

Mar. 2010



# Newsletter

**Utah Chapter**

*Our Mission: Provide our members opportunities for career development and networking with peers. Advance and promote the profession by creating awareness of the skills and abilities of IT audit and security Professionals.*

## **President's Message**

Greetings Utah Chapter members,

We had a great February meeting, where James Elste from Symantec Corporation gave a presentation on The Anatomy of a Breach.

Our March presenter is Josh Taylor, with PWC, who will be presenting on Third Party Assurance (TPA). Please remember to sign up early to make sure we get a room big enough to comfortably seat everyone who wants to attend.

Also, our spring seminar is scheduled for May 14th. We are very excited to have Cisco come and present, and we will provide more information about the details of the Spring seminar soon.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone on March 18, 2010.

Thanks

Julie Park

## Monthly Professional Training

Date: Thursday, Mar. 18, 2010  
Time: 11:30 – 1:15 pm.  
Place: Lion House  
Speaker: Josh Taylor, PWC  
Topic: Third Party Assurance (TPA)  
Cost: \$20 for members and \$15 for students, \$25 for non-members  
  
CPE: 1 Credit

Email: [utah.isaca.chapter@gmail.com](mailto:utah.isaca.chapter@gmail.com)  
Include the first and last name with e-mail address for each attendee you are registering.  
Register at: <http://www.isaca-ut.org/utahevents.html>

### Menu

Caesar Salad  
Roast Baron of Beef  
Coconut Cream Pie

### Monthly Training Registration

The cutoff time period to sign up for the professional lunch meeting is the Tuesday before the monthly Thursday meeting. If you sign up after noon on Tuesday, you may or may not have a guaranteed seat. Since the rooms at the Lion House are small we have to give them a hard count by Tuesday at noon to reserve a room. Thanks

### Earning CPE

#### **ISACA e-Symposium**

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If you are in need of CPE credits, an easy way to earn them is by participating in an ISACA e-Symposium. These are free online web casts and you can earn 3 CPE credits. For further details, go to: [www.isaca.org/webcasts](http://www.isaca.org/webcasts)

I found out from ISACA that there is no limit to the number of e-Symposiums or on-line quizzes that you can take to help fulfill your CPE requirements. If you have any questions concerning CPE credits please email the following: [certification@isaca.org](mailto:certification@isaca.org) and they will answer your questions.

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### Suggestions for Monthly Speakers

If you have a topic you would like to hear in one of our monthly meetings or if you know of a good speaker please email Jackie Schwartz: [Jackie.Schwartz@usa.net](mailto:Jackie.Schwartz@usa.net)

# CISA Success!!

Congratulations to those who passed the CISA exam.

## CISA Top 3 Scorers

No. 1: Mr. Brandon Greenwood

No. 2: Ted DeArmon

No. 3: M. Brock M. Marshall

## CISA Exam Passers

Mr. Edward Sawyer

Mr. James B Wightman

Travis Ringger

Mr. Timothy J. Strobell

Randall Willardsen

Mr. Frank J. Dittmar

Yu-ting C. Shen

Mr. Ryan Scott Edwards

Mr. Brandon Greenwood

Ted DeArmon

David Christensen

Jerry R. Smith

Sharon Westenskow

## CISM Top 3 Scorers

No one took the exam.

## Monthly Article

### IT Project Risk Management

The mastery of risk is distinguished in modern times from the past by an understanding and measurement of risks, their consequences and the effect human beings have on outcome. However as strange as it might seem IT project management is immature in it's view of risks. It is a repeating theme that all of us in the IT field see with the same recriminating data showing us that approximately 20 percent of all IT projects are canceled before completion. And, less than one-third of those IT projects are completed on time or within budgetary constraints.

When the postmortem of failed IT projects occurs it usually reveals there were significant symptoms of trouble. A warning sign is best defined as an indication that predicts one or more possible problems. So when these early warning signs appear on the stage, managers must ask themselves whether this warning is sufficient to warrant the project's termination or possible change of direction. By placing such early warning systems early in the project's planning, and then auditing for their appearance organizations can save significant amounts of money while the project is still in it's early stages.

Although there are many early warning signs, probably the most prevalent are what might be called the Terrible Twelve. They are best broken into two groups, the first six are People Related and the second six are Business Process Related. Here they are:

-Lack of top management support. This risk is not surprising for those that have been involved in project management or project management auditing. Projects that are not fully supported by executive management with accountability from the top down are generally not deemed sufficiently important to require support from the "bottom up." Consequently, these projects often dwindle into nothingness.

-Weak project manager. Project managers must be leaders, communicators, and sometimes salesmen. Project managers are not just people upon whom blame can be cast when a project fails. They must be proven leaders capable of planning and coordinating many efforts according to a determined time table and within budget. They do not perform the actual project itself, rather they are the lubricant of the project. They must plan the project not perform the project.

-No stakeholder participation. All projects that are significant to an organization has a number of stakeholders. It is these stakeholders that must contribute resources if the project is going to achieve any degree of success. Too often these stakeholders remove resources when the project's demands conflict with their own causing the project to fail. When the project finds itself in this situation, usually the victim is drowning and might die.

-Weak or non-commitment of project team. For the project manager delivering the project within scope, with a high quality delivery, on time and on budget requires a lot of hard work and many challenging choices. Often these choices are not easily made. Project team members that do not have a strong commitment to the project and it's schedule can always find other things that will attract their attention. Project managers must be mindful that team members must possess the skills to fulfill their assigned tasks and they must also be attentive to the fact that unreasonable schedules are project-killers.

-Team members lack sufficient knowledge or skills to perform requisite tasks. This early warning sign is telling about the team's ability to perform in a project-related atmosphere. A word to the wise; if the required skills are present at the project's beginning, then they will not be developed during the project's development. Project management must insure skills, knowledge and abilities are present in the team members at the start of the project, not developed en route.

-Subject matters experts are unavailable or overscheduled. It is common to find that SMEs from the user business units are unable to provide requisite time to the project team if they are fully tasked in their regular business assignment. Time for them to fully participate in the project is essential. Their failure to fully participate is a critical early warning sign.

-Lack of fully documented requirements. It is necessary that the project has functional, performance, and reliability requirements. If not, then each team member and stakeholder will likely have widely disparate expectations about the project. Wise project managers ask for sign-offs on requirements documentation forcing expectations and assumptions to be in alignment. Experienced auditors ask for this relevant documentation when reviewing projects. There is a simple axiom, if a project does not have a defined written and acknowledged success criteria than it is doomed to disappoint.

-No change control process. The project manager can declare that "requirements are frozen." This is a statement usually made somewhere after the project's planning state has finalized and is ready to begin execution. But in today's world nothing could be farther from the truth. Businesses change, processes, change, technologies change, management changes, and so on. There must be a methodology to formally process and manage changes in the project.

-Ineffective schedule planning or management. If project milestone deliverables and due dates are not documented, then there are many differing opinions regarding the needs and when they are due. A project team must understand and agree on the tasks in the short-term leading to the long-term milestones. They must be apprised of these schedules as different skills and resources are needed at different times. Various tasks are often dependent upon the successful completion of previous tasks. Completing a project on time requires that team members have a flowing and consistent view of the intermediate goals and deliverables.

-Communication breakdown. Any project has multiple stakeholders and requires that the project manager act like an orchestra director. It is important to note that when consensus on project success is lost, it is quite likely the project will fail. If all the stakeholders do not communicate and work together on an ongoing basis the project team will be marching in many directions and the project will fail.

-Resources assigned to another project. If resources originally destined for a project are redirected to another project seemingly of a higher priority then this is an early warning sign of failure.

-No clear business case for the project. If there is no documented business case for the project, or if the project is not closely aligned with the strategic strategy of the business organization, then this is clearly an early sign of failure. The rare exception is the "save the business enterprise" project where the very survival of the organization is at stake and the project will be completed regardless of the economic impact.

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