Put Your Goal on the Critical Path

go/learning workshop
June & July 2012
Agenda

• Review of alignment & goal setting
• Critical Path Method
• Applying CPM to your goal
• Adjusting to complete your goal
Alignment
• We are most effective when going in the same direction with a shared purpose

Prioritization
• Knowing what is most important helps us decide what we should be spending time on

Goals
• Goals that are align and prioritized drive our work
Types of Goals

- **Strategic & Operational**
  - What needs to be planned to get us where we want to go?
  - What needs to be done to get us there with the desired results?

- **Development**
  - How we get it done most effectively
Development Goals

- Skills, abilities, and experiences needed to:
  - Reach strategic and operational goals
  - Increase capability in my current position
  - Prepare me for more responsibility in the future
Making your Goals SMART

S Specific
M Measureable
A Aligned
R Realistic
T Time bound
Critical Path Method

• Lays out all steps needed to complete a goal
• Determines time to complete each activity
• Connects the relationships between the activities
• Helps predict if a goal can be completed on time
• Identifies the longest path to completion
Critical Path:

The string of activities that will delay the completion of your goal if any one activity is delayed

If you know an activity is not on the critical path, then you know a delay in that activity may not necessarily delay the goal
Put Your Goal on the Critical Path

- List all activities to complete the goal
- Plot the activities in a network diagram
- Determine your critical path
- Identify resources & implement
Brainstorm Activities

• List all of the steps you can think of
• Don’t worry about the order
• Use paper, newsprint, or post its
Goal: Hang a picture

Choose a place
Decide on size
Buy hanger
Gather tools
Buy a picture
Mark the place
Ensure the mark is level
Install hanger
Hang picture
# List all Activities, Dependencies & Time

## Goal: Hang a picture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Required predecessor</th>
<th>Duration (minutes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Choose a place</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Decide on size</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Buy a picture</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Buy hanger</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Gather tools</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Mark the place</td>
<td>B,C</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Ensure the mark is level</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Install hanger &amp; hang picture</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Create a Network Diagram
Determine Critical Path
Float or Slack time

- Float tells you how much extra time you have
- Once you know the float, you know how much play you have in your schedule
- If an activity has a float of 2 days, it can slip by that much without affecting the end date
- The float for any activity on the critical path is zero
Determine Float

• Calculate the duration for the next longest path
• Subtract that duration from the critical path duration
• Repeat for each path

    CP duration – next path duration = float
Path A = Ø Float
Path E = 100 - 15 = 85 minutes of float
Path F = 100 - 7 = 93 minutes of float

This is the amount of time each path can slip without delay of the goal.

Critical Path = 100 minutes
How is this useful?

• Planning and organizing tool
• Think through the steps in advance
• Verify or adjust “time bound”
• Identify resources
• Delegate tasks in parallel paths