



10 Things I Hate About The CMMI

Kieran Doyle

Lamri Ltd,
Dundas House,
Aske Stables,
Richmond,
North Yorkshire,
DL10 5HG

T: 01748 821824
E: kieran.doyle@lamri.com

Agenda

- The Nature of Process Improvement
- Resistance
- Reasons for Resistance
- Categories of Objection
- The Top 10 Objections to Implementing CMMI
- Summary

The Nature of Process Improvement

- It's about change.
- It requires involvement of people at many levels of the organisation.
- Change is rarely welcome and often painful.
- So people mistrust it
- And they particularly distrust the people who advocate it!

So They Resist Change.



The Typical Response?

Resistance is Futile!



If only it was so simple?

- Resisting Resistance - may make things worse!
- We need to understand why first.
- Ask questions first
.....then shoot!

Reasons For Resistance

- Fear
- Vested interest
- Misunderstanding
- Can't see why?
- Testing the hypothesis – Is it a good idea?
- Valid objections

Categories of Objection

- Plain Wrong
- Invalid or Inaccurate Perceptions
- Warrants a Considered Response

The Top 10 Hates!

10. It's just a badge / a gong / a fad etc.



- Reason: Misunderstanding.
Can't See Why.
- Category: Inaccurate Perception

What's the response?

- People DO need to see why the organisation is proceeding on this path.
- Are you a “Serial Initiative Junky”
- Does your CEO suffer from “Flight Magazine Syndrome”
- Treatment
 - Get Serious
 - Why are we doing this?
 - What are we looking to achieve?
 - How does this model help us?

Above all:

COMMUNICATE!

© 2001 Randy Glasbergen. www.glasbergen.com



**“I love you just the way you are
when you’re not being just the way you are.”**

9. Fits only a US Culture



- Reason: Fear.
Vested Interest.
- Category: Plain Wrong

What's underlying this reaction?

- This reaction often stems from one of two situations:
 1. We like how **WE** are
 - “It may be a mess, but it is our mess.”
 - “They are different. Don't think or do things for the same reasons.”
 - In short **Fear** of
 - change,
 - takeover,
 - moving work,
 - Etc.

What's underlying this reaction?

2. Vested Interest

- In some ways a subset of fear.
- “That approach won't fit here.”
- Often results in:
 - Power struggles
 - Active “guerilla” tactics
 - Plain ignoring and waiting till it goes away.

What's the response?

EDUCATE

- Look at the “Basics”
- Maturity Level 2 Process Areas:
 - Requirements Management
 - Project Planning
 - Project Monitoring & Control
 - Supplier Agreement Management
 - Measurement & Analysis
 - Process & Product Quality Assurance
 - Configuration Management
- Which ones do we not need to do?
- Everybody needs these!!

8. Lead Appraiser Inconsistencies



- Reason: Valid Objection
- Category: Warrants A Considered Response

How does this arise?

- Lead Appraiser differences over:
 - Interpretations of the Model
 - Interpretations of the Appraisal Methods
- These are often not as big as people perceive
- They are not always bad
 - “All models are wrong some; some models are useful” - George Box
 - Discussion and debate are necessary to development and improvement
- BUT
 - We must beware “Religious Wars”

How does this arise?

- **Unauthorised/Non-partner organisations claiming equivalence**
 - Some organisations claim their method is ARC Compliant
- **Perceived Appraisal Result Anomalies**
 - Doubt over some Maturity Level 5 ratings
 - Abuses by Organisations of the system:
 - When was the last appraisal?
 - What was actually appraised? Which part of the organisation?
 - Who did it?

What's the response?

- SEI Custodianship of the Model & Appraisal Method
 - Authorising Trainers
 - Authorising Lead Appraisers
 - Registering of Appraisals
 - PARS List
 - http://seir.sei.cmu.edu/pars/pars_list_iframe.asp
- Improvements
 - Better Marketing of the CMMI & SEI
 - Better links with Partner Organisations
 - Time-bounding Appraisal Results e.g. 3 years

7. Proliferation of Models



- Reason: Valid Objection
- Category: Warrants A Considered Response

How does this arise?

- CMM / CMMI have been a victim of their own success?
- Other Maturity Models
 - Project Management Maturity (PMM) Model
 - Testing Maturity Model
 - People CMM
 - Etc.
- In many cases these are similar in nature and content to the CMM / CMMI
- But to the un-initiated
 - Which one to go for?
 - Which one will work with me?
- Confusion Reigns – Utilised by those wishing to Block!

What's the response?

- The advantages of the CMMI
 - Extendable model
 - Appropriate to many different sectors and business models
 - Systems & Software,
 - Infrastructure
 - Services
 - IT Service Management
- From the SEI's perspective
 - Better Marketing of the CMMI & SEI
 - Version 1.2 extends to Services and Acquisition
 - Additional extensions that need considering
 - CMMI & ITIL
 - CMMI & Security
 - Etc.

6. Quantitative Project Management – Hurts my head!



- Reason: Fear.
Can't See Why?
- Category: Warrants a Considered Response

How does this arise?

- At the mention of “Metrics” grown men have been known to cry.
- The concept of measures is surprisingly one of the most challenging aspects of CMMI for many people.
- And that’s before you get to Maturity Level 4!
- Responses include:
 - Measure everything that moves ...
 -and a lot that doesn’t as well
 - Measure something because we can
 - It’s all a load of rubbish and not worth doing anyway.

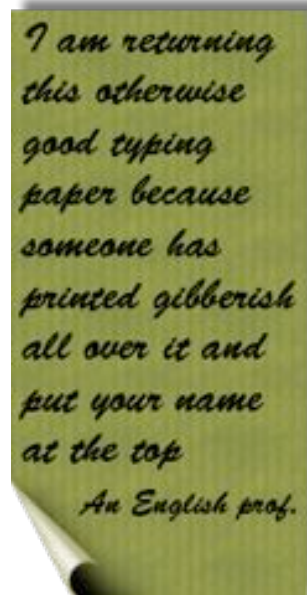
What's the response?

- This is fundamentally a misunderstanding of what the CMMI is all about.
- Measures should add value.
- Sort out:
 - What you want to know?
 - Why?
 - What you are going to do with it?
- The rest becomes easy.

- The story of organisational development using the CMMI is about
- ... EVOLUTION IN USING DATA.



5. Complicated Model / It's Gibberish



- Reason: Valid Objection
Testing the hypothesis – Is it a good idea?
- Category: Invalid or Inaccurate Perceptions (BUT)
Warrants A Considered Response

How does this arise?

- It is fairly undeniable that the CMMI is written in its own language
- Particularly apparent to:
 - Those who didn't duck when volunteers were sought for preparing data for a SCAMPI appraisal.
 - Badly written Final Findings presentations that quote the practices of the model.
- It is a valid question to ask what something means.
 - Why do I need to do this practice?
 - E.g. PPQA GP2.9 “Objectively evaluate adherence of the process and product quality assurance process against its process description, standards, and procedures, and address non-compliance”

What's the response?

EDUCATE

- But crucially put it in terms that people understand.
- E.g. “We need to make sure this process checking is working properly; giving us an accurate picture of what's going on; and doing it cost-effectively”

4. It's Only Appropriate To Large Scale / Defence Projects



- Reason: Misunderstanding
- Category: Plain Wrong

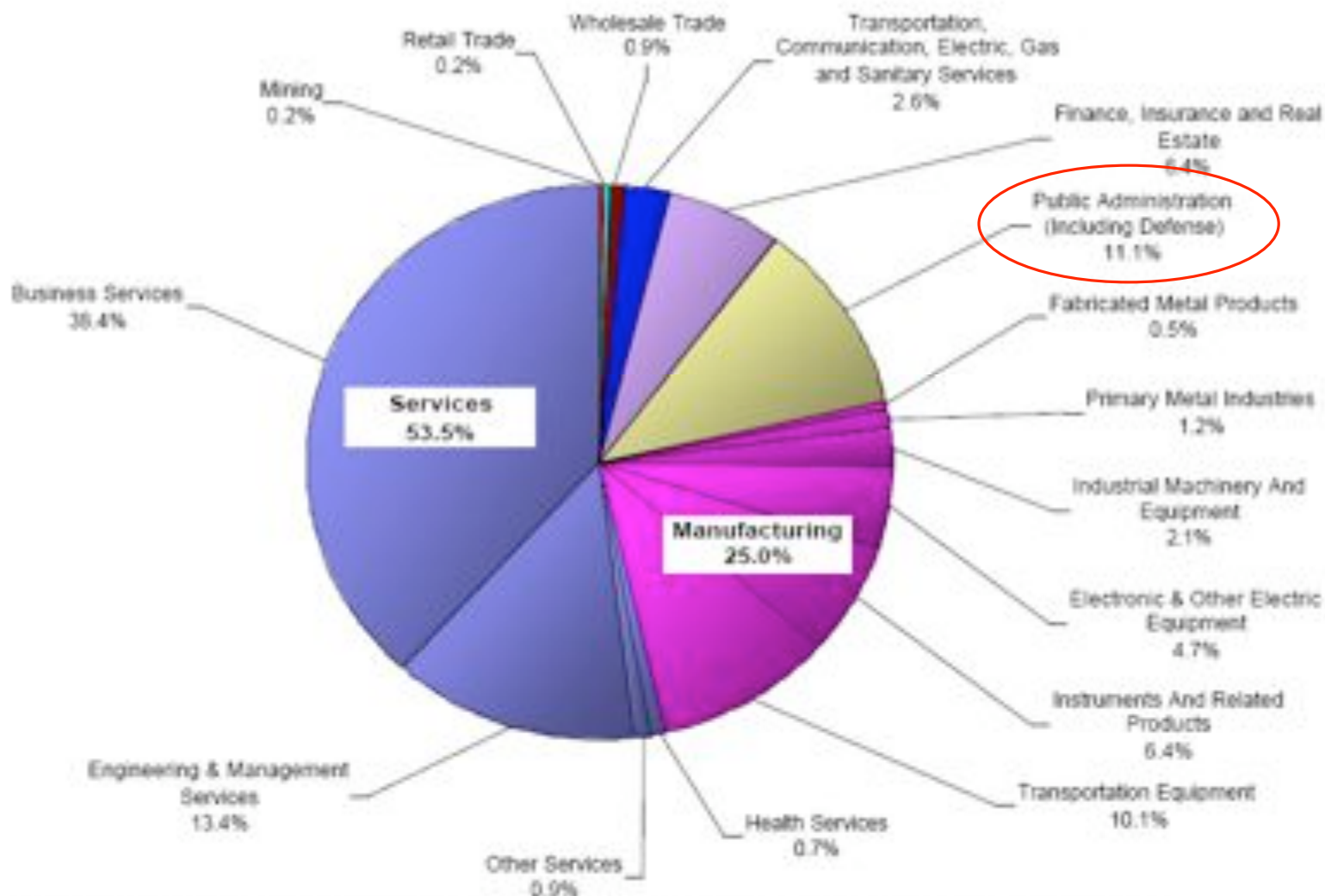
How does this arise?

- A frequent misunderstanding based on the history of the SW-CMM and CMMI.
- The CMM was primarily used and sponsored by the American Department of Defence
- Most organisations originally using the SW-CMM were indeed defence oriented.
- This is no longer the case



Organization Type

Based on Primary Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) Code



Based on 424 organizations reporting SIC code. For more information visit: <http://www.osha.gov/oshstats/sicser.html>

3. We're Different! It Doesn't Apply To Us



- Reason: Misunderstanding - At best
Vested Interest – At worst
- Category: Plain Wrong

How does this arise?

- Superset of “US Culture” and “Defence” Objection
- Every organisation likes to think it is unique
 - Its culture
 - Its Heroes and Villains
 - Its problems
 - Its products
- Easy to persuade yourself that
 - “That approach won’t fit here.”
 - “Our problem is unique – that model wont fit”

What's the response?

- Look at the statistics – the range of different types of truly different organisations that utilise the CMMI
- Patterns and Anti-patterns
- It is no accident that the Maturity Level 2 process areas are these seven
 - REQM, PP, PMC, SAM, MA, PPQA, CM
 - Example: An organisation with problems with testing.

2. It Is Overly Bureaucratic



- Reason: Misunderstanding
- Category: Plain Wrong

How does this arise?

- “Old style” Quality Management Systems
 - Large,
 - Sprawling
 - “Shelf-Ware”
- Audit Mentality
 - “The standard says this way, so this way it’s got to be!”
 - The Letter of the Law ...
 - ...but what was its intention?
- The CMMI looks just like one more of these “do it because the model says so” structures

What's the response?

- “All models are wrong; some models are useful!”
- The CMMI gives the principles required for best practice ...
-but not how to implement them in YOUR situation!
- Processes should be fit for purpose
- Different implementation approaches are pertinent to different situations;
 - Safety critical systems
 - Games development
- What is the purpose that we are trying to address

Let Experience Be Your Teacher

- Understand why each practice is in the model through the experience of it not being implemented!
- One of the greatest teachers is getting it wrong ...
- ... and learning from it.
- *“Insanity: doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.”* Albert Einstein

Top 10 Hates

2. It is overly bureaucratic
3. We're Different! It Doesn't Apply To Us.
4. It is only appropriate to large scale / defence projects
5. Complicated Model / Its Gibberish
6. Quantitative Project Management – Hurts my head
7. Proliferation of Models
8. Lead Appraiser Inconsistencies
9. Fits only a US Culture
10. Its just a badge / a gong / a fad, etc.

1. It Will Remove My Creativity!



- Reason: Misunderstanding
Fear
- Category: Plain Wrong

How does this arise?

- You didn't know engineers were artists!?
- To many process has certain connotations:
 - Stepwise,
 - Rigorous,
 - Unbending,
 - Robotic
- Problem solving appears:
 - Exciting,
 - Innovative,
 - Imaginative,
- Firefighters are heroes!



What's the response?

COMMUNICATE & EDUCATE

- And stick at it ...
- ...Eventually the experience catches up with the rhetoric
- Example: Quote from an appraisal interviewee
 - “We hate all this process stuff ...
... and we don't like you!”
- 18 months later:
 - “The process stuff is great; now when we start a project it frees us to do the creative bit that much faster!”

Summary

- Change challenges people
- They will resist
- In some ways this is not bad at all ...
- ...In order to resist it you've got to engage with it.
- So in the end ...

Resistance Really is Futile!

Questions?

Kieran Doyle
(Aka Appraisus of Borg)

Lamri Ltd,
Dundas House,
Aske Stables,
Richmond,
North Yorkshire,
DL10 5HG
T: 01748 821824
E: kieran.doyle@lamri.com