How Lifelong Learning Has Shaped My Career

Making 50+ Years of Scheduling Calculus Obsolete

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As Published

M Tishman Distinguished Lecture

Human history teaches us. . .that economic growth springs from better recipes, not just from more cooking. (Paul Romer, 2008)



Romer, Paul M. "Economic Growth." In *The Concise Encyclopedia of Economics*, edited by David Henderson. Library of Economics and Liberty. Article published August 2008. <u>http://www.econlib.org/library/Enc/EconomicGrowth.html#</u>



IN REMEMBRANCE OF TWO DISTINGUISHED ENGINEERS

PROF. ROBERT B. HARRIS



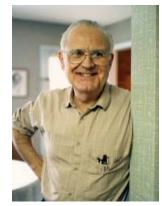
"Why not be a teacher? You'd be a fine teacher, perhaps a great one."

"If I was, who knows it?"

"You, your pupils, your friends, God. Not a bad public, that."

~ Sir Thomas More

CURTIS "BILL" BOTTUM JR.



Every once in a while, a leader appears in society who is totally dedicated to applying and living out the teachings of a great wisdom tradition in the everyday affairs of the world. Sometimes, depending on the particulars and circumstances, he or

she becomes an agent of change, helping to transform society into one that increasingly works for the benefit of all. While these individuals can show up most anytime and anywhere, the following is about a contemporary of ours—Curtis Edward Bottum Jr. (pronounced "Boat-um")—who showed up in his community and the world of business. Even though his parents had already named him Curtis, upon first seeing him his father declared, "He looks like a Bill to me." So, he became a Curtis called Bill.

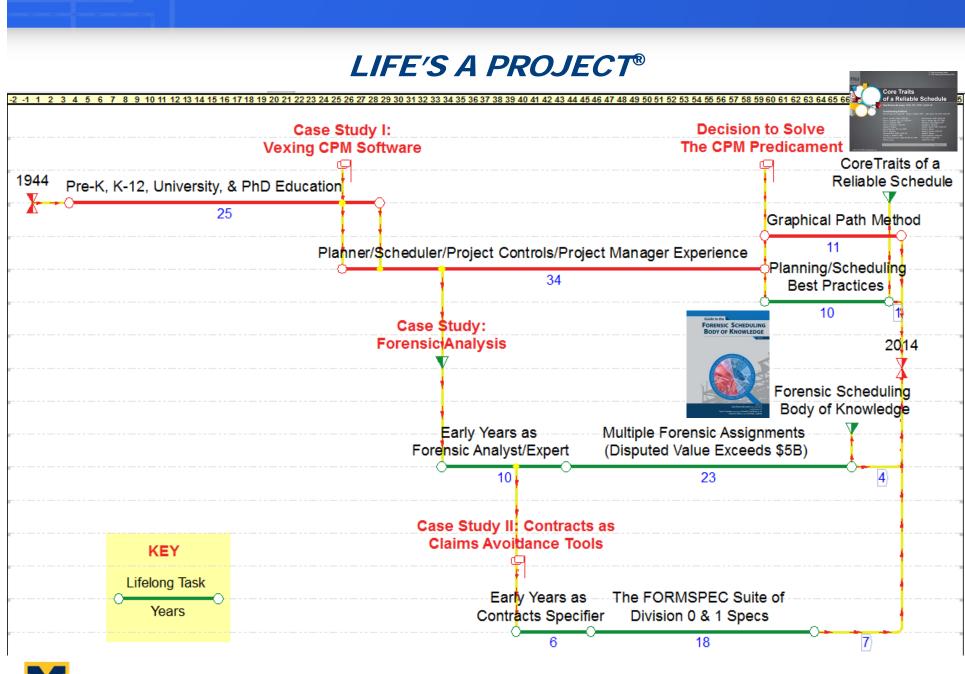


A TWISTON THE MEANING OF LIFELONG LEARNING

Conventionally speaking, lifelong learning is the pursuit of knowledge throughout life for personal or professional reasons

As used in this lecture, it is a mindset where a professional acts as *both* teacher *and* student throughout one's career for the purpose of:

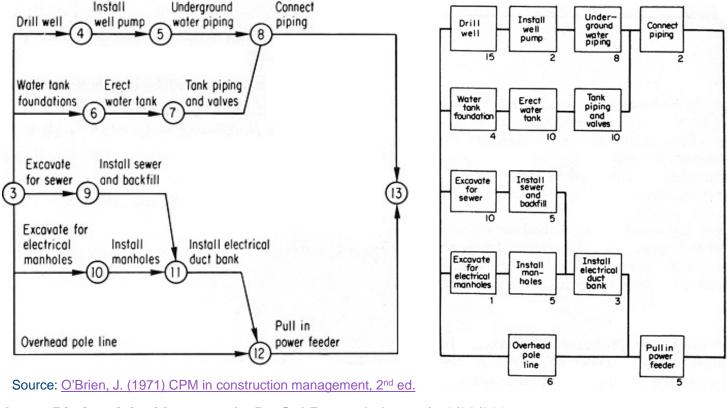
- Performing the next assignment just a bit better than the previous one
- Incrementally improving a knowledge where the opportunity arises
- Taking on a knowledge hurdle seemingly unsurmountable to others



CASE STUDY I: SOLVING THE VEXING CPM SOFTWARE

Situation: In the spring of 1969, the largest contractor in Michigan cannot make head nor tail of newly purchased CPM software

Their schedules were limited to finish-to-start logic, in the late 1960s, a limitation in both arrow diagrams and the Fondahl activity-on-node diagram





SOLVING THE VEXING CPM SOFTWARE

Paradox: While the network notation resembled the Fondahl *precedence* notation, the mathematics were upside down

The network was true precedence network diagramming (PDM) as we know it in that it allowed start-to-start and finish-to-finish logic

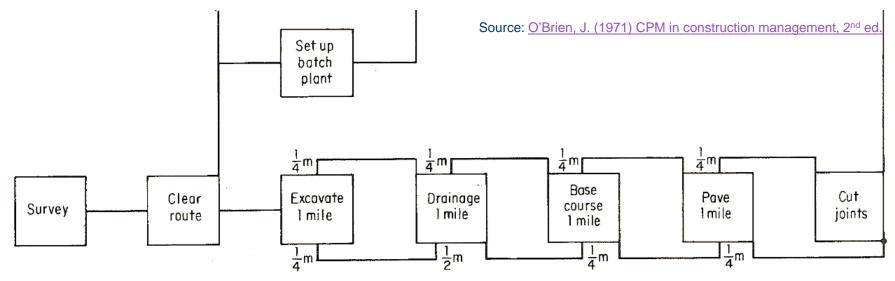
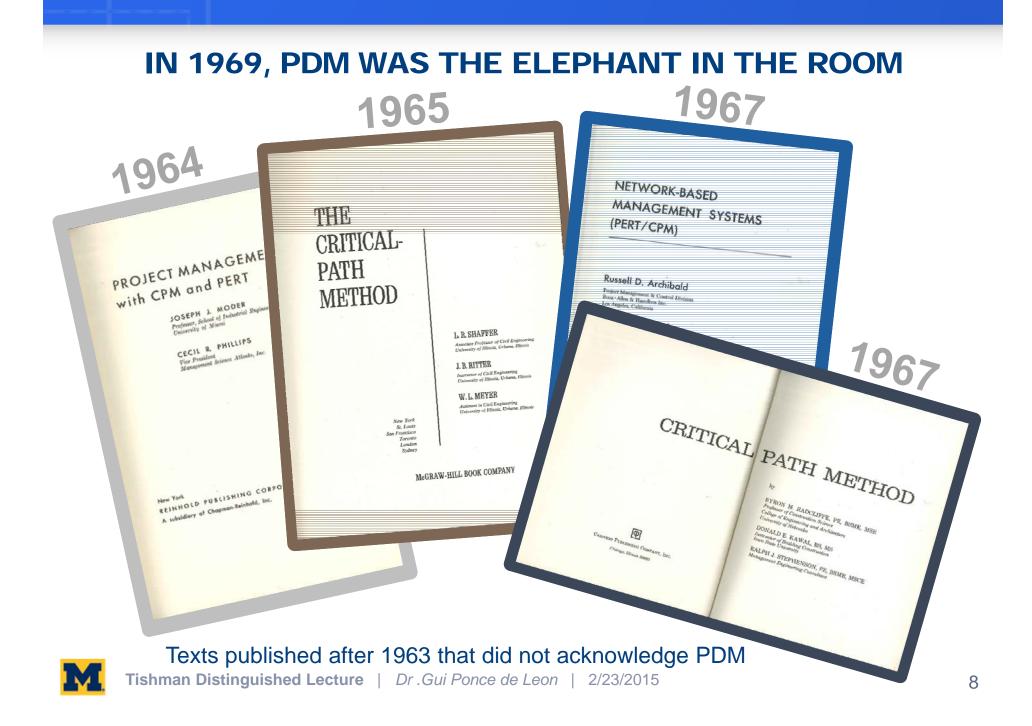


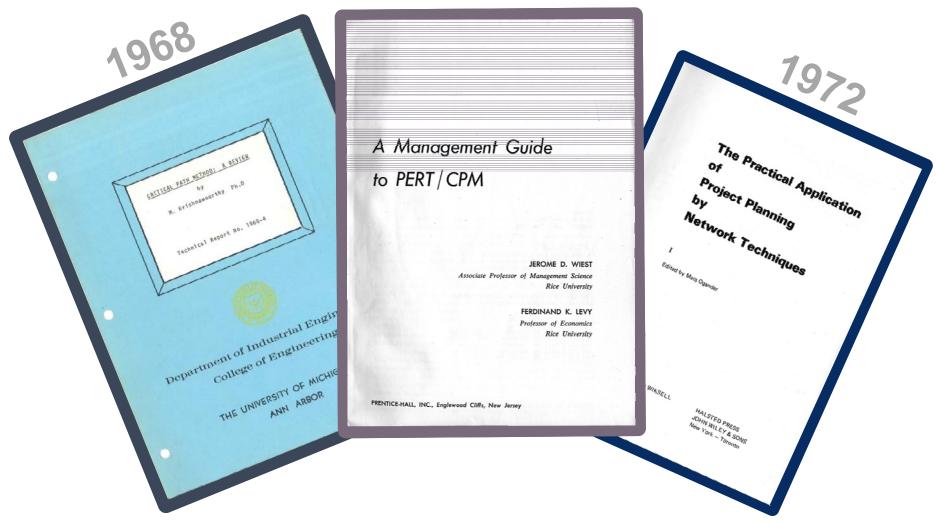
Figure 10.1.5 PDM version of network for 1-mile highway.

Even though PDM research at the H.D. Zachry Company culminated in 1962 and in 1963 IBM joint ventured with Zachry to develop software based on the method, PDM was largely MIA in the CPM literature



OTHER TEXTS WITH NARY A MENTION OF PDM

1969





CREDIT GOES TO JIM O'BRIEN FOR TAKING PDM PUBLIC





SOLVING THE VEXING CPM SOFTWARE

Solution: Learn the network technique used by the software, work out the mathematics from scratch, and reconcile the results with the mathematics of CPM network schedules based on conventional arrow diagrams and on Prof. Fondahl's network model aka circle diagram

Lessons Learned:

- 1. Not uncommon for business innovation to outpace academia
- 2. Don't buy into a new method without first verifying it

Upshot: Take the copious research published in the first 10 years of CPM and apply it to the emerging precedence diagramming method



CASE STUDY II: CONTRACTS AS CLAIMS AVOIDANCE TOOLS

Situation: In the spring of 1983, Washtenaw County was completing a \$120M wastewater treatment plant project program that was mired in litigation and the County wanted to avoid history repeating itself on a subsequent \$13M project

Paradox: While the Division 0 Specifications provided by the County's engineer were proven specifications from legal and technical standpoints, they were largely silent relative to the types of schedule-related and change order pricing claims that had become the norm on projects completing in the late 1970s and early 1980s

Solution: Draft supplementary conditions and scheduling specifications to prospectively deal with—and hopefully altogether avoid—what had become endemic delay and extra cost claims

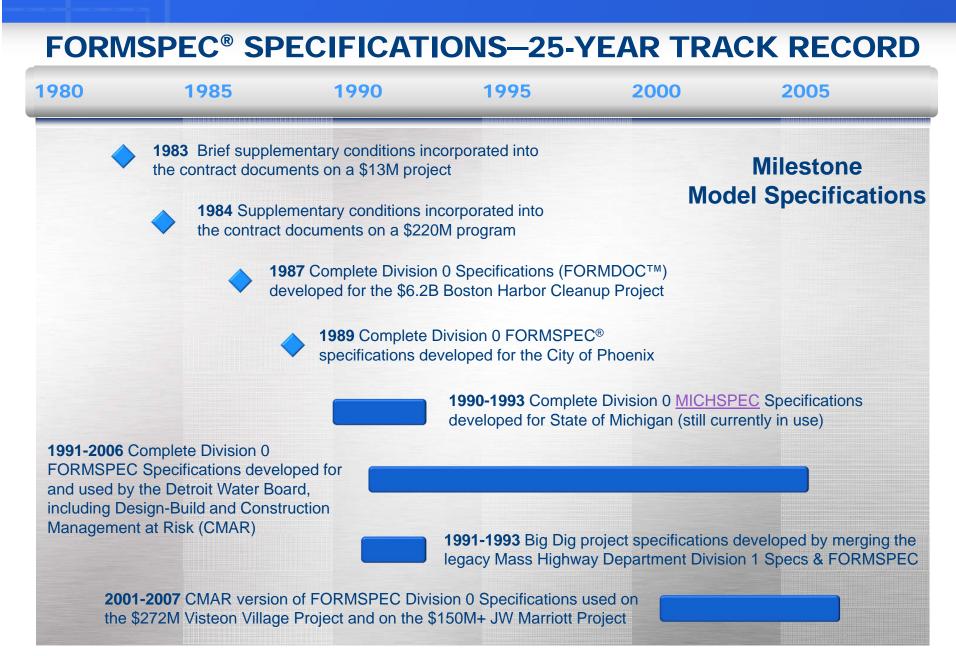
CONTRACTS AS CLAIMS AVOIDANCE TOOLS

Lessons Learned:

- 1. Contractors and their sureties abhor contract specifications that are not the industry standard
- 2. Newly drafted contract specifications, provided fair and balanced and supported by owners, eventually become the norm and operate to reduce the risk of delay and extra-work pricing disputes

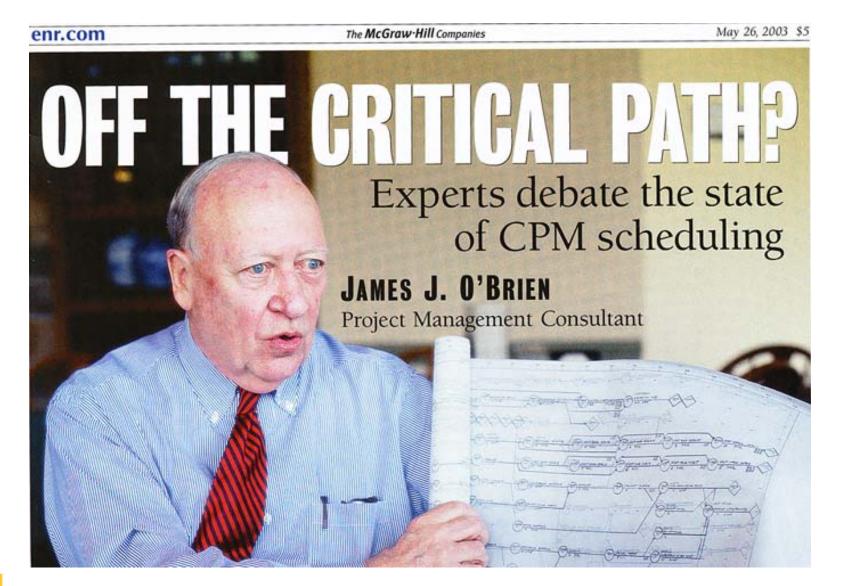
Upshot: The 1983 supplementary conditions assignment led to development of the FORMSPEC [®] suite of construction industry contracts, used on projects amounting to billions of dollars, which were completed with no or negligible litigation—including the \$14.7B *Big Dig* Project in Boston, which reached substantial completion in 2004







MAKING 50+ YEARS OF CPM CALCULUS OBSOLETE

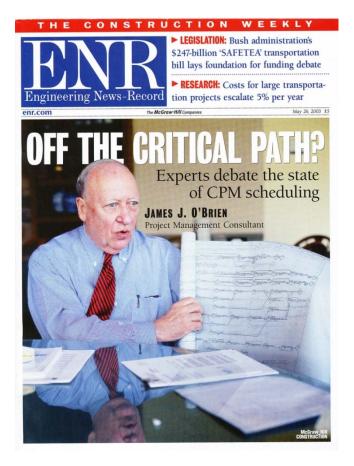




SNIPPETS OF HOW CPM WENT OFF THE RAILS

"What is described as a CPM schedule these days sometimes is not one at all"

"They say they see widespread abuses of powerful software to produce badly flawed or deliberately deceptive schedules that look good but lack mathematical coherence or common sense about how the industry works"

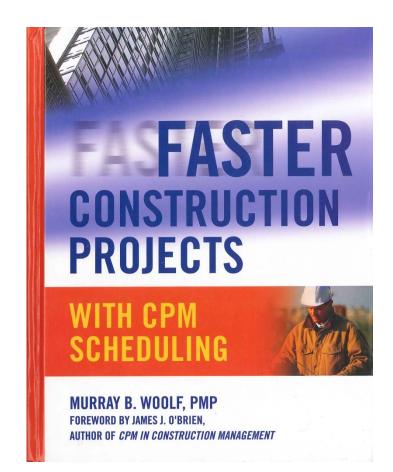




SNIPPETS OF HOW CPM WENT OFF THE RAILS (cont'd)

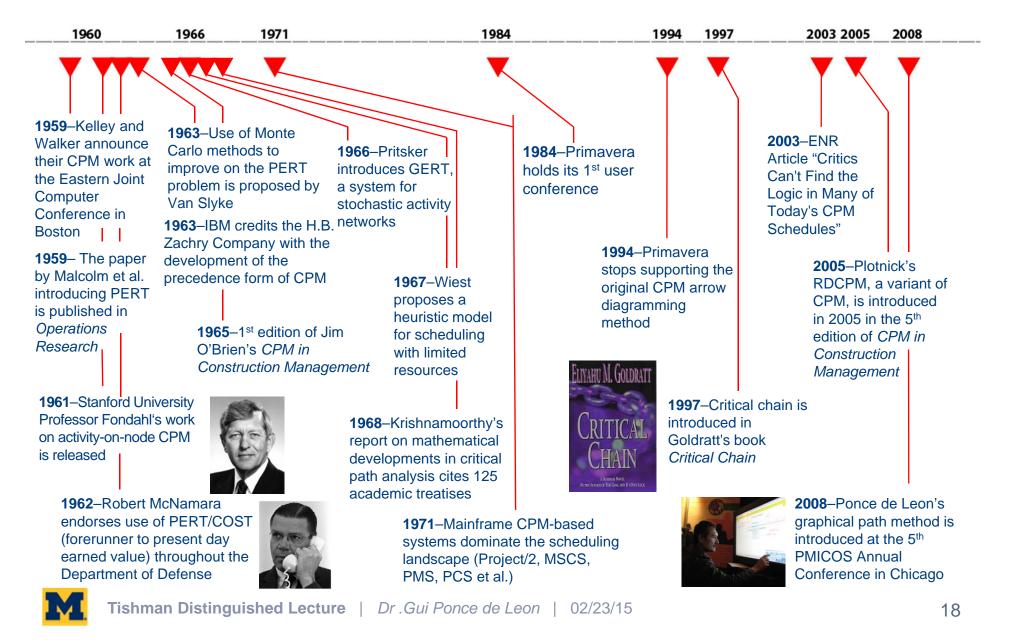
"we have collectively evolved the profession to where planning is no longer the essential first step in the scheduling process"

"Among the young guys, computers have made it easy to slap together something that looks right, but there is a thought process that must be involved, and it is hard to tell in many contemporary schedules if the thinking happened or not"





GPM WAS BORNE ALOFT ON CPM'S GIGANTIC 50 YEARS



THE CPM STATE OF AFFAIRS IN 2003

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	

- CPM had become schedulecentric, and "planning" the casualty
- CPM networks had been largely supplanted by logic Gantt charts
- Schedulers had become obsessed with overly detailed schedules
- Stakeholders had disengaged but planned their work just the same
- A *dates rule, logic serves* ethos had turned planning upside down
- Mathematically flawed schedules were the norm due to overuse of constraints and preferential logic

- Building a network on a computer on the fly had disabled *pull* planning, making CPM impractical for lean construction planners
- With the CPM algorithm nonfunctional left of the data date, there was no incentive to accurately record actual dates
- Resource leveling had fallen by the wayside, because black box, automated resource leveling produced unrealistic results
- Spreadsheets were becoming de rigueur tools for capital planning



TWO RECENT INSTANCES OF DISCONTENT WITH CPM

Eric Lamb, in "How to Fix a Broken Scheduling System"

"Schedules with an exhaustive level of detail in a CPM network try to predict day-to-day activities years in advance and are inherently flawed"

"For an industry striving to be more productive, the current state of scheduling practices is wasteful"

"Simply, we have created a monster"

Stu Ockman, in "Dearth of Scheduling Software Expertise Still Bedevils Many Legal Cases," alluding to a 2,900activity schedule that had 928 constraints, lamented that

"The multiple constraints made finding the critical path for the project's start and end dates impossible, not to mention the nearly 83 workdays of negative float they yielded. Lawsuits followed the project"



THE METHOD AS APPLIED IN PLANNING/SCHEDULING

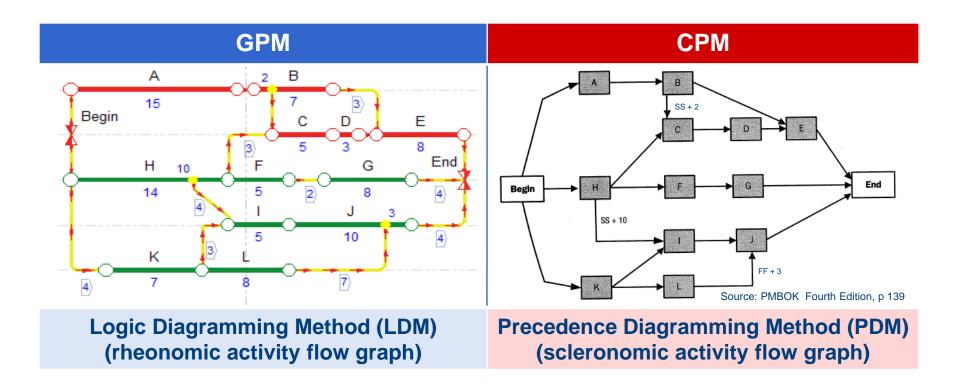
The engine behind digital graphical and visualization tools that kinetically calculate and display the schedule as stakeholders physically manipulate activities, milestones, and benchmarks

- Visualization is enabled by a new time-scaled logic diagramming method (LDM) that combines the strengths of arrow diagrams & precedence diagrams
- Activities may be on planned dates without resorting to date constraints or preferential logic
- An activity on planned dates can drift back (to the early start) and may float forward (to the late finish)

- As an activity is manipulated, GPM self-healing and GPM scheduling algorithms kinetically reposition impacted activities without invoking the CPM forward or backward pass
- ✓ Both *forward* planning and *backward* planning are allowed
- Total floats left of the data date are calculated, which allows algorithmic identification of the *then-existing* as-built critical path



GPM RELIES ON THE LDM NETWORK NOTATION





LDM AND PDM CONTRASTED

GPM/LDM	CPM/PDM
Activity-on-Link, with PDM Logic Constructs	Activity-on-Node, with PDM Logic Labels on the Links
Essentially Equal Logic Tie Capability-N	Indeling of FS/SS/FF/SF Logic Allowed
An Embedded Node aka Embed Is Used for PDM Logic	Links Labeled as SS, FF, SF Are Used for PDM Logic
In LDM, Embedded Node Of	ffset Equates to Lag in PDM
Stakeholders and the Software May Control Network Layout	Software Dictates Schedule Layout, e.g., Gantt Chart
Unlike ADM and PDM, which Are both Commonly B	Built Schematically, LDM Is a Time-Scaled Diagram
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THE GPM PLANNING/SCHEDULING ETHOS

- Graphical, visual, and sufficiently simple schedules are a priority
- 2. Emphasis is on collaborative planning vs. schedule machinations
- 3. Stakeholder consensus is more important than fictive precision
- 4. Collaboration improves where level of detail stimulates participation
- 5. Time-scaled networks with PDM logic are superior to Gantt charts with logic ties

- The network is built forward or backward or using both planning approaches
- Stakeholders, not the scheduling algorithm, drive key activity dates
- 8. Stakeholder strategies in context drive resource leveling
- 9. Building a schedule is done by physical object manipulation rather than by data entry
- 10. Level 1 and level 2 schedules are developed independently as opposed to by merely hammocking level 3 schedules



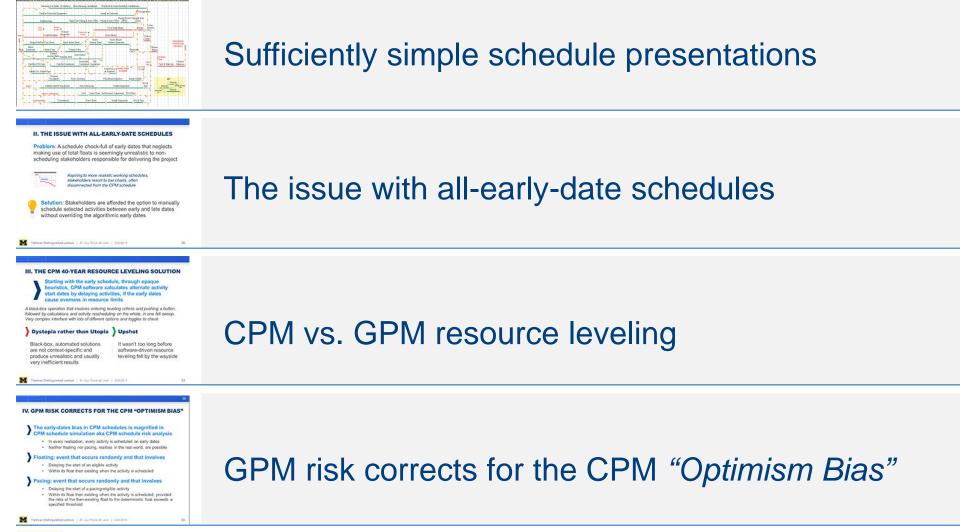
THE POWER OF THE GPM SCHEDULING ALGORITHMS

- Date constraints are not needed to start activities on planned dates
- 2. Planned dates do not supersede early dates, which create drift (i.e., reverse float)
- 3. If planned start > algorithmic early start, *drift* exists
- 4. If planned start < algorithmic late start, *float* exists
- 5. For every activity & milestone, drift + float = total float
- 6. PDM logic is modeled through embedded nodes vs. link labels

- 7. Gap, a relationship attribute, measures logic tie/link leeway
- 8. Total float is derived from gaps as opposed to subtracting early dates from late dates
- 9. Total floats are algorithmically calculated left of the data date, and the as-built critical path is identified left of the data date
- 10. The kinetic nature of the algorithmic GPM engine provides a more cognitively responsive environment for both schedulers and nonschedulers alike



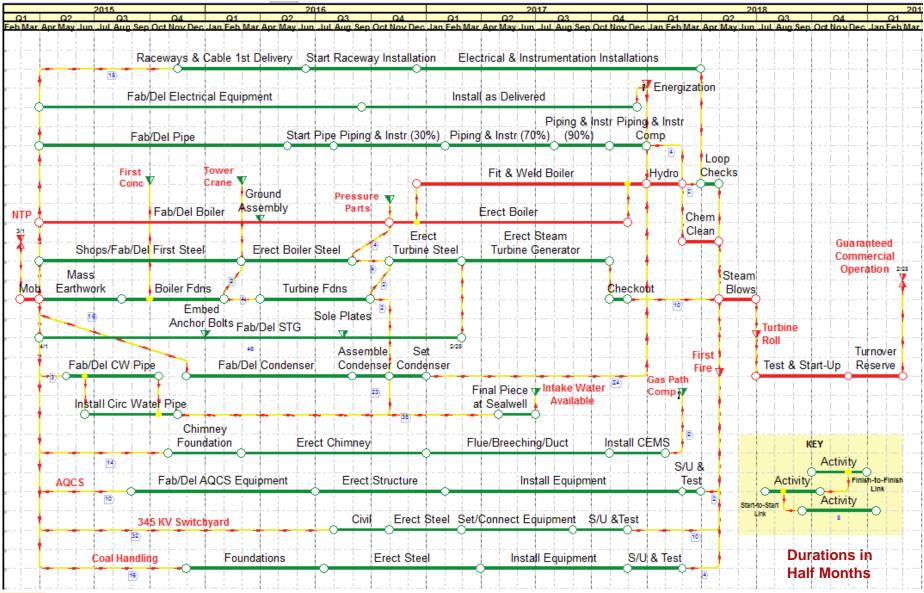
GPM TOPICS SELECTED FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION



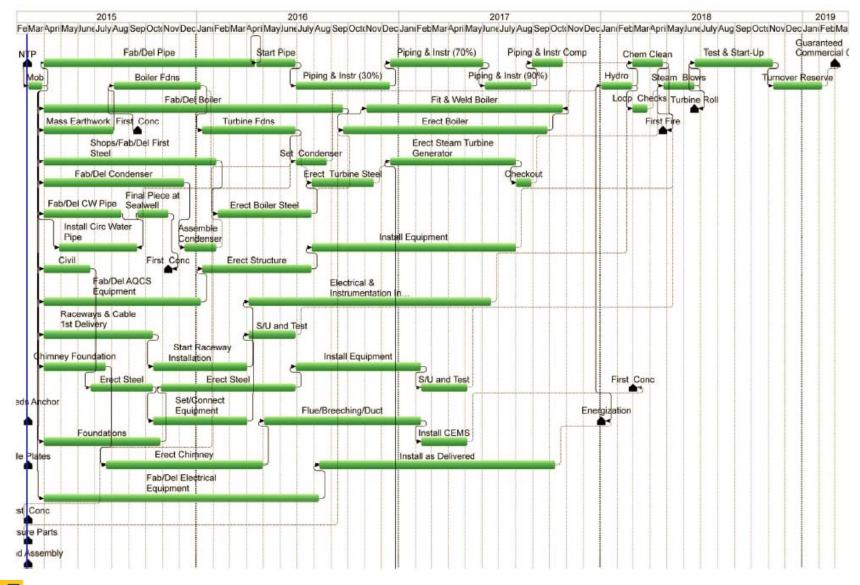


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I. A SUFFICIENTLY SIMPLE SCHEDULE PRESENTATION

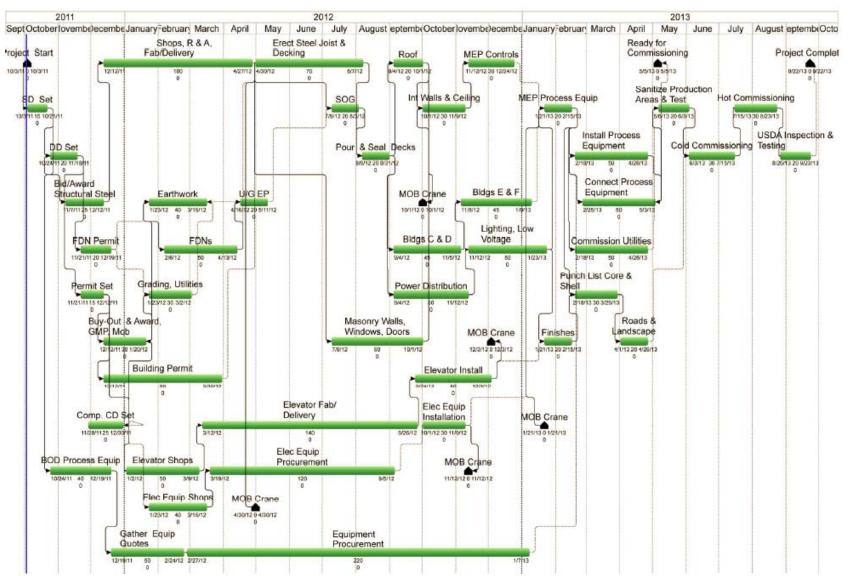


A SCHEDULE ONLY A TRAINED EYE CAN FOLLOW



ANOTHER SUFFICIENTLY SIMPLE SCHEDULE DISPLAY

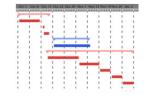
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AN EQUIVALENT TIME-SCALED PRECEDENCE DIAGRAM

II. THE ISSUE WITH ALL-EARLY-DATE SCHEDULES

Problem: A schedule chock-full of early dates that neglects making use of total floats is seemingly unrealistic to non-scheduling stakeholders responsible for delivering the project



Aspiring to more realistic working schedules, stakeholders resort to bar charts, often disconnected from the CPM schedule



The GPM Solution: Stakeholders are afforded the option to manually schedule selected activities between early and late dates *without overriding* the algorithmic early dates



THE GPM PLANNED DATES PRECEPT IN SCHEDULING

The scheduler may manually override activity dates

Activities placed between early and late dates are on GPM planned dates; the GPM algorithm retains the algorithmic early dates

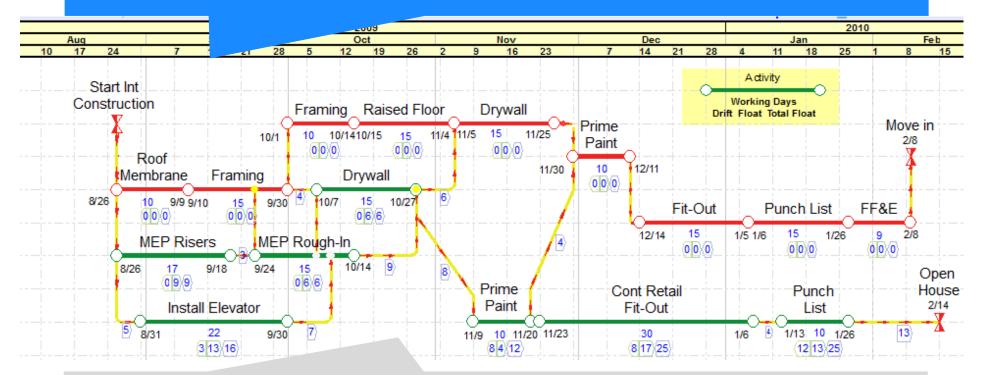
Because planned dates do not override early dates, GPM detects that an activity retains the ability to *drift back* without forcing an earlier project start and to float forward as much as the late dates permit

The combination of planned dates/drift/float represents a paradigm shift from the CPM early-date bias, one-directional float protocol



THE PLANNED DATES/DRIFT/FLOAT/TOTAL FLOAT PRECEPT

When an activity is on early dates, drift = 0 and float = total float; conversely, when on late dates, drift = total float and float = 0



As an activity shifts to later dates, drift increases, float decreases, and total float is a constant; if the activity shifts back to earlier dates, drift decreases, float increases, and total float remains constant



III. THE CPM 40-YEAR RESOURCE LEVELING SOLUTION

Starting with the early schedule, through opaque heuristics, CPM software calculates alternate activity start dates by delaying activities, if the early dates cause overruns in resource limits

A black-box operation that involves entering leveling criteria and pushing a button, followed by calculations and activity rescheduling on the whole, in one fell swoop. Very complex interface with lots of different options and toggles to check

Dystopia rather than Utopia Upshot

Black-box, automated solutions are not context-specific and produce unrealistic and usually very inefficient results

It wasn't too long before software-driven resource leveling fell by the wayside



THE CPM RESOURCE LEVELING PREDICAMENT



MURRAY WOOLF Author of <u>Faster Construction</u> Projects with CPM Scheduling

"In general, I discourage the use of any button that, once pushed, takes the decision-making out of the minds of those who are charged with managing the project and instead delegates it to a softly hissing microchip"

"...If you give this power to the computer (software), no human will thereafter be able to (easily) identify or understand the total-float of activities because it obscures the various paths and, hence, one will not be able to exploit activities according to available total-float. Do you really want to surrender such power to the computer?"

So, what's a stakeholder to do?



THE CPM RESOURCE LEVELING PREDICAMENT (cont'd)



GAO Schedule Assessment Guide

Best Practices for project schedules

Woolf's views are echoed in the <u>GAO</u> <u>Schedule Assessment Guide:</u>

"Automated leveling may produce inefficient output, such as delaying activities if resources are partially available and, thus, prevent activities from being partially accomplished while the project waits for the full complement of resources to become available"

The GAO guide further posits that:

"Resource leveling can be performed automatically with scheduling software or *manually by management and planners* or both" (*italics mine*)

So, what's a stakeholder to do?



SYNERGIZING STAKEHOLDER/MACHINE INTERACTION

GPM resource-constrained scheduling is a *transparent, hybrid, stakeholder-driven/software-aided* process that amalgamates schedule context and stakeholders' judgment

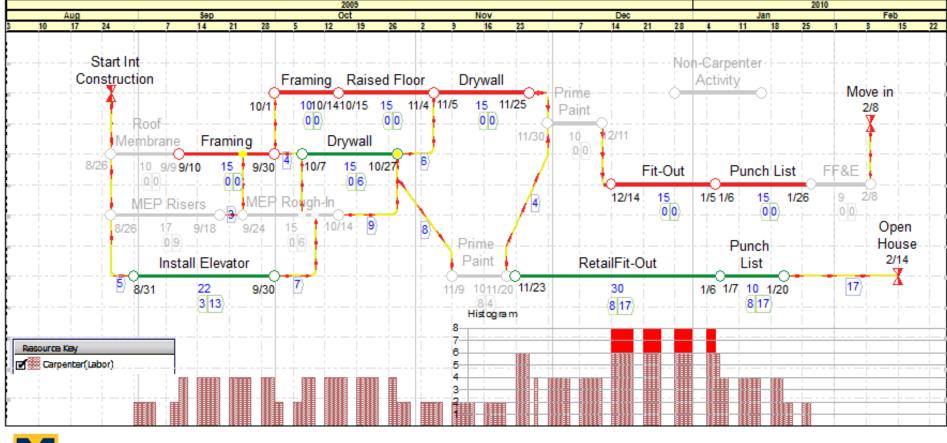
To improve a resource histogram profile, stakeholders, utilizing float and drift, may in every possible way (manually or by conceding to the software), shift a selected activity, crash or extend the activity, split the activity, and/or push UNDO to return to any prior state

- As an activity is manually or digitally manipulated, other preceding and/or succeeding activities that are impacted based on logic are simultaneously repositioned along the time scale
- ✓ The GPM algorithms also kinetically refresh the evolving resource histograms



SIMPLE GPM RESOURCE ALLOCATION DEMONSTRATIVE

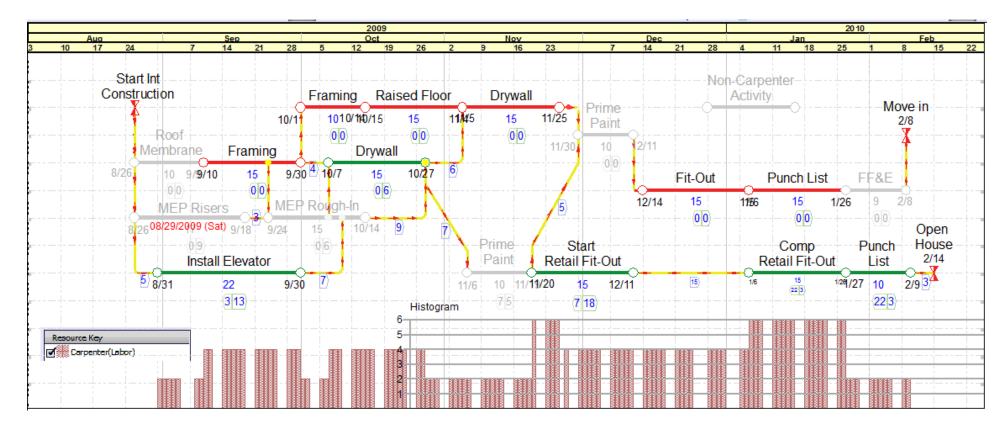
The objective is to eliminate the carpenter limit (6 carpenters) overrun between Dec 14 & Jan 5; the selected activity is Retail Fit-Out because it contributes to the overrun, is noncritical, and uses carpenters





FIRST 3-STEP SEQUENCE IN LEVELING DEMONSTRATIVE

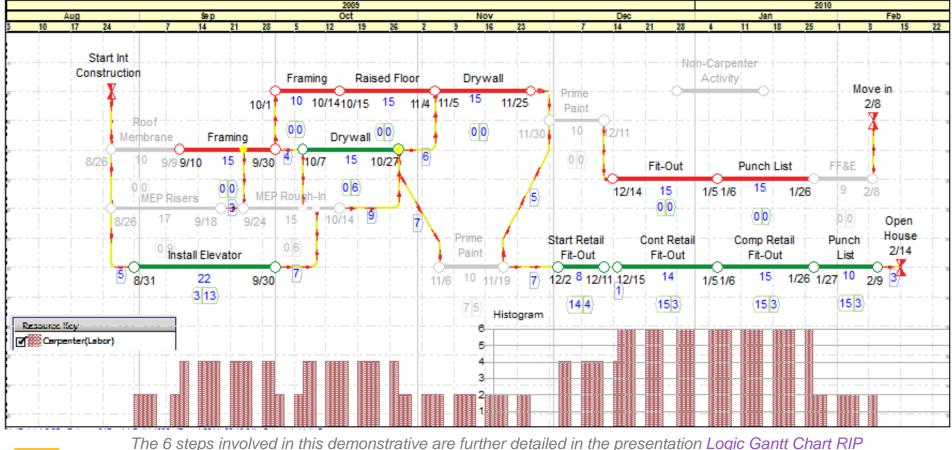
Step 1: Retail Fit-Out is split (on 14 Dec 09) into two 15-day activities Step 2: Comp Retail Fit-Out floats by 14 days (gap reduces to 3 days) Step 3: Start Retail Fit-Out drifts back 1 day (drift reduces to 7 days)





THE NEXT 3 STEPS IN THE LEVELING DEMONSTRATIVE

Step 4: Extend 'Start Retail' to 30 days; crew reduces to 2 carpenters Step 5: Split 'Start Retail' (on 14 Dec 09) into 14-day and 16-day activities Step 6: Turn "Logic" off, crash 'Start Retail' to 8 days from its start node, crew doubles to 4 carpenters; drift 'Start' Retail' by 1 day and turn logic back on





Tishman Distinguished Lecture | Dr. Gui Ponce de Leon | 2/23/2015

IV. GPM RISK CORRECTS FOR THE CPM "OPTIMISM BIAS"

The early-dates bias in CPM scheduling is magnified in CPM schedule simulation aka CPM schedule risk analysis

- In every realization, every activity is scheduled on early dates
- Neither floating nor pacing, realities in the real world, are possible

Floating: real-world event that occurs often and involves

• Delaying the start of an eligible activity within its float thenexisting when the activity is started

Pacing: real-world event that involves

• A decision to delay an activity because of a float-generating unrelated delay that originated before the pacing decision

In the real world, floating and pacing decisions rely on anticipated vs. as-built durations

FLOAT CONSUMPTION RISKS IN SCHEDULE SIMULATION

In GPM risk, whether an eligible activity floats or paces in a realization is modeled by defining a likelihood factor

• A floating or pacing critical path delay occurs whenever an activity that floated or paced and that falls on the longest path would not otherwise have been critical but for the floating or pacing decision

Relative to CPM, researches have proposed off-simulation approaches to quantify the influence of float use on the mean of the project completion probability distribution

- Sakka & El-Sayegh propose activity-by-activity regression relationships
- Gong proposes activity-by-activity time disturbance analyses



DEMONSTRATING THE CPM EARLY-DATES BIAS

In the case study that follows, a deterministic schedule for a project is assessed for risk by ranging activity durations based on three-point estimates

- **PERT solution**: conventional PERT technique where the threepoint estimates are replaced by PERT mean values and the network is calculated using the standard critical path algorithm
- **CPM solution**: simulation technique where activity durations are random variables and neither floating nor pacing are allowed
- **GPM solution**: simulation technique where activity durations are random variables and both floating and pacing are allowed

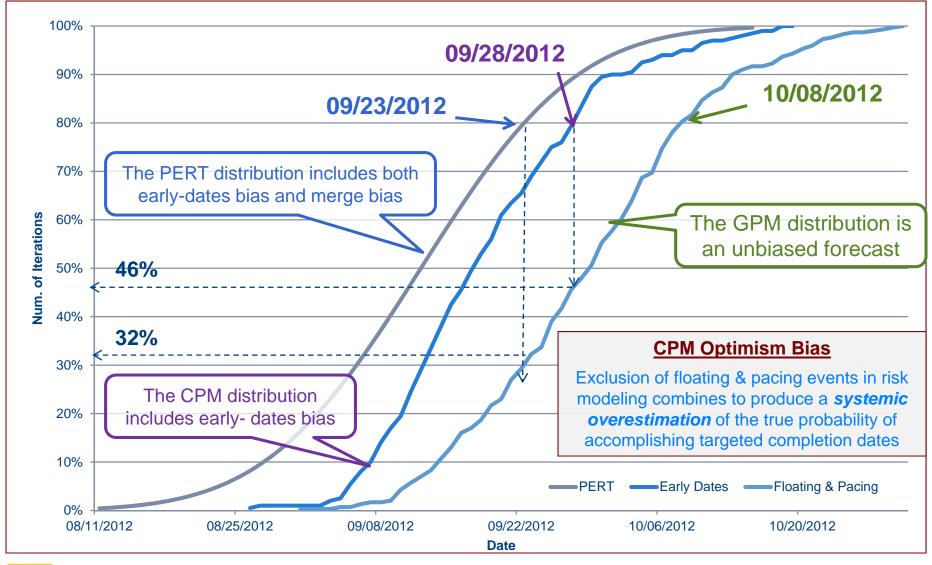
The objective is to determine the probability distribution function of the project completion date, and the completion date with an 80% likelihood of being met aka the P80 date

PROJECT NETWORK USED IN THE CASE STUDY

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DEMONSTRATING THE CPM "OPTIMISM BIAS"





TAKE-AWAYS

Committing to lifelong learning makes for an exciting *life-is-a-project* career

Lifelong learning morphs into lifelong innovation where there is a mindset for never wasting a lesson learned, being opportunistic about improving the practice, and going for breakthrough innovation where warranted

- 3 GPM networks, due to their sufficiently simple visuals, are intuitive and more fluently processed by schedulers and non-scheduling stakeholders alike
- 4 GPM planned dates, which generate drift, not only render resource leveling practical, at last, but also preserve total float traceability
- 5 GPM is a method that allows collaboration between network planners and lean construction planners because it supports both *pull* and *push* planning
- 6 GPM resource leveling allows stakeholders to remain engaged and to direct resource leveling to proceed manually or digitally, activity by activity



GPM schedule risk more accurately predicts the probability of project completion by permitting modeling of floating and pacing risks in simulation





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THANK YOU!