

Calling your BLUF

Effectively Influencing Decision Making
– swiftly.



Agenda

1. Context is everything: Senior Leadership Challenges
2. Project Controls Practitioners: The Detailed Mind
3. What's a BLUF?
4. Why you need to BLUF
5. When and How to BLUF
6. W, SW, WN.....creating BLUF
7. Example BLUFs

Context is Everything: Senior Leadership Challenges (1)

According to BetterUp, the six most common leadership challenges are:

1. Providing Inspiration
 - Helping people find meaning in their work
2. Developing Others
 - Growing people
3. Leading Change
 - Leading through uncertainty
4. Handling different perspectives
 - Managing conflict
5. Dealing with Imposter Syndrome
 - Managing self doubt
6. Managing a team
 - Build trust, manage expectations

[1. How to Deal with These 17 Common Leadership Challenges \(betterup.com\)](https://www.betterup.com/leadership-challenges)



Context is Everything: Senior Leadership Challenges (2)

Then we add in the challenge of Making Decisions in a time poor, information overloaded world.

Which means Senior Leaders almost need to be **Wonder Woman or any other Superhero!**

Project Controls
Professional's
Challenge




How do we make decision-making fast and easy?

How do we provide confidence to Senior Leaders that they are making the right decision?

Project Controls Practitioners: The Detailed Mind (1)

Our nature as Project Controls Practitioners:



Success in any endeavor requires single-minded attention to detail and total concentration.

— Willie Sutton —

AZ QUOTES

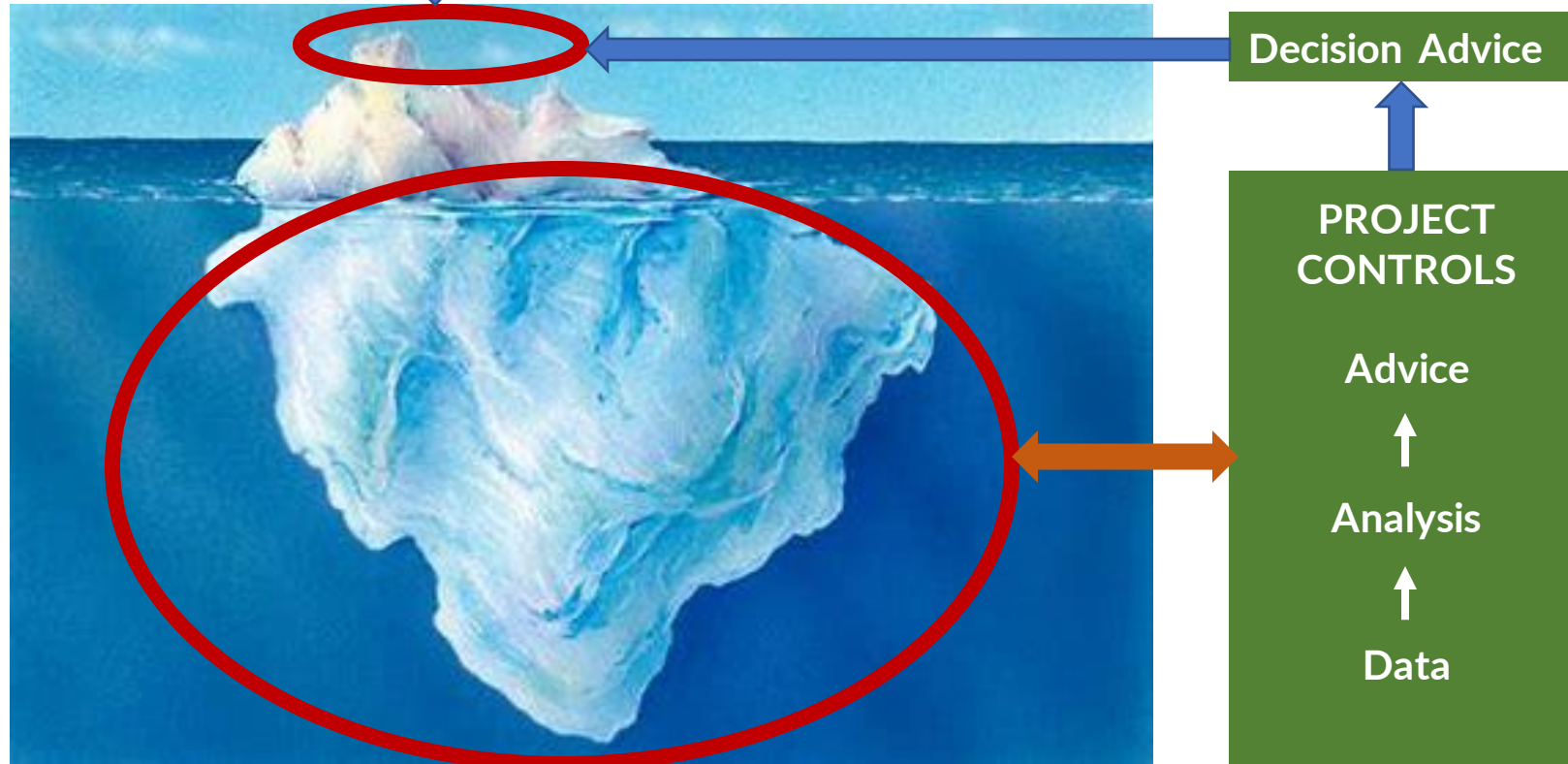
We live in the detail to plan, control, and adjust to enable successful delivery

Would we be good bank robbers? Likely so!

**Willie Sutton was a highly accomplished bank robber in the US in the 1930's. During his forty-year robbery career he stole an estimated \$2 million, and he eventually spent more than half of his adult life in prison and escaped three times.

Project Controls Practitioners: The Detailed Mind (2)

We must move up the iceberg to enable our Senior Leaders to be successful in decision making by getting to the BLUF.



What's a BLUF?

BOTTOM LINE UP FRONT

The BLUF states upfront the purpose of the message and engenders the need for action.

The BLUF is designed to enforce speed and clarity.

An effective BLUF is concise and to the point.

A GREAT BLUF sets the scene for making decisions easier for the Decision Maker.



Why you need to BLUF



The BLUF bridges the **Decision Gap**, allowing the decision maker to:

1. Understand quickly and simply
2. Take action

When and How to BLUF

EVERY DAY, IN EVERY WAY

Starting with the BLUF gives the decision maker room to think.

- They don't need to filter through a swathe of detailed information to get where they need to be, to grasp the essence of the issue and what needs to be done
- They can choose to ask for more detail, or trust a **well written, evidence backed** BLUF, followed by an appropriate level of concise detail.

Starting with the BLUF shows thought and analysis.

- Channel an inner Mark Twain

"If I had more time, I would have written a shorter letter."

Stacey's Rule of Thumb: "Tell me in 25 words or less or go think some more."



When and How to BLUF

Bart Simpson was right!

Information
Overload



Excessive detail = a buffet of salad

- What to choose, what to choose?

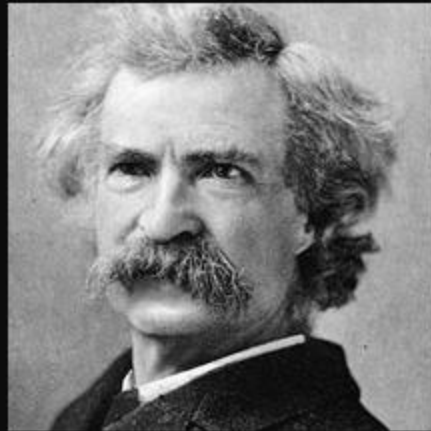
(This could take some time.)

The BLUF is the good stuff on the buffet

- It's where we go first!
 - Salad follows (or maybe not.....)

(Decision made!)

Disclaimer: A word on evidence from Mark Twain



No amount of evidence will ever
persuade an idiot

~ Mark Twain

AZ QUOTES

W, SW, WN... Creating BLUF

WHAT

Describe the event / need

- Facts only!
- Short and punchy!
- Elevator pitch mode engaged!

**THIS IS YOUR
BLUF**

SO WHAT

Analysis

- Why does this matter?
- Opinions and perspectives
- Consider any broader issues
- Present outcomes / conclusions

WHAT'S NEXT

Call to ACTION

- Turn conclusions into go-forward actions.
- Make recommendations for what should be done next



Example BLUFs



WHAT

Describe the event

Analysis shows we are likely to be 20% over schedule by the time we deliver the project.



SO WHAT

Analysis

If we don't correct this, we'll be 6 months late and liquidated damages will apply.

This is the result of our supplier experiencing global supply chain issues.

WHAT'S NEXT

Call to ACTION

I have located a supplier in Victoria and need your approval to procure materials from them.

We will also have to explore cancelling the contract with our current supplier. Shall I engage with commercial for advice?



Example BLUFs

WHAT

Describe the event

I need you to approve both the design and content of the attached brochure by 9am tomorrow

SO WHAT

Analysis

This brochure is required for a quick turnaround marketing campaign commencing in 3 days

It describes our services, products and special deals attached to the campaign

Analysis predicts a 105% ROI

WHAT'S NEXT

Call to ACTION

Please email your approval to the marketing department by 9am tomorrow so we don't miss out on a great campaign opportunity





THANK YOU

