Presentations and Telling the Story

Revenue Estimating Conference
Mission San Luis Retreat

October 30, 2012
Outline

- There is a Story
- The Story Must be Told
- How Best to Tell the Story
There is a Story

- Behind every estimate, there is a story

*Elements of a Story:*
- Setting
- Characters
- Plot
The Story Must be Told

- Estimating conferences must approve or choose among estimates.

- The *TELLING* of the story behind the estimates is an essential element to this process of choice and approval.

- *IN ADDITION* to informing the decision making process, the telling of the story can improve the story itself.
How Best to Tell the Story

- Who is your audience?
- Be Efficient AND Informative
- Be Succinct
How Best to Tell the Story

- **Who is your audience?**

- The *primary audience* is the conference principals
  - Varying pre-existing knowledge and experience
  - Limited time to develop additional knowledge

- The implication is: Don’t assume your audience knows anything in particular...Tell the story in a way that your grandmother could understand it.
How Best to Tell the Story

- **Be Efficient AND Informative**
  - Give your audience what it NEEDS
  - Don’t take more time than is necessary

- Your audience needs to know the most important:
  - Settings (laws and assumptions)?
  - Characters (explanatory variables)?
  - Plot lines (interactions & dynamics among the above)?
How Best to Tell the Story

- Other helpful information for your audience:
  - Thoughts on why someone else’s story (estimate) is different from yours.
  - Historical context of your story
    - Is your forecast breaking new ground compared to previous forecasts?
    - *Data revisions*—note them and their importance to your story.
How Best to Tell the Story

- **Be Succinct**

  - “Clear, precise expression in few words”
    - Use some pictures
    - Careful spreadsheet design
    - Careful description of assumptions/methodologies
Closing Thoughts

- It’s a learning process

- These are aspirational ideas, events will often conspire against you (such as too few hours in the day)

- There are benefits beyond helping the estimating conference principals make decisions