


# Laying The Foundations Before Building


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European SEPG 2006

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# Welcome




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## Introductions



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## Peter Leeson



- Over 30 years in software engineering
- Over 12 years in process improvement
- SCAMPI Lead Appraiser
- Introduction to CMMI trainer
- International experience
- British, speaking Dutch, French, bad German and nearly no Chinese
- Founder and Director of Q:PIT Ltd

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## Carlos Flores Ramirez

- Over 20 years of experience in IT and Consulting
- Almost 10 years optimizing organisations: SE PI, Outsourcing, Strategic Alignment, Service Delivery Processes, etc.
- International experience: North and South-America, Western and Eastern Europe
- Working experience in Spanish, English, French and Italian, some Portuguese & Flemish
- IT Director in AXA Belgium since 2001





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## Structure Of The Workshop


- Purpose
- Theory
- Practical experience
- Response
- Round table



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 **Contents** 

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- Know what you want to build
- Choose the site carefully
- Draw the plans
- Dig the hole
- Pour the concrete
- Start building

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 **Know What You Want To Build**

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## Cultural Change



**Moving**

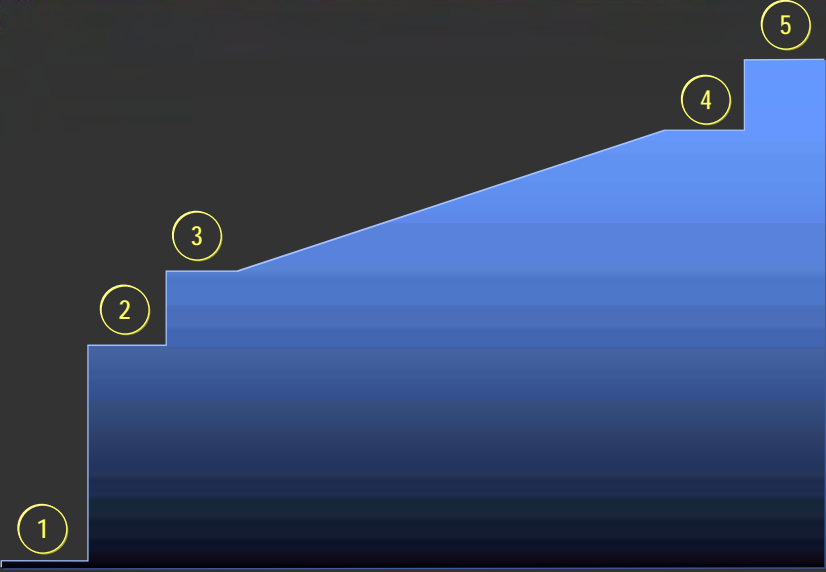

- From doing what seems right considering today's pressures and priorities
- To doing what we know to be right for the organization's future

**Switching**

- From minding my own business
- To understanding roles and responsibilities


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## Cultural Change



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## Cultural Change

Focus on what matters

Communicate why things need to be done rather than just that something needs to be done

Makes sure you understand the organization's need for improvement and focus on improving the organization

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## Cultural Change

Communicate

Communicate

Communicate

Communicate

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Communicate

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Communicate

Communicate

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Communicate

**Listen**

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## Cultural Change

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### Focus on the people

- Training
- Explaining
- Understanding

### Work within the culture


- The people you have
- The way of working you have
- The processes you have

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## Know what you want to build?: try hard!

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- How do you define an unknown target?
- How do you define the road to a place you have never been?
- How do you prepare for a journey you have never experienced?
- What do you do when you have to go a place nobody in your organisation has gone before?
  
- **No need to need all the details BUT be sure to know the nature of the challenge and prepare yourself**



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## Know what you want to build: what is not?

- It is not a technical issue
- Very little to do with a methodology
- Nothing to do with buying a tool
- Not a problem armies of consultants will solve.
- Not a problem you can outsource or offshore
- **This is a people challenge**
- **This is a question of attitude**
- **The real thing you need is a different mindset!**
  
- **Culture is the most difficult thing to change...**



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## Our “cultural” experiences




- **We recognised the nature of the challenge**
- **We had an approach: “viral infection”**
- **We had the right messages**
- **We started to “infect” some key people BUT**
  - **We underestimated the challenge**
  - **We did not prepare it enough**
  - **We had difficulties to find the right help**
  - **We did not communicate enough (remember Kotter!)**



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# Choosing The Site



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## Business Goals

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Understand what are the business objectives

Do you want to be

- The best,
- The first,
- The cheapest, or
- The only one

Align your improvement goals to your business goals

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## Reasons To Change

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Why do you want to change?

What's wrong today?

What's the rush?

Who wants to change?

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## Management Involvement

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- Top management involvement
- Middle management involvement
- Project management involvement
- Line management involvement
- Other management involvement

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## Making the Tough Choices

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- Approach**
  - Select an approach that fits your culture
- Model**
  - Choose a model that will support you for years

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## Choosing the site: What did we want to achieve? Why?

- How do you link your IT organisation goals to your business goals?
- How do you link your PI journey into those goals?
- What do you do when you do not have enough quantitative data?
- How can you steer the Program when some of your clients are sceptical?
- How do you convince your people that the situation has to change/improve? How do you help them to change?
- How do you help your top management to visibly commit on a daily basis?
- How do you focus the organisation?
- **Too many questions to be answered, not enough data to be sure of the answer. You must make the effort of understanding why?**



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## Our initial “decisions”

- We understood the main focus and direction but did not have enough quantitative evidence
- We wanted to work details with clients but we could not ask all the clients for more participation in another IT Improvement Program, so we approached them one by one.
- We tried to gain their participation on the basis of quick-wins and measurable small improvements on the field, it was not easy.
- We decided to focus on some dimensions of our work: Estimations, Project Management and Monitoring, Requirements Management. We took too long to focus on the other areas



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## Our initial “decisions”

- We tried to organise 1 real steering for the Program (with the business) but ended up with 1 by Business Line.
- We did not communicate enough on the urgency of the situation and had to deal with a lot of resistance along the way.
- We funded the project internally and were lucky to have that possibility. Benefits are real but difficult to quantify at the beginning.
- We followed the advise of an expert and went for CMMI staged version, honestly we did not really mind. We had to start the journey and we had more important things to discuss.
- We started Big Bang, all teams, all Process areas. Somehow there were better ways.
- **A lot of decisions based on beliefs and following expert opinion BUT what was the alternative?**



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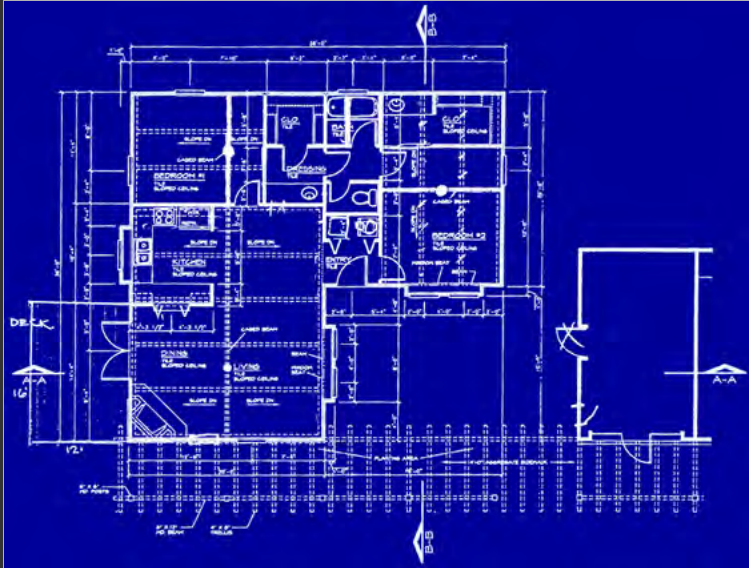
# Contents



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## Draw The Plans



The image shows a detailed architectural floor plan of a building, rendered in white lines on a dark blue background. The plan includes various rooms such as a reception area, a lounge, a kitchen, and several bedrooms. It also shows structural elements like walls, doors, windows, and a grid system. A north arrow is visible in the upper right corner. The drawing is surrounded by a decorative border with a rainbow gradient.

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## Establish The Current Status

What are current strengths and weaknesses

- Appraisal does not mean SCAMPI
- Use professional help

Root causes and impact analysis


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## Goals

- Measurable progress
- Time frames
- Milestones

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## Understanding

- Get your process improvement people to understand process improvement
- Establish the policy

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## Choosing the site: What did we want to achieve? How?

- How do you define your real situation?
- How do you ensure people understand and believe it?
- How do you define the criteria for success when your baseline is not clear?
- How do you ensure everybody knows what we are talking about?
- How do you measure progress?
- What is the business case of this initiative?
- How do you focus the organisation?
- How do you make clear what you want?
  
- **Do not underestimate the level of leadership you have to take**



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## Our initial “decisions”


- We asked an external company to measure our maturity (SCAMPI C) and we saw we had to a lot of work to do.
- We decided to focus on some dimensions of our work: Estimations, Project Management and Monitoring, Requirements Management. We took too long to focus on the other areas
- We trained everybody: all developers 1day, all managers and directors and key people at least 3 days, special training for QA people, we organised info sessions for Business. An absolute must! And not only once.
- We spent weeks defining and communicating our policy. People worried about: confidentiality of metrics, hierarchy of policy, processes, procedures, etc. It was a good communication tool, very much worth the effort!



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 **Dig The Hole**



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## Team


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- Consultant
- EPG
- Specialists
- Management
- Leadership

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## Infrastructure

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- OPF, OPD, IPM
- Change management

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## Dig the hole: The team and the infrastructure

- Do you hire your QA team?, or do you train them?, and what about your SEPG?
- Is there a right mix of internal versus externals?
- Who will lead the effort?, At executive level?, at managerial level? How do you manage it?
- How do you organise the teams in the field?
- Who is responsible for the Process Improvement? The Managers?, the Directors?, the engineers?
- What are the roles and responsibilities of participants? Sponsor, Managers, Directors, engineers, support teams, etc.
- How are your processes going to relate to each other?
- How do we help people to deal with the change?
- **Without a dedicated team and a lot of support, better forget the whole thing.**



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## Our team and how we started

- We tried to hire as much expertise as possible, it was difficult and took more time, money and effort than expected. The good news is that the good experts we found were really good.
- Managing processes is different than managing people and not the same as managing application development. Give your people a chance but be prepared to take decisions.
- We assigned responsibility to Directors responsible for Business Lines, in some cases they were still digesting the change, in some cases they needed a lot of support. Accept that speeds will be different but focus on progress.
- We tried to get a day a week from the sponsor; if he agrees you have to fill that day, If he does not agree maybe he/she did not understand yet.
- We developed a Process Architecture after writing the Processes, it was painful!. PLEASE develop the Process Architecture from the start



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## Our team and how we started

- We tried to build the QA function slowly, let's start with 10% assignments and then increase to 50% of full time. Maybe it is better to have more discussions and start with full time people BUT it requires a lot of commitment and faith.
- We tried to manage the Program by the Directors on the field. Do not underestimate the effort: training, understanding, change, etc. leadership has to make to lead the program.
- We failed trying to find help and a simple way to manage change. It does not exist, managing change is a question of every day and every moment and you need to repeat and repeat the messages and work on the field with all people.



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## Pour The Concrete




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## Sustainable

- CM
- PPQA
- MA
- Policy
- Management review
- Build on bases
- Improve, don't invent

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# Training

Getting the people to understand  
More than a model  
ML5

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## Pour the concrete, how to make it last?

- How to deploy the processes?
  - Big bang?, everybody at the same speed?, what type of pilots?
  - Gradually?, in waves?, team by team or BL by BL?
- How to build the QA function?
- How to make the policy alive?
- How do you write processes in areas there is almost no knowledge in the house?
- Do you need very good processes? What to do when you do not have very good processes?
- What training to organise?, process training?, what about software engineering training? Who do you train?, who trains?
- **More questions of a new different nature!**



## How we poured the foundation?

- We decided to launch all processes in all teams in waves, 2 days of Project Launch by team, write an action plan to address gaps identified and then deploy. Maybe it was going to be easy to pilot processes in teams that were somehow advanced and then generalize.
- We decided to launch by Business Line. On perspective, same as previous line.
- Building the QA function was a very difficult, we got a lot of externals helping and we had to develop internals to take over. It was difficult to get the right people –they were busy doing projects-. It required a lot of training, coaching, support. There is no other way to deal with this. It is your organisation, your people and you have to build with them your QA function.
- The policy also took us some time, it was a participatory effort lead by the CIO and ended up being a solid document BUT it was a new experience for the organisation and took some time to agree and see it in the same way.



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## How we poured the foundation?

- We had a problem with the quality of the processes? Do you deploy processes that seem to be not very good? Do you rewrite them before deploying?, do you write them by a team of experts of do you accept what the workgroups produce?. One of our workgroups decided they did not need training on 1 particular engineering discipline, we are still having problems on this subject.
- Training was a lot of work to prepare. Most of the initial material was prepared by good external experts but our people did not like it. Then we adapted it to our local liking and some other people did not like. We tried to train the trainers and ensure continuity but then we found out most of our good people were busy giving training and did not have to do the job.
- **If you want the change to last, start with what you got and continue improving the situation day by day. QA is key.**





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# Start Building



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## Selling To Your Customers

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Don't forget your customers are paying for this  
Engineering Process Areas

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## Focus On Quality

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Understanding quality  
Don't trust the model  
Manage your risks

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## Plan Your Improvement Project

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- Requirements development
- Technical solution
- Verification and validation
- Project planning, monitoring and control

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### Start building

- How to involve your customers in deployment? They will be involved and can make it as painful or as easy as they want.
- How to improve the engineering processes areas in a traditional environment?
- Once again, why are doing all this?, what are our objectives?
- Do we understand Quality in the same way?
- How much do we follow the model?
- How do you plan a project of such a different nature?
- How do you execute a project of such a different nature?
- How do you deal with Change Management every day?
- **Once more, how do you answer questions about a topic you do not know?**



## How we started building?

- We decided to have a pragmatic approach to involving customers?, By Business line and by team. It went ok sometimes, great others and gave problems some other times. In perspective, I think we should have made more of a central effort and communicating to them along the journey.
- Too many times we had people that said: The Practice nn.mm says this,..the model says this, we have to follow the process... Do not stop asking WHY? And requiring an answer!
- Clarify what you mean by Quality, illustrate it with examples, do not assume you will be understood the first time.
- The first year we decided that every Business Line was responsible for the planning and execution, the second year we added a Program Office to improve focus and visibility. We should had started with the Program Office and put more resources in SEPG but it is easy to say it now.



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## Conclusion



Know what you want to build

Choose the site carefully

Draw the plans

Dig the hole

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Start building

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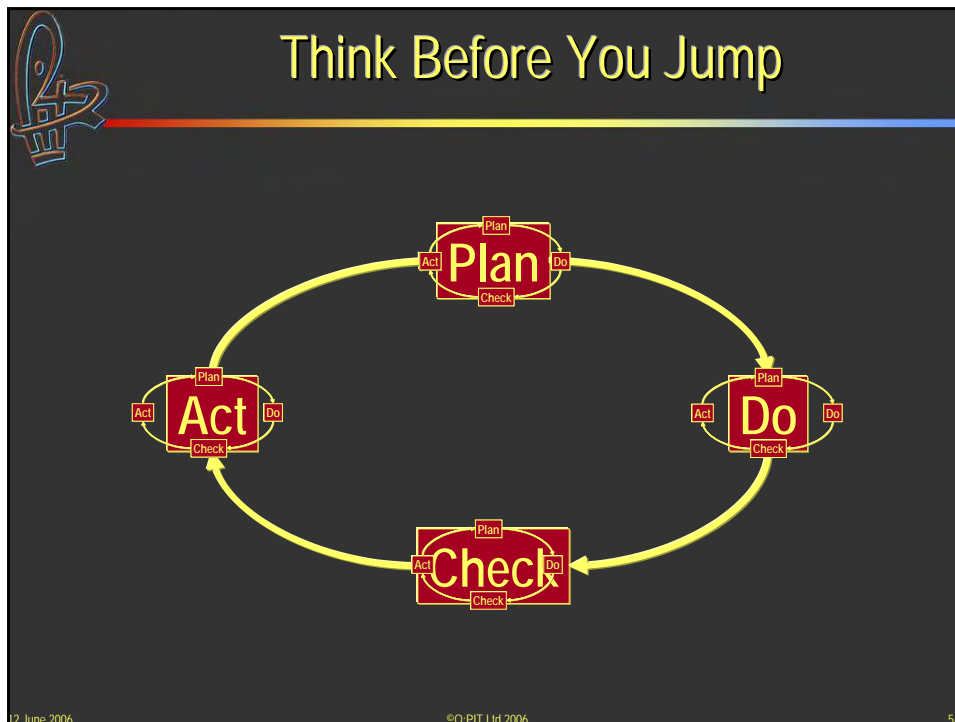
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## CONCLUSION

- Changing the culture of your organisation is one of the biggest challenges you can undertake as an executive.
- Process Improvement is about changing the culture, the way every single person will work.
- Do not underestimate the effort needed to prepare and execute you improvement program.
- Do not underestimate the size of barriers to change.
- Do not underestimate the amount of support your people need and the amount of effort you have to make.
- Before you believe it is impossible or stop your Process Improvement Project: Do not underestimate the benefits you, your organisation, your clients and your people will get.
- **Of course it is difficult, if it was too easy it was not going to be fun!**



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## Focus On Culture

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Process Improvement in 3 words

- Goal
- Common sense
- Improve

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## Start From The Top

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Change management requires changing management  
or changing management

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## PI Is A Project


PI Engineering is like any other engineering project with

- Deliverables
- Accountability
- Plans
- Resources
- Requirements
- Design before building
- Testing
- etc

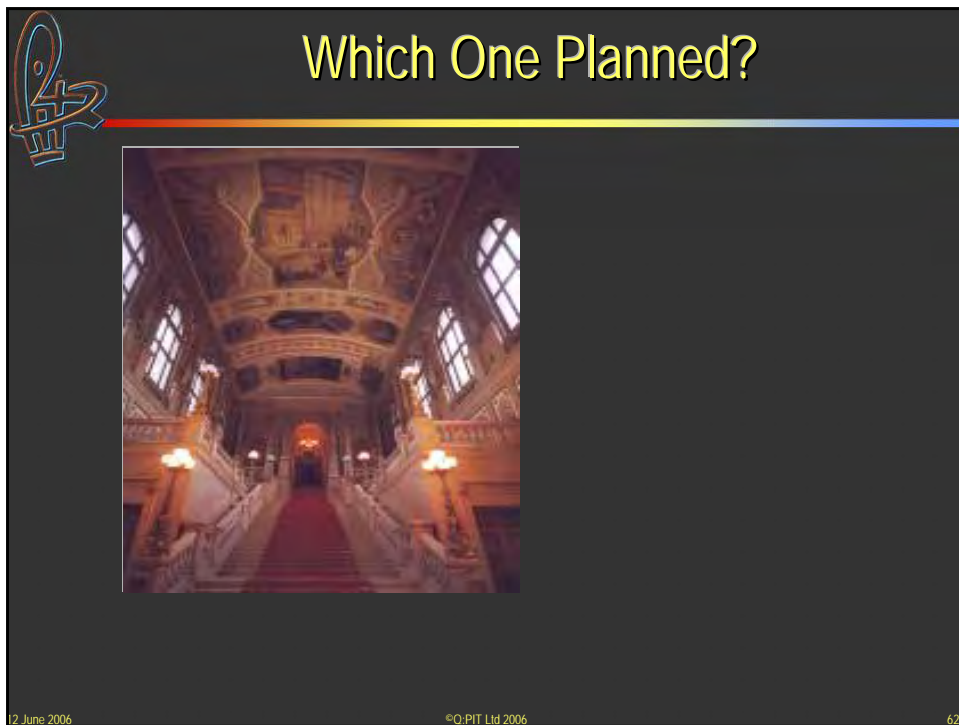
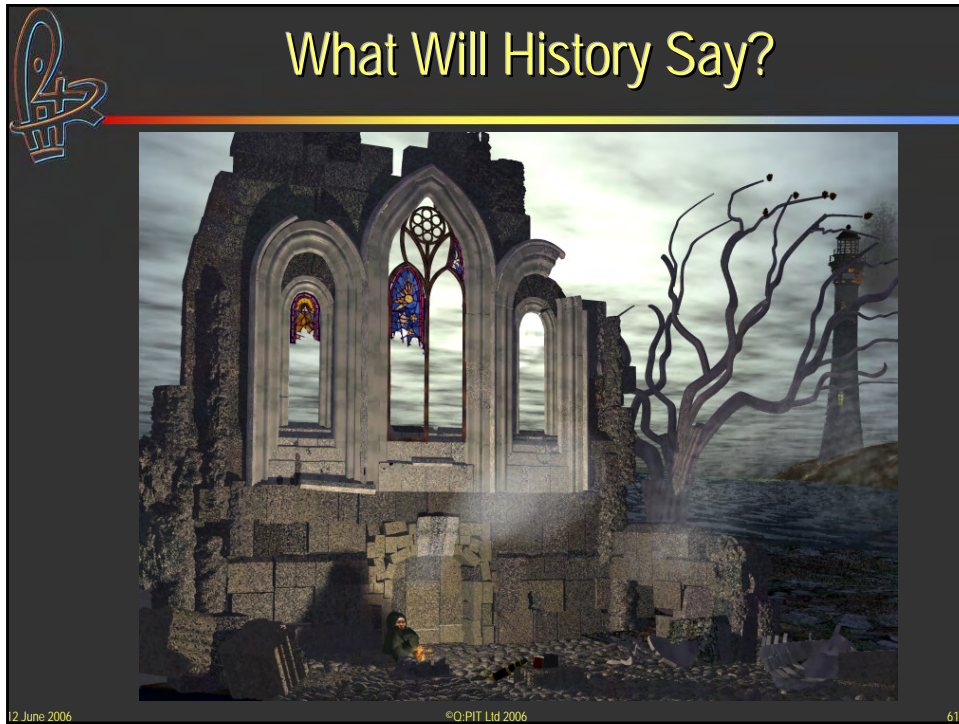
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## Questions ?




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### Which One Planned?



The slide features a dark background with a stylized logo in the top left corner. The title "Which One Planned?" is centered at the top in a yellow font. Below the title, there are two photographs. The left photograph shows a grand, ornate interior of a building, likely a cathedral or a large hall, with a red carpeted staircase and high ceilings. The right photograph shows a scene of structural collapse, with debris and a large section of a ceiling or floor falling away.

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### Which One Has The Means To Succeed?



The slide features a dark background with a stylized logo in the top left corner. The title "Which One Has The Means To Succeed?" is centered at the top in a yellow font. Below the title, there is a single photograph showing the silhouette of an excavator against a vibrant sunset sky with orange and red clouds.

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### Which One Has The Means To Succeed?



The slide features a stylized logo on the left. The main content consists of two images. The left image shows the silhouette of an excavator against a vibrant sunset sky. The right image shows a young child sitting on a seesaw at a playground. The slide includes a copyright notice and a page number at the bottom.

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### Which One Focused on Culture and Communication?



The slide features a stylized logo on the left. The main content is a photograph of the Sagrada Família in Barcelona, Spain, showing its iconic spires and Gothic Revival architecture. A construction crane is visible in the background. The slide includes a copyright notice and a page number at the bottom.

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 Which One Focused on Culture and Communication?



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