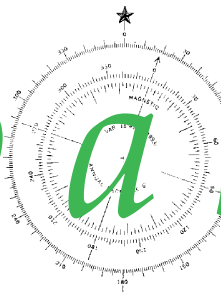


# Compass



VOLUME 3, NUMBER 1, SPRING 1999

## Why?

*Marco Polo described a bridge, stone by stone.*

*"But which is the stone that supports the bridge?" Kublai Khan asks.*

*"The bridge is not supported by one stone or another," Marco answers, "but by the line of the arch that they form."*

*Kublai Kahn remains silent, reflecting. Then he adds: "Why do you speak to me of stones? It is only the arch that matters to me."*

*Polo answers: "Without the stones there is no arch."*

*Invisible Cities  
Italo Calvino*

I hate status reporting sessions because status reporting sessions are where unanswerable questions are asked with the expectation that any reasonable and competent person should be able to answer them. Most sponsors innocently ask "which stone holds up the bridge?" Others are not so benevolent. Either way, I feel cornered and incompetent and liable to respond in a variety of self-destructive ways.

I get myself in trouble when I feel that I must answer the unanswerable question because I'm likely to answer it, or try to. When I'm on my game, I can see through this disqualifying bind, as Polo does in the opening quote, and see the absurdity of the premise. Then I respond produc-

tively.

Anyone who's ever been lured into a why spiral with a three year-old knows these feelings. Why seems like a reasonable question to a three year-old. They learn about their world by evaluating causes and effects so their questions probe from the effect to find the preceding cause. This localizes the phenomenon, infecting you with an implicit cause-effect assumption, as if the past were the only thing able to effect the present and the future. The real world is more complicated. With the three year-old, each response sparks another why, in an endless inquiring spiral; endless, at least, until your imagination and patience give out.



I won't suggest that project sponsors are anything like three year-olds, but

I wouldn't want to prevent you from drawing any analogy that works for you. The critical

element of the interaction, however, is not the emotional age of the inquisitor. We would all like to be able to explain our world. As project manager, you might feel a special responsibility to stay on top of everything and be capable of answering every question to the questioner's naive satisfaction. This is the boundary of dangerous territory.

There are three types of causality: efficient, final, and circular. The most commonly assumed form is called "efficient" causality, but this is the form least often encountered in the real world. This is where the past pushes from behind to influence the future. This tacit assumption that the past is what influences the future is the root cause of most why disconnections. You can tell when someone is assuming efficient causality because they will use the word "because" in their response to the why question. (I used efficient causality in the preceding sentence.) An explicit example of efficient causality looks like this: "Because we didn't complete coding on time, testing will be delayed for a week." I think this is called efficient causality because it makes the world look like a smooth running, efficient place. We are easily satisfied by such simplifying responses. They make sense to our sense of reason. But if we're not careful, we can create satisfaction to the

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exclusion of any real understanding.

*“...we can create satisfaction to the exclusion of any real understanding.”*

A second form of causality- although a strange-feeling one- is where the future influences the present. We all experience this causality whenever we schedule a trip on a commercial airline. We leave Portland at 6:45am in order to arrive in San Jose by 8:30am. This “in order to” causality is called “final” causality because it looks at the final state- the effect- as the cause of the preceding events. The future pulls the past instead of the past pushing the future. This feels like a horse behind the cart relationship. But look closely, this is actually the form of causality where the horse is in front of the cart! In order to pull the cart, we put the horse in front. In order to give you a complete understanding of this concept, I’m writing this sentence as an example of final causality. (I used final causality in the preceding two sentences.) You can tell when someone is using final causality because they answer the why question with some form of “in order to.” This form of causality also over simplifies the world, but it can leave some space for adapting between now and then. “In order to complete by year end, we’ve decided to change the plan we agreed on earlier.” With efficient causality, the penny’s already been spent. With final causality, we’re deciding how to spend it.

The third form of causality is where the past and the future and the present conspire to influence the event. This “circular” causality is both the messiest and the most common form of causality. This is the arch to Marco Polo’s bridge in the opening quote. As Polo demonstrates to the Kublai, dynamic stability depends upon circular causality but trying to explain circular causality can sound like you’re giving

someone the run around. The because and in order tos intertwine to create a rich, thick stew when the inquisitor wants a thin soup. In the real world, the reasons why the airplane leaves at 6:45am are complicated and interrelated. Because Alaska Airlines has a profit goal, and in order to meet lease payments, and because of agreements with flight attendants, and in order to satisfy federal regulations for pilot flight hours, and in order to efficiently utilize ground personnel, and because no one will agree to fly on planes leaving before 6:30am, and because San Jose traffic is impassable between 6:00am and 9:00am, and because if the plane arrives in San Jose by 8:30am it can leave for Las Vegas by 9:15am. And so on as far as your imagination and patience can tolerate. There is no “real” reason, only this frustrating and potentially enlightening circularity.

Projects are particularly subject to simple cause-effect questions and explanations because our scheduling tools insist upon such relationships. These are gross simplifications but we are easily stuck within these maps of the world, forgetting that the world is always richer than any map’s representation. A single why is usually the wrong answer because the simple cause-effect inquiry is usually the wrong question. A string of five whys will yield a richer explanation, the arch, but not a simple

which-stone-holds-up-the-bridge? answer. As Polo reminds us, we need to know about the stones but we cannot and do not need to know which stone holds up the bridge.

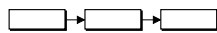


When are why questions appropriate? What do you have if you are able to find the root cause? In the event that you pass this way again, armed with this knowledge, you’ll be able to perhaps choose an alternative outcome.

This smells too much like trying to fix the past, a certain dead end. Distrust single whys. They explain more about the responder’s map of the territory than they explain about the territory. “What do we do now?” is a better question. It looks forward, allowing us to draw from our experiences without expecting us to be able to either discretely explain or fix the past. Nor does it impose any assumption that we should be able to avoid unsettling experiences in the future.

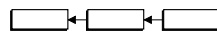
We can become master responders by remembering that the past is no more responsible for the present than is the future. Why we are here is a weak question and the search for the right answer is a search without meaningful end. das

### Efficient Causality



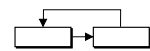
This is where the past pushes the future. The horse is behind the cart. *Because* is the cue and whatever you conclude might over simplify a complicated situation. Be careful. The more confident you are that you know the correct cause, the more likely you are to have fooled yourself!

### Final Causality



This is where the future pulls on the present. The horse is in front of the cart but the causal relationship seems backward. *In order to* is the cue and, like efficient causality, over simplification is likely. Unlike notions of efficient causality, final causality leaves some space for adapting.

### Circular Causality



This is where the past, future, and present all conspire to influence the event. The horse is only a part of the reason why the cart is moving. This is the most common form of causality in the world and the one we least anticipate. Try asking why five times. Watch the circles emerge! das

## This Isn't A Cookbook

### ...the elements of project style.

I am pleased to announce publication of a new edition of an old friend. The little book "This Isn't A Cookbook," which we have been using as workshop pre-reading since back in the Ontara days of 1993, is now available in a new updated edition.

The original was a pamphlet, three-hole punched and stapled in the upper left hand corner. Graphics were sparse.

We've completely redesigned the new edition, creating extensive graphics by Compass graphic artist Wilder Schmaltz and an updated introduction. For those not familiar with it, this little book "is subtitled The Elements of Project Style in homage to William Strunk Jr.'s [author of The Elements of Style] understanding that we don't need to understand all the rules, just the more troublesome ones. Even if we could somehow catalogue all the rules [the book's introduction continues], we'd probably only create a cadre of rule rememberers, who could quote the chapter and verse without really understanding the underlying principles. Let's instead highlight the important principles of style that, when combined with specific context, can help a project leader and their projects survive."



Giordano Bruno, who was burned at the stake as a heretic in Rome's Cam-

The new edition also features a new character, shown at the left. You'll notice Bruno in various guises throughout this edition of Compass. This character is named Bruno, after the 16th century radical humanist

po de Fiori. A statue stands there in his honor today.

Bruno was burned at the stake for believing that the universe was infinite and composed of many solar systems.

The term heretic comes from a Greek term (hairetikos) which means able to choose. I chose Bruno as the icon for this book because I believe strongly that successful project management is more about the choices you make than the recipes you apply.

*"I believe strongly that successful project management is more about the choices you make than the recipes you apply."*

It is fitting that the chef in the "This Isn't A Cookbook" should be someone who was burned at the stake for choosing their own way of looking at the world. I find it gratifying that he turned out to be right!

Those of you attending our Mastering Projects Workshop will receive a copy of this new softbound edition of This Isn't A Cookbook. Those who have already attended the workshop or who have yet to attend may order your updated edition of This Isn't A Cookbook...the elements of project style - at True North's website @ [www.projectcommunity.com](http://www.projectcommunity.com). das

## David's Notes

### True North's Third:

This edition of Compass marks True North project guidance strategies' third anniversary. The first edition of Compass, distributed twenty eight months ago, was delivered to barely five hundred. This edition will be delivered to four thousand! Also with this edition, we expand from a six to an eight panel format.

### Open Enrollment Workshops:

Three more open enrollment Mastering Projects Workshops are scheduled in 1999. These will be conducted under the auspices of the Oregon Graduate Institute of Science and Technology's Center for Professional Development on May 18-20, September 28-30, and November 30 - December 2. See [www.projectcommunity.com](http://www.projectcommunity.com) for online enrollment.

### Leader's Forum:

My colleagues Wayne and Eileen Strider, aka Strider & Cline, Inc., will present their 1999 Leaders' Forums June 26 - July 2 at The Nordic Inn, Mt.Crested Butte, CO and October 2 - 8 at The Bishop's Lodge, Santa Fe, NM. I attended their first Leaders Forum in 1994. It is a place where people who lead others connect to help each other make sense of their curious world. I highly recommend this experience! Check them out at [www.striderandcline.com](http://www.striderandcline.com). or contact [waynestrider@worldnet.att.net](mailto:waynestrider@worldnet.att.net).

### Compass via Email:

Thanks to all of you who asked to have your edition of Compass distributed via email. We continue to offer distribution of this newsletter via the internet. If you'd prefer to save a shrub and receive Compass electronically, please send your email address to [Compassmail@yahoo.com](mailto:Compassmail@yahoo.com). We'll put you on the email list.

### True North's Website:

Our website came online this past quarter @ [projectcommunity.com](http://projectcommunity.com). Check out our weekly rants and get access to:

- online registration for open enrollment Mastering Projects Workshops,
- all of our past newsletter articles, and
- links to interesting sites. das

## Notices:

I am a facilitator for the Weinberg and Weinberg Problem Solving Leadership Workshops. Upcoming workshops are scheduled for:

The week of June 13, 1999 in Albuquerque- I will be facilitating.

The week of September 13th in Albuquerque- I will not be facilitating.

Contact Susie Brame at Wk: (503) 721-0908 or Fx: (503) 226-9066 or [Suzeque@aol.com](mailto:Suzeque@aol.com) or [www.geraldmweinberg.com](http://www.geraldmweinberg.com) for more details.

## About *Compass*

*Compass* is published quarterly by *True North pgs, Inc.*, and is distributed free of charge to a project-oriented community now numbering 4000.

*Compass* is a navigation tool for continuing your process of becoming a project manager. *Compass* shares stories and insights to serve as the basis for you to provide more effective project leadership to your team. We enable each other to improve the quality of our project experiences through sharing our stories and our insights.

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Ask for permission and you'll get it.

*David A. Schmaltz, President*

*True North pgs, Inc.*

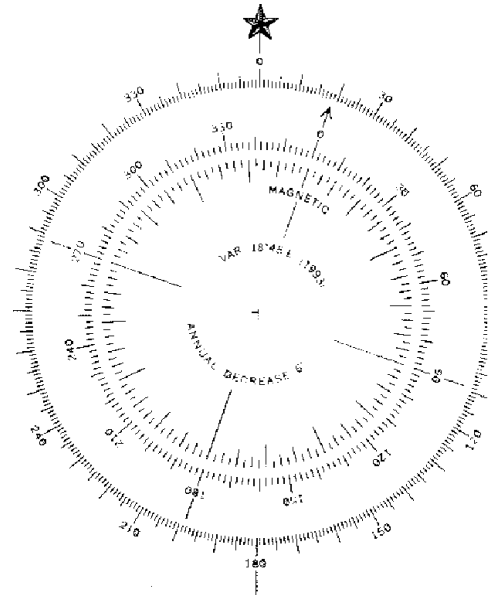
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*"You are  
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project management tool  
you will ever use."*



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## A Mastery Mantra

*III is the proprietor of Systemmodels, a San Francisco-based consulting firm. Contact him at [jiggler@projectcommunity.com](mailto:jiggler@projectcommunity.com)*

Projects are devilish things. They do their best to wiggle away from any effort to tame them, so that they can grow and take on their own identity as mighty beings that control their own destinies. Our challenge -- at least one of them -- is to find a way to shape their form; to maintain a stable frame around the effort so that everyone involved continues to see it the same way. The hairiest part of that challenge is making sure that the agreed set of considerations for the project, often referred to as scope or context, remain the same over time. The alternative is to assure that if the original agreement changes, all hands are clear about how the revised project looks.

All of this pre-supposes that there was an agreement in the first place. When most projects are born, there is usually some kind of declaration that portrays a shared understanding of how big the effort is and what scorecard items we will use to measure its success. The issue of "how big" can be vexing to pin down.

One sure way to stir up devilment is to use the notion of functions, included and excluded, as a statement of bigness. I find that "function" means different things to different people in the project community, and that the dimensions of any two ideas about a particular "function" are likely to be as different as the individuals who hold them. Multiply that diversity by the gaps and overlaps that arise when we try to circle the wagons around a set of "functions" for the project, holding those against a set or "functions" that the project will avoid.

For instance, suppose we had an initiating project agreement for a study of the manufacturing "function," along with a stern warning to steer clear of the marketing "function." It would seem pretty obvious that those two are separable from each other, and that we should be able to

cover the concerns of the one without snagging ourselves on the thorns of the other. We smile, shake hands, sign agreements, and launch into the work. Everything swims famously until we stumble across something known as inventory.

Inventory, the collection of goods on hand, is the target of manufacturing. Manufacturing replenishes inventory. Marketing relieves inventory, and has its own set of inventory interactions. Now what do we do??? We agreed to embrace manufacturing and to shun marketing, and now we have to figure out how to deal with a business reality that involves both "functions." In situations like this, the resolution often starts stretching the bigness frame, with all the pitfalls that make projects devilish

Subduing devils requires some magic. In the Hindu tradition, phrases that help are called "mantras." The Sanskrit roots of Mantra speak of mind and of thinking. It works like this: A phrase that addresses a concern becomes a refrain, repeated as necessary, aloud or silently, to focus the mind on what's next. The more namable the focus, the more direct attention there is for seeing and sharing the project as understood.

**Boundary Is Everything...**

**Boundary Is Everything...**

**Boundary Is Everything...**

The word I use for bigness is boundary. I declare boundary with two exhibits: a picture of the working system that shows communication traffic flows between it and the world, and a faithful census of all acts and decisions from outside the edge that provoke a response inside.



The picture uses the notation from Data Flow Diagramming to show a summary one-lump engine in the middle, and all the necessary information-sharing paths (descriptive

information and directive information) named for the actual details rather than for the conveyance. "Dinner Invitation" tells me more than "E-Mail." Arrowheads show the direction of flow, and are hooked up to boxes that name the pieces of the world at the other end of the line.

The census is a list of Key Events: occurrences out there that have meaning for what's inside. If we think of our lump as a seamless, capable, instantaneous situation-handler, we can directly pinpoint the external messages, instructions, and prompts that call for either a result or just keeping good minutes of everything we ought to be tracking. Clock/Calendar signals go on the list, too. For extra credit, turn it into a table with columns:

- the external decision, act or start-time, or due-date,
- the information that lets you know it took place,
- a simple phrase (or set of phrases, using action verbs and nouns you care about) that governs your internal response to the stimulus; and,
- other references you need or recording you leave (for each of the response phrases).

Creepiness, as in scope creep, lies in "functions." Fuzziness grows from words like context and scope, which point to a mushy edge. Context comes from words about weaving, which speak to how everything is intertwined together, and scope suggests what you can see, inside or out. If I'm looking to lasso this rascal project, I've got to clearly paint my target. The boundary exhibits let me share provable understandings of bigness, and serve as the first line of defense or renegotiation in the case of a morphing of objectives, or resources, or schedules, or community members, or environment, or tools, or authority, or access, or...

**Boundary Is Everything...**

**Boundary Is Everything...**

**Boundary Is Everything...**

III

## Appreciations

III for his Mantra.

Kathy Carey for really courageous editing!

Wilder Schmaltz for the delightful Bruno graphical inventions! Very nice creating stuff with you, son!

Kay Wise for deciding not to hire me!

Mark Gray for perspective.

Joanne Schirm for being the Butt-head®.

Alan Anderson for making stuff seem seamless.

Susie Brame for making the January open enrollment workshop happen!

Marilyn Phillips, Ed Reynolds, and Mark Lewis for inviting me in.

Renee Abreo for sharing his stolen lunch hour.

David Goggins for helping me fix my back!

Tracy Kerievsky for describing her experience.

Lynne Beatty for the showcase.

Tom Gettys for Invisible Cities.

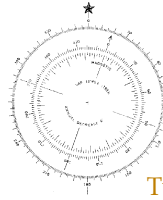
Rick Brenner for tolerating the editing.

Heinz von Foerster for causing causality insights.



Amy Schwab for the impassable! das

## What To Do When You're Stuck



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Some problems have no obvious solution. Two factors—position and precedent—are often responsible when your usual approaches fail.

In teams, competence and seniority usually determine position. Precedents—the customary approaches—hold us to established methods. Position and precedent work against you when you're stuck. Here are five ideas to get you moving again.

### 1. Decide To Do Nothing About This Problem

- A fresh viewpoint might be all you need.
- Go fix something else. If another problem is causing this one, repairing that one resolves them both.
- Maybe this problem is a conspiracy of simpler problems more easily resolved alone. Go fix them instead.

### 2. Replan -- Do Other Things For A While

- The pressure of flowing water keeps logjams jammed. Replanning the problem out of the critical path reduces pressure that stalls creative thinking.
- Applying effort somewhere else, I often learn something that helps with the problem I've set aside.

### 3. Intentionally Generate New Ideas

- Uncover what you don't know you know. Perhaps someone has the missing piece, but doesn't know it. If so, it might help to play a game I call "What Haven't I Told You?" Every-

one thinks of something they haven't heard anyone talk about. Then take turns telling an item to the group.

- Use morphological analysis. Morphological analysis studies the effects of combinations of factors (see Adams: Conceptual Blockbusting). List the factors along the left edge of a page, then copy the same list across the top. Consider the intersection of each row and column. Apply this to the items from "What Haven't I Told You?"

- Do something different. To get something new, do something new. Conduct a brainstorming session or a game of "What Haven't I Told You?" in an unusual place, or invite a comedian to facilitate. Declare a Casual Day, or if your organization is already casual, declare a Suit Day. Jiggle things.

### 4. Suspend Criticism

New ideas are fragile. They might seem to conflict with cherished beliefs, or be incomplete but basically correct. They have few supporters--perhaps only one--and those supporters might lack clout. When the team is discussing new ideas, try adopting this rule: To comment on an idea, you must strengthen it.

### 5. Distribute All Information

You might be tempted to withhold information, especially if it's bad news. Withholding almost always keeps you stuck. Distribute everything you know—now. rb

Rick Brenner runs Chaco Canyon Consulting in Boston. He is a coach and consultant in project management, interpersonal, organizational dynamics in high-pressure environments. He has been a software engineer and consultant for fifteen years, and teaches a course in business modeling at the Harvard University Extension School. Contact him: [rbrenner@chacocanyon.com](mailto:rbrenner@chacocanyon.com) or check out his web site at <http://www.chacocanyon.com>.

## Impassable

### *Don't mistake the edge of your rut for the view of the horizon*

"Road impassable in winter months, four miles ahead," said the sign ten miles past the last turnoff. This New Mexico state highway was the most direct route on the map, yet, here we were, with a potentially, impassable road four miles yonder. Since the calendar said it was spring, in spite of the remnants of snow on the roadside, we decided to venture forth, confident we could turn back should conditions get impassable. Four miles further on the pavement stopped and the adventure began.

As we drove past the final signs of habitation, the road narrowed considerably. A little further on we noticed the pot holes growing in size --



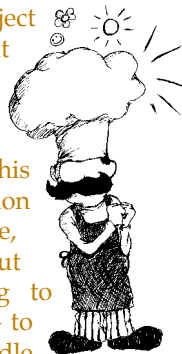
and David pointed out my natural tendency to assume the worst. I assumed any mud puddle spanning the width of the road hid a huge pothole waiting to swallow the car. The road quality deteriorated until we were driving on a sloppy, clay road -- straddling ruts that in many places could clearly high center the car, and carefully keeping up a pace to plow us through the sloppiest of mud holes. An hour and nearly twenty miles later, we reemerged onto pavement, agreeing that, the road was certainly impassable in conditions only marginally worse than we had encountered.

It was the most beautiful drive we'd taken in a long time. It was also one of the most instructive. As I caught myself expecting the worst as we picked our way through the ruts, I was reminded of a quote, "Don't mistake the edge of your rut for the view of the horizon." A good re-

minder of the nature of ruts.

I remembered this again as I started writing this article and as I discovered myself in an old familiar rut. Writing for publication is not very comfortable for me. I'm certain that there in that big mud puddle of the instructed article, is a pothole large enough to swallow me whole. I'm sure that whatever I write won't make sense, or won't be of much value. I fuss, I avoid, I start, restart and re-re-restart as I wrestle with possible topics. Finally I hit on a topic, write for awhile, stop, set it aside, start again, and repeat the cycle until I have several different takes, often minor variations on a theme. Then I hit the wall, abandon the effort, fuss and avoid more and, finally, under pressure of passed deadlines and held up production, fine tune an early version (usually the first one), and pump out the article. I finally finish, feeling bad that I'm late submitting my piece and feeling relieved that the ordeal is finally over.

So, right now I'm in step two of this cycle, nearly falling into the same old rut. But I just remembered that once, only once up until now, I've followed a different process. It was the last thing I wrote -- a rant for the website. I had the tightest deadline ever -- being told to pump out a rant for publishing that morning. Since it was a rant, I just sat down, figured out what I had the most emotion around and wrote about it. I woke up that morning frustrated about something that seemed completely unrelated. I used the rant to work through the frustration and it tied nicely back into project management. Out it flowed like an unbroken stream. I wonder if that can happen again this time? My frustration writing this article, finding myself in a rut again and wanting to choose differently -- to jump out and straddle



this most familiar of ruts. Maybe this time I can catch the horizon -- and not get lost in the view of the edge of the rut.

With projects I see lots of people -- most of them completely unconsciously -- fall into ruts like my expectation that the pot holes would swallow the car. Last week as I role-played the project sponsor during the workshop, I saw the whole group fall into one of these ruts. One minute they were engaging one another as adults, the next minute, as soon as the sponsor entered the room, they turned into solicitous eight year olds. The adult questions I had heard them formulate for the sponsor only moments before were set aside and they began to solicit what they might do for me. I felt as if a shoe shine were imminent. Even in role, I caught myself nearly falling into the game -- wanting to tell them what to do. When we talked about the pattern, they acknowledged it was 'the' pattern. All of their previous comments about the unreasonable sponsors telling them what to do, took on new meaning as we watched that group of adults beg for just what they said they didn't want.

*"...their comments about unreasonable sponsors ... took on new meaning as we watched that group of adults beg for just what they said they didn't want."*

We all have ruts and we mostly can't see them. When we're stuck in our ruts, it is very easy to mistake the edge of the rut for the horizon. We just can't see any other way or we can't even consider that there might be any other way. Occasionally, something happens to disrupt the normal flow, but, without waking up to see how it compares to the normal rut, we'll fall back into our rut eventually getting high centered and then cursing others for the outcome.

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I often need a friend to point out a rut -- like David pointing out my pot-hole assumption. I've also learned I can discover my own ruts too. Once I notice one, I can start paying attention. First, I might catch myself after I fall in. Later, I might catch myself at the moment of choice and still go into the rut. Eventually, I discover, if I stay awake, I can catch myself at the moment of choice, and choose differently. I might choose to straddle the rut, or maybe to select a different route and avoid the rut entirely.

Jerry Weinberg says, "It isn't so much knowing how, as it is knowing when." It is a matter of catching ourselves in the moment, catching ourselves being ourselves. Eventually, when we catch ourselves soon enough, we can choose differently. Then we see the distinction between the horizon and the lowly edge of the rut.

So, back to my rut -- writing this article. I got to experience a different way of writing with my rant. As I started to fall unconscious into my usual newsletter writing rut, I caught myself being myself, and I chose differently. Yes, it is true, as I wrote this I had a tendency to fall back into the rut. Yes, I suspect I might start the same way next time too. However, I think I'll remember that the experience can be different. And, yes, over time, I'll start doing it differently from the beginning -- and find ways to straddle the ruts, and even find unrutted routes to take instead. aas

## RantSpace

Two issues ago- Compass Volume 2, Number 3, I proposed creating a periodic email message - a 'Ping' - that I would send to whomever requested it. I've send a couple of Pings since and, to be honest, I'm not feeling well connected to the idea and am replacing Ping with Rant.

Since we put up our website, we've been using it as a medium to hold forth on whatever we feel needs it. We have been updating our RantSpace each week with whatever seems to be asking for a savaging. Recent rants have included one on the applicability of engineering maturity in the real project world, the wide-spread practice of "brown nosing" (pun intended), what it feels like to be smart, and other thorns in our sides. So, if you'd like a Ping, stop by and see what has gotten under our saddles lately!

[www.projectcommunity.com/rantSpace.html](http://www.projectcommunity.com/rantSpace.html) das

## What Are They Learning at the Mastering Projects Workshop?

*I've gleaned the following statements from one workshop's participant comments.*

*From: S. F.:*

Projects are messy - learn to enjoy the mess and recognize when good enough is good enough and perfection isn't required.

*From: G. R.:*

Projects are not perfect, can not be perfect. Plan for and accept the im-

perfection.

*From: D. K.:*

1) Expanding my project community - in particular, I'm going to work to embrace a certain person who has been very less than enthusiastic about my project

2) Changing my project plan to be more realistic - I will redo certain aspects of my project plan to reflect more realistic, short-term (13-week horizon) goals.

3) Recognizing that some of my problems are actually dilemmas - Some of my project's problems actually have more than one solution, whereas I have been viewing the situation as binary (right or wrong).

*From L. L.:*

The class reinforced the idea of helping the people around me get what they need/want out of a project (including me). I learned to try to be generous, listen, and have grace (don't jump to judgements - understand that it's okay for someone else's perspective to be different than mine). I plan to use the things I learned in all areas of my life - not just at work!

You should consider joining us in an upcoming Mastering Projects Workshop. Online enrollment at [www.projectcommunity.com.das](http://www.projectcommunity.com.das)

## It's Me!

*This one moved me most. das*

*From: L. C.:*

"Above all, never be needier than your project."

I came to realize that I was the source of the frustration that motivated me to take this workshop:

\* I am anal-retentive.

\* I try to do everything perfectly.

\* I expect to be able to perform on

multiple projects at the same level as if I were dedicated to a single project.

\* I self-impose and then miss deadlines that are not otherwise driven by the project.

\* I (mis)interpret silence from my customers as disapproval.

It's not because of the \*\*\*\* Computer Support Team.

It's not because of \*\*\*\* installation problems.

It's me.