

Applied Project Acceleration™ Engagement Overview

“Most software projects are late and if they aren’t, chances are they are going to be late.”

Your organization may be stuck between a “rock and a hard place.” Executive management expects all of your software projects to be released on time, with quality, and under budget. You have the task to balance planning, process, and people to influence project outcome. And just becoming agile or assigning the right talent to projects may not be enough to see results.

Backgrounder

Ken Whitaker, of Leading Software Maniacs (LSM), has been leading commercial software development teams at the executive level since 1988. He has written books and hosted public workshops on improving the effectiveness of software development for over ten years.

Our perception is that books and workshops have become a commodity—many of us agile practitioners are preaching the same story. It has become clear to us that the software industry doesn’t need yet another *how to be agile* or *up-front testing reduces project risk* workshop with the hope of dramatic change. Software development wants to learn how to improve project delivery now. “I send my developers to workshops all of the time and although they learned a lot, nothing really improves. Project delays are costly and my team feels the pressure.”

Redefinition of Learning as an Engagement

LSM has a new personalized engagement that may be the answer to see improvements now—in real time. We call this event an *Applied Project Acceleration Engagement*. Highlights include:

- **Hands-on:** Personalized guidance to help your teams improve collaboration and better decision making that gets software projects back on track. You select the topics upfront.
- **Learning and doing:** A combination of workshop learning followed immediately with the team putting into practice what they just learned to their project.
- **Getting to D-U-N-N:** Breaking down complexities into definitive priorities is the focus throughout this engagement. You’ll learn how to eradicate an “almost complete” culture and your team will experience more frequent closure of work.
- **Knowledge transfer:** No long-term consulting arrangement is required. Techniques and skills are transferred to your staff so that improvements can be repeated in all future projects.

When teams experience superior results, they become self-motivated to repeat what works. There’s no doubt that success breeds success.

Applied Project Acceleration Is Unique

There are certainly many benefits to classic consulting or workshops being offered by an incredible assortment of consultants. LSM believes there is more value for software development organizations with a more integrated approach:



The engagement title is a mouthful, but every word has meaning:

Applied = hands-on, put into practice immediately.

Project = learning specifically to help your project that needs to get back on track.

Acceleration = emphasis to complete tasks and energize the team to achieve faster project delivery with a sense of urgency.

Engagement = guidance, consultative help with a structured approach (you choose the workshop topics we present).

The goal of this engagement is to drive *energy* and *purpose* into software development project teams with a combination of workshop learning and hands-on consulting. Project team participants and management should experience immediate, tangible results with the tools and skills learned. This approach should be repeatable resulting in future business success.

Is Our Engagement Really What You Need?

The effort to transition a prospect into a customer has got to be effortless, quick, and compelling. The steps LSM has designed are as simple as 1-2-3:

1. Take an organizational self-assessment. It will inform you of the basic health of your teams.
2. If the results of step 1 shows improvement is needed, download and review the *Applied Project Acceleration Engagement Overview* document.
3. If you want to investigate further, select the workshop topics from our course catalog and estimate the amount of hands-on guidance required. You'll get immediate feedback of the length in days for an engagement along with the estimated cost. Total transparency.

Once steps 1, 2, and 3 are performed, LSM will provide a one-hour complimentary consultant to discuss what we can do for you. At that time, an engagement can be scheduled.

The customer is expected to make a conference room, meeting space, and any food and beverage available for the participants. LSM provides a handout master that the customer can print for participants.

If you really aren't sure if an engagement is necessary, an on-site Soft-Audit™ assessment can be performed to assess the software development's organization effectiveness (<http://www.Soft-Audit.com>). The Nerd Herd Game, one of the workshop components, will be made available for separate purchase (<http://www.NerdHerdGame.com>).

Comparisons to Conventional Workshops

HIGHLIGHTS

Activity:

Engagement for private consulting.

Logistics: On-site (preferred) but can also be remote (virtual).

Audience: Software development, project managers, product managers, and senior management.

Fees: Fixed daily rate, unlimited participants (on-site or virtual). You have direct influence on the length of time for the engagement.

	Applied Project Acceleration	Conventional workshops
<i>Public or private setting?</i>	Private. LSM is happy to sign an NDA if that is required.	A public seminar is, well, <i>public</i> . Nobody can expose dirty laundry.
<i>Workshop material</i>	You select the topics most important to you. (We'll even substitute your project name in the material instead of using the generic term for "project.")	Course material cannot usually be changed.
<i>Flexibility of workshop material</i>	You choose the workshop topics (from over 25 available). You can apply for PDUs with PMI for the time spent in the workshop.	The material is fixed and cannot normally be modified. Certifications and PDUs are typically awarded.
<i>Cost/benefit</i>	Our focus is on improving your business and with fees based on unlimited participants, you should be pleasantly surprised. All costs are available from the start. Total transparency and no surprises.	Consulting or sending everyone to a workshop can become very expensive.
<i>Upfront planning discussion</i>	After reviewing the three steps, a one-hour planning call with LSM is complimentary.	Not usually required. Class material can be viewed on the website provide by the presenter.

Please visit www.AppliedProjectEngagement.com to learn more.

Biography



Ken Whitaker of Leading Software Maniacs® (LSM) has more than twenty-five years of software development executive leadership and training experience in a variety of technology roles and industries. He has written three books on leadership and is an innovator in instructional design and workshops primarily on agile project leadership.

Ken is the creator of PM Chalkboard® video shorts, recently a vice president of an embedded software company, and the editor for *Better Software* magazine.

To help creative professionals (those who aren't necessarily software developers), Ken has developed the Spresso® iVersionIt™ versioning software and is working on productivity apps including a unique gamification product affectionately called the Nerd Herd Game. He can be reached at <http://www.leadingswmaniacs.com>.