

Miriona's Message – no. 8

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Introduction

End of first quarter...

It doesn't seem possible that we're near the end of March already. Since my last newsletter we've had deep snow (well, it seemed deep in Surrey, where I live!) and just a few weeks later we're into mild and beautifully sunny weather. Long may the latter continue – we're definitely due a decent Summer this year!

Anyway, I wish you all a happy Easter break and, as we move into the new financial year, I hope that your budgets for 2009-10 have not been slashed too deeply!

Hot Topic

DPA - Privacy Notices Consultation

Under the Data Protection Act, organisations are responsible for giving people clear details about what data they are storing on them and how this will be used. A Privacy Notice is “the oral or written statement that individuals are given when information is collected about them”. At the least (and by law) it will tell people who you are and what you are going to do with their information. It can also give details about access rights or your security arrangements.

The Information Commissioner's Office is running a public consultation prior to publishing a Privacy Notices Code of Practice. The Code of Practice will help organisations to draft clear privacy notices and make sure that they collect information about people fairly and transparently. The Code will contain good and bad examples that organisations will be able to use to help draw up their own privacy notices.

If you wish to know more about this, read the Draft Code and/or give your views as part of the consultation, have a look on the ICO's site:

http://www.ico.gov.uk/Home/about_us/consultations/our_consultations.aspx

Comments on the draft Code of Practice can be provided **before Friday 3 April**. Even if you don't want to do this, it's a good opportunity to review and possibly update your own Privacy Notice(s).

For more information, you can call Miriona on 07766 948470 or email newsletter@miriona.co.uk.

Working Smarter

Boston Grid - Evaluation and Comparison

What is the technique?

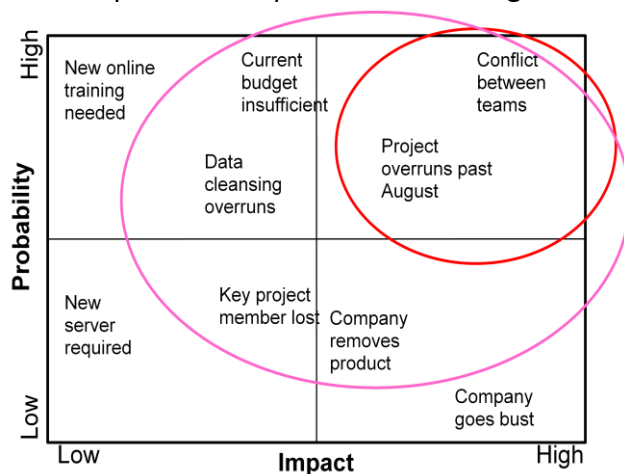
A Boston Grid is used to evaluate and compare a limited number of related items (for example a list of possible solutions to a problem or the level of risk on a project).

How do you do it?

1. Draw a grid of two by two cells (or use arrows to show a scale on each axis of a square).
2. Label each axis with appropriate means of measurement. Some examples are cost, benefits, how easy to achieve.
3. Place each item in the appropriate place on the grid. An easy way to do this is to use post-its on a flipchart or whiteboard, so that they can be easily moved if necessary.
4. Once all items have been placed, it should be possible to see which are the most desirable/risky/whatever...

What does it look like?

An example of a completed Grid looking at risks for a project is:



On this Grid, the highest risks are within the red circle and others that will need mitigation are within the pink circle.

Want to discuss this further? Contact Miriona on 07766 948470 or email newsletter@miriona.co.uk.

Hints & Tips

PowerPoint: Blanking a slide

Sometimes when you're presenting using PowerPoint, you want the audience to be focusing on you – not still looking at the last slide. Using the 'b' key will blank the slide. When you want to continue showing the slides, just use the 'b' key again to bring the last slide back up.

Outlook: Converting an Email into an Appointment - What about Office 2003/XP?

If you drag an e-mail across to the calendar, it opens in a new appointment. You will need to change the date and time, but all the info will be in the body of the appointment. This can be very useful for making sure that you have all the information to hand for a meeting.

The Lighter Side of IT!

Q: How many internet mail list subscribers does it take to change a light bulb?

A: 1,331:

* 1 to change the light bulb and to post to the mail list that the light bulb has been changed

- * 14 to share similar experiences of changing light bulbs and how the light bulb could have been changed differently.
- * 7 to caution about the dangers of changing light bulbs.
- * 27 to point out spelling/grammar errors in posts about changing light bulbs.
- * 53 to flame the spell checkers
- * 156 to write to the list administrator complaining about the light bulb discussion and its inappropriateness to this mail list.
- * 41 to correct spelling in the spelling/grammar flames.
- * 109 to post that this list is not about light bulbs and to please take this email exchange to alt.lite.bulb
- * 203 to demand that cross posting to alt.grammar, alt.spelling and alt.punctuation about changing light bulbs be stopped.
- * 111 to defend the posting to this list saying that we are all use light bulbs and therefore the posts ****are**** relevant to this mail list.
- * 306 to debate which method of changing light bulbs is superior, where to buy the best light bulbs, what brand of light bulbs work best for this technique, and what brands are faulty.
- * 27 to post URLs where one can see examples of different light bulbs
- * 14 to post that the URLs were posted incorrectly, and to post corrected URLs.
- * 3 to post about links they found from the URLs that are relevant to this list which makes light bulbs relevant to this list.
- * 33 to concatenate all posts to date, then quote them including all headers and footers, and then add "Me Too."
- * 12 to post to the list that they are unsubscribing because they cannot handle the light bulb controversy.
- * 19 to quote the "Me Too's" to say, "Me Three."
- * 4 to suggest that posters request the light bulb FAQ.
- * 1 to propose new alt.change.lite.bulb newsgroup.
- * 47 to say this is just what alt.physic.cold_fusion was meant for, so leave it here
- * 143 votes for alt.lite.bulb

Thank you for reading!

Any comments or ideas for future newsletters are welcomed – please send to newsletter@miriona.co.uk.

More information on Miriona and our services can be found on our website www.miriona.co.uk.

To contact Miriona, please call 07766 948470 or email newsletter@miriona.co.uk.

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