



CRISIS MANAGEMENT

My career started in the nuclear business working for Westinghouse. I was usually given over a week to write a procedure that took me about 4 hours. Then two weeks of reviews began as the document was passed up, down and sideways through the organization. Once everyone was satisfied, off it went to Naval Reactors in Washington. Often it would return to repeat the process.

Not much has changed. For the last 25 years I have been working with government regulated medical device companies. The process of doing business follows a very similar tortuous path as the nuclear industry.

The goal is to ensure safety and efficacy. I am not so sure that is the result but without a doubt it builds an organizational culture that is painfully slow moving. So what happens during a crisis like the current meltdown at the nuclear complex at Fukushima Daiichi when speed under pressure means everything? Does this group instantly transform into John Wayne's Hell Fighters over night? To me it is like asking an Olympic weight lifter on game day to run the 880 race. Not only does he have a different set of muscles, training and cardio everything about the fellow says weight lifter not sprinter.

Hopefully I am wrong for those folks in Japan. Hopefully leadership rules the day stepping to the front. With life and death on the line maybe the team can shed all the non-value added nonsense and do what they know or at least believe to be the right thing. What heroes those people are at ground zero working under the constant threat of a nuclear explosion. Let us hope they can make that transformation.

What kind of team have you built or organization do you work for? Are you plodding along? If a real crisis hit tomorrow, could your team make that shift? Does the leadership exist to take charge and lead in a crisis environment? If the news over the last 6 months has not shook you about where the world is going it might be time turn on CNN. Crisis is quickly becoming the new norm. Are you ready? Can your business afford a 6 month delay of the new project?

Maybe it is time to create the urgency for your project now before a crisis finds you. Want some tips on how to do that, talk to us. We are the project execution people.

The Value of Projects