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THE HERDING CATS[®] GAME: Earned Value in Action

A 1-day, 7 PDU (0.7 CEU) facilitated game

Focus on Stakeholder Value

Herding Cats[®] is a simulation that will be familiar to those who work on complex technical projects that are difficult to manage. This experiential learning tool lets you test and apply your understanding of project management in a risk-free yet realistic environment.

At the beginning, you and your team will be given:

- The business background for the project
- The stakeholders' trade-offs among scope, schedule, and cost
- A project plan
- Details on resources available to the project, turnover, learning curves, and overtime
- Details on the product's technical risk
- Information on each team member's range of performance
- A set of overall project risk events that may occur

Then you will be asked to manage your project to deliver more stakeholder value than the competing teams' projects.

Deal with an Unpredictable Project

Herding Cats[®] asks you to apply the fundamental principles of project management to an ever-changing set of events. Other simulations present a predefined problem to learn a predefined lesson; Herding Cats[®] challenges you to develop a comprehensive yet flexible strategy that can withstand the random difficulties that arise during a real project! You and your team will know what *might* happen, but you won't know what *will* happen – until you roll the dice.

Test the "Earned-Value" Concept

Many professionals believe that “earned value” is not relevant to their projects. During the simulation, you will monitor the actual progress of your project, compare it to your plan, and take corrective action when necessary. You will have the option to use “earned value” and see for yourself if it can help you guide your project.

Extract What's Valuable to You

After the simulation is over, you and your team will reflect on:

- The skills and techniques you used in simulation
- What worked and what didn't
- What you would change the next time
- Useful lessons you might apply to your actual projects

Herding Cats[®] will leave you with powerful, practical new ideas to apply to your current projects.

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AGENDA

Morning

- Introduction
- Review of range-based estimation
- Earned-value fundamentals
- Planned value, actual costs, earned value
- Cost Performance Index (CPI) and Schedule Performance Index (SPI)
- Estimates to Complete (ETC) and Estimates at Completion (EAC)
- New Leaf's Remaining Work Index (RWI) and the Staffing-to-Schedule Index (StSI)
- Introduction to Herding Cats[®]
- Herding Cats[®], first part

Afternoon

- Herding Cats[®] conclusion
- Herding Cats[®] debrief
- Review of earned value in Herding Cats[®]
- Earned value, back at work
- Closing