

## Thank You!

- For requesting details of the Project Acceleration Assessment.

This is without doubt your first step to greatly increased project performance for your organisation by the use of Critical Chain Project Management (CCPM) methods.

I hope that you will find everything you need to know in this document, but if you have any questions that are not covered, just call or email and we will answer them.

CCPM can make a massive improvements in on-time delivery, productivity, and throughput. However there are two key things required to enable this to happen and which are effectively our two guiding principles:

We want to work with organisations:

- a). Who have the desire and drive to improve their project performance.
- b). With whom we can make a significant difference and a positive outcome.

So, if you identify yourself as being in the first category, then let us work together to achieve the second.

Best Regards

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PS - And don't forget that Critical Point is able to provide expert education and consultancy in many other Theory of Constraints (TOC) disciplines including Supply Chain, Operation Management, Enterprise Management and Throughput Accounting - see our web site for more details.

# The Acceleration Assessment: Overview

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The Assessment is a short intensive exercise with the goal of identifying and demonstrating if Critical Chain Project Management (CCPM) can improve the performance of projects in your organisation.

## What we will do:

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We will demonstrate the improvements that can be made with CCPM in the two most fundamentally important parts of a project: i) The Project Schedule and ii) during Project Execution. We will provide an opportunity to review and question both in a Summary Review Meeting and we will leave you with two key outputs for your further review.

### i). Project Schedule - A New Critical Chain Schedule.

CCPM uses much improved techniques to 'traditional' schedule construction methods, resulting in more effective, efficient and, most importantly, highly focussed and reliable schedules. To demonstrate the results that can be achieved, *we will develop a CCPM schedule for a project of your choice. This can be a new project, one that is in progress or a previously completed project.*

### ii). Project Execution – 'CCPM in Execution' Presentation.

CCPM working methods also differ from many 'traditional' practices, resolving multiple inefficiencies and creating fast-running projects. To demonstrate how these operate *we will provide a presentation explaining what these working methods are and these deliver greater efficiencies.*

### iii). Summary Review.

Having worked with us on the creation of the CCPM Network Diagram and having seen the 'CCPM in Execution' Presentation, we believe that your personnel will already be well placed to judge the benefits of CCPM. However, *we will provide a Summary Review meeting to present and review the resulting CCPM schedule and for any outstanding questions to be answered.*

### iv). Key Outputs.

We will provide you with: *1) a pdf of the CCPM project network diagram, and 2) the slides from the 'CCPM in Execution' presentation.*

## The Acceleration Assessment: Overview: cont'd

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### What we ask you to do:

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- i. To provide the personnel who have detailed knowledge about the selected project for approx. 2 days to work with us to create the Project Network Diagram and new Critical Chain schedule.
- ii. To advise whether the project is for Assessment, Acceleration, Rescue or Comparison\*.  
(See 'Assessment, Acceleration, Rescue or Comparison' - Page 13)
- iii. To provide some basic details of your chosen project in advance of our work on-site such that we can get to work quickly on arrival.
- iv. To provide a room with a (large) whiteboard & computer-linked projector.
- v. To cover the cost of our travel and accommodation. (This may be for one or two people at our discretion. FYI we are based in Kent U.K.).

## The Acceleration Assessment: Overview: cont'd

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### What happens after the Acceleration Assessment?

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It is entirely up to you.

If, following our work, you don't think that the CCPM approach will work for you, then fine. We will leave you in peace to get on with your project.

However if you can see that the new CCPM schedule and execution methods provide significant benefits and advantages and want to take this to the next stage, simply contact us and we will provide an 'Outline Implementation Proposal'. This will describe how CCPM could be implemented for the project we have worked with you on.

If, after digesting the Outline Implementation Proposal, you wish to proceed further with CCPM, let us know so that we can discuss how to move forward (and for your 'Project Acceleration' to start!).

# The Assessment: In More Detail

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## The Acceleration Assessment - Why do it this way?

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Well, we don't think that just talking about CCPM is the quickest way to get your projects running faster... we could come and explain to you all about the theory, show you a presentation, discuss your situation, answer your questions, let you think about it for a week or two etc. etc.

We can do this but this is a slow process, and just like CCPM itself, we want to introduce some speed into the situation – and the best way to do this is to turn the usual process around and start by a real, practical and relevant example - with a real project.

Not only does this inject speed into the process but this also provides you with first-hand evidence and visibility of how CCPM works in the flesh – with a real example, in your business, on one of your projects, with your people involved.

So, as the song goes "A little less conversation, a little more action..."

We think this just gets straight to the point:

- Does CCPM do what it says on the can?
- Does it deliver something truly useful to you that works in your environment?
- Will CCPM really make your projects run faster?

We think that the Acceleration Assessment process provides the answers to these questions in the shortest possible time.

## The Assessment: In More Detail: cont'd

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### Assessment Activities, Roles and Sequence

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The main tasks of the Assessment exercise are as follows:

Day 1:

	Task	Critical Point	Client
1	Build CCPM Project Network	✓	✓
2	Enter details into New CCPM Schedule	✓	(✓)*
3	Produce '1 <sup>st</sup> Cut' CCPM schedule	✓	

Day 2:

4	Resolve issues & optimise CCPM Schedule	✓	
5	'CCPM In Execution' presentation	✓	✓
6	Review Meeting.	✓	✓

\* Dependent on resource availability

The time required to complete the Assessment work is strongly determined by the complexity and size of the project, and the availability of project-knowledgeable personnel. It is possible that some activities may spill into a third day.

## The Assessment: In More Detail: cont'd

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### The New CCPM Schedule - A Co-operative Undertaking.

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We recognise that a couple of days is a significant outlay of key resources at what is probably a very busy time (when isn't it a busy time when projects are concerned?). But it is essential to have the right people in the room for this exercise (however this time-cost will be far outweighed by the time saved on a project using a CCPM Schedule and Execution Methods).

So we will bring the CCPM knowledge and experience, and we ask that you provide the people who can provide the 'project information' - by which we mean, but not limited to:

- Personnel with knowledge and familiarity of:
  - The goal of the project.
  - The project scope.
  - The project requirements.
  - The main tasks of the project.
  - The project's and the organisation's resource capabilities.
  - The project's and the organisation's constraints.

And additionally:

- A copy of the current project schedule (in whatever format it is currently held).

Essentially this is the Who, What, Why, Where and When of the project. The Project Manager will be a key participant, but we would expect other personnel with relevant input to contribute to enable an accurate and realistic CCPM Schedule to be created in the shortest possible time.

The output of this work will be the CCPM Project Network Diagram, the tasks and sequence of which will identify the new priority execution paths for the project, rationalise and improve contingency and contingency visibility, allow for further analysis and optimisation, and provide the basis of the new initial CCPM schedule for the project.



## The Assessment: In More Detail: cont'd

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### 'CCPM In Execution' Presentation

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We will provide a PowerPoint presentation explaining how the principles of CCPM are put into practice in the working project environment; how 'traditional' working methods slow projects dramatically, how project monitoring is made both simpler and more accurate, as well as a look at how CCPM brings even greater benefits when applied at the Programme and Portfolio level. (This presentation and takes around 1½ - 2 hrs including Q &A.)

#### Overview:

Participants will gain an understanding of the main elements of CCPM in the working environment, its benefits, and how it differs from 'traditional' methods. It will explain:

- o Why do we need another project management method?
- o What causes projects to fail?
- o What is CCPM?
- o How does CCPM prevent project failure?
- o Programme & Portfolio – CCPM in the multi-project environment

## The Assessment: In More Detail: cont'd

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### End of Day Summary Review.

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It is often common for an exercise like this to conclude with the consultants spending quite some time showcasing their work done, previous clients, targets achieved, capability of the consultancy, next steps, benefits etc. in a final presentation, often requiring senior management in the audience. This is often regarded (with some apprehension on behalf of the recipients) as the 'hard sell' session.

We can do this.

But we don't tend to do it like this.

What we prefer to do is to present the completed CCPM schedule for your project and provide an opportunity for Q & A of this and any other part of the CCPM process.

We think that your personnel, who have participated in the CCPM schedule building and have seen the 'CCPM In Execution' presentation, will be well able to judge if the exercise has produced something that is viable and valuable for your organisation – *without* us talking at you for another 3 hours at the end of a long day.

So we will provide a review meeting, and we will be happy to style it to whatever you want, with whoever you wish to attend.

But you won't be subjected to a lengthy sales pitch.

## Don't just take our word for it...

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In case you have nagging (but entirely justifiable) doubts about committing the resources for this offer, perhaps the following short extract of the many successful CCPM results might give food for thought\*:

### Consumer Products Company

Reduced first project by more than 10 months (approx. 50%)

25 - 50 % reduction on first 10 projects

### High Tech Company

Projects now completed on time in an environment where everything was late

Schedules are now believable and credible

### Technology Company

Identified and eliminated early schedule risks

Return on Investment ratio conservatively 250:1

### Medical Products Company

On-time completion of projects increased from 22% to well above 90%

ROI conservatively 500:1

### Telecom Company

Average project length reduced by more than 50%

On-time delivery of projects went from 40% to nearly 100%

No increase in personnel

Many more results available on request or see the 'Results' pages of our web site.

\* Source: ProChain Inc.

## The Small Print:

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We don't think that tying people up in a mass of legalise is conducive to engendering an atmosphere of cooperation, so we have only a few entries here for clarity...

1. We reserve the right to decide when 'The Assessment' is complete.
  - We will work as hard and as fast as we can to provide a new CCPM schedule for your project, and we would normally expect that it would be mutually agreed at what point this is complete. However the final decision of when it is complete remains with us.
2. We reserve the right to end or defer 'The Assessment' at any time if we believe that the necessary information or personnel or facilities are not being made available to us.
  - Clearly we cannot carry out the task that we have set ourselves without the necessary input - we would all be wasting our time.
3. We undertake not to disclose any details about your company, project(s), personnel or any information made available to us during our visit and we will be happy to sign a NDA to this effect.
4. We will expect that normal business formalities will be observed with respect to ordering, invoicing and settlement. So we would expect to receive a Purchase Order from you for the fee for the Acceleration Assessment. In the situation where we have been unable to create a schedule which is not realistically achievable, we will provide an invoice with no fee but with the travel and accommodation costs detailed. We would expect settlement of invoices to be within 28 days.

## What we would like to know:

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### Assessment, Acceleration, Rescue or Comparison?

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CCPM can be used very effectively in any project situation, whether a new project or one in progress. So whether you have a new project (Assessment), a slipping project that needs some speeding up (Acceleration), or some serious problems in achieving completion targets (Rescue), CCPM has something very significant to offer. But if you would rather see how a CCPM schedule compares with a previously completed project then we can use this (Comparison). Please let us know which would best apply in your situation.

### Project Outline Details

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Please provide some details about the project and your organisation, it will help to get a 'fast start' on the first day. A suggested list of pertinent outline details are below. We will, of course, treat these as 'Commercial in Confidence' and / or sign an NDA beforehand, and will not pass on or disclose any information given.

However it is appreciated that you may not wish to provide any detail beforehand and if this is the case, then fine, we will do this as the first task of the day.

The sort of details that we would like to know are:

Your Company: What do you do? How do you do it?

Project Description	Approximate Budget, Duration, M/days
Project Goal	Start Date, Target Completion Date
Internal Project / For Client	Fixed Delivery Date Project?
Overall Estimated Man/Days of Effort	Current schedule tool (e.g. Excel, MS Project etc.)

# CCPM - Q & A

## CCPM in Your Business Environment

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Q? – Will CCPM work in your industry / sector?

A? – CCPM is not sector-specific and has been used successfully in a wide range of industries.

Q? – But the projects in our business have some very specialised characteristics, how do we know that CCPM will be able to cater for these?

A? – Many businesses have specific characteristics determined by their sector or their own organisation. However the generic nature of the CCPM solution and that the focus is on a project execution schedule - which is common to all projects - means that they can be implemented within and around any situation, specialised or otherwise.

Q? – Our projects are large and complex, is CCPM suitable for this sort of implementation?

A? – Yes, CCPM has been successfully used on many very large and very complex projects.

Q? – We would need to do a pilot project if we considered implementing CCPM, is this a problem?

A? – Not a problem. Any size of project can be run and benefit from CCPM, and we understand that confidence in the methodology needs to be achieved. However if a pilot project is required, we would suggest that the pilot project has some real significance, size and value to your organisation to enable CCPM to demonstrate the benefits that can be achieved. (e.g. There is limited value in evaluating a F1 car by driving it at 30mph in first gear.)

### CCPM - Q & A: cont'd

#### Risk

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Q? – Changes to our project management processes would constitute a risk to whatever project we decided to trial the methodology on. How would this risk be mitigated?

A? – CCPM involves changes to the project schedule construction process and working practices during execution. CCPM does not change the way that other functions of a project management process operate. Existing documentation / methods can continue as before. So the change to the project management processes are both limited and isolated from other functions and therefore low-risk.

Q? – Would implementing CCPM affect other operations that we run on a project?

A? – All project-specific operations; e.g. requirements gathering and validation, business and functional scope and analysis, change control, testing etc. would not be affected.

Q? – Would implementing CCPM affect the way that project personnel work?

A? – To some extent, Yes. For the most part these are usually and generally accepted by project personnel for what they are - logical steps that improve productivity and have a positive effect on the working environment. However it does require the cooperation of the project personnel in accepting and adopting some new methods.

Q? – Can you provide details of previous CCPM implementations you have worked on?

A? – Yes. Contact us for these details.

### CCPM - Q & A: cont'd

#### Software

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Q? – Does CCPM need to have new / specific software?

A? – Although we would stress that CCPM is *not* a 'software only' solution (changes to working practices are of equal importance), to get the real benefits of CCPM, yes, specific CCPM software is necessary.

Q? – Why is it necessary to use CCPM software?

A? – The main answer is that CCPM software has been specifically developed to i) create the initial schedule to CCPM principles, ii) enable performance tuning and 'what if?' scenarios, iii) to provide instant and excellent, project focus and monitoring, and iv) to enable changes and updated schedules to be produced quickly and easily.

Q? – If we went ahead with implementing CCPM would we need to change the Project Management software that we currently use?

A? – Yes – or at least it would mean a change to the software for running the Project Schedule. Software that is used outside of the schedule is unlikely to be affected. (There are various options for CCPM software depending upon your situation and current PM software. Some CCPM software products are 'stand-alone' and some work as an add-on to Microsoft Project).

Q? – Because of the overhead and time required for training, software validation and implementation, we don't want to introduce new project management software at this time, is there a way around this?

A? – Yes. We can be flexible and operate in whatever way would be most suitable for you. This could be to maintain your project plan on CCPM software outside of your technical environment e.g. we could keep your schedule on our computers. Updating the schedule could then be done on-site or remotely but separately from your existing software and environment.



## CCPM - Q & A: cont'd

### Software (continued)

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Q? – Is CCPM software expensive?

A? – No, not for serious, professional, mature software that has been developed and improved over many years. Although variations exist, it is comparable in price to other capable project management software.

Q? – We have many projects in progress at any one time, with resources shared across them, does CCPM software cater for this situation?

A? – CCPM software is scalable. Thus for a single project, all that is required is the use of the basic scheduler level of the software. At the next level the software caters for multi-project (programme / portfolio) situations. And the third level is designed for implementation across an entire organisation.

Q? – Can the CCPM software be obtained for an evaluation period – i.e. without a purchase commitment?

A? – For a limited period, generally yes (subject to the specific software vendor's terms and conditions).

## CCPM - Q & A: cont'd

### CCPM Methodology

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Q? – You contend that CCPM can make dramatic improvements to project completion timescales *without* increasing resources. How is this done?

A? – The simple answer is that CCPM implements efficiency across multiple areas of project operation. This really needs explaining in detail to see how this works (the 'CCPM In Execution' presentation is the ideal way to see this), but briefly: Firstly the initial Critical Chain schedule is built to maximise efficient time and resource use. Secondly, by implementing some simple but seriously efficiency-improving techniques that reduce wasted time and effort inherent in the normal behaviours of the human resources and practices of a 'traditional' project. Thirdly by ensuring that resources, and the tasks that they are to work on, are fully prepared to start immediately and effectively. And lastly by providing unparalleled control and visibility of progress and where to focus during execution.

Q? – Is this all that CCPM is – some resource efficiency improvements?

A? – No, that is not all that CCPM is. Resource efficiency is only one part of CCPM. The other key components are: By creating an improved and optimised schedule that is tuned and focussed on delivering the project goal, and that identifies the true critical route of the tasks in the schedule (i.e. *not* the standard critical path). By using methods that ensure that project reporting and monitoring is more accurate, up-to-date and continually identifies the most important key tasks, reacts to change, indicates the true project status and provides high visibility on where to focus attention. (Again the best answer is to see the 'CCPM In Execution' presentation.)

### CCPM - Q & A: cont'd

## CCPM Methodology (continued)

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Q? – What key elements are required in implementing CCPM?

A? – CCPM implementation requires a combination of:

An Implementation Plan – Not a large or onerous plan, just something so that everyone knows when and where things take place. *It's the 'Order of Service'.*

Overview Education – All of the organisation (from senior management down to the 'shop floor' workers) need to have a basic understanding of CCPM. This is delivered initially in the 'CCPM In Execution' presentation'. *This ensures that everyone reads from the same hymn book.*

Role-Specific Briefing - To ensure that everyone is clear about changes to their own working methods. *Ensuring everyone is on the same page of the hymn book and knows when and how they should sing.*

Implementation, Guidance & Assistance – Creation of the implementation plan and guidance during implementation is a key role and needs to be someone with CCPM implementation experience to ensure that the CCPM Implementation Plan is followed, answers questions, resolves issues, ensures the CCPM methods are followed, provides coaching for the client project manager, maintains / helps maintain the CCPM Pilot Project plan etc. *He/she leads and conducts the choir.*

Q? – How long does a CCPM implementation take?

A? – Well although clearly this is dependent upon the scale of the implementation (i.e. single project / multi-project / portfolio / entire organisation), it is entirely possible to achieve significant results in a relatively short space of time. A simple implementation can start to actually deliver meaningful and measurable results in under 2 weeks.

Q? – We are already part-way through a project. Can CCPM be applied in this situation?

A? – Yes. But because of the need to create a new (CCPM) Schedule, this would clearly mean a re-plan of the project and then a cut-over to the new project. However much of this work can be carried out whilst the project continues, And the speed and productivity benefits of running CCPM will very soon recover and overtake any time loss due to this change.

### CCPM - Q & A: cont'd

#### CCPM Methodology (continued)

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Q? – Does CCPM always result in a reduced project timescale?

A? – Not necessarily. The CCPM scheduling process is effective but very rigorous and may reveal that the intended completion date is not achievable (within the resources currently made available to the project). This in itself is of great and fundamental value and may prevent initiating a project with an unattainable completion date. However the ability to easily experiment with multiple, *but realistic*, 'What-if?' scenarios with the CCPM software, provides the ability to adjust tasks and resources to create a truly viable and achievable schedule to fit required timescales.

Q? – Can CCPM be applied to Fixed End-Date projects?

A? – Absolutely 'Yes!'

Q? – We would wish to ensure the security of all aspects of our business and that of our clients. Would you be prepared to sign up to a Non-Disclosure Agreement?

A? – Of course.

## CCPM - Q & A: cont'd

### Existing Project Management Methodology

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Q? – Does it matter what existing project methodology / method we have in use? E.g. Prince, PMBOK, Waterfall, Iterative, Incremental, Spiral, RUP etc?

A? – Because of the generic nature of the CCPM solutions, and because CCPM's scope is limited to the schedule creation and schedule monitoring during execution, we have not found that it impacts on any existing project management methodology, which are generally not prescriptive about the tool used for the schedule creation and execution anyway. CCPM simply replaces the existing scheduling tools used for these parts of the project.

Q? – Does CCPM work with Agile? (A fast development methodology used in I.T.)

A? – Yes. CCPM has been successfully use to control Agile developments, including some very large ones: In one Agile environment, with over 800 developers, CCPM was used to link and coordinate large numbers of development paths in an overall 'Master Project'.

### Any Other Questions?

Just call or email and we would be pleased to answer anything that we have not covered.

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