Lean Aerospace Initiative

Growing the Lean Community An LAI Plenary Conference

Understanding Risk and Uncertainty April 10, 2001

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Hypotheses

Product development is an investment

- Uncertainty and risk are inherent, to varying degrees, in all product developments
- Risk is the probability that the product requirements will not be achieved, thus imperiling the investment



Hypotheses (cont.)

- Quantifying uncertainty and risk will enable better management of product developments
- Value in product development is the amount by which risk is reduced per unit of resource expended
- Balancing risk across all aspects of product development is a significant lean principle





(initial state)

(final state)





Basic Assumptions

- Effective product developments have the following characteristics
 - Processes are well calibrated so that error biases and trends are negligible
 - As new information is generated it is combined with old Information according to the relative qualities of new and old
 - >All productive activities serve to reduce uncertainty



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Lean Model of a Transport Aircraft Aerospace Preliminary Design Study (cont.)

- Initial design parameter estimates indicate range>13,000km
- Uncertainty in these estimates produces a probability of 0.4 that the final product will not meet the requirements (unacceptable risk)
- Preliminary PD effort will refine the design and reduce uncertainty by a factor of 5
- Initial Plan-spend \$500K over a 10 week period to refine the design and reduce uncertainty by the required factor of 5
- Final Plan- for the same reduction in uncertainty, but by balancing risk over the three activities, the cost is reduced by 13% (saves \$66K)

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