

**MORE!**  
Notes  
from the Blogosphere:  
***Snarky** Tales from the Behind the  
Curtain*

**Jeff Dalton**

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Certified SCAMPI Lead Appraiser  
CMMI Instructor  
Blogger

You want to download this presentation. You NEED to . . . whatev

jeff@broadsword solutions.com



Appraisals – Training – Consulting – Products

Featuring *agile*CMMI and the CMMI Accelerator®

# “Why have a CMMI ‘blog when you could blog your love life?’”

8. I’ m an SCAMPI LA. I don’ t have a love life because I’m a process geek

7. Do people outside the USA speak CMMI and why can’ t it be more like English?

6. Who cares about the CMMI besides irritable QA people?

5. What other governments are obsessed with the CMMI?

4. Why does everyone ask the same boring questions?

3. Is Jolt Cola and Red Bull really a substitute for ML5?

2. How many are will admit to not knowing what the heck OPP is and . . . .

1. Because there are people under 50 that are interested in the CMMI



# “Who is this zany blog guy anyway? Jeff Dalton

- President of Broadsword
- Certified SCAMPI Lead Appraiser, SCAMPI B & C Team Leader
- CMMI Instructor
- SCAMPI Observer for Candidate Appraisers
- Process Improvement consultant and Agile evangelist
- Software Engineer
- Blogger
- SEI Member Award recipient for “Outstanding Representative
- Father, husband, handyman, pilot, musician, ....

# “There’s no place like home” – *blog basics...*

- **AsktheCMMIAppraiser.com**
- **Went live in 2005**
- **Focus on Agile CMMI**
- **New content added daily**
- **Over 1,000 hits per month**
- **Questions from:**
  - SQA
  - Executives
  - Agile Developers
  - ATMs
  - SEPG
  - Consultants
  - Process Engineers
  - Engineers



The screenshot shows a blog post titled "Ask The CMMI Appraiser" by Jeff Dalton, dated Saturday, February 9, 2008. The post discusses Requirements Management (REQM) and its implementation. It includes a call to action for a CMMI class in April 2008 and a contact email for questions. The Broadsword logo is visible at the top and bottom of the page, along with an SEI Partner CMMI badge.

**Ask The CMMI Appraiser**  
Got questions? Get answers! Thoughts of an Agile Lead Appraiser by Jeff Dalton  
(www.broadswordsolutions.com)

**BROADSWORD**

Saturday, February 9, 2008

**How do we implement Requirements Management?**

We have 100 people working as an IT service company for mainly software development and maintenance projects. We want to have Requirements Management processes in place such that we can comply with CMMi level 2 and then gradually to level 3.

Could you provide some guidance on how we should proceed?

Entire books have been written on this subject so I won't try to replicate that information here. The short answer is: start by looking at what you ALREADY do today and perform a gap analysis between that and the CMMI practices for Requirements Management (REQM).

REQM is what is required for ML2. Requirements Development is part of ML3. For REQM, there are three key areas you need to focus on: developing a shared understanding of what the requirements mean, understanding how they impact the rest of the project (if they're new or changed), and gaining an appropriate level of commitment from all key stakeholders.

Join us for our next "Introduction to CMMI" class April 23rd - 25th, 2008 in metro Detroit, MI

Please sign up for our April class at <http://www.broadswordsolutions.com/>

**Got a Question?**

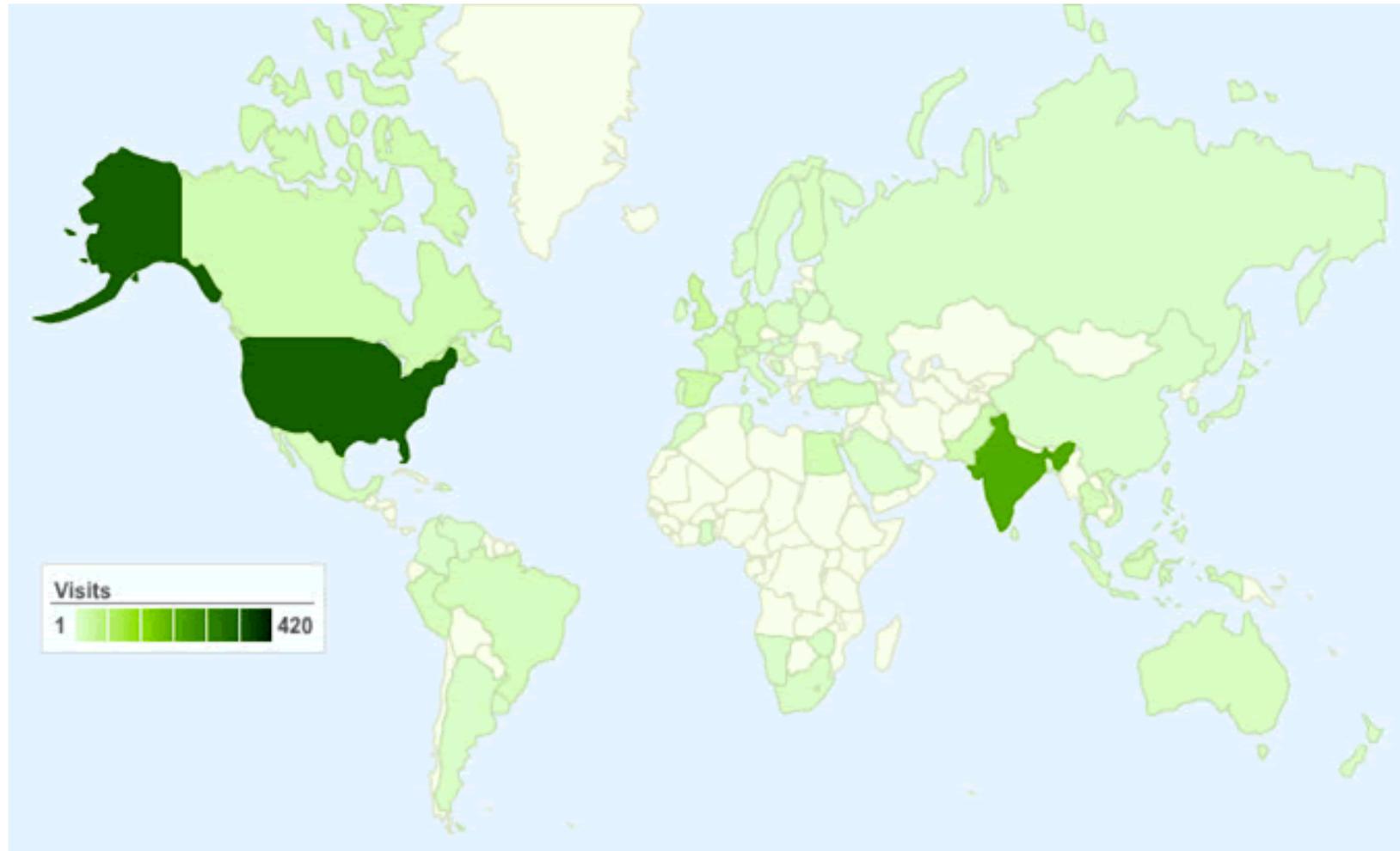
To ask Jeff a CMMI question, click here: [appraiser@broadswordsolutions.com](mailto:appraiser@broadswordsolutions.com)

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CMMI

**Broadsword at SEPG**

“We’re not in Kansas anymore” – *hits by region...*



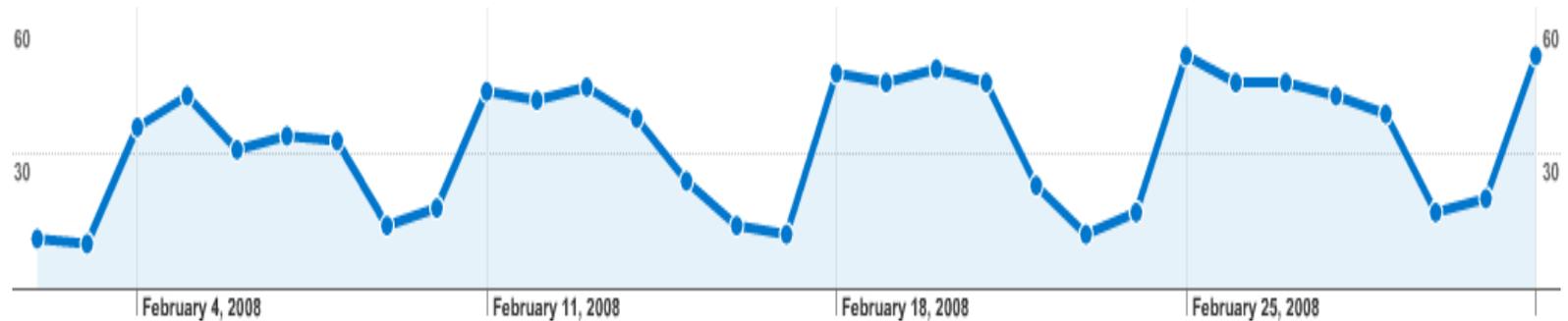
## “We’re not in Kansas anymore” – hits by network...

	Network Location	Visits	Pages/Visit	Avg. Time	% New Visits
<b>1</b>	videsh sanchar nigam ltd - india.	40	1.85	00:02:30	57.50%
<b>2</b>	reliance communications ltd	26	1.31	00:01:50	69.23%
<b>3</b>	comcast cable communications inc.	23	1.35	00:01:25	95.65%
<b>4</b>	road runner holdco llc	21	1.29	00:01:19	85.71%
<b>5</b>	verizon internet services inc.	21	1.90	00:01:51	85.71%
<b>6</b>	nib (national internet backbone)	20	1.70	00:01:10	80.00%
<b>7</b>	manly cat b isp	15	1.20	00:03:19	53.33%
<b>8</b>	comite gestor da internet no brasil	14	1.07	00:00:53	92.86%
<b>9</b>	comcast cable communications inc	13	2.77	00:05:01	23.08%
<b>10</b>	cox communications	12	1.42	00:00:51	75.00%

“Don’t be silly Toto; scarecrows don’t talk” – *languages...*

	Language	Visits	Pages/Visit	Avg. Tim	% New Visits
<b>1</b>	English-US	960	1.72	00:02:28	76.15%
<b>2</b>	Spanish	21	1.38	00:00:58	80.95%
<b>3</b>	German-standard	20	2.50	00:04:02	90.00%
<b>4</b>	French-standard	19	1.32	00:01:02	89.47%
<b>5</b>	English	9	1.11	00:00:15	22.22%
<b>6</b>	Spanish-traditional	9	1.56	00:01:14	55.56%
<b>7</b>	Dutch-standard	9	1.89	00:01:11	100.00%
<b>8</b>	Portuguese-Brazil	9	1.11	00:01:23	100.00%
<b>9</b>	English-UK	8	1.50	00:04:10	87.50%
<b>10</b>	Polish	7	1.57	00:00:43	57.14%

“People come and go here!” – *visitor trends...*



- **1,101 people visited the blog last month**
- **915 Absolute Unique Visitors**
- **1,871 Page Views**
- **1.70 Average Page Views**

“What are people from around the world asking?”



# “Why must the PPQA Team be the pain-in-the-@\$\$ Team?” (US)

Well, if you just fill out the darn artifact there wouldn't be a problem!

Seriously though, compliance is only a means to an end--PPQA should not be about 'compliance'. It's about 'insight'. It is also the best way for us to gauge whether or not we did a good job rolling out the process.

WHOA!...Hold on a minute!...What's that you say?...Now, after we did a stellar job designing and rolling out the process, some PPQA puke wants to tell us something we already know!...Darn PPQA zealots!



If we did a perfect job designing the process, communicating the process, and educating about the process, people would probably use it.

If we over-engineered it, designed it poorly, announced it with an email, and said "go forth and be process focused," then we did a poor job.

Only PPQA can tell us that.

# “Can I keep my SCAMPI Appraisal notes after the fact?” (AU)

Take only memories, leave only footprints . . . . oh, that's the National Forest!

Any SCAMPI Appraisal generates a large amount of written documentation including:

- interview questions & answers
- practice characterizations
- observations
- findings

Any notes/written documents that identify the source of the information (*i.e., an answer to an interview question*) should be destroyed in order to maintain the method's "non-attribution" policy. This includes spreadsheets and files that identify the project team which information was derived from. Violations can cast doubt on the reliability of the data collected.



I usually recommend destroying everything that is not part of the formal appraisal record.

# “Can ATMs use laptops during SCAMPI Interviews?” (India)

I have heard LA’s articulate “rules” both for and against this practice. This is wrong! There is no rule in the MDD regarding laptops.



I usually ask the Appraisal Team Members to NOT use laptops during interviews because it is distracting to the interviewees, and often makes them more nervous than they already are (*some suffer from high stress as it is!*).

I have also seen ATM's surfing the web and playing with email when they should be listening and taking notes, so it is also a distraction to them.

Call me old-fashioned, but a steno pad and pen is the best tool for this job.

## “Can the QM be an ATM? ... Our LA says “NO”!” (India)

The SCAMPI MDD outlines the requirements for ATM's and it doesn't exclude ANY particular job function. It does, however, instruct us to avoid conflicts of interest--specifically "chain of command" conflicts.

Therefore, the LA should be concerned with the following two questions:

- 1) Will you be interviewing people who work for you? (*not recommended*)
- 2) Will you be in a position to evaluate your own work? (*not recommended*)

If the answer to both of these questions is "no" then I don't see a problem with it as long as you can show that objectivity is maintained. The SCAMPI MDD has no issue with it either.



# “I need to learn about PPQA fast! ... How do I do it?” (US)

How to get smart fast?...OK, first get some #8 AWG/3 wire and a plasma welder...

Start by reading the PPQA PA in the model; make sure to read the informative material. PPQA has multiple purposes:

- 1) “Are we using the process?” and “Is the process appropriate?”
- 2) “What insight can we gain by understanding these two things?” Is the process useable? Is it helping people? How can we make it better?



Good luck, and please,... don't hurt yourself!

# “Where is the question bank for SCAMPI Appraisals?” (UK)

I could tell you, but ... I'd have to kill you!

There is no “official” question bank for CMMI SCAMPI Appraisals. Client's often ask this with the belief that such a question bank would help to standardize the appraisal method. However, the specific context of each appraisal (*organization, industry, product types, culture, et al*) make it virtually impossible to make standardization effective. It's far more informative to design the questions around the organization than to try to get them to answer unfamiliar questions.



At Broadsword, we have a database of several hundred potential questions worded in many different ways that are mapped to the practices in the CMMI. Some questions map to multiple practices, or even multiple Process Areas. We select the appropriate question set after spending some time getting to know our client and then we modify the high-context words to better suit the language of their culture. This customization appears to produce the best results.

# “Is there really a difference between Waterfall & Agile?” (US)

Sure, Agile guys are super laid back, and waterfall folks are really uptight . . . J/K . . . I know lot's of uptight agile guys too! ☺

Waterfall	Agile
Scope is generally fixed, and both budget & schedule are negotiable	Budget & time are fixed, and scope ( <i>within each iteration and release</i> ) is negotiable.
Requirements are fixed, extensive planning is done, and all changes are managed through a change control process. The entire set of requirements is completed, the code is designed, built, and tested, and then delivered.	A complete lifecycle is executed incrementally and iteratively against a subset of requirements, enabling both the business, customer, and the development staff to learn along the way. These small sets are delivered to customer in useable chunks.



Just scratching the surface here, but you get the idea...

# “We don’t estimate using historical data—is that ok?” (Brazil)



In general, I’m reluctant to require any prescriptive method as the only way to satisfy a practice.

In other words, a project can very easily estimate properly without specifically taking actual estimates from the prior year and using them with a multiplier as you have described.

I agree with your assessment, the absence of a specific piece of written data should not stop you from achieving a goal as long as you are achieving it in some other way.

The suggested work products in the book are just that, suggestions. There's no need to take them literally – but they often do lead to the right answer.

# “How long do we have to wait to be Re-Appraised?” (China)

If you're asking how long a *successful* appraisal is "good for," the answer is 3 years.

If you've had an *unsuccessful* appraisal then the answer is less clear. The SEI does not provide any formal guidelines for this, as every organization is unique.

It really comes down to the depth of the weaknesses identified during your appraisal, and whether or not you can credibly make the corrections, build up some



maturity, and show results on a reasonable amount of projects.

In some companies this could be 6 months - in others it could be 6 years. It just depends on your situation.

The bottom line is that there is no formal requirement from the SEI on this, but you will need to ensure that your Lead Appraiser is comfortable with your progress from the last appraisal before you conduct a second one.

## “We’re buying a tool to do CMMI. Which one is best?” (Poland)

Excuse me while I take a tool to my head. . . oh, sorry, I thought I was in the wood shop!... By far, the best tool to use for CMMI is the one between your ears.

Applying logic and sound business judgment in selecting your approach, who should be involved, and how success is defined will be the single most important “tool” in your arsenal.

I worked with a client once who spent millions on a “tool” to “do CMMI” but they gave a blank stare when asked about their business goals and objectives.

That said, you'll likely end up with more than one new toy to play with if you decide to go ahead and buy something.



# “How many processes are the right amount?” (Turkey)

...er...um...well...

...a lot...

...or...

...a little...



## “We don’t use DAR—should we just fill out the forms?” (FR)

Hmmmm...should you fill out a form only for the purpose of "satisfying" CMMI even though it may not be needed? The pragmatist in me is dying to know... Why add the overhead?

I would never ask you to fill out a form just for the CMMI. There are projects that just don't perform any DAR practices, nor do they have a need to. If that is the case then DAR evidence just wouldn't be available for that project.

Of course, this is not a free pass to ignore DAR either. Someone with appropriate authority should want to know why DAR wasn't needed, and a process for tailoring would need to be demonstrated, but that's another subject.

Bottom line? Don't do things "just for the CMMI." Do things that make sense for you and your business - and have an appropriate process for tailoring.



## “I hear Agile companies can’t achieve ML4. Is that true?” (US)

As my mother-in-law would say, "I'd agree with you... if you were right."

Many think Agile means "no documentation" and that is just wrong. Conversely, there are too many people that think the CMMI means "lots of documents," and that ML4/5 need even more. This too is untrue.



I think ML4/5 will lead you to be MORE Agile, not less. One reason for this is that at ML4 we have good data to tell us how we can minimize and optimize our process. Agile proponents always talk about "just enough" (*and I think that's great*) but until you reach ML4 and have collected the right data to perform OPP (*statistical analysis*) how do you KNOW what "just enough" is? The answer is "you don't."

So, there is NO truth to what you've heard . . . plenty of "agile" organizations adopt ML4 and ML5. The question I would ask first is, are the companies you're hearing about really "agile" or are they that other, new-fangled methodology: "lazy?"

**“Can we get to ML3 by Tuesday for no money?” (US)**

# AS Promised.... Another game of STUMP THE APPRAISER!!!!

**Prizes!**

**Laughs!**

**Humiliation!**

**Cheap shots!**



**“Pay no attention to that man behind the curtain...”**

For more check out...

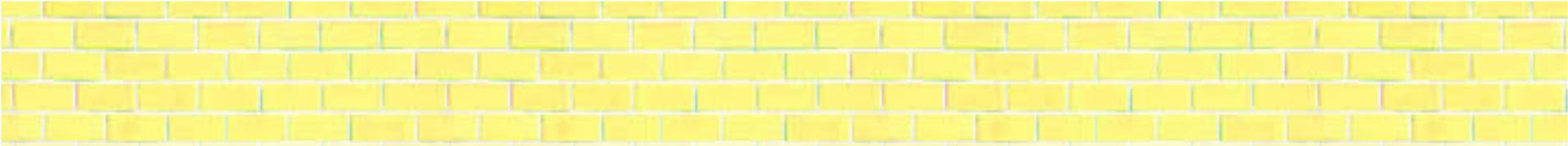
**<http://AsktheCMMIAppraiser.com>**



**Jeff Dalton**

Blogger

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