

## ProChain 2020 Virtual Conference Introduction

This document provides a brief introduction that will help you stay oriented as you attend ProChain's Critical Chain conference. It contains a couple of links, a video summary of Critical Chain, a glossary of commonly used terms, and some après-conference information.

[Download the Conference Agenda here](#)

[Video Introduction to Critical Chain](#)

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### Glossary

**A<sup>5</sup> System:** A<sup>5</sup> is an implementation framework developed by ProChain Solutions and described in the book [Islands of Stability](#). It consists of the following five steps:

- Agree on the goals you want to accomplish together (chartering).
- Align around how you're going to do it (planning).
- Advance to achieve your goals (execution).
- Assess to see how well you're doing (measurement).
- Adapt as you learn and the situation changes (response).

**Buffer:** A *buffer* is time strategically added to a schedule to protect against expected task variation and unanticipated delays in task execution. Buffers are not slack; they provide essential time in the schedule to account for uncertainty.

**Buffer Consumption:** If a project's tasks are delayed, the times during which they are projected to be performed push out and overlap the buffer. That overlap is called *buffer consumption*. 100% buffer consumption means you have no buffer left.

**Critical Chain:** *Critical Chain* is a project scheduling approach first described by Eliyahu Goldratt in his book [Critical Chain](#). It involves explicitly accounting for resource contention and variation. The Critical Chain of a project endpoint is its longest chain of tasks, accounting for resource contention.

**Critical Chain Project Management (CCPM):** CCPM is the common term for a project management methodology based on critical chain scheduling. It promotes focused work through credible Critical Chain schedules that acknowledge and account for task variation and limited resources.

**Fever Chart:** The *fever chart* is a graphical representation of buffer status that clearly communicates the health and status of a project endpoint or an entire pipeline. The horizontal dimension of the fever chart is percent project complete, meaning the percentage of the chain feeding the endpoint that has been completed. The vertical dimension is percent buffer consumed. The fever chart is divided into three status zones: (1) good probability of completing on time or early (green), (2) at risk of not completing on time (yellow), and (3) at great risk of not completing on time (red).

**Focus Duration:** The *focus duration* is the time you believe a task would take to complete, on average, if you had the minimum possible interruptions and everything needed were available. It is sometimes called the “hands-on” or “touch” time required; it is not a “safe” or “high confidence” duration.

**Low-Risk Duration:** The *low-risk duration* is the upper end of the range for how long you expect a task to take to complete. It can be thought of as the 90% confidence duration.

**Pacing:** *Project Pacing* is the process of staggering project starts, in order to maximize project speed and minimize multitasking.

**Pipeline:** A *project pipeline* is a group of projects that makes sense to manage as a group. Critical chain pipeline management often includes project pacing.

**ProChain Solutions, Inc.:** *ProChain* was founded in 1997 with the goal of helping project managers and project organizations to be dramatically more effective. Over the past 20+ years, we have used a combination of software tools and methodology to help clients gain billions of dollars of value. ProChain software includes the following modules:

- **ProChain Enterprise (PCE)** is a web-based tool that allows your organization to analyze and update project status from anywhere in the world.
- **ProChain Fusion (PCF)** is ProChain's newest web-based system. It allows unprecedented ease of remote updating and management for projects and tasks.
- **ProChain Pipeline (PCP)** is a desktop tool that runs on top of Microsoft Project® and allows you to manage and pace a pipeline of projects.
- **ProChain Project Scheduling (PPS)** is a desktop tool that runs on top of Microsoft Project® and allows you to apply Critical Chain scheduling and analysis tools to a single project.

**Project Buffer:** A *project buffer* is a buffer that is placed after the final task of a project endpoint. It provides the time needed to protect the endpoint's completion (or commitment) date from delays. This is the most important buffer to place in a schedule and to monitor.

**Project Launch:** A *Project Launch* is the application of ProChain's A<sup>5</sup> system to a single project.

#### After the Conference ...

- We will send out a **survey**. If you fill it out you get a FREE GIFT!
- If you requested a copy of ***Islands of Stability*** when you registered, we will send it.
- We will provide you with instructions for getting **PDU's from PMI** for attending the conferences.
- When the **conference videos** are ready online, we will send you information about how to access them.