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Agree to Disagree:
Top Schedule Comments And Requirements That Are Actually Hurting Your Project



Introductions



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Overview

What Requirements and Comments are Actually Helping Manage the Project Towards Success

THE DISCUSSION

This session brings the contractors perspective into common disagreements in schedule management practices.

WALK AWAY WITH THOUGHTS ABOUT:

01

Understanding **Potential Risks** and Benefits of How Requirements are Getting Enforced

02

Implementing **Solutions** to Allow a Smoother Operation

03

How to **Positively Impact** the Project Through Your Role

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Agenda

- Our Background
- Clarifying Intent and Purpose
- Project Experiences
- Comments and Examples
- What Should Have Been Asked?
- Questions / Additional Discussion

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Our Background – We Are Schedulers

We Support Construction Operations

2025 Top 14 General Contractor: Typically >200+ Active Projects with Schedules and Contract Deadlines

Nationwide Projects: Predominantly Vertical Construction Perspective,

Client Types: Public, Institutional, municipality, Private Mix

Contract Types: Bid-Build, CM At-Risk, Design-Build, Progressive Design Build, Etc…

Project Value: $20M to $1B+

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Our Background – We Are Schedulers

How We Operate

Help Project Teams Develop and Maintain Schedules

Teach Scheduling Best Practices

Utilize It As a Tool for Leadership Decision Making

Drive Internal Team Accountability

Advise / Learn Through Schedule Challenges

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The Project Schedule - More Than a Deliverable

We use it!

Support Leadership Decision Making

Communication to Owner/ Subs

Managing Internal Priorities

Adapting the Plan as Necessary

Through Our Experience – We Have Seen

Make Schedules THE TOOL To Manage The Success Of The Project

How Well Jobs Can Go When There Is TRUST Between Team Members

How Good Organizational Agility Can Help STREAMLINE Processes

How ACTION Taken At The Earliest Stages Can Help Mitigate Potential Issues

How Projects Can be Negatively Affected By Doing The Opposite

Our Goals

Share Our Observations of Commonalities Between Successful Experiences

Identify Common Sticking Points in Schedule Comments and Requirements

Provide Contractors Perspective On How It Could Negatively Affect The Schedule

Highlight Opportunities To Partner Together And Tweak Our Approach To Working Together For The Betterment Of Our Projects

Confessions

We Recognize Contractors Are Not Perfect And Need Accountability To Maintain The Necessary Standards

Not All Contractors Prioritize The Projects Needs Over Their Own

The Best Practices and Schedule Standards Exist For A Reason

For Every Example We Share There Is Likely An Equal And Opposite Example To Support The Other Position

What Are We Managing?

Construction is…
Dynamic
Done by Humans
Subject to Many Variables
Design Details
Site Conditions and Limitations
Weather Conditions
Different Players - Owners, Contractors, Subs, Management Teams
Material Availability, Fabrication/Lead Times, Logistics,
Tighter Schedules, Lower Budgets, Increased Documentation

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How Is Your Team Set Up To Deal With It?

Do They:
Focus On The Bigger Picture To Prioritize What Is Truly Critical

Resolve Things At The Lowest Management Level Possible?

Have A Stake In The Success Of The Project?

Treat All Parties Fairly And Equally

Look Ahead To Avoid Potential Issues Before They Occur?

Assume Positive Intent Of Their Counterparts?

Or...

Is Your Team Set Up To:
Enforce Accountability With All Criteria Big And Small?

Document Every Variance Along The Way?

Prepare Documentation To Protect One Parties Interest?

Prevent Things From Advancing Until Everything Is Perfect?

Managing Through Hindsight?

The Unofficial Contractor's Scheduling Principles

The Schedule Must Always Align With Reality

The Contractor is responsible for Schedule Integrity

The Schedule History Should Show What Actually Happened

If It Takes Longer To Update The Schedule Than Perform The Work In The Field Something Is Wrong.

The Cost Loaded Schedule Is A Schedule First And A Cost Tool Second

If It Does Not Have Schedule Significance, It Does Not Belong In The Schedule

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Initial Schedule Kick Off Meeting

1. Contract Milestones
2. Reporting Requirements
3. Work Access Limitations
4. Holidays
5. Schedule Modification Process
6. Primavera P6 - Versions and Settings
7. Schedule Settings/ Coding/ Data Date
8. Anticipated Weather Days/ Calendars
9. Fragnets and Change management
10. Weather Delay Tracking
11. Time Impact Analysis - Contract Requirements
12. Time Impact Analysis - Anticipated Resolution Process
13. Owner Review Times
14. Other Misc Topics

- Are The Specs Requirements What you Really Want?
- Clarify Intent
- Alignment before Effort
- Opportunity to Build Relationship before Conflict
- Work Through Clarifications

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Baseline Schedules

Comments That Are Always Welcome:

Aligning with Bid/Contract Requirements

- Verifying Agreement on Logic Ties to Contractual Milestones
- Verifying the Complete Project Scope Is Represented

Identifying Inconsistencies in Sequence, Logic Ties, Calendars, etc…

Questions That Seek Further Understanding Of The Plan

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Baseline Schedules

Common Sticking Points

Not Allowing SS/FF Relationships - Want FS Only

Explain Every Lag in the Project Schedule

Original Duration Limits

Make Changes to Absorb Early Issues

Redundant Logic

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Baseline Schedules

Weather: Right-Sized for Project Scope

Month	# of Days
January	8
February	7
March	7
April	4
May	4
June	4
July	4
August	4
September	4
October	4
November	8
December	8

“All construction tasks for [project phase] shall include a weather calendar with NOAA days per [contract requirements]”

66 Days in the table
25% of the year in Workdays

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Cost Loading

Concerns from Contractor Perspective

SIGNIFICANT Effort to Set Up and Maintain

Any Added/Deleted Activities Require Re-Balancing Costs

Cost Management Takes away from Planning Process

Often Creates Update Problems with Schedule Integrity

Generally Try to Get Requirement Removed if Possible

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Cost Loading

Good Spec: Two Step Process

3.02 STEP 1 CONTRACTOR'S CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE (CCS-1)

A. Detailed Schedule Submittal: Submit with GMP submittal.

B. Preparation: Include all detailed activities necessary to describe full scope of construction Work, as required by Section 3.04.

3.03 STEP 2 CONTRACTOR'S CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE (CCS-2)

A. Detailed Schedule Submittal: Submit with GMP submittal.

B. Preparation: Include all detailed cost-loading of activities within the accepted Step 1 CCS, to describe full scope of construction Work, as required by Section 3.04.

Monthly Updates

Cost Loaded Activity Status/Progress

Cost Loaded Gets More Attention

Not Allowed To Close-Out Activity or Create New One For Remaining Scope

Add A Completion List Activity For Holding The Disputed Money

If Follow-On Trades Are Able To Progress, Let It Be Closed

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Early/ Late Completion – Contractor's Dream Spec

You may show early completion time on any schedule if you comply with the Contract. Early completion time is a resource for your exclusive use. You may increase early completion time by improving production, reallocating resources to be more efficient, performing sequential activities concurrently, or by completing activities earlier than planned.

You may show a scheduled completion date that is later than the work completion date on an update schedule after the baseline schedule is accepted. Provide an explanation for a late scheduled completion date in the narrative report included with the schedule submittal.

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Specs Limiting Contractor Schedule Changes

The Project Schedule shall not be revised to include additional activities, deleted activities revised activity durations, revised network logic, or any other changes to the schedule without approval of the Contracting Officer Representative. Only actual progress, completion dates, and anticipated future progress shall be incorporated in a schedule update.

H. Actual start and finish date and Work in progress shall not be automatically updated by default mechanisms that may be included in CPM scheduling software systems. Actual start and finish dates shall be updated manually and shall represent actual history and match daily reports. Work in progress shall be shown with the actual start date, the remaining duration will represent the current expected completion date, and the physical percent completed for each activity. The remaining Activities should represent Contractor's current projected plan for orderly completion of the Work.

I. This Progress Schedule Update shall not have any change in the logic of the network or in the duration of activities.

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Spec Supporting an Accurate Schedule

(b) All schedule submissions are to be an accurate reflection and model of the Construction Manager's contractual responsibilities for completing the Project. These responsibilities include not only timely performance and completion of the Project, but also those requirements listed throughout the technical specifications and all other parts of the Contract Documents.

Monthly Updates

Project 1: Reviewer Rejects Schedule For Changes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The [redacted] schedule updates forecast the substantial completion for [redacted] which is 25 days later than the December schedule and 66 days after the baseline date [redacted]. This delay is caused by adding two new activities for civil utilities and SWM approval for the tunnel and site, and remodel wet utilities civil set.

The [redacted] schedule includes changes in the activities and duration, logic. Exhibit J prohibits these changes in the schedule and considers them as the cause for rejection of the schedule submission. The contractor should have explained the reason for these changes with reasonable detail in the narrative report.

The schedule submittal does not conform to Exhibit J in several areas, as outlined in this report. Additionally, the schedule includes activities that do not have proper logic ties and are riding on the data date. This issue may impact the accuracy of the scheduled dates.

Monthly Updates

Project 1: What Got Missed

Multiple GMPs in progress

Project Scope Changing Significantly - Added/Deleted Buildings

Schedule includes the whole program with future GMPs in Summary Form

Owner Asked for a Rebaseline and didn’t tell the schedule reviewer

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Project 2: No Fragnets, Reject Everything

- All fragnets are to be removed from the cpm by [redacted]; [redacted] has not complied with requirements for time adjustments per [redacted] and has waived any claims to those fragnets.

All updates since [redacted]s baseline CPM approval have been rejected. June update is rejected. The baseline is a binding document and no changes can be made to it in logic or durations, regardless of internal buyout decisions by [redacted], unless a time change proposal, issued in compliance with the contract requirements, has been approved by the [redacted]

[redacted] Contractor

[redacted] Owner

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Project 2: What Got Missed

No Baseline Review comments, No Update Review Comments for 6 months

Owner Changed Electrical Equipment Different Than Spec - longer Lead Time

Contractor Submitted Notice / TIA

Reviewer is engaged and Immediately Rejects Everything to Protect Owner

How Should This Be Handled?

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Progress Only Files - A Moment of Honesty

Good for:

General Indication if previous plan was achieved

Not Good For:

Understanding Why Dates are Different

Should Not Be Reviewed as The Full Schedule Update

Reviewer Conclusions are usually one-sided and flawed

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Progress Only Files – What is it really saying?

Project 1:

NOTE: Logic revisions or recovery schedules have been required for the past 9 months. This is an indication that planned progress has not been achieved over the last 9 months and improvement towards schedule execution is required.

Project 2:

In comparison with the [redacted] Progress Only update [redacted], 33 calendar days of improvement were realized in the submitted [redacted] schedule update [redacted] with this milestone, due to schedule changes noted in the above section.

In summary, this milestone would have slipped an additional 33 calendar days if the logic revisions were not made in the current schedule update.

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Working Through Delays and Impacts

Where do things break down?

Seek to Understand the Root of the Issue Before Starting Technical Review

Narratives Are For The Entire Project Team

Definition of Scope Must Come Before Schedule Detail and Cost

What Is Being Said In Team Meetings? Are Leaders Present?

Understand the Cost of Time on the Project

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Working Through Delays and Impacts

Questions That Don’t Get Asked, But Should

What Can We Do About It?

What Acceleration Opportunities Are There and What do They Cost?

What are the Top Items that You Need from X Party?

What do You See as The Biggest Risks to your Plan?

How Can We Take Steps to Mitigate Those Risks?

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Winning Approaches

Read The Narrative

If the Project Scope Changes, So Should the Schedule

It’s Okay to Let Items be Accepted Without Additional Changes

If Something Is Rejected: Itemize Specific Issues to be Corrected

Allow the Corrections To Be Made In the Next Month’s Update and Don’t Require Resubmissions Unless Truly Necessary

Don’t Reject Updates Solely Based on Whether the Project is on Schedule. If There are Issues, the Schedule Needs To Show it.

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Working Through Delays and Impacts

What did we Miss?

Additional Questions / Discussions?

Thank You



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