ARC 226 Construction Scheduling

Chapter 19

Introduction to Computerized CPM Scheduling
Introduction

- CPM basics were developed in the ‘50s
  - Was initially a cumbersome process, especially for updates
    - Information was not available on a timely basis
- For CPM to be fully utilized, real-time data is important
- CPM became much more useful with the advent of PCs
  - The PMs still needed to have computer skills, which was (and in some cases still is) uncommon
- The most common programs are Primavera Project Planner (P3), SureTrak, and MS Project
- Project managers must still become proficient with CPM basics and the computer software
Tips for Learning PM Software

- Once one brand is learned, learning other is easier.
- It is essential to know the basics of CPM first.
- Most companies provide introductory training with the software.
  - Typically two to three days.
- Post-secondary institutions may offer training.
- Training should be followed immediately by application at your office.
- Start by inputting a basic schedule and generating reports.
  - Learn new features as you need them.
- Often beneficial to have several employees trained at the same time.
Comparison of Popular Software

- Each company should analyze the capabilities of different software and decide which meets the needs of their company
- Learning the CPM basics is the critical first step
- P3, SureTrak, MS Project have the largest user base
Primavera Project Planner

- Commonly referred to as P3
- Allows more than one PM to be in the same schedule files at the same time
- Takes a little more time to learn (most likely)
- Primary choice for large commercial and industrial contractors
- Can handle almost any type of project and generate many different types of reports
- Allows for multiple baseline schedules for comparison
- Both S-curves shown (banana curve)
SureTrak

- Junior version of P3
- More Windows based than P3
- Single user
- Less expensive than P3
- Only one baseline schedule
- Can show only one S-curve
- Can import into P3
MS Project

- Familiar Windows user interface
- Imports/exports easily to other MS programs (Excel)
- Most commonly used with residential
- Less expensive
- Can not do multiple S-curves
General Suggestions for Reports

- Keep in mind the intent of the report is to communicate the schedule with the interested party
- Keep the reports simple and clear
  ◦ A tabular report may be the best
- Save the fancy graphics for the appropriate time
  ◦ Possibly for a contract negotiation
- In general, keep the reports simple and without information overload
Conclusion

- Computer advances have greatly increased the usability of CPM techniques
  - The PC probably is the only reason CPM is now viable
- All companies can benefit from the methods
- Take the time to learn the CPM techniques, then the software
- Take a course on the particular software
  - Then learn by using
  - Start simple, add features as you need them