



(U) Letter to the Editor: Getting Buy-In for Tool Development

FROM: the editor
Unknown
Run Date: 01/27/2006

(U//FOUO) The topic of "roadblocks to change" and the related matter of tool development have elicited quite a response from the readership! So much so, I've bundled the comments together into a series, to make it easier to follow. Here are two more reader opinions:

(U//FOUO) The January 10, 2006 article "Roadblocks to Change" has stimulated some much-needed dialogue and the comments generated by this article have begun to illuminate this issue. The most recent comments, by [REDACTED] [*part 4 of this series -- editor*], have offered some of the dimensions that a future solution will need to include.

(C) This is not a new issue area and has been with us for quite some time. In the days of old A2 we regularly did mortal combat with the development communities of A6 and later A7 (A6's predecessor). We were so feisty about the issues surrounding computer capability because the computer was an integral part of our analytic production. Because of our high interest we initiated efforts to find a better way of doing business rather than continue to fight all the time. As a result of the work of [REDACTED] (now retired) and [REDACTED] we started the journey into the use of Integrated Computer Assisted Software Engineering (I-CASE). What we found was that I-CASE used diagramming techniques that as analysts we could read and determine whether our practices and needs were captured. The developers on the other hand could see other things in those same diagrams. Thus in effect we created a language between the two communities and we also created direct involvement between the analyst and the project.

(C) Unfortunately the computer science community of that era did not find our approach that appealing (amongst other things it advertised automatic code generation directly from requirements). It also occurred about the time that A2 went from an Office of 1200 to a part of a consolidated office of Russia and were now only 300 to 400 people. Management's attention shifted from efficient business to down-sizing.

(C) As a result of these experiences it has always surprised me that the NSA approach to software engineering had a hard time appreciating that if one did not directly involve the target-using community for a new system, that program would encounter great difficulty with the delivery. For example, in July 2002 the delivery of the new NSRP was greeted with great consternation from S2 for this very reason. More recently, the delivery of voice tools (NUCLEON, CREST et al) similarly met with great resistance. When you are intending to change the work practices of a group of people those very people need to be directly involved in how their work is to be changed. If they are not directly involved, do not expect them to welcome the change. It really is as simple as that. Of

 **SERIES:**
(U) Roadblocks to Change

1. [Study Points Out 'Roadblocks to Change'](#)
2. [Letters to the Editor : About 'Roadblocks to Change'](#)
3. [Letter to the Editor : More on Tool Development](#)
4. [Letter to the Editor : A Tool Developer's Perspective on 'Roadblocks to Change'](#)
5. [Letter to the Editor : Getting Buy-In for Tool Development](#)
6. [Letters to the Editor : Still More on Tool Development](#)

course the techniques are key and management's direct involvement are critical to success.

(C) This spring the Rebuilding Analysis Program Office will deliver the first spiral of the first increment of the Integrated Analytic Environment. From the time that the contract was awarded to the Harris Corporation, there has been a RebA Roll-Out Strategy group. The group is chaired by S2 and its aim is to assure the smooth and effective delivery of the IAE. As a member of the Strategy Group, S2 Analytic Technologies for the Enterprise (S202) has shared its experiences with delivering the voice tools. This experience helped with creating the Early Adopters Working Group which is structured around specific work units representing each of the 12 product lines and include around 150 people. Through the judicious use of the time of the early-adopters, [REDACTED] has assured that the developers understand the work practices of the analysts and that the analyst see the potential of new ways of doing business. The group has also recorded their concerns as well.

(U//FOUO) Its too early to say that this is the solution, but clearly the management and leaders of S2 have devoted a lot of energy to make this a successful delivery. Certainly the using community is involved. Management is as well and it faces some tall challenges before April.

-- [REDACTED]

(U//FOUO) I have been reading the chain of replies to the recent article "Roadblocks to Change" and would like to add a couple of thoughts to the fray. Let me start by stating that I am an end-user, an analyst and a report writer. In my office there are those that often resist adopting new tools because they feel that it is too difficult and time-consuming to learn how to use them. In other words, they are very comfortable with the status quo. However, I believe that in the majority of cases, they resist because the change provides no apparent benefit to them.

(U//FOUO) It seems to me that software (tool) developers are constantly changing our tools because that's their job. Let's face it; if you build a tool that works and there's no need to change or improve it, pretty soon you're going to need a new job. In the corporate or government world, and in our everyday lives, the software we use is in a constant state of change whether we like it or not. Simply checking the version number evidences this (Version 8.4.72.1a (beta), for instance). I'm sure that there are improvements made with each new version, but often, they are transparent to the end-user or merely provide a "fix" to existing problems. Rarely do I see real capabilities added and when I do, there's usually a loss of some other capability. And all of this costs money and resources, both of which are in short supply, I'm told.

(U//FOUO) Our office currently is "resisting change," although there's not much we can do about it. They tell us that soon we will transition from UNIX-based platforms to NT-based platforms. I fully understand why this is happening. I agree that the Agency needs to use a common computing environment. Unfortunately, the tools that we are supposed to use on the new platform are, at best, equal to what we have now, and at worst, completely inadequate for the tasks we are performing. All of the other considerations concerning new software tools are inconsequential if the tools can't be used to do our jobs. Even the most secure and stable database tool is useless if I can't quickly insert, modify, or

access my data.

(U//FOUO) I strongly believe that the only way an organization can properly affect change is to get people to buy into it. People need to truly understand the "why's" and "what's" and have a vested interest in successful change. Change cannot be forced from the top down and truly achieve the desired goal. This may seem obvious, but the general perception is that this is still the way most changes are made.

-- 

(U//FOUO) Editor's note: FYI, this thread has been picked up by at least one [blog](#).

"(U//FOUO) SIDtoday articles may not be republished or reposted outside NSANet without the consent of S0121 ([DL sid comms](#))."

DYNAMIC PAGE -- HIGHEST POSSIBLE CLASSIFICATION IS
TOP SECRET // SI / TK // REL TO USA AUS CAN GBR NZL
DERIVED FROM: NSA/CSSM 1-52, DATED 08 JAN 2007 DECLASSIFY ON: 20320108