

# CMMI Appraisals for Organizations that Use Kanban

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Lean Kanban North America (LKNA) 2017

May 9, 2017



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# Introduction



# About Karen

- ▶ QA Manager for TriTech Enterprise Systems, Inc.
- ▶ Led projects to successful Maturity Level 2 and 3 DEV appraisals
- ▶ Team Kanban Practitioner
- ▶ Project Management Professional
- ▶ Kanban Management Professional in progress
- ▶ 10 Years CMMI Experience
- ▶ 11.5 Months Kanban Experience

# Quick Poll

- ▶ How many of you are familiar with CMMI?
- ▶ How many of you have been through a CMMI appraisal?
- ▶ How many of you are currently working towards an appraisal?

# CMMI Overview



# What is CMMI?

- ▶ <http://cmmiinstitute.com/>
- ▶ CMMI is a performance improvement framework that helps organizations to improve their capabilities via multiple models:
  - ▶ Development
  - ▶ Services
  - ▶ Acquisition
  - ▶ People CMM
  - ▶ DMM
- ▶ The models share a common architecture:
  - ▶ Process Areas related to the model
  - ▶ Specific Practices for each process area
  - ▶ Generic Practices global to all process areas

# How does it work?

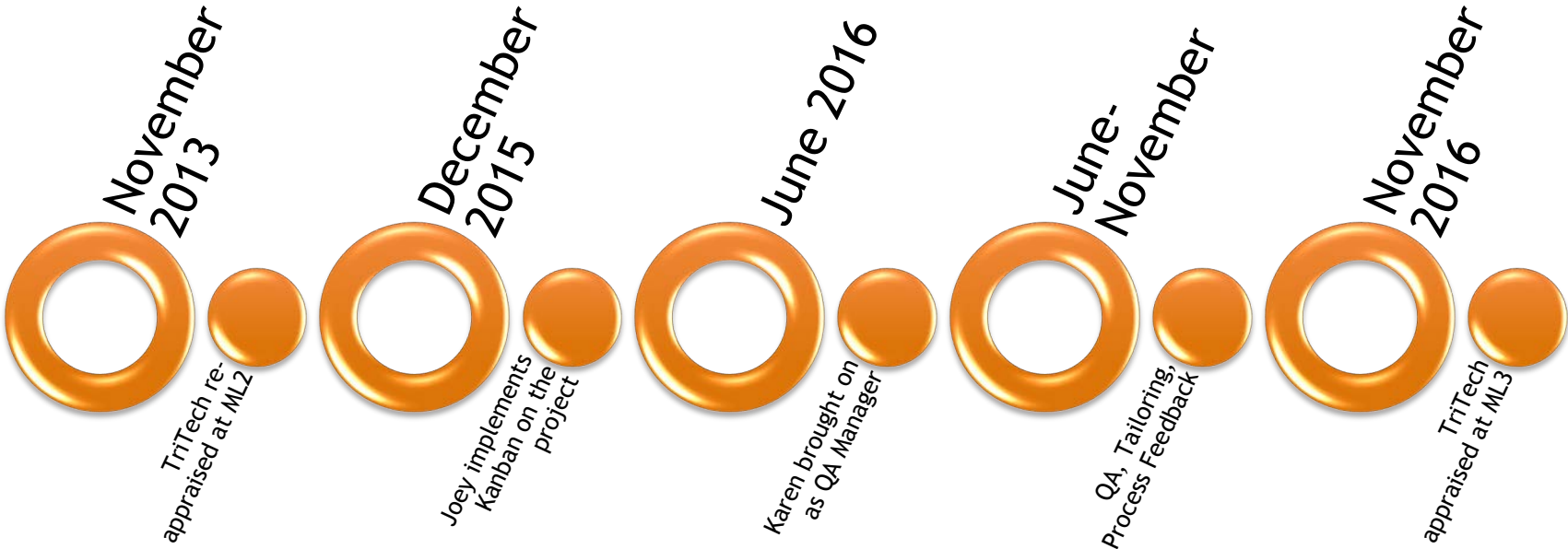
- ▶ CMMI does not dictate how to implement the process areas.
- ▶ Organizations adapt the guidance and best practices in their chosen models to develop and improve processes and tools geared towards their goals and objectives.
- ▶ Appraisals gauge the capability or maturity of an organization:
  - ▶ 5 Levels of Maturity appraisals
  - ▶ Capability appraisals are performed on selected process areas

# Project Case Study





# Background



# The Approach

- ▶ Organizational separation between appraisal activities and project activities
- ▶ OSSP mentoring
- ▶ QA audits and noncompliance issue resolution
- ▶ OSSP tailoring

# The Appraisal

- ▶ PIID creation (mapping Kanban to CMMI)
- ▶ Without breaking the non-disclosure agreement... It was a tough appraisal!
- ▶ Lessons Learned

# The Result

- ▶ Currently incorporating Kanban into our OSSP
- ▶ Moving towards flow-based processes, vs. waterfall processes
- ▶ Using Kanban to perform process improvement
- ▶ Seeing process improvements with greater collaboration from the organization and from the process users

# Implementing CMMI for Worse or Better

How top-down pressure can lead to bottom-up confusion

# Seeking an Appraisal for the Checkmark

- ▶ Organizational leaders are often motivated by financial goals or client requirements:
  - ▶ “We need to do CMMI to bid on contracts!”
  - ▶ “Our customer wants us to do CMMI!”
- ▶ If implemented too quickly or without a genuine desire to seek performance improvement, organizations can develop a check-in-the-box mentality towards CMMI:
  - ▶ “We have a CMMI culture! We speak in acronyms!”
- ▶ After an appraisal, leaders may ignore the reality of ongoing process improvement:
  - ▶ "The whole company will be certified!"
  - ▶ “Our appraisal is about to expire! We need to do something!”

# Bottom-Up Confusion from Teams

- ▶ "Why do we need to do CMMI? We follow Kanban/ISO/IEEE/Scrum/[insert preferred method here]!"
- ▶ "It's just about creating documentation for appraisals!"
- ▶ "We should have a person to do the CMMI stuff so I can focus on my work."
- ▶ Too much reliance on CMMI language
- ▶ Too much attention to CMMI appraisals vs. doing the right work (meeting goals)

# Genuine Desire to Improve

- ▶ Maintain competitive edge in industry
- ▶ Genuinely interested in continuously improving processes (appraisals are every 3 years, remember!)
- ▶ Model(s) implemented based on business needs
- ▶ Dedicated resources



# Advice for the Kanban Crowd

# “Start with what you do now.”

- ▶ Focus on what you are doing well now... And then keep doing it!
- ▶ Don't force fit CMMI to fit how you work. No massive reorganization efforts!
- ▶ Meet the intent of CMMI, do not enforce its vocabulary.

# Form a relationship with your organizational QA team.

- ▶ Talk constantly.
- ▶ Discover where you fall short through audits.
- ▶ Implement improvements from there.
  - ▶ Improvements to the project
  - ▶ Improvements to the processes

# Tailor your processes, and then tailor them again... And again.

- ▶ Provide feedback to your process owners.
- ▶ Tailor your processes from the organizational standard as you go.
- ▶ Eventually, the processes will catch up to your best practices!

# Survive your appraisal.

- ▶ Do you need an appraisal?
  - ▶ If it is a check in the box, make sure the hassle is worth the effort.
  - ▶ If it is to implement real change, make sure you are ready to invest in money, time, and resources.
- ▶ Remember, you can implement CMMI as best practices without an appraisal!
- ▶ Manage your appraisal activities as a separate project
- ▶ Keep the project teams working on their goals, and not worrying about appraisal prep.

# Questions?

