

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER PRESENTS

# ED YOURDON

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## MANAGING DEATH-MARCH PROJECTS

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**NOVEMBER 30 – DECEMBER 1, 2009**  
RESIDENZA DI RIPETTA - VIA DI RIPETTA, 231  
ROME (ITALY)



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# MANAGING DEATH-MARCH PROJECTS

## ABOUT THIS SEMINAR

Historically, all software projects have involved risk and pressure — but many of the projects in today’s chaotic Business environment involve such intense pressure that they require non-standard, radical management techniques. This seminar is a survival guide for managers and project team members who are about to embark upon a “mission impossible” effort.

The seminar is not about the things we would all like to do, to “do it right” and it is not a conventional sermon about the benefits of rapid prototyping and iterative development life-cycles. While we all believe in rigorous software methodologies and the “Boy Scout” virtues that lead to high levels of software quality and easily maintainable systems, they can be counter-productive and even fatal in high-pressure “do-or-die” projects.

Death-March Project Management is concerned with five key aspects of a project: politics, people, process, project-management, and tools. Death-March doesn’t pull any punches, and does not beat around the bush when it comes to hard-hitting advice. Don’t come to this seminar if you want to know what “nice” people do in “nice” projects; come instead if you’ve been thrown into a nasty, ugly project where everyone has come to the conclusion that the “standard way of doing business” will lead to a guaranteed failure.

### WHO SHOULD ATTEND

- Project Managers
- Systems Analysts
- Designers and Programmers involved in high-risk projects

The seminar is also intended for the End-Users who are involved in the project, and who may worry that they will become participants in a disaster. And it is also recommended for members of the Senior Management staff who commissioned the high-risk project in the first place, and/or who may be responsible for having created the high-risk conditions. These peripheral “players” in the project will ultimately be viewed as friends or enemies by the project team, once it begins; it is extremely useful for End-Users and Senior Managers to understand how they can help — and why it is often better to just stay out of the way — as the project team bulldozes its way to a successful completion.

## 1. Introduction

- Definition and characteristics of a Death-March Project
- Why are Death-March Projects occurring today?
- Why would anyone want to be involved in such a project?

## 2. Death-March Politics

- Identifying the owners, customers, shareholders, and stakeholders in the Death-March Project
- Determining the basic nature of the project: “mission impossible” (we succeed and live happily ever after) versus “kamikaze project” (the project succeeds but we’ll all be dead at the end) versus “suicide mission” (overwhelming political forces want the project to fail, and we’re the sacrificial lambs)
- Levels of commitment to an Death-March Project: the parable of the chicken and pig discussing a bacon-and-eggs breakfast

## 3. Death-March Negotiations

- Identifying acceptable tradeoffs between schedule, budget, staff resources, quality, and other constraints
- Tools for rational negotiation of tradeoffs
- What to do when rational communication is impossible

## 4. Death-March Peopleware issues

- Hiring and staffing issues for an Death-March project: putting the best possible people on the project
- Identifying loyalty and commitment issues: to oneself, one’s family, the project, the company etc.

- The importance of communicating the urgency, priorities, constraints, and risks of the project
- Team-building issues: team roles, helping the team “gel,” keeping teams together from one Death-March project to another etc.
- The Manager’s role in an Death-March team: hands-on Managers who live in the project “war-room,” versus hands-off Managers who allow the team to manage its own day-to-day affairs

## 5. Death-March Processes

- Formal versus informal processes: the contrast between the SEI process model, and the “mad-world” model popularized by the shrink-wrap software industry
- The importance of getting the project team to “own” the process they use in the project
- The importance of prototyping (in case anyone has forgotten!)
- Using simulation models to explore the impact of different process strategies before the project begins

## 6. The Dynamics of Processes

- Models of software development processes: mental models, spreadsheet models, static versus dynamic models
- Visual models
- An example: Tarek Abdel-Hamid’s Software Process model
- New research from Ray Madachy

## 7. Simulators and “war games” for modeling Death-March Projects

- The concept of “war-games”
- Benefits and advantages of conducting “war-game” exercises

- Techniques for conducting software development “war-games” with simulation models

## 8. Death-March Project Control

- Management styles for different types of Death-March Projects: innovative, high-intensity but “traditional” application development etc.
- Measuring, managing, and controlling progress
- The importance of a “daily build” to establish credible progress milestones in large, complex Death-March Projects
- The essence of Risk Management, distilling the key ideas published by Charette, Jones, Thomsett etc.

## 9. Death-March Tools

- Identifying a minimal toolset for Death-March Projects; what are the most crucial tools that the team must have?
- A checklist of tools in the area of prototyping, configuration management, groupware, testing etc. The risks of choosing new tools in an Death-March Project

## 10. Death-March as a way of life

- What if this Death-March Project is just the first of many?
- Establishing a Death-March “culture” within the organization
- Death-March training and annual visits to the Death-March “flight simulator”

## INFORMATION

<p><b>PARTICIPATION FEE</b></p> <p>€ 1200</p> <p>The fee includes all seminar documentation, luncheon and coffee breaks.</p> <p><b>VENUE</b></p> <p>Residenza di Ripetta Via di Ripetta, 231 Rome (Italy)</p> <p><b>SEMINAR TIMETABLE</b></p> <p>9.30 am - 1.00 pm 2.00 pm - 5.00 pm</p>	<p><b>HOW TO REGISTER</b></p> <p>You must send the registration form with the receipt of the payment to: <b>TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER S.r.l.</b> Piazza Cavour, 3 - 00193 Rome (Italy) Fax +39-06-6871102</p> <p><b>within</b> <b>November 16, 2009</b></p> <p><b>PAYMENT</b></p> <p>Wire transfer to: Technology Transfer S.r.l. Banca Intesa Sanpaolo S.p.A. Agenzia 6787 di Roma Iban Code: IT 34 Y 03069 05039 048890270110</p>	<p><b>GENERAL CONDITIONS</b></p> <p><b>GROUP DISCOUNT</b></p> <p>If a company registers 5 participants to the same seminar, it will pay only for 4. Those who benefit of this discount are not entitled to other discounts for the same seminar.</p> <p><b>EARLY REGISTRATION</b></p> <p>The participants who will register 30 days before the seminar are entitled to a 5% discount.</p> <p><b>CANCELLATION POLICY</b></p> <p>A full refund is given for any cancellation received more than 15 days before the seminar starts. Cancellations less than 15 days prior the event are liable for 50% of the fee. Cancellations less than one week prior to the event date will be liable for the full fee.</p> <p><b>CANCELLATION LIABILITY</b></p> <p>In the case of cancellation of an event for any reason, Technology Transfer's liability is limited to the return of the registration fee only.</p>
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Registration fee:  
€ 1200

*If registered participants are unable to attend, or in case of cancellation of the seminar, the general conditions mentioned before are applicable.*

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## SPEAKER

**Ed Yourdon** is a veteran of the IT industry for nearly 45 years, Ed Yourdon has been deeply involved in the Internet revolution since it began in the mid-1990s; he has served on Boards of Directors and technical advisory boards for numerous high-tech startup companies in the U.S. and India. He has been involved in Enterprise 2.0 since its beginnings in the 2002-2003 period, and he currently consults, lectures, and writes about various aspects of the new technologies. Mr. Yourdon will summarize the technologies, identify the strategic issues facing IT managers and senior executives today. He is an internationally-recognized computer consultant, as well as the author of more than two dozen books, including: ***“Byte Wars”***, ***“Managing High-Intensity Internet Projects”***, ***“Death March”***, ***“Rise and Resurrection of the American Programmer”***, and ***“Decline and Fall of the American Programmer”***. His latest book, ***“Outsource: competing in the global productivity race”***, discusses both current and future trends in offshore outsourcing, and provides practical strategies for individuals, small Businesses, and the nation to cope with this unstoppable tidal wave. According to the December 1999 issue of *“Crosstalk: The Journal of Defense Software Engineering”*, Ed Yourdon is one of the ten most influential men and women in the software field. In June 1997, he was inducted into the Computer Hall of Fame, along with such notables as Charles Babbage, Seymour Cray, James Martin, Grace Hopper, Gerald Weinberg, and Bill Gates.