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**Resident Bloggers**

Stephen Ibaraki

Technology Journalist I.S.P.,
DF/NPA, CNPBarnaby Jeans
IT Pro Advisor
Microsoft Canada**Top Tips from an Awarding Winning Technical Architect: Dennis McPeak**

I wanted to give you a heads-up on an upcoming interview with Dennis McPeak, Technical Architect with RBC Financial Group, since he provides some excellent tips for IT managers. Dennis and his team won the Project Team of the Year Award from Computing Canada announced online in January of this year.

Here's our discussion on scope creep:

SI: What are your top five recommendations for keeping a lid on scope creep?

DM: For any reader not yet familiar with scope creep – beware! In my estimation, this is the death knell for all large projects. Born out of my experience on this recent project, my recommendations for keeping a lid on scope creep (or change requests) are as follows:

- Capture important information related to the impact on:
 - Business Cases
 - Functional Designs
 - Technical Designs
 - Plans and Schedules
- Create a formal process to manage scope creep that includes the following step-wise approach to the change requests:
 - Initiation
 - Analysis
 - Review
 - Approval
 - Implementation
- Determine the impact of each change request to the requirements in terms of design, cost and schedule. Review the impact among a representative counsel of project participants. Broad representation is important as a significant change request may affect multiple or all participants and sponsors.
- For significant deferrable change requests, consider a Phase 2 and Phase 3 approach. As each phase will require a separate design, cost and schedule, it will keep the original project on track.
- Make the process very public. A public process compels any individual that makes a change request to champion the change, defend its impact and take responsibility for the impact on the overall project.

Look for the interview to appear early next week!

Cheers,
Stephen Ibaraki, I.S.P., sibaraki@cips.ca

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Filed Under: [Stephen Ibaraki](#), [Guest Bloggers](#)

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Comments**# re: Top Tips from an Awarding Winning Technical Architect: Dennis McPeak**

Friday, May 19, 2006 12:18 PM by [jointer](#)

Good advice Dennis and I look forward to hearing from the interview. Scope creep is the killer in any project regardless of the industry. One of the most difficult things to do is to be your own customer. No matter how hard you try to convince people that it is "their dollar" psychologically it is not like doing work for someone else under a contract. I have long been a proponent, in so far as it is possible, of making the Project Office in an organization a true "profit centre". There should be an internally negotiated contract based upon a competitive outside world situation. In other words make them convince the Senior Management that they can consistently do a better job than hiring outside.

There is a dangerous tendency to easily convince yourself that because an internal group knows the organization best that they will execute best! The fallacy in this argument can be incentive. All things being equal you would expect an internal group to know best but you must hold them accountable as if they were external!

If you have ever worked in an environment where all contracts are fixed price with negotiated extras, it sure sharpens the focus as to what is in and what is not. Try running an internal project that way sometime and it will very soon find the weaknesses in your change management systems and procedures.



John Oxley
Director IT Pro Evangelism
Microsoft Canada



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It will also smarten up the people when it comes to convincing them about what they have to do to maintain their tenure.

Cheers
Graham Jones

re: Top Tips from an Awarding Winning Technical Architect: Dennis McPeak

Friday, May 19, 2006 3:08 PM by [Stephen Ibaraki I.S.P.](mailto:sibaraki@cips.ca),
sibaraki@cips.ca

Graham,

There is a lot of value in your argument about making it a profit center. This speaks to running the IT organization like a business with a business plan and making a business case for each initiative and using business rules to engage projects. The overall goal of IT is to enable the strategic objectives of the hosting business and provide business agility, improved productivity and efficiency, lower operational costs, improved collaboration with customer and partners, and higher stakeholder satisfaction. Moreover IT is the enabler of capitalizing on new business opportunities and mitigating business risk. There would be clear metrics for success and a focus on business strategy.

Cheers,
Stephen Ibaraki, I.S.P.

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