TURNING THE SUPERTANKER

Iain Minns | 5 October 2016

ARCADIS

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Introduction

Iain Minns is an qualified APM, MSP and MoP practitioner with 16 years' experience in programme and project controls across a number of industry sectors and different types of projects (process, systems, business change and infrastructure), currently UK Head of Programme and Project Controls for Arcadis.

What are the key challenges?

Optimism Bias

- The desire to believe in the unbelievable?

- Hearing but not listening?

- A need to please people further up the organisation?

- Reliance on loyalty vs ability?

- Unrealistic view of our own abilities?

Is there an open culture?

Organisation Maturity

- Do they really know what they want?

- How was the project conceived?

- Does the capability to deliver the output exist?

- Is there robust governance to be able to hold people to account?

- Does the business have the processes, systems and tools to deliver the project?

- Are they able to recognise skill gaps and contract in what they need?

vs

Culture beats strategy every time

Linking outputs to the benefits plan

- Is there a justification for the asset being created or replaced?

- Has the operating cost been factored in?

- Are the requirements simple and easy to explain?

- Does the business understand what it is buying and what is needed to operate the asset and realise the benefits?

- Does the business case link the output back to the business vision and purpose?

vs

Communication is king!

# The single point of failure…

- How has the project team been set up?

- Is it a team or a group of people?

- Does all information go through one person?

- Is there a plan being followed?

- How does the business assure itself that the project is following process (quality checks)?

**Is the business over-reliant on one person?**

Accountability and consequence

- Are the accountabilities clear between sponsor/client/user and project?

- Is there a positive tension between key roles within the project?

- Do people understand their authority to make decisions?

- Do they understand the consequences of their decisions?

- Are people operating within their accountabilities or roaming?
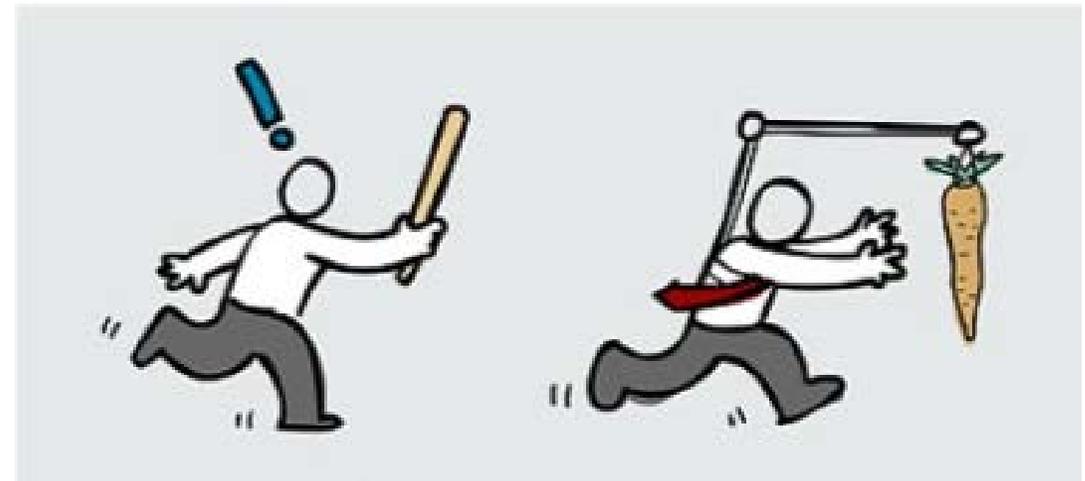
"You are free to choose but not to alter the consequences of your decision"
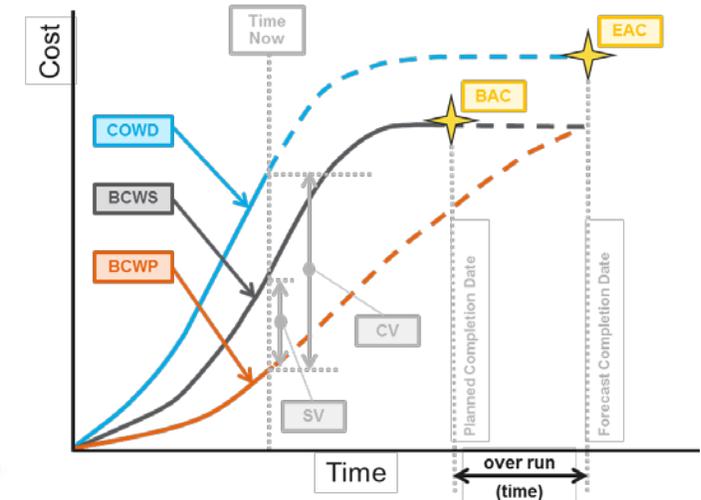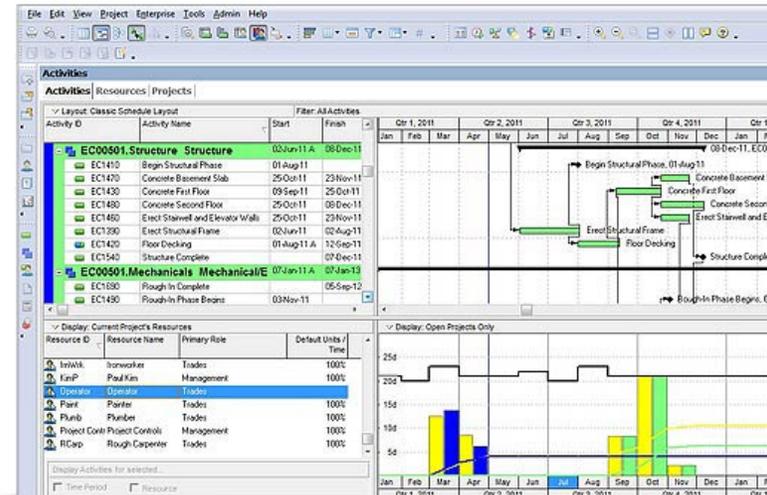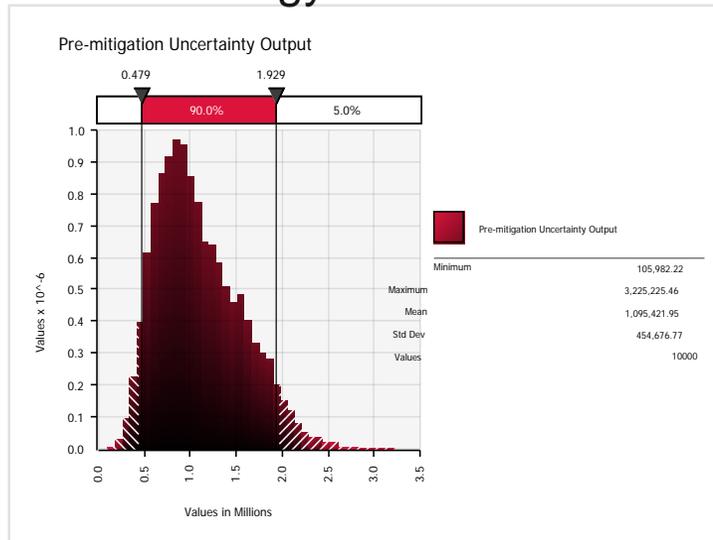
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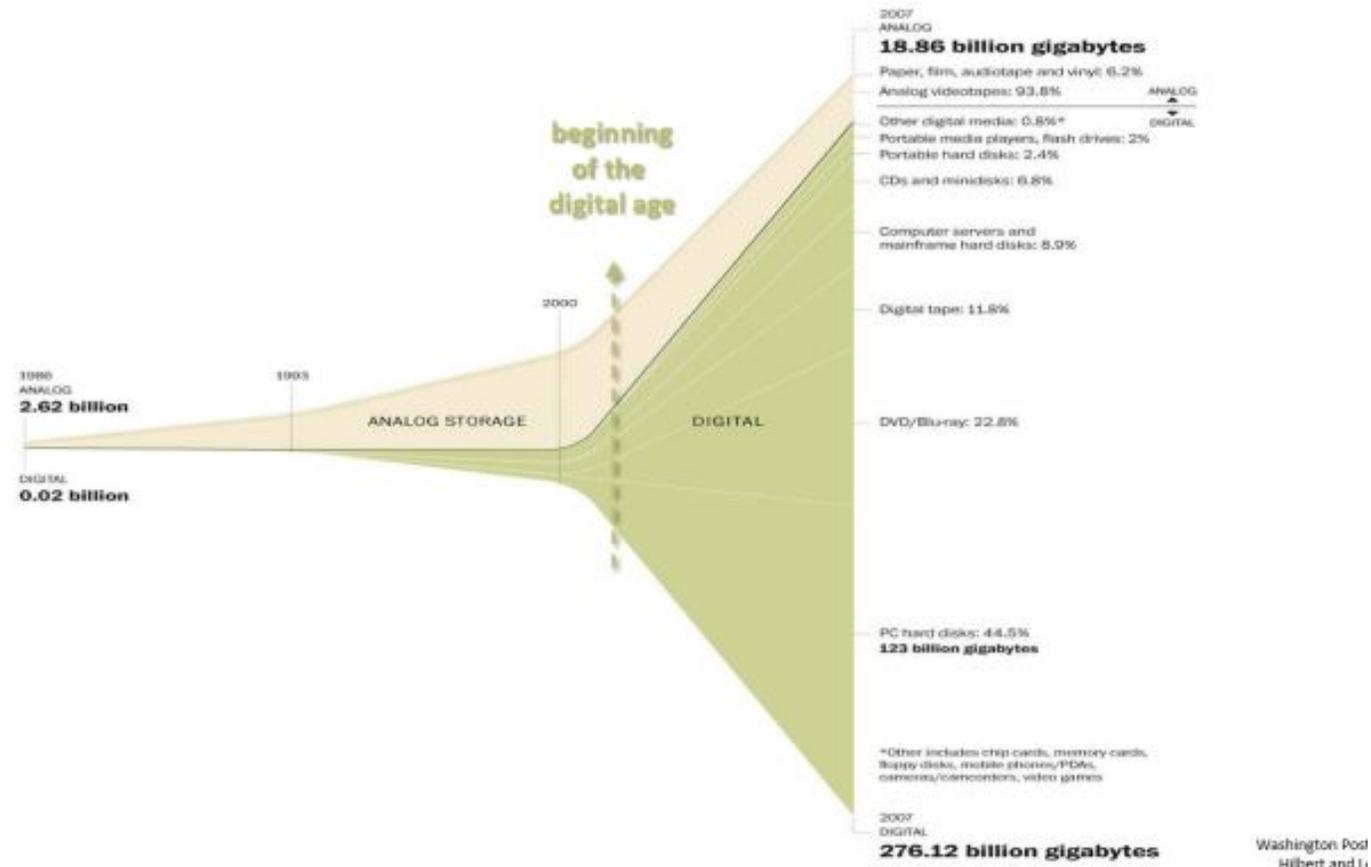
Being blinded with science

- Lets talk about QRA, EVMS, EDMS, RIBA, RICS, Roadmap, Routemap…

- Logic linked, resource loaded activity schedules with primary, secondary and tertiary critical paths…

- Terminology blinds us from what is in front of us…

Keep it simple, assume I'm stupid!

Who owns the risk?

- The client, the client, the client

- Risks may be tolerable if you understand them and you are prepared for the consequences

- They may affect your decision to proceed!
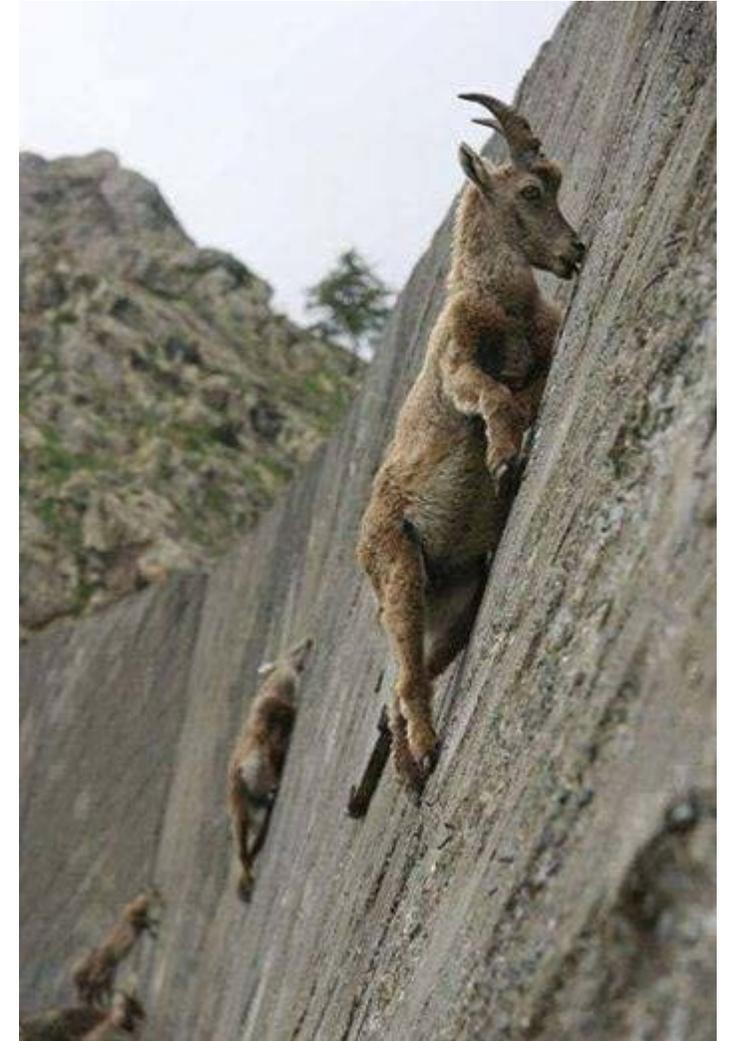
Understand the risks to the business case

Turning the super tanker

Management information

- Is the problem recognised?

- What information do you need to make the decision?

- Does the project and/or business have the information to hand?

- Was the business case set up right and can it be used to make a decision?

- Are the benefits sufficiently well articulated, realistic and linked to the output?

Problems don't go away, they just grow bigger

Cost benefit analysis

- How much more effort, time and cost will it take to deliver the output

- Is there a reduced scope that can be delivered that is still beneficial to the business

- What is the impact to the asset base?

- What are the implications to whole life cycle costs?
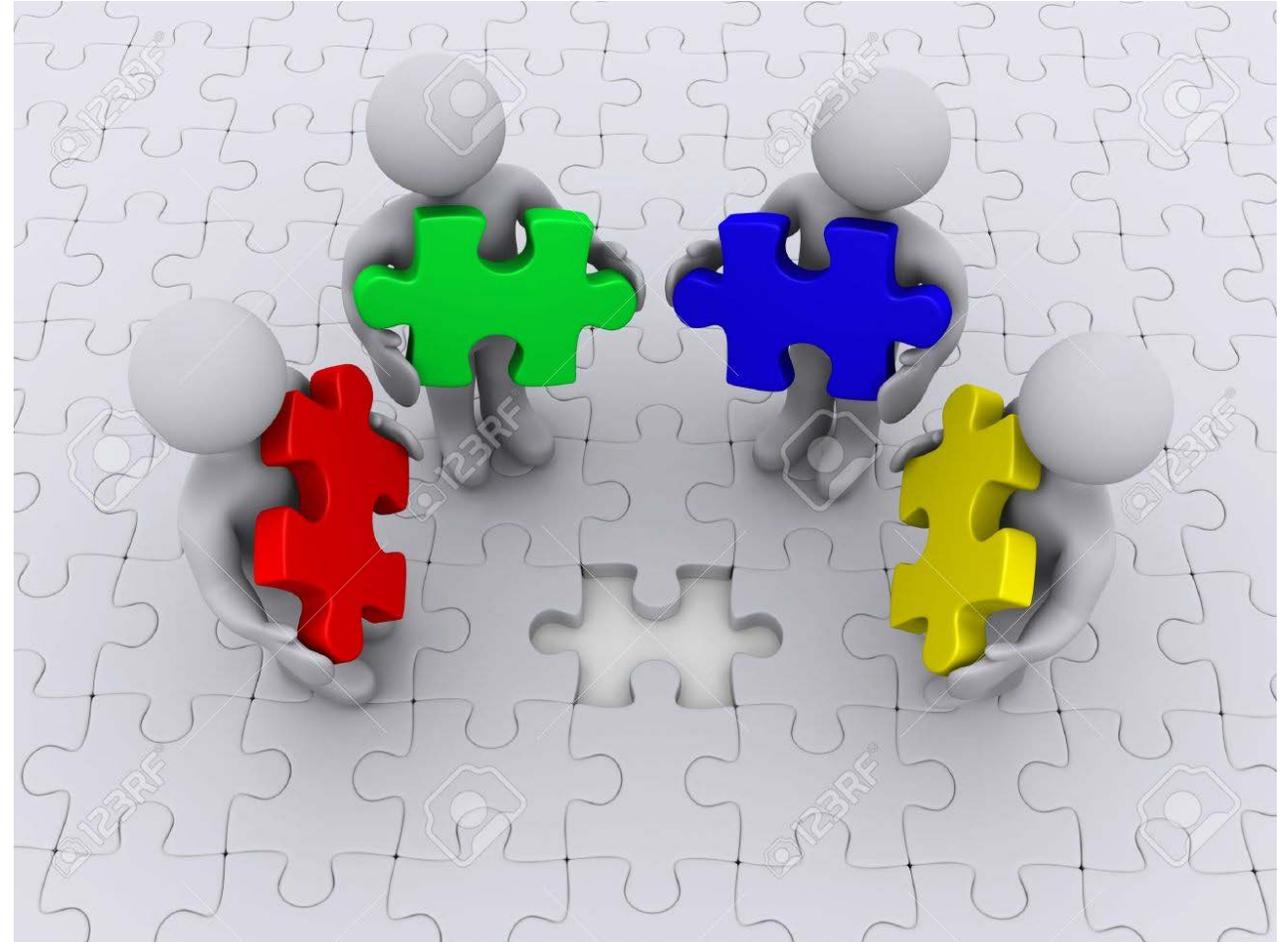
Be objective and find the right solution

Should we stop?

- How do you make the decision?

- Who makes the decision?

- How are decisions recorded and communicated?

- How much effort will it take to affect the direction of travel?

Making the decision is the easy part!

Should we keep going?

- Have the issues been recognised and is there a viable recovery plan?

- Does the business have confidence in the team – being part of the problem makes it hard to be part of the solution?

- How can you commit to the planned or revised output(s)?

- How do you recover from the issues that caused the pause/re-think in the first place?

- Can you convince the business you can deliver?

Avoid any further disasters, they can damage your reputation!

Focus on the work to deliver the output

- Everyone in the team should be focussed on the desired output

- Everything everyone does should be about delivering the output

- No-one will be successful unless everyone is successful

- Invest in the time needed to create the team

- Don't be afraid to switch people out

Will it make the boat go faster? Keep asking the question…

Simples…!

Thank you – questions?