

Lead Appraisers Gone Wild!

Or How NOT to Lead an
Appraisal!

Background on this topic, or why I want all my peers mad at me.

- I have performed SCAMPI As since 2000. Have performed over 15.
- Have performed SCAMPI Bs about 10
- Have performed SCAMPI Cs about 20
- Also am a candidate LA Observer.
- I see a lot of bad habits and misunderstandings of the method during appraisals.
- Some of the following are examples of MDD violations, some are just my pet peeves.

Does anyone out there read the MDD?

- The Method Description Document which describes the Standard CMMI Appraisal Method for Process Improvement is designed to provide benchmark quality ratings relative to the CMMI.
- The MDD describes the requirements, activities, and practices associated with each of the processes that compose the SCAMPI method. Precise listing of required practices, parameters and variation limits as well as optional practices and guidance for enacting the method, are covered.

Read the MDD

- Sometimes as a LA you have to read!
- We know that if you don't know where you are, a map won't help, BUT,
- you can get the MDD off the SEI's website at .../pub/documents/01.reports/pdf/1hb001.pdf
- LAs, this is YOUR BIBLE!!



Understand the Appraisal Plan

MDD Section 1.2

- As in: ‘Yes, you have to have one’ (1.2.6)
- And ‘Yes, the sponsor has to approve/sign it’ (1.2.6)
- And ‘Yes, you have to identify your needed resources. (1.2.2) This is nice to do BEFORE the on-site period.
- When I ask to see the schedule, don’t say “We are just going to see who’s here this week to interview” (logistics 1.2.4)

Identify Needed Resources

MDD 1.2.2

- When I ask for proof of team training and training of the team, don't say "We don't need no stinking Intro to CMMI class" (1.3).
- When I ask if the team as individuals and as a whole meet the minimum criteria, don't give me the blank stare then ask me how many lbs of Godiva chocolate I want (1.3.2)

Plan and Manage Logistics

MDD 1.2.4

■ Scheduling!

- Please DO NOT kill your appraisal team and make the work days longer than 9 hours. They will not like you. It also leads to bad habits!
- Please DO NOT have 16 interviews, all back to back in 4 days. Leave at least 1.5 hours between interviews for mini-team consolidation.



Plan and Manage Logistics

MDD 1.2.4

- If you want the team to be together ALL day, have at least water available for them. If you want them to work through meals, have meals brought in. Ask if any members have specific dietary needs.



Identify Team Leader

MDD 1.3.1

- Select an authorized SCAMPI Lead Appraiser to serve as the appraisal team leader.
- Verify the qualifications of the appraisal team leader (experience, knowledge, and skills).



Identify Team Leader

MDD 1.3.1

- The requirements for a Team Leader are outlined in the SEI Lead Appraiser program.
- There can be only one official appraisal team leader on any given appraisal.



Obtain and Analyze Initial Objective Evidence MDD 1.4

■ Verification Versus Discovery

Gather high-leverage objective evidence. The amount of initial objective evidence provided by the organization will determine the proportion of evidence that must be discovered (versus verified) during the appraisal. Maximizing time spent in verification, versus discovery, is a key performance objective for the appraisal process.



Obtain and Analyze Objective Evidence MDD 1.4

- The effort required to conduct a SCAMPI appraisal is a direct function of the amount of data available to the team at the beginning of the process. Before the appraisal outputs can be created, the team will need to verify objective evidence for each instantiation of each practice within the scope of the appraisal.
- Leave at least 2-3 days for Analyzing Objective Evidence. Do not do this AFTER interviews start.

Prepare Participants 1.4.1

- Members of the organization who participate in the appraisal MUST be informed of their role, and the expectations the sponsor and appraisal team have.
- This is typically accomplished through a briefing where the appraisal team leader provides an overview of the appraisal process, purpose, and objectives
- Many time I hear 'I can't make the Opening Meeting mandatory, the organization won't come anyway', or 'So and so is on TDY, or they have a nosebleed today, or whatever'.

Prepare Participants 1.4.1

- Not making this opening meeting mandatory makes you, or someone on the team, explain over and over again at the beginning of each interview to the interviewees, why they are there.



Perform Readiness Review

MDD 1.5

- Determine whether the objective evidence for each process instance is adequate to proceed with the appraisal as planned.
- Review the feasibility of the appraisal plan in light of the inventory of objective evidence available.
- At least one readiness review **MUST** be conducted prior to assembling the team on site for data collection.
- Again, **DO NOT** do this after **INTERVIEWS** start.

Perform Readiness Review MDD 1.5

- At least one readiness review **MUST** be conducted prior to assembling the team on site for data collection
- Again, **DO NOT** do this after **INTERVIEWS** start.
- Don't make me call this guy →



Examine Objective Evidence from Interviews MDD 2.1.4

- This is not your old CBA-IPI Methodology. Stop needless interviewing! Don't let this happen to you ->
- Obtain face-to-face affirmations for (1) at least one instantiation for each model practice in the scope of the appraisal, or (2) at least 50% of the practices corresponding to each specific and generic goal for each instantiation.



Examine Objective Evidence from Interviews MDD 2.1.4

- And speaking of interviews. Do not let your appraisal team members fall asleep during the interviews.
- Make sure that you introduce all members of the appraisal team to the interviewees.



Examine Objective Evidence from Interviews MDD 2.1.4

- Also, do not ask the same questions that have already been asked. Pay attention, during all questions. “These notes must cover all areas investigated during the interview, and are not limited to the PAs assigned to the individual team member (i.e., everybody takes notes on everything).” (2.3.1)
- Do NOT ask a question, and then when the interviewee is answering, not write down what they are saying.... argh!

Take/Review/Tag Notes

MDD 2.3.1

- And speaking of NOT taking notes.... “Every team member present must take notes during interviews and presentations.”
- Just because during an interview, the questions being asked do not pertain to YOUR PA, does not mean you can decide to go home for the day.



Take/Review/Tag Notes

MDD 2.3.1

- All team members actively take notes during all data-gathering sessions. “The purpose is to record, verbatim, what the information source reveals about the implementation of practices in the project or organization.”
- In other words, do not rely on memory when you are tagging your notes. Take good notes during the interviews!

Remember,

- Make friends with those you are interviewing as well as those on your team.



Some Closing Notes

- Above all, be the LA everyone wants to have come back!



Last But Not Least!

■ Have fun!

