

PMI WESTCHESTER LUNCH AND LEARN



IMPROVISATIONAL
PROJECT MANAGEMENT:
is there theater in
business?

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What to Expect Today

Give yourself permission to be open to this experience.

**We will talk
about
Improvisation**

**We will play an
improv game!**

**We will discuss 3
key principles of
improvisation**

**We will relate
the concepts to
project
management**

LET'S GET STARTED!

YES, AND!



Demonstration



NewsCaster

- Thank referrer
- sports, weather, etc.
- Introduce yourself
- Call out to another person



PROJECT PHASES

- Initiating
- Planning
- Designing & Testing
- Deploying
- Closing

Foundations

First, lay the groundwork:



Make Positive and Active Choices



It's the Actor's Job to Justify



Respect the Physical and Verbal Reality of the Scene



Let's Go!

Make Active and Positive Choices – YES, AND..



Make Positive and Active Choices

To advance, forward progress is necessary

“Yes And” is collaborative –
“No But” is divisive

Positive emotions are stronger than negative emotions

A differing viewpoint can exist without negating other ideas

It's the Actor's Job to Justify

- **IMPORTANT NOTE!** This does not mean to support or justify any kind of inappropriate or unlawful behavior
- Justify decisions of management with respect to change
 - Understand, validate and justify the existing process that needs to change before putting forth new agenda
 - “I know why we did it before this way, we’re doing it now to fix the issue in production. This will reduce delays down the line.



It's the Actor's Job to Justify

Examples

- You're extra busy because the laser is down, let's make our meeting shorter
- After lunch might not be the best time to show a long training video to shop floor
- Environmental conditions may have adverse affects



Project Management and Improvisation

THE TWO ARE MORE ALIKE THAN YOU MIGHT EXPECT. BOTH NEED:



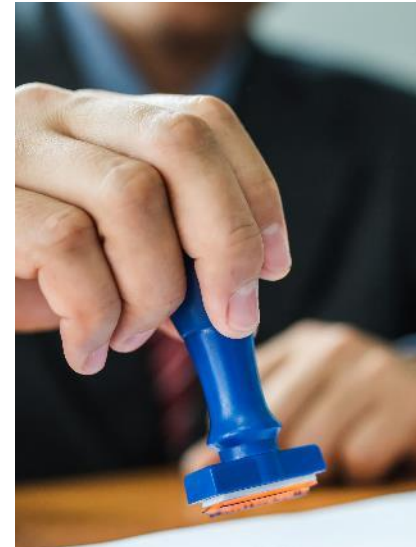
*An environment
of trust to be
successful*



*A predetermined
format in
which to progress*



*Understanding and
acceptance that change
is constant*



*A recognized entity
authorized to make the
final decision*



*Accept of the decision
through exploring
and enhancing*

So the most effective project management is, by its nature, improvisational, responsive to change

Recognize the Requirements for Action



Humans all strive to be *“better”*



The definition of *“better”* varies per person



Humans first seek pleasure, then strive to avoid pain, and want to achieve both using the least amount of effort



Action requires a need, combined with an emotionally satisfying, executable plan



Random tip! Avoid Questions

Questions put all of the onus on the responder

They can have an unintended accusatorial tone

OR IF YOU MUST ASK:

Strive to ask only informational questions

Preemptively express your dislike of having to ask

BONUS TIP! Stay in Discovery – Master the Obvious



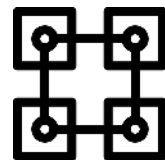
Use active listening techniques when someone is communicating



Listen to yourself as you communicate



Strive more to be understood than to anticipate how others will understand you



Be aware of the status levels of those involved and how it impacts group dynamics

Creativity at its best – make the seemingly impossible possible

*Self editing can limit our ability to explore all possibilities.
That exploration—through improvisation—is what leads to success.*



PROJECT OUTCOMES
What is expected



POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS
What is realistic



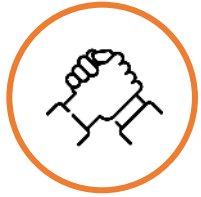
A SUCCESSFUL SCENE
What is possible

I NEED A SUGGESTION

THE SCENE MAY OR MAY NOT MAKE SENSE

MAINTAIN TRUST

“And... Scene” Takeaways



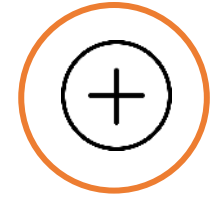
Start with trust



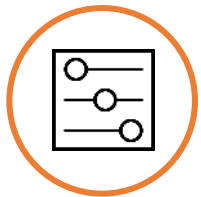
Avoid questions



Stay in discovery



Make active and positive choices



Encourage what is possible



Acknowledge the reality of the organization and situation



Understand it is the PM's job to justify



Understand emotions



YES, AND!

