



FORTEZZA

CONSULTING

STAND FIRM

How to Double Project Speed in 2 Months or Less

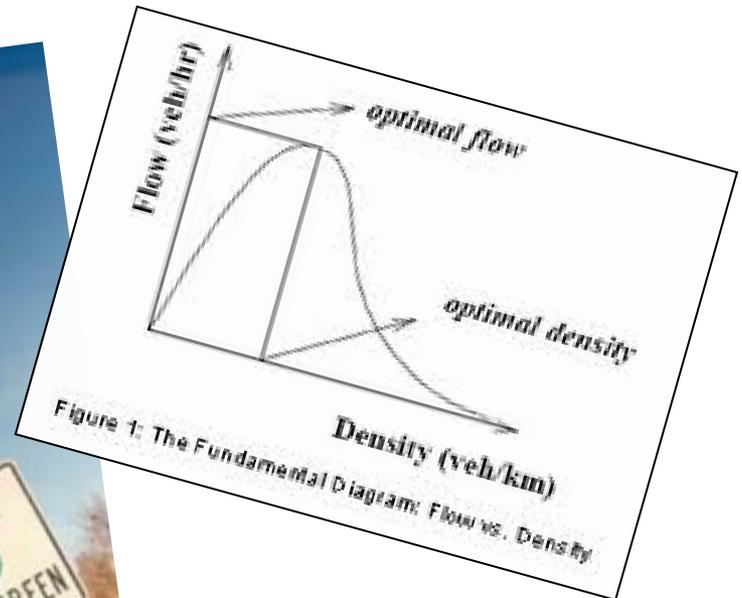
Prepared for the NIH PM Community of Practice

Presented by Michael Hannan
Founder & Principal Consultant

13 October 2015

Technique 1

Program / Project Staggering



Program/Project Staggering: Simple Example

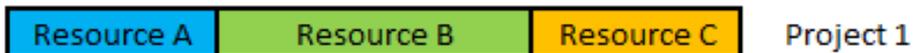
Three types of tasks, requiring three different resources:

- *A – Planning, Scoping, Prioritizing*
- *B – Architecting, Developing, Integrating, System Testing*
- *C – User Acceptance Testing*

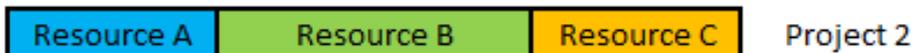
Three simple projects

Seven weeks each

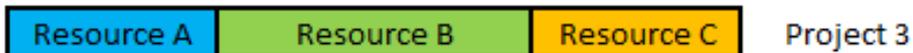
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P 4

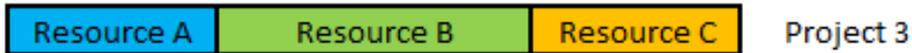
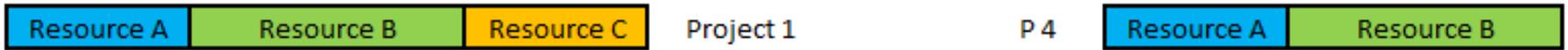


The sooner we start



The Illusion of Progress

Wk 1	Wk 2	Wk 3	Wk 4	Wk 5	Wk 6	Wk 7	Wk 8	Wk 9	Wk 10	Wk 11	Wk 12	Wk 13	Wk 14	Wk 15	Wk 16	Wk 17
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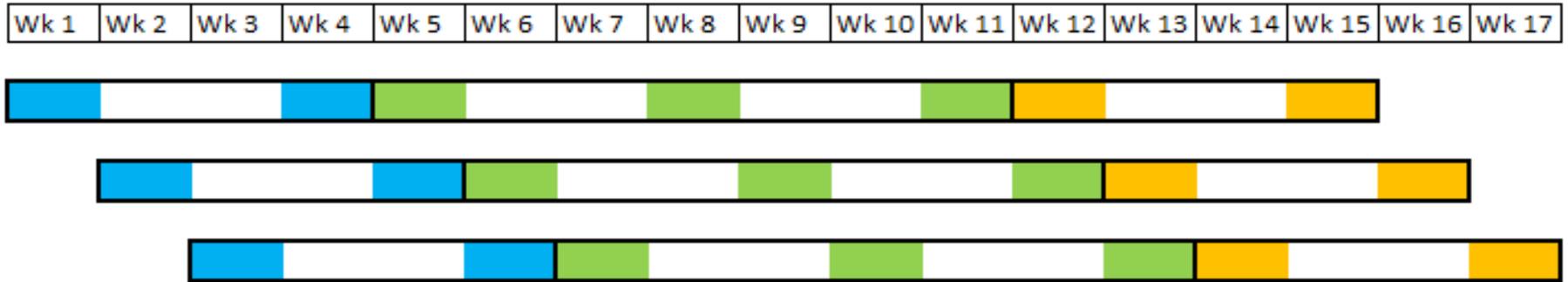


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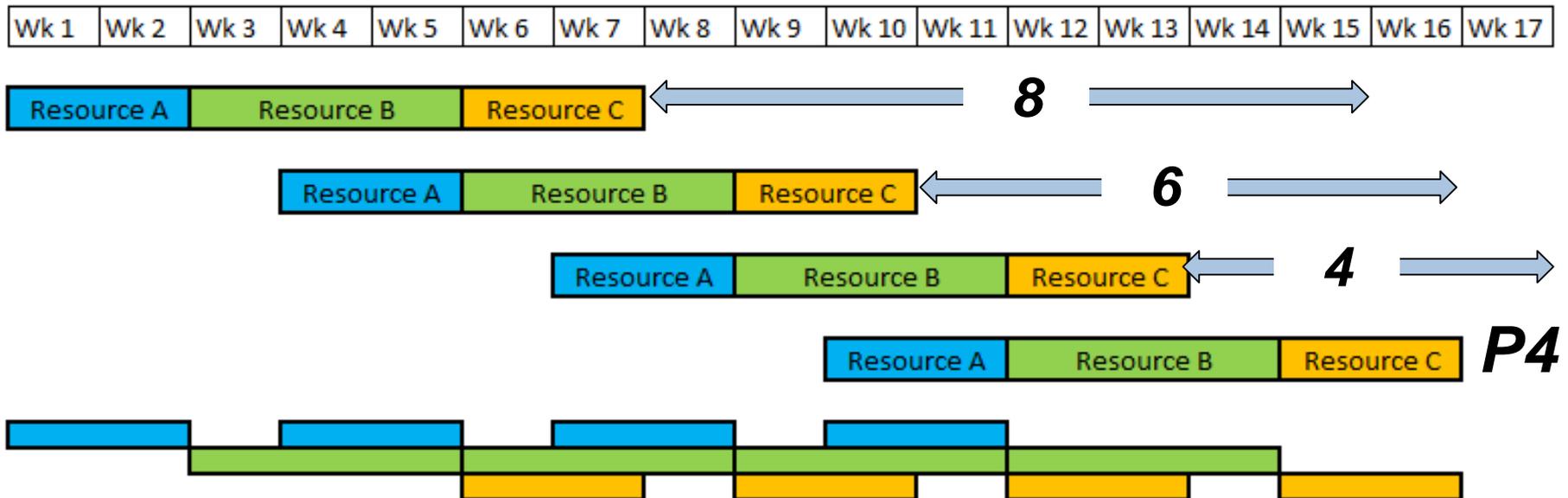


Simultaneous vs. Staggered Projects

Simultaneous Projects



Staggered Projects



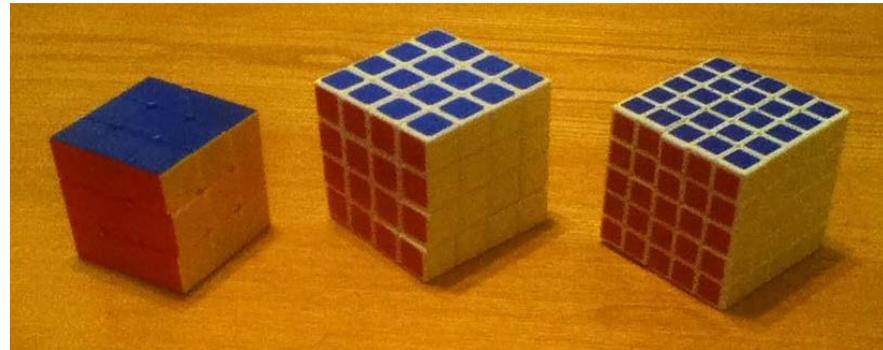
Project Staggering: Key Takeaways

- ▶ Typically delivers a 20-40% improvement in project throughput
- ▶ Executive stakeholders must be convinced that a project start date weeks or months in the future will result in an earlier finish.
- ▶ Staggering helps expose hidden resource bottlenecks, identifying opportunities for resource balancing
- ▶ Individual efficiency must be subordinated to the goal of maximizing throughput



Technique 2

Maximize Single-Task Focus

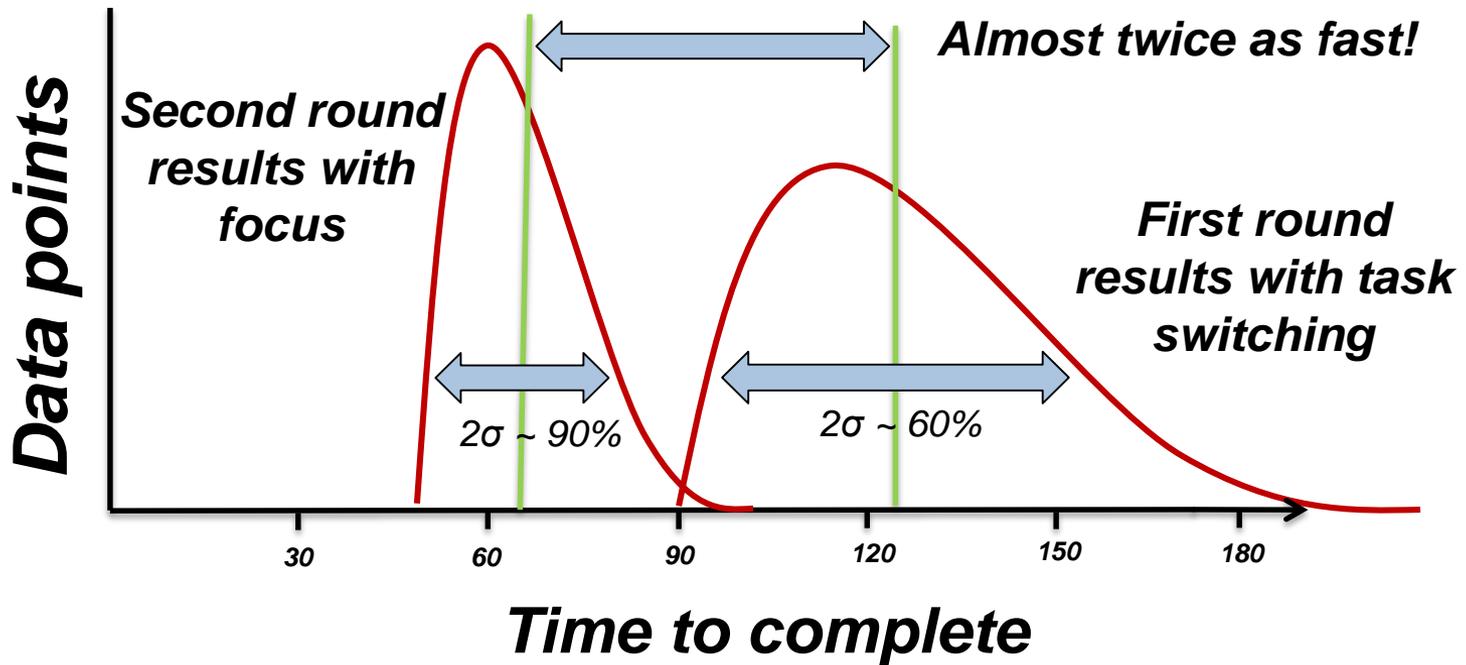


Task-switching Game

	TASK SWITCHING				FOCUS - SINGLE TASKING		
	A - Z	I - XVI	□ ○ △		A - Z	I - XVI	□ ○ △
1	A	I	□	A			
2				B			
3				C			
4				D			
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
11							
12							
13							
14							
19							
20							
21	Round # 1						
22							
23							
24							
25							
26							
Finish Times							



Typical Game Results



Ways to Drive Single-Tasking

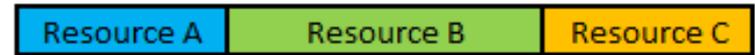
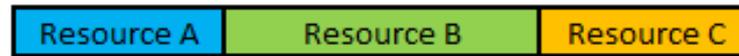
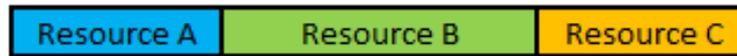
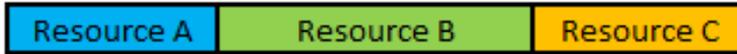
- ▶ Turn off the Outlook pop-up notifications
- ▶ Block off calendar time, and only leave a few small windows for mandatory meetings, responding to emails, and to handle miscellaneous tasks
- ▶ Turn on an auto-reply message letting people know that you are “heads down” on a task for X days, and will respond to them as soon as the task is complete.
- ▶ Put your phone on silent while in the middle of a task
- ▶ Close the door, and put a sign out saying, “Tasked with completing XYZ task; please do not disturb.”
- ▶ Work from home, and/or work non-standard hours (non-Agile projects)
- ▶ Show your boss the results from the multi-tasking game...or better yet, invite him/her to play it!
- ▶ Work under a single-tasking management framework
- ▶ If you are the boss, mandate all of the above



Staggering + Single Tasking

Staggering

Wk 1	Wk 2	Wk 3	Wk 4	Wk 5	Wk 6	Wk 7	Wk 8	Wk 9	Wk 10	Wk 11	Wk 12	Wk 13	Wk 14	Wk 15	Wk 16	Wk 17
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4 Project Completions

Staggering + Single-Tasking



7 Project Completions

Assuming a 35% speed improvement...



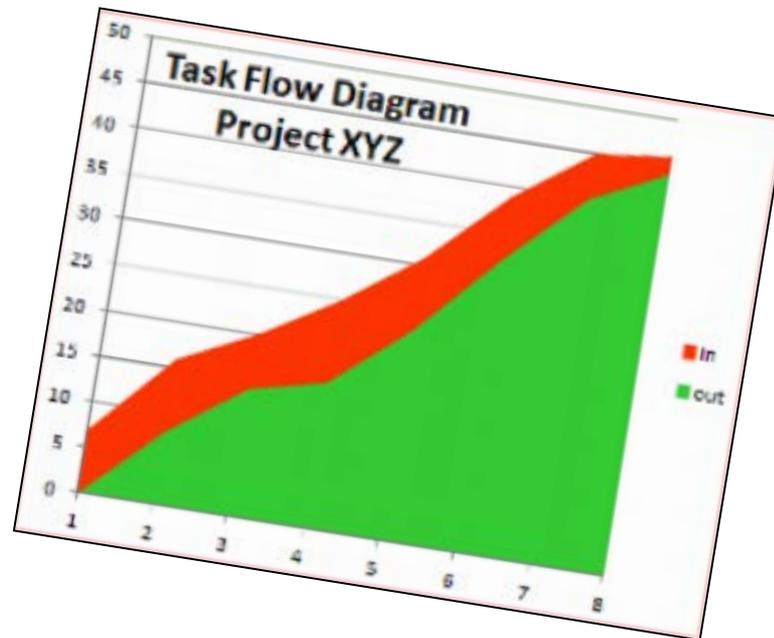
Single-Tasking: Key Takeaways

- ▶ Potential speed improvements are typically 40% or more, and execution is more predictable and reliable
- ▶ There are many ways to drive single-tasking on your own
- ▶ Executive support is critical
 - Executive “top cover” for single-tasking can accelerate its adoption dramatically
 - Executive interruptions and expectations of multi-tasking will quickly derail adoption of single-tasking



Technique 3

Task-flow Maximization using the ACCLAIM™ Single Tasking Method™



What Do Leading Methods Teach Us About Maximizing Flow?

▶ Lean/Kanban

- **Visualizing** the actual flow of work—especially for workflows that aren't inherently visual—is critical for team members to identify impediments and to experiment with improvement ideas.
- Enabling the system to “**pull**” work, vs. having work assigned or “pushed,” tends to improve flow while empowering teams.
- Minimizing batch sizes—ideally down to a batch size of one, or “**single-piece flow**”—can generate impressive flow improvements
- In general, the less “work in process” (or **WIP**) in the system, the faster and more efficient the system

▶ Theory of Constraints, Psychology

- Maximizing flow across an end-to-end process (system) can only be done once the **system constraint** is identified
- **Single-tasking** is a highly effective way to minimize lead times for human-centric tasks

▶ Agile/Scrum, Psychology

- **The team** knows how to be **more productive** than the sum of its members
- **The team** is much more motivated when working under a disciplined framework designed to foster **team autonomy**.



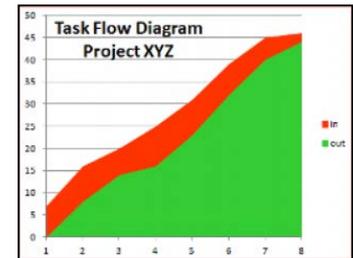
Crafting a Task-flow Maximization Approach

- ▶ If the team can break tasks on the project plan into fine-grained subtasks that take less than a week, and ideally about a day...
- ▶ If the team can maintain a ready supply of these fine-grained tasks for all team members...
- ▶ If these fine-grained tasks are visible, and can be pulled for execution by any team member, one at a time, without concern for sequence...
- ▶ If the end-to-end bottleneck can be identified, and the flow organized to minimize end-to-end WIP...

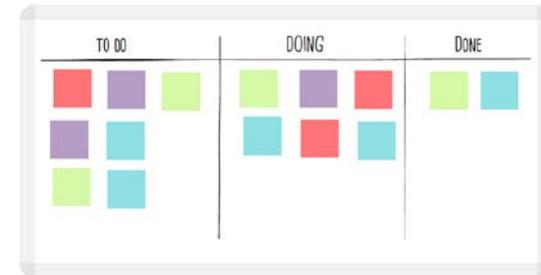
Feed the Machine

*TOC WIP
Minimization*

Ease the Flow



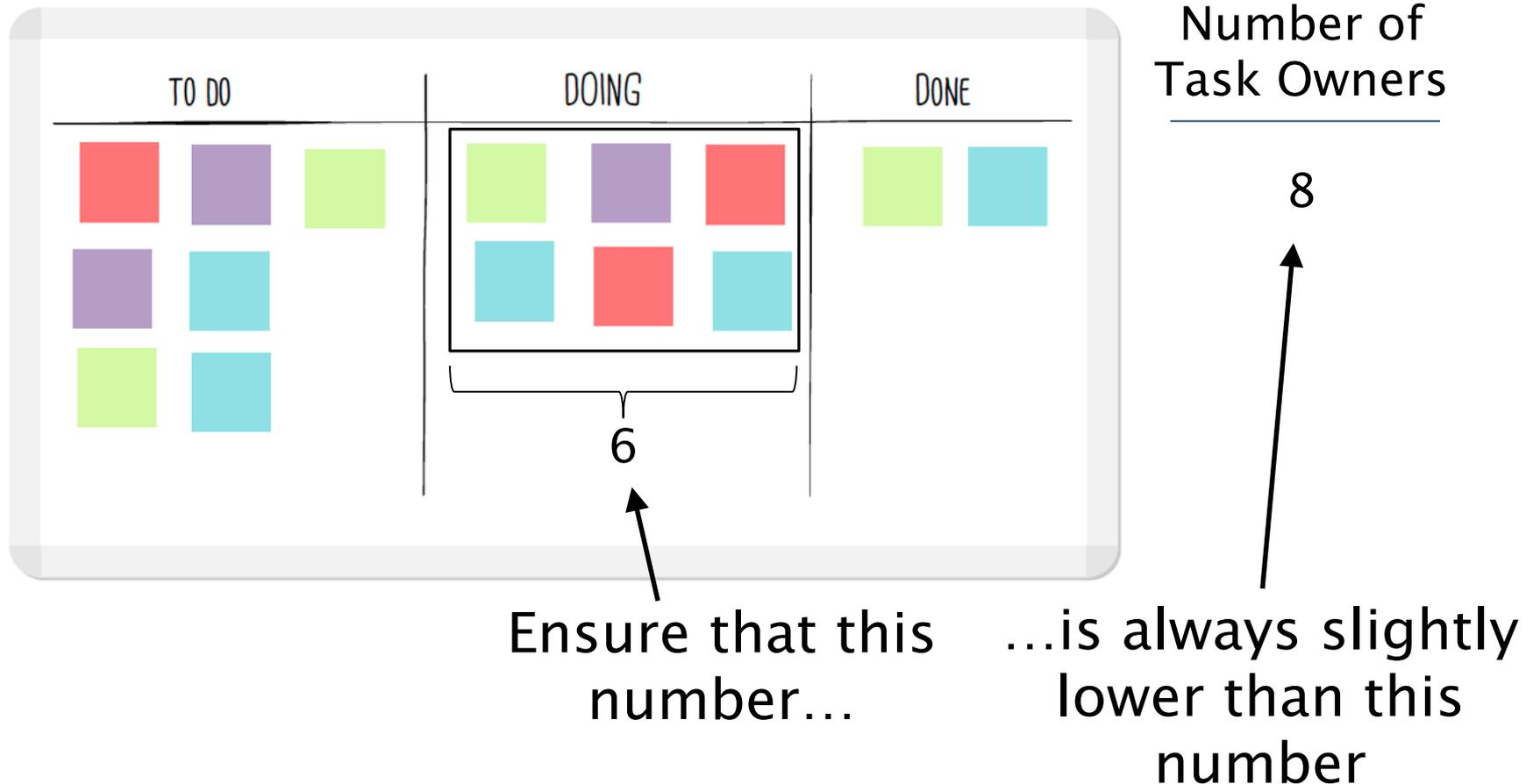
*Visual Mgmt +
Pull System +
Single-piece Flow*



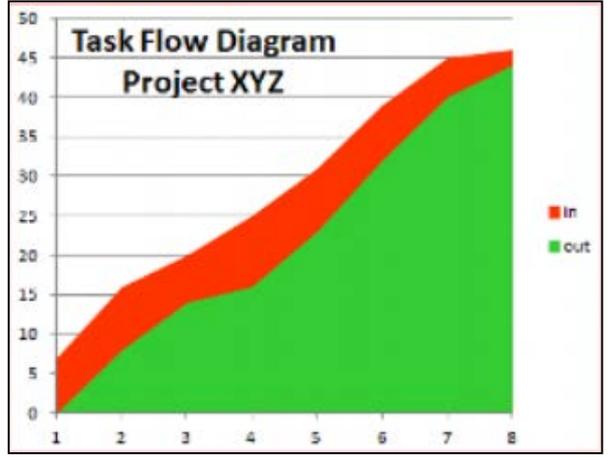
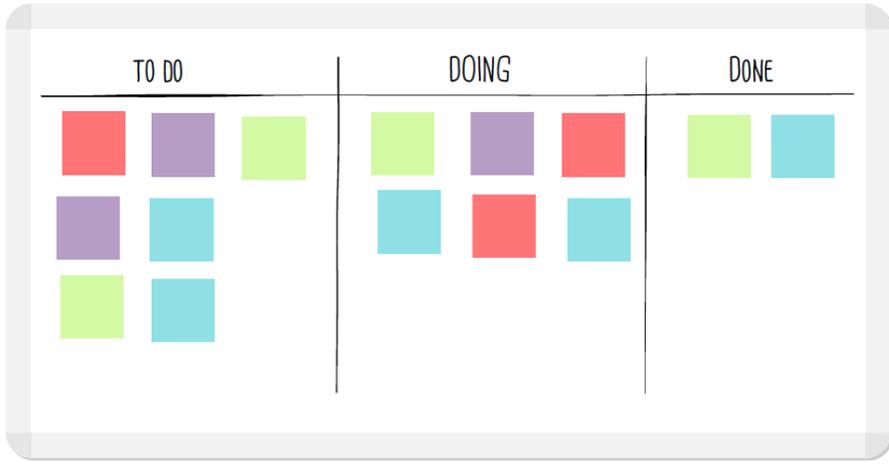
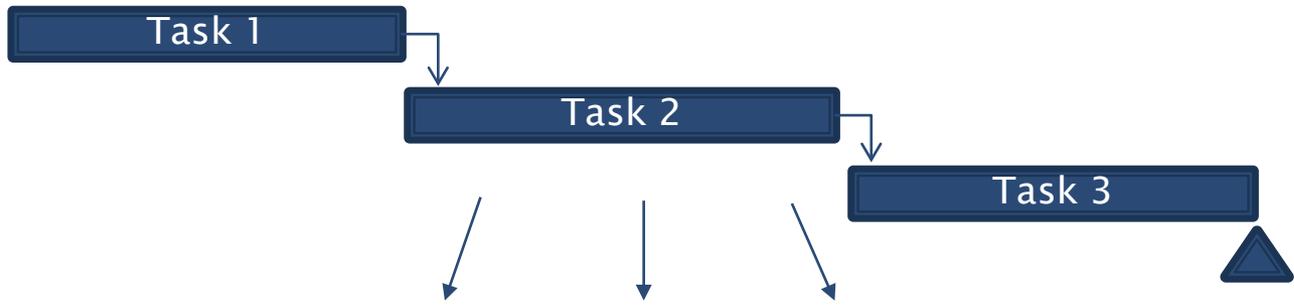
Then I have maximized flow, strengthened team autonomy, aligned team behavior with portfolio-level throughput objectives, and achieved single-task execution, all at the same time.



How Do We Know Whether Single Tasking is Actually Happening?



How Do Granular Tasks on a Task Board Relate to the Tasks on a Gantt Chart?

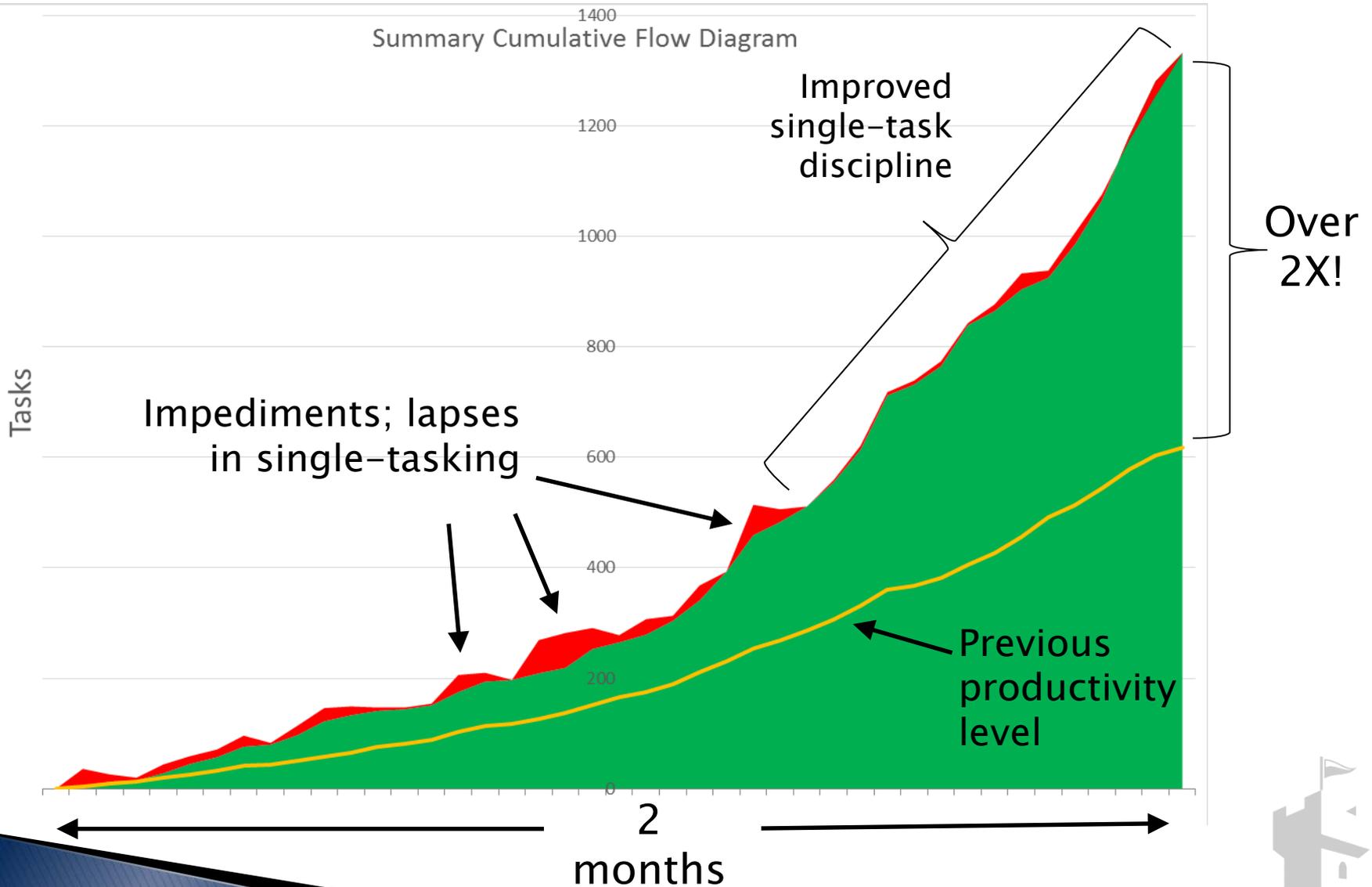


ACCLAIM Single Tasking Method: Key Takeaways

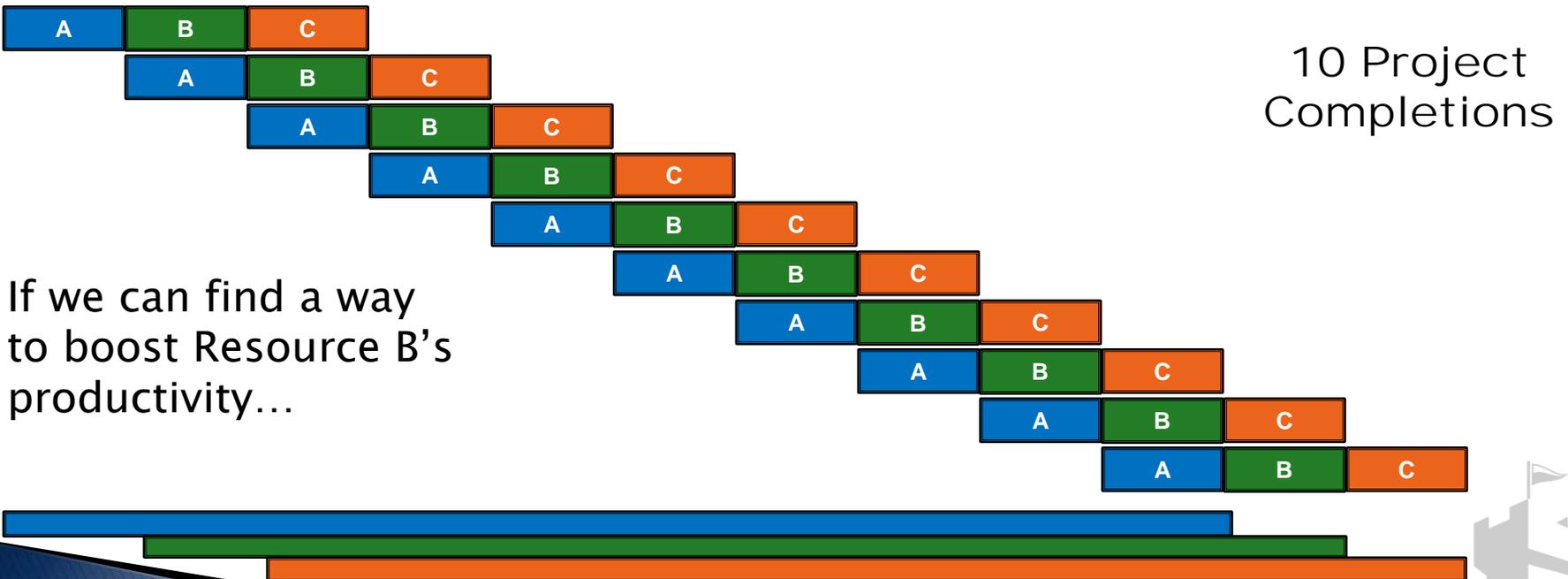
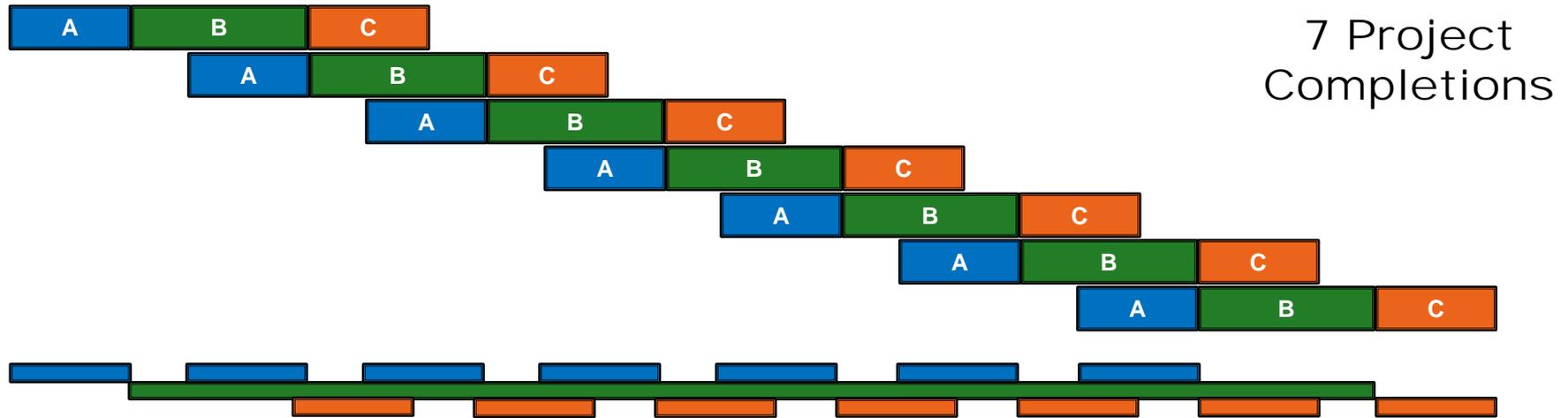
- ▶ Can be applied to any environment, as long as four conditions exist:
 - 1) There is a pool of resources that can be managed as a group
 - 2) We can ensure that there is always a ready supply of fine-grained tasks
 - 3) We can ensure that there are always slightly fewer tasks than task owners
 - 4) Task owners can “pull” tasks when ready, one at a time, in priority order
- ▶ Typically achieves a 2X in team productivity within the first month, and over 3X within three months



Example: Public Sector IT Agency

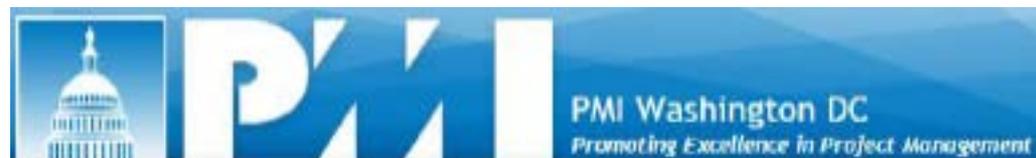
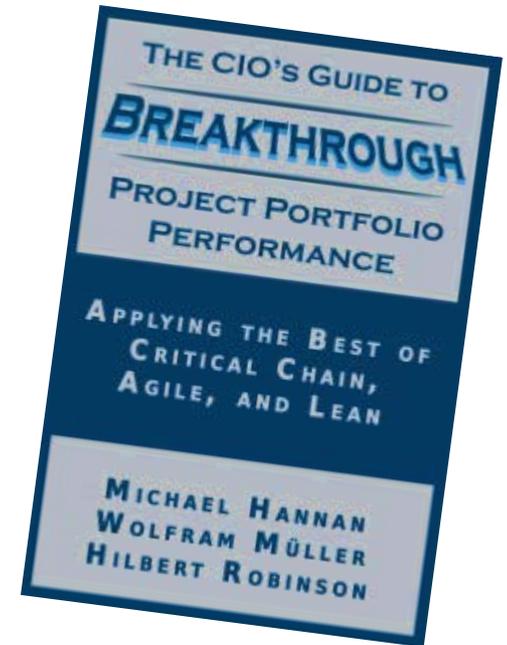


The “Resource B” Opportunity



Where Can I Learn More?

- ▶ Fortezza Consulting resources
 - Blog
(www.FortezzaConsulting.com/blog)
 - Email subscription
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 - Conferences & speaking events
(www.FortezzaConsulting.com/registration)
 - Book (Kindle, Paperback, Hardcover)
(www.FortezzaConsulting.com/new-book)
- ▶ PMI Washington DC Chapter resources
 - “PMI Point of View” podcast series
 - April 2015 podcast on “Reliable Innovation”
(<https://www.pmiwdc.org/pm-pov>)





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