

My To-Do List

Bernie Yee | Producer, Oculus

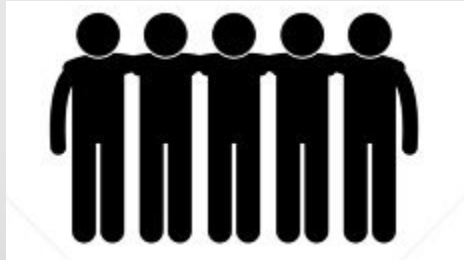
March 3, 2015

What does a producer do?



Geography	(All)				
State	(All)				
City	(All)				
	Month				
Data	Jan 2009	Feb 2009	Mar 2009	Apr 2009	
Sales	58,689,000	55,263,800	55,253,700	58,296,000	
Cost of Goods Sold	43,441,930	41,169,600	44,088,400	43,231,100	
Gross Margin	15,247,170	14,103,200	15,165,300	15,064,900	
Gross Margin %	26.0%	25.5%	25.6%	25.8%	
Rent	2,500,300	2,500,300	2,500,300	2,500,300	
Personnel Cost	4,546,800	4,553,750	4,520,420	4,530,830	
Utilities	1,909,300	1,945,240	1,946,880	1,946,550	
Consumables	424,498	416,650	425,330	433,850	
Misc Exp	1,191,690	1,187,500	1,177,470	1,183,680	
Operating Expenses	10,572,588	10,603,440	10,570,400	10,595,210	
Operating Profit	4,674,582	3,499,760	4,594,900	4,469,690	
Operating Profit %	8.0%	6.3%	7.8%	7.7%	

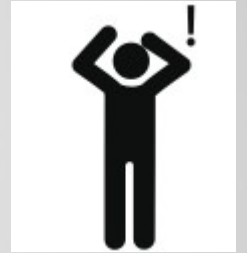
When do producers get hired?



When do producers get hired?



When do producers get hired?



The To-Do List

a/k/a “the backlog”

All the work in a project gets represented here.

Your responsibility.

Your To-Do List

Likely provided by your studio.

Don't just follow it blindly.

Think about *why* you are doing these things.

Three things

Useful Clichés (guiding principles)

Things I do (a list of organizing behaviors)

Things I read (where to learn more)

Useful Clichés:

a starting point

“Plans are worthless, but planning is everything.”

- Eisenhower

“A good plan, violently executed now, is better than a perfect plan next week.”

- Patton

“Don’t sweat the small stuff.”

- Richard Carlson

“The servant-leader is servant first...”

- Robert Greenleaf

“Bad games comes from bad communication.”

-Bernie

A Producer's To-Do List

Translate the clichés into actionable things

“Plans are worthless, but planning is everything.”

Your most important job: planning.

The thing you throw away: the plan.

What's the best process?

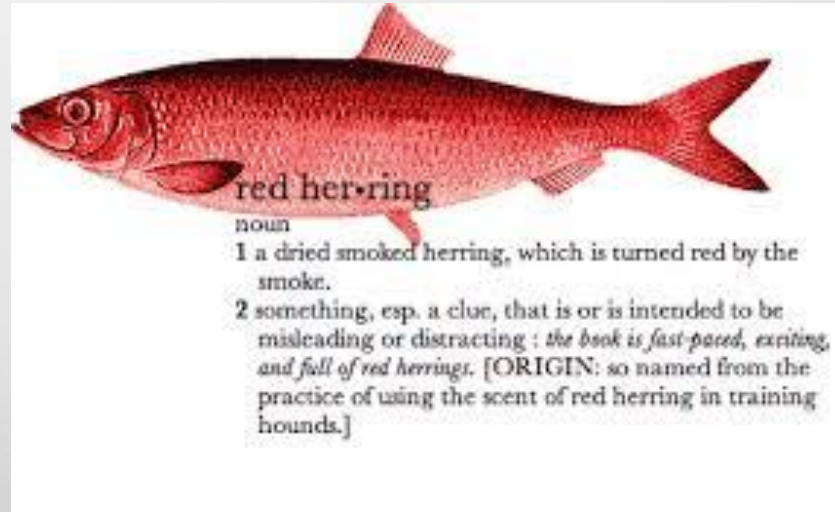
Waterfall

Scrum

Lean

Kanban

What's the best process?



What's the best process?

The best process is the one the
team buys into.

An aside.

(Actually I have an opinion about best process)

Agile

Individuals and interactions over processes and tools

Working software over comprehensive documentation

Customer collaboration over contract negotiation

Responding to change over following a plan

“There is no process which cannot be made ineffective by following it too closely.”

- Jason Booth

Re-evaluation & Refactoring

Internalize those values in your own craft:

- The plan
- The work
- Thoughtful analysis
- For you? A diary

“Don’t sweat the small stuff.”

Know what’s the small stuff.

Know what’s the big stuff.

How do you tell the difference?

Be a scientist. Measure the right things.

Backlog==uncertainty

It's all the *known* work.

Build this with rigor.

Accept there's unknown work.

“A good plan, violently executed now, is better than a perfect plan next week.”

Embrace uncertainty!

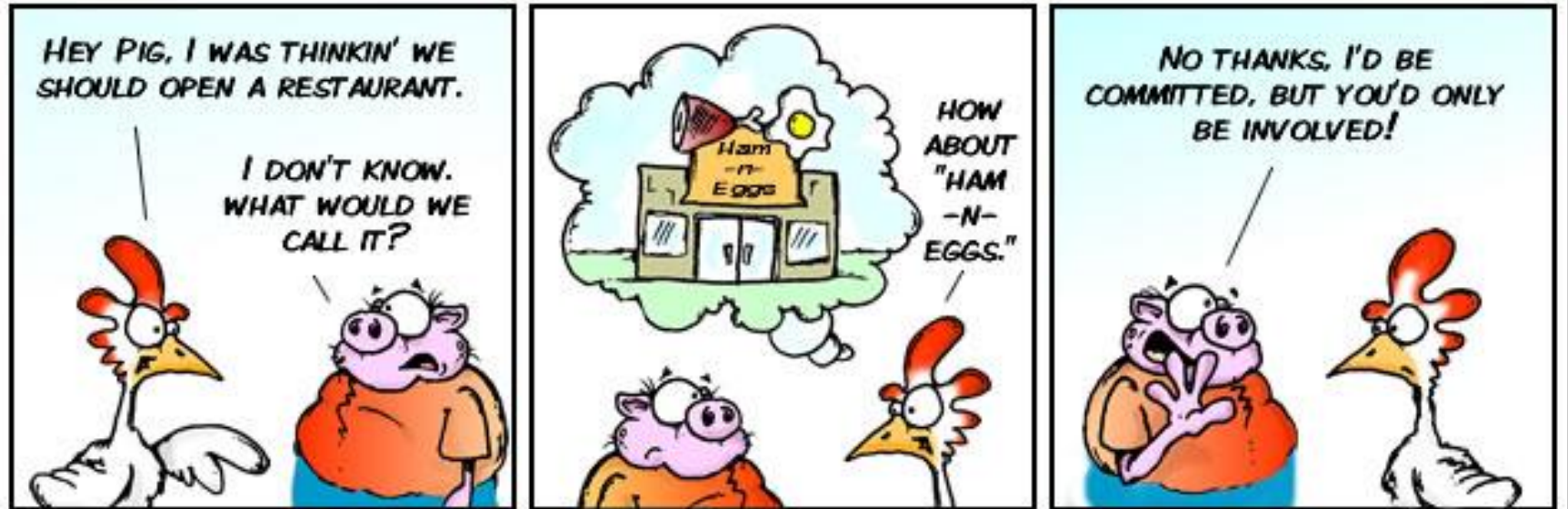
“Servant leadership”

(Origins in the Te Tao Ching)

Chicken vs. Pig

Does everyone know the producer joke about the chicken and the pig?

Chicken vs Pig



By Clark & Vizdos

© 2006 implementingscrum.com

The best producers want to obsolete themselves.

Things can go well!

...resist the urge to meddle.

Same when team is heads down.



50th Anniversary Edition

THINGS FALL APART

Chinua Achebe

“Bad games come from bad communication.”

Or, the false dichotomy of Hard skills vs. Soft Skills

How to learn about your craft

Books you might be tempted to read

Mythical Man Month

Rapid Development

Agile Game Development with Scrum

Dynamics of Software Development

Yes, all these are worth reading.

Let me suggest something else:

Science of Fear, Daniel Gardner

Innumeracy, John Paulos

Don't Think of an Elephant, George Lakoff

Thanks for the Feedback, Stone & Heen

An invisible craft

Production varies by:

- Discipline
- Project
- Team
- Studio

Thanks.

- All the teams I've worked on!
- Jason Booth
- Brian Sharp
- Richard Rouse III
- Laura Fryer
- Mike Soden
- Marc Scattergood

And to you, thanks.

The act of writing this talk reminded me of the things I need to remember.

Questions?

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