

Leadership Message

My first contact with SPINs (Software Process Improvement Networks) was in the mid-1990s in Europe - Sweden to be exact. Version 1.1 of the Software CMM had been released and many companies were starting to use this new thing called "a maturity model". There was a lot of misunderstanding

around the concept, the maturity model was often equated with a software development life cycle and attempts were made to rigorously implement all of the key practices and sub-practices (actually this misconception still turns up every now and then).

It was an interesting time, many industries had begun to replace

mechanical designs with software (so called embedded software) and managers in many of these companies did not understand software. Some of them did not even know that their products contained software. One actually told me that software had never had defects – just things called "bugs"!

But the SPINs in Europe at that time never really took off, for a variety of reasons: SPIN was seen as an American phenomena; people in many European countries would not dream of sacrificing "free time" for competence building activities; the critical mass for a volunteer organization did not exist in many cities; companies were not willing to share their blemishes or their successes for that matter.

Ten years later, I find myself in Waterloo, Canada and the software CMM has been replaced by CMMI – in fact CMMI now in three flavours: product development, product acquisition, and service delivery. Were there functioning SPINs in Canada? Was Canada more European or American? Now-a-days all information can be found on the internet – so I googled "SPIN". I found a SPIN in Waterloo that seemed to be defunct and another in Toronto. I attended a couple of interesting events and thought "this is an organization I want to be part of" and then nothing! Turns out Toronto SPIN was going through a crisis, only a very few volunteers, all of course with day jobs, meant people with



Winifred Menezes

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Please submit any feedback on this newsletter as well as articles and digital photographs for consideration in future issues to communications@torontospin.com.

Note that this newsletter and past issues of this monthly newsletter are available online at <http://www.torontospin.com/torontospin/press.shtml>.

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diminished time to devote to SPIN, fewer events, less publicity, even fewer volunteers, clearly a downward spiral.

Was I interested in volunteering? Well yes – I think SPIN is an ideal way to share experiences in process improvement and to network – but the trip from Waterloo to Toronto on the 401 is not exactly a joy and I travel a lot (1-2 weeks each month all over the world) – "I'd love to support you but I can't" was my answer. That was when I found to my delight that Toronto SPIN was flexible enough to accommodate me. Phone meetings and e-mail enable some level of participation even from the other end of the world. Specific projects (survey, elections, and specific events) allow concentrated effort over shorter time period.

In parting – if you believe in the mission of Toronto SPIN and are interested in volunteering, but are concerned about the effort required – don't hesitate. There is a way for you to contribute to Toronto SPIN, taking into account your specific skills and the amount of time you can spare.

Winifred Menezes
Steering Committee Member

TSPIN April Event: Measuring Software Process & the Benefits of Software Process Improvement

Our April event theme was “Measuring Software Process and the Benefits of Software Process Improvement”. Our speakers were David Herron of David Consulting Group (Toronto SPIN’s Diamond Sponsor) and Dino D’Agostino from IBM Canada.

In light of the economic meltdown, many organizations are looking for real measurements and ROI on any kind of improvement initiative, so these topics were particularly relevant. We had 34 attendees gather in a downtown boardroom in the financial district for these presentations. David Herron’s entertaining and thought-provoking presentation on identifying real measures of software process activities and his presentation of a case study was extremely well-received. Dino D’Agostino spoke to the tangible benefits that any kind of software process improvement can bring, and presented a solution from IBM to streamline software development and delivery processes.

In observance of Earth Day, we also gave away baby pine trees as door prizes in addition to the usual books and memory sticks.

Thanks to BMO Capital Markets for providing the venue for this event.

*Vivienne Suen
Steering Committee Member*



April TSPIN Event Attendees



David Herron



Dino D'Agostino



Orhan Kalayci

Upcoming Events

May TSPIN Event - Software Testing



Toronto SPIN is delighted to host another exciting conference event this month.

Pedram Faghihi, Process Analyst and Training Lead at Aviva Canada will present "Software Testing Process Improvement". The focus of this discussion is on the practical approaches toward Software Testing Process Improvement, sharing of the reality and walking through key points toward the guaranteed success.

Ryan Lloyd, Product Manager at MKS Inc. will present "Standard Engineering Practices applied to Software Testing". The aim of this discussion is to highlight some standard engineering practices that can be applied to software testing, allowing testing teams to get greater reuse and value out of their test artifacts.

Check out the full event details on the event poster at the [registration website](#).

What's Goin' On?

Check out the following learning opportunities:

May 26, 2009 – **TSPIN May Event** at IBM Canada Ltd., 3600 Steeles Avenue East, Markham (5:30-8:30PM). Free visitor parking available (follow signs). \$20 at the door. Register at torontospin.com.

June 9-12, 2009 – **SEPG Europe 2009** in Prague, Czech Republic

September 21-24, 2009 – **SEI Team Software Process (TSP) Symposium** in New Orleans, Louisiana

November 2-5, 2009 – **International Conference on Computer Science and Software Engineering (CASCON)** in Richmond Hill, Ontario

TSPIN Brain Teaser Contest

Across

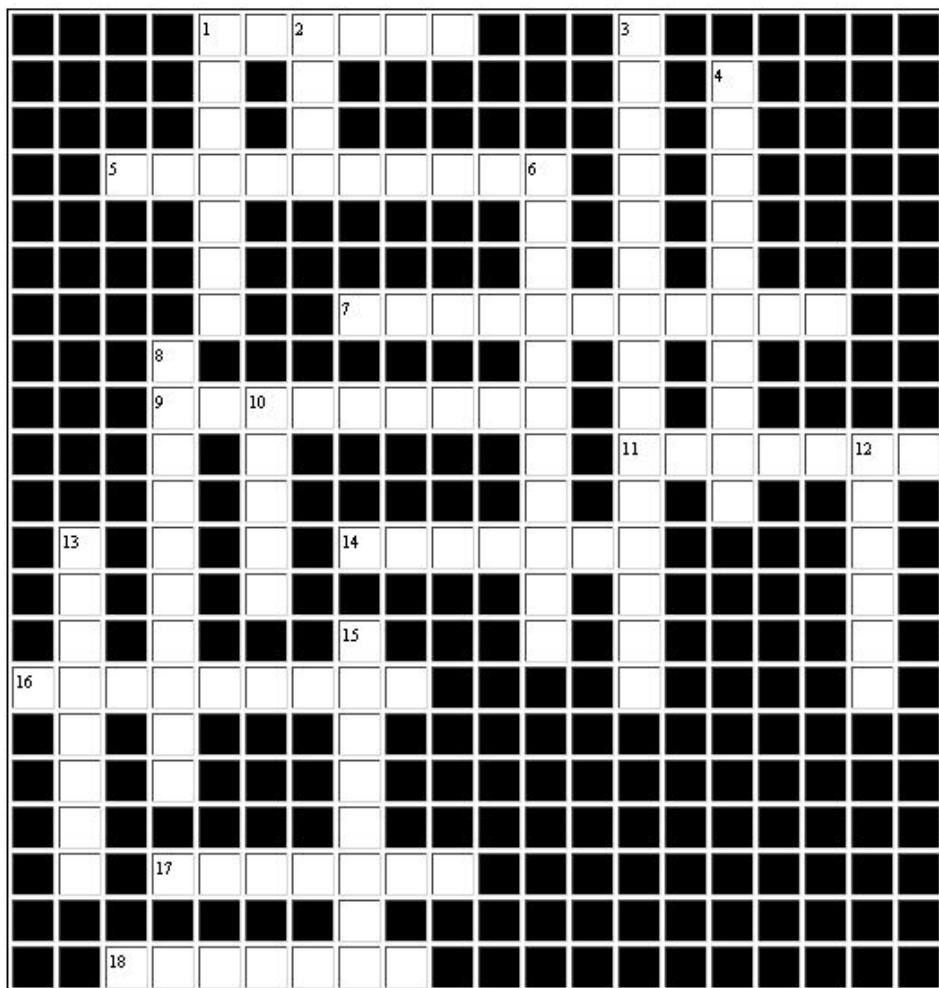
1. CMMI appraisals may be ____ or continuous
5. Level 2 of the CMMI
7. Area of interest addressed by CMMI-ACQ
9. Software Engineering ____, the organization owning the CMMI
11. Level 4 of the CMMI
14. Level 1 of the CMMI
16. CMMI Levels are achieved through _____
17. SPIN - Software Process Improvement _____
18. Level 3 of the CMMI

Down

1. Another CMMI process category
2. Process _____ - A cluster of activities in the CMMI
3. Educational institution that is home to the CMMI
4. Level 5 of the CMMI
6. One of the process categories of the CMMI
8. City where the CMMI "resides"
10. Six ____, an alternative process improvement model
12. ____ Value Management, project management approach commonly combined with CMMI
13. Watts ____, father of the CMMI
15. Location of the 2009 SEPG North America conference

You could win a free pass to a future TSPIN event!

Submit your completed puzzle via email to communications@torontospin.com or fax to (845) 264-6649 by June 12, 2009. All correct entries will be collected and one winner will be randomly drawn. Winners will be announced in the next monthly newsletter.



Puzzle contributed by:
Vivienne Suen
 Steering Committee
 Member

Toronto SPIN Volunteer Team

Toronto SPIN would not exist without the support of dedicated volunteers. Many thanks to all our volunteers who contribute their time to making Toronto SPIN the success that it is today.

If you are interested in volunteer opportunities with Toronto SPIN, please send an email to volunteers@torontospin.com. You will be invited to attend a one-hour volunteer orientation session that will give you a full overview of how Toronto SPIN is organized so you can determine if, and how, you want to participate.

Steering Committee

You've probably seen the table in the newsletter with the names of Steering Committee members and wondered about the process for being elected or joining the Steering Committee. So here is some information on how this works now as well as changes that are in the pipeline.

The Steering Committee meets monthly, usually on the third Wednesday of the month, though this can change depending on travel and availability. All Toronto SPIN members are welcome to attend Steering Committee meetings. Members interested in serving on the Steering Committee need to attend 3 meetings after which they are "voted in" by the Steering Committee. Meeting minutes are public and are published on the Toronto SPIN website.

If you are interested in attending a meeting and need to know the date and time, send an e-mail to info@torontospin.com

However, active Toronto SPIN members have been discussing the need to have an elected Steering Committee. Our constitution does not allow for elections, so first we need to amend the constitution. This work is in progress, hopefully more information in the next newsletter. Once the amendments have been agreed to, the hope is to have elections early next year.

*Winifred Menezes
Steering Committee Member*

Our Current Volunteer Team

Steering Committee

Doris Concepcion	IBM Canada Ltd.
Andrew Gurudata	Telus Mobility
Rekha Kulshreshtha	IBM Canada Ltd.
Renay Langdon	eHealth Ontario
Winifred Menezes	Freya Consulting Ltd.
Ruben Montero	IBM Canada Ltd.
Vivienne Suen	IBM Canada Ltd.
Erika Vintan	Bank of Montreal
Kirk Zapa	KAYZET Inc.

Volunteer Team

Cristina Dumitrescu	TUCOWS
Emmanuel Gonnet	Gem Up Consulting
Miriam Hashmi	IBM Canada Ltd.
Orhan Kalayci	eHealth Ontario
Simon Kalechstein	IBM Canada Ltd.
Joyce MacDonald	Gregory Consulting Ltd.
Lynne McCombes	MKS
Sachin Quadros	IBM Canada Ltd.
Kaniska Rakhit	
Venkat Ramaseshan	IBM Canada Ltd.

General Volunteers

Sanford Hersh	Computer Elations Inc.
Susan Muckle	Ontario Energy Board
Jenna Munro	IBM Canada Ltd.
Juana Zegarra	CGI Inc.
Hamid Yazdanpanah	IBM Canada Ltd.

*Renay Langdon
TSPIN Volunteer Sub-Committee Lead*

Need More?

Here are some helpful references:

Social Networking

For TSPIN members to contact and communicate with each other, we've set up [an official Toronto SPIN group on LinkedIn](#). Members of this group will be able to start a discussion, submit a news article and view job posting.

Toronto 'SPINner' Online

Did you know that this newsletter and past issues of this monthly newsletter [are available online](#)?

Speaker Presentations from Past Events

Remember that final speaker presentations [are available on our website](#) for your reference.

Register for Upcoming Events

Submit your registrations for upcoming events [on our website](#).