

UPDATE 14/05

## CMMI Conference and 'Experience with CMMI on a large scale'

Peter Pedross, CEO of PEDCO held a presentation at the CMMI Conference in Washington DC on May 6-7<sup>th</sup>, 2014. (-> [sepgconference.org](http://sepgconference.org)). This update presents some highlights from the conference as well as a short description of the experience report 'CMMI on a large scale'.

### CMMI Conference

The CMMI Conference 'SEPG North America 2014' took place at the Sheraton Hotel at Tyson Corner in Washington DC. During the two day conference I was able to participate in several very interesting workshops sessions. Each workshop consists of several short presentations with a duration of 20 minutes. With such a format, it was very convenient to get a picture of a theme in one wrap-up.

In my opinion, there were merely two big themes around.

- Getting real world improvements for organisations with CMMI, e.g. CMMI for Development or CMMI for Services.  
This included several sessions about getting results, change management, cost & performance measurement, estimation & risk and measuring productivity, progress & perception and other sessions.
- Agile! This theme has settled in the real world and is used to grow business with CMMI and agile together.  
There were a lot of sessions about how to apply agile together with CMMI, including real world measures and results from various companies. Also sessions about applying agility on a larger scale, like using Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe) or others to progress and improve with agile.

It was very interesting to listen to the vast experience of the community and exchange knowledge with other speakers and participants. To my big surprise, CMMI is also applied in small(er) companies with less than, for example 50 employees. My perception was, that CMMI is applied by rather large companies, which is true; but not the whole story. Some participants also stated, that they rather use CMMI than talk about it. I think that it is a good sign, a sign that CMMI is used as a good practice model for reference and less about chasing levels, but chasing value. This will bring the industry further towards value-based engineering.

My session at the conference was about applying CMMI on a large scale:  
(Conference Description):

*CMMI was developed in collaboration with industry partners that use the framework—it is designed to help ensure quality at an enterprise level. However, the process of process improvement at this scale can be daunting. If you are in the midst of a large scale CMMI project, or considering one, this session will help you to navigate the pitfalls and mountain tops of CMMI on a large scale.*

UPDATE 14/05

## CMMI on a large scale

Topics of the well-received speech were:

- Context
- Why processes are needed.
- Overall results at a glance.
- Lessons learned
- Conclusions

Summary of the speech:

This presentation was about the experience made while implementing a process improvement program at a large scale financial institute. CMMI was used as a reference model for all processes. The main reasons for improving the development processes were that the regulatory and organisational environment for companies involved in software development is becoming ever more demanding. At the same time competitive pressure is increasing. At first, the processes and environments must ensure that all the relevant regulations are complied with. And secondly, they still have to be as lean as possible to keep innovation levels high and time-to-market low.

Within this context, some of the past problems faced at a large scale institute were discussed. It was also a theme to discuss the reasons for using CMMI as a reference model to improve its own development processes. For illustration, some results of this process improvement endeavour were presented. Overall, the measured value proposition was very good. Despite the good numbers and the achieved results; the perception of the process implementation (and together with it CMMI) was different for the employees. Some success factors were presented and possible root causes for the misperception were discussed. The presentation closed with the conclusions of 6 years' experience.

Some of the conclusions were:

- Processes do not stand for themselves.
- Understand the real reason of findings and problems.
- Build a metric framework. Measure work products, process, project and product.  
Perform root cause analysis:
  - Start improving on evidence.
  - Point out consequences.
  - Discover future needs.
- It is key to find a balance between control, product quality and project efficiency.
- Employees must understand, that it is not only about project efficiency or getting a certification. It is about a sustainable operation of an IT-Organization, while reducing regulatory risks, production shortage and production costs.

For further information please visit our website at: [www.pedco.eu](http://www.pedco.eu) or get in contact with us: [pedco@pedco.eu](mailto:pedco@pedco.eu).