



# CONFRONTING RISK IN THE PROJECT CONTEXT

**“What Risks have you  
Confronted Lately”**

**Rob George, LPG**

# What kind of risks have you confronted?

1. “Challenging” Clients
2. Ever accepted a project that you shouldn't?
3. Missed deadlines
4. Employee Project Management
5. Client Communication

# **“Challenging” Client!**

***“I feel like you are bending me over and....!”***

**How do you deal with this client?**

**Followed the next day with:**

***“Thanks Rob, I thank you for your hard work on this matter!! Keep it up.”***

# What did we learn?

That some clients may be like Sybil with multiple personalities?



# What did we learn?

- Stay calm.
- Find out what the client needs or wants, and make sure they know you are trying to help them.
- Sometimes they just need to vent and you could be a temporary therapist.

# Why did you want that project?

Do you take on every project that comes in the door?

Example: Arsenic testing on a residential home wood deck and backyard soils.

Scope was approved by Client and clearly listed in the contract.

The client was looking for something more, and we didn't produce what he wanted.

Would Jim Collins (Author of Good To Great) approve of this?

Are these projects within your Hedgehog Concept?

# What did we learn?

- Make sure your scope is outlined properly and make sure the parties involved understand *The Scope*.
- Don't bite off more than you can chew.
- It's ok to tell a Client *no*.



# How many deadlines have you missed?

Who makes the deadlines for your testing, sampling,  
or report submittals?

The Client, you, other staff, senior managers...?

A wise man tells me all the time:

*“The only deadlines we miss are the ones WE set for ourselves.”*

*(Kim Forster, Active Environmental Services)*



# Has one of your employees screwed-up a report or lacked Project Management skills?

## Example:

Federal project with hazardous waste (Lead contamination) and quick deadlines by the Client.

Employee had already quit in their head  
(and then actually quit shortly after...)

but no one knew the details about their project....?

# What do you do?

## Confront it?

Gather your resources, talk with the employees and client...

## What did we learn from it?

Communicate with employees and your clients.

Weekly meetings for project updates.

Set up a project tracking system (milestones).

# Client Communication is important!

## Example:

Car salesman had a project for property development.

Soil and ground water contamination with remediation using Indiana's Voluntary Remediation Program.

What happened?



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# What happened:

- Scope was approved by Us and the Client, and costs were put together as a “Not To Exceed Opinion of Cost” ....
- Scope changed for the Client but the potential cost difference was not communicated with the Client, which meant closure strategy changed **which led to increased costs**
- Reports were reviewed by the Agency (3<sup>rd</sup> party consultant & competitor working for Agency) which led to additional investigations and report revisions **which led to increased costs**

# What Is The Common Denominator?

## What did we learn?

Communication!

People will understand if you if you just talk to them.



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