

PM WORLD TODAY – GUEST EDITORIAL – JANUARY 2010

Construction Scheduling Today Issues and Controversies Series

By Earl Glenwright

PM World Today is introducing a new monthly series of presentations on contemporary construction scheduling issues and discussions about controversial aspects of construction scheduling in the real world of today's projects.

Construction Scheduling has been evolving from its beginning in 1957 until today. Consequently practitioners and management teams should upgrade their understanding of the principles, processes, practices, and how they can profit by taking full advantage of current techniques.

Hence we must put today's scheduling practices in a contemporary perspective.

To understand the issues, explanations, and remedies one must accept the reality that an evolution has occurred in the way we practice the use of scheduling principles and processes today. Many prior practices, albeit appropriate work-arounds of software and hardware limitations at the time they were used, are no longer appropriate. In fact they are hindering full use of current hardware and software in the most effective way of achieving the full benefits that are now available. Good scheduling practices will enhance achieving on-time completion of construction projects which ultimately manifests itself in larger contributions that increase the amount of profit.

Experienced senior scheduling managers are not all in agreement but they do acknowledge the issues.

In this series of discussions I make no claim as to originality or propriety. They are my observations and conclusions from my lifetime of experiences using network based work planning, scheduling, and management for the work done in construction of various types of projects.

To whet your curiosity the following subjects will be discussed initially and additional items or issues presented that are your concerns and/or have been requested.

All readers may offer follow up comments in any following issues of *PM World Today* as well as suggest topics to be presented and/or discussed. Let's get these issues and practices out on the 'table' and discuss the pros and cons. Perhaps we will not formulate a resolution but at least we will understand them better.

Construction Issues and controversies series:

- Principles, Processes, & Practices
- The Scheduling Practitioner's role on the management team
- Career Dilemma: The psychology of Scheduling
- Salient Construction issues: top 10 and 5 of them to resolve now
- Scheduling Specification issue: What not How.
- Planning Ahead: Schedule Preparation Framework.
- Activity Data records & Daily Field Reports
- Multiple work calendars and Durations in weeks: uses and abuses
- The utility of the Mathematical Analysis of a logic network of activities.
- The requirements for a zero float path
- Scope Breakdown Structure alias why the WBS term is inappropriate.
- Why and What Resources? Resource Loading and Allocation Scheduling
- The Activity Float Myth and booby trap.
- Preferential Logic: when, why, purpose, and misuse.
- The awful truth about Precedence Diagramming Method dependencies.
- To Constrain or not to Constrain: uses and consequences.
- Synchronizing trades on-site start with Harmonograms.
- Earned Schedule & 24 Earned value outcomes.
- Why 'percent complete' is an inadequate measure for forecasting completion.
- Baseline Due Diligence Validation and Auditing
- Certification alternatives.
- "It's a new world Goldie"; or is it ?

As Samuel Clements once observed, every one talks about the issues, but no one does anything about it.

Certainly an open forum on these issues and controversies will provide an understanding of today's scheduling world. Maybe we can actually resolve one or two.

About the Author:***Earl Glenwright, PSP******Author***

Earl Glenwright, PSP, has a career spanning 40+ years in construction project scheduling. Earl is certified as a Planning and Scheduling Professional [PSP] by the Association for the Advancement of Cost Engineering International [AACEi]. He frequently gives presentations at their annual conferences. Earl has both a BS in Civil Engineering and MBA degree and is a Registered Professional Engineer. Earl's career has included multi-year positions in several countries including Brasil, Saudi Arabia, and Sudan. He currently lives in Colorado and Bulgaria. Prior to 1988 he was employed by the [US] Bureau of Reclamation and the [US] Army Corps of Engineers. After retiring in 1988 he has been a free-lance consultant for both contractor's construction scheduling and small business Enterprise Project Management. His experience includes large and very large [super-mega] construction projects, very small projects such as construction planning, and scheduling for home construction by his Habitat for Humanity affiliate. Through his extensive scheduling experience he has been recognized as a Subject Matter Expert [SME], a Master Scheduler, and an Expert Advisor. Earl has been active in the Project Management Institute (PMI) for 30+ years. He has presented "Time & Cost" training at PMI's annual seminar-symposia, and was a member of the initial PMBoK Guide Project Team, the 2000 update team, and the project team that prepared the 3rd edition. Earl has recently presented 'workshop/seminars' for Bulgarian project scheduling and controls persons which cover the 3 phases of scheduling: framework preparation/planning, schedule development, and schedule management and control. The workbooks are dual language English and Bulgarian. Earl can be contacted at earl_csss@yahoo.com.