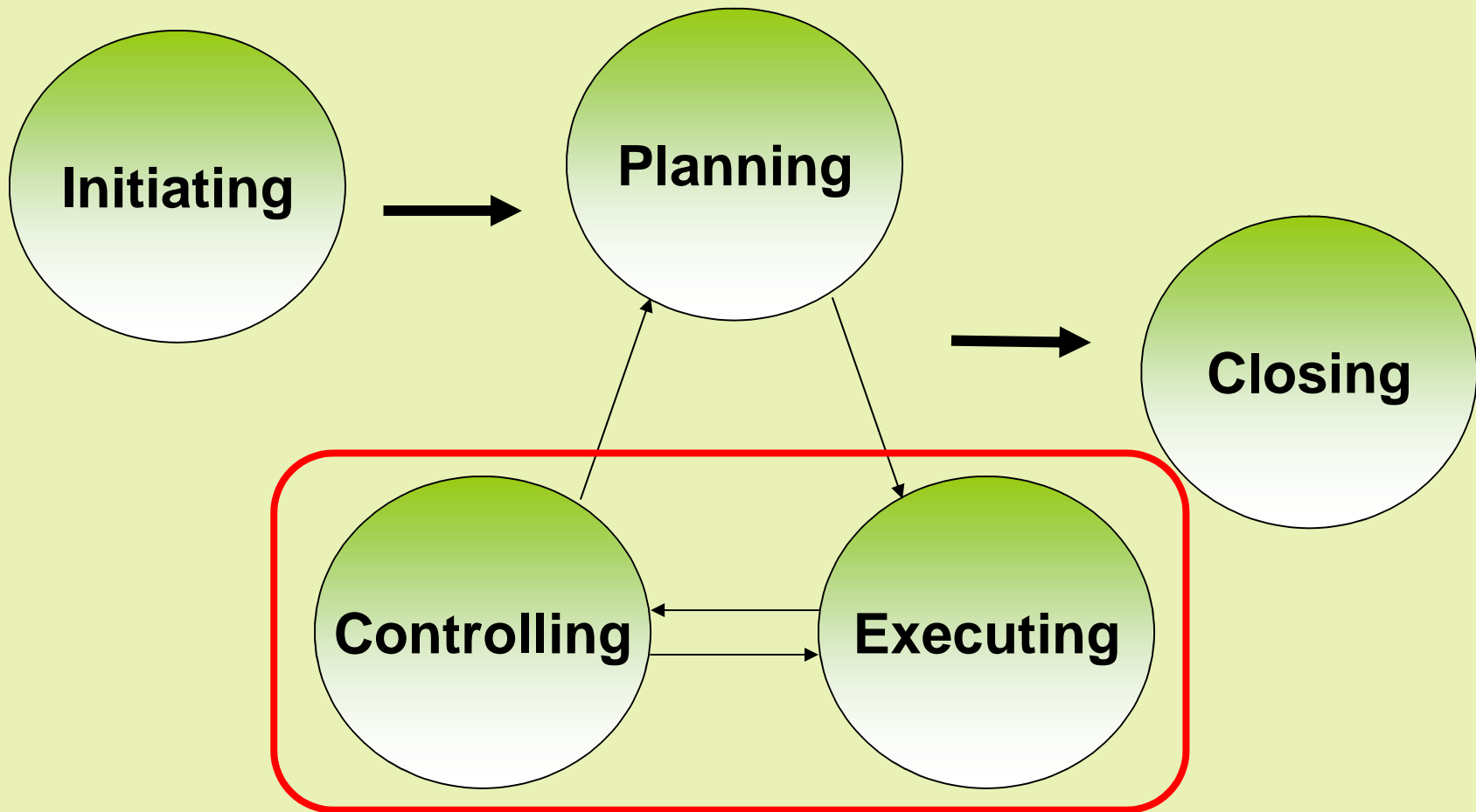
The Project Management Lifecycle



PM Lifecycle (PMI)



Where Do You Spend Your Time?





The “Big Secret” of PM






Where's the Value?

Most people think that the value of Project Management is in the Executing & Controlling phases

In traditional industries, this may be true – compare to construction or industrial production – but not in knowledge work





The “Big Secret”

For most smaller projects, the real value of Project Management is in **Initiating, Planning & Closing**

These areas are where projects go from success → failure





Why Initiating?

- **Initiating** is where you formulate your “contract” with the client/customer /users/management
- If you don't even start out truly in agreement about the point of the project, you have no common foundation from which to discuss changes, etc





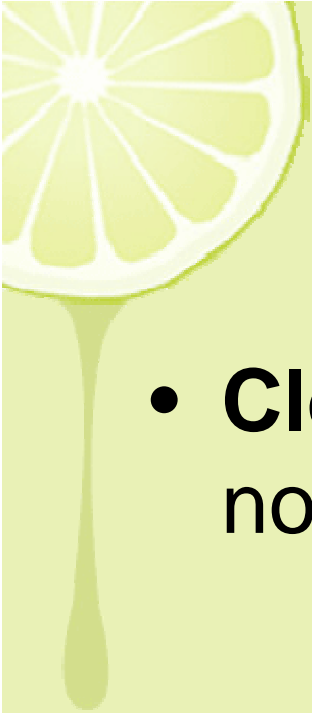
Why Planning?

The point of **Planning** is NOT to follow the plan, but to

- a) Gain a better understanding of what needs to be done.
- b) Communicate with key stakeholders

“In preparing for battle, I have always found that plans are useless, but planning is indispensable” – Eisenhower

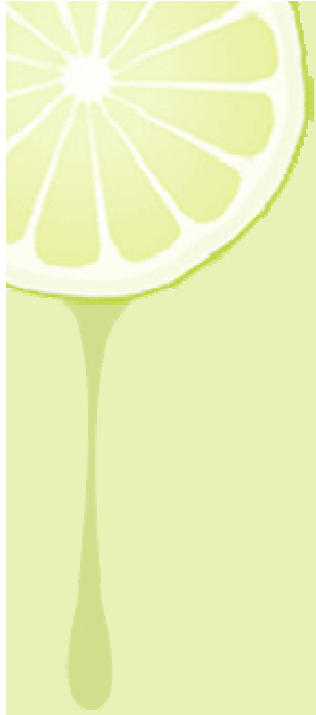




Why Closing?


- **Closing** is important because go-live is not the end of your project
- If you treat launch as the end of the project, then you will get “undead” stakeholders – coming back from the past all the time with new requirements/fixes





PM Essentials Toolkit





What Do You Really Need?

- If you used every bit of project management advice out there, you really would never get to do anything but PM
- **HOWEVER**, there are some key tools that are truly useful ... and necessary





PM Essentials Toolkit

1. Initiation Document
2. Project Plan
3. Risk Management Plan
4. Issue List
5. Stakeholder Reviews
6. Closeout Meeting





Initiation Document

- Essential for making sure that everyone is TRULY on the same page
- Write down the objective of the project:
To: (what you're going to do)
In A Way That: (the key things to hit)
So That: (what's the point?)
- Get everyone that matters to sign it (important != hierarchy)





Project Plan

- Create just enough of a plan to:
 - Track what needs to be **achieved**
 - Track progress
- DON'T play the “percent complete” game
 - use milestones instead of tasks
- DO reflect the authority of your plan in the format
- TRUST your people to achieve results





Risk Management Plan

- List the potential risks – rate by likelihood and severity
- Decide which ones you need a plan for
- Make a plan!
- Review regularly to make sure your assumptions about likelihood & severity are still right – and to kick off the contingency plans for risks that emerge

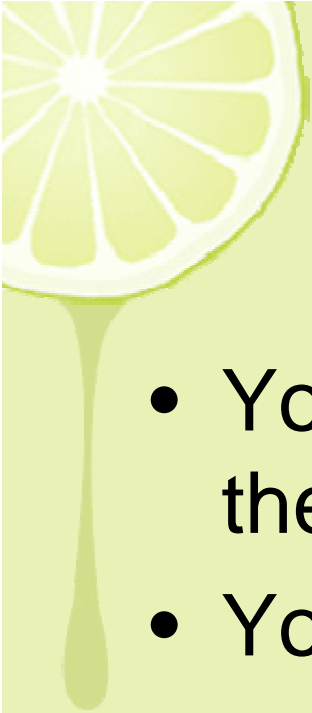




Issue List

- Issues are risks that have reared their ugly little heads
- They may be risks that you already identified (and so have a plan for) or new ones that you didn't consider
- Either way, you need to track them through to resolution
- **Your issue list should be separate from your bug list**






A Quick Note On Scope

- You can't stop the stakeholders changing their minds, or requirements changing
- You CAN make them aware of the impact
- Let the customer prioritise – show them the cost of making the scope change
- Go back to the project initiation document – does the change help towards objective?





Stakeholder Reviews

- Even though you and your team may think everything is going fine, others may disagree
- Stakeholder reviews are important to get disagreements out in the open
- You can't always expect consensus – but you can get the issues documented and agreement on a route forward





Closeout Meeting

- Launch or go-live is not the end of your project
- Your project ends when your stakeholders agree that you've delivered
- Closeout meetings are important to review the original initiation doc as well as the issue list, which should document any compromises made – and agree any future work





What We Covered Today

1. Perceptions of Project Management
2. Project Management Lifecycle
3. The “Big Secret” of PM
4. PM Essentials Toolkit

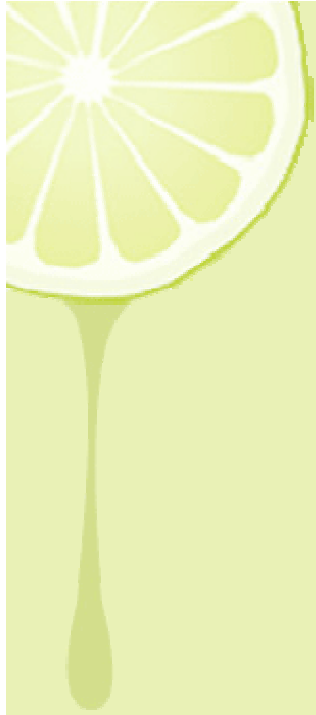




PM Essentials Toolkit

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Any Questions?

Thank you for listening 😊





Further Reading

- “Official” Project Management:
 - www.pmi.org
 - www.apm.org.uk
- Blogs:
 - www.randsinresponse.com
 - slackermanager.com
 - blog.geekmanager.co.uk





One Last Thing...

BarCampNorthEast is coming soon!
Keep your eyes on the wiki:

Barcamp.org/BarCampNorthEast



North East
barcamp

