

# meng 293 – Project Management & Social Responsibility

## Assignment 3 – Project Management 1

The escapologist Houdini would amaze audiences with the following trick.

On a dockside he would be handcuffed and shackled, sewn up in a mailbag, placed inside a large trunk which was then nailed and chained shut and lowered to the bottom of a lake or river. Before the trick he would brag that he could hold his breath for 7 minutes.

After over 8 minutes underwater his assistants would look panicked and the trunk would be hurriedly brought to the surface and opened. The crowd would press close to look, positive that Houdini was dead.

As the trunk was opened and the empty mail bag, shackles and handcuffs lifted out, Houdini would nonchalantly saunter in from the crowd fully clothed and smoking a cigar to be embraced by his “relieved” assistants and to huge cheers from the crowd.

Whilst not trying to belittle the trick, much of it was showmanship at its finest as modern Project Planning techniques can clearly show.

The following is a breakdown of the “tasks” that had to be performed to complete the show.

<b>HOUDINI’S TASKS</b>	<b>Minutes</b>	<b>ASSISTANTS’ TASKS</b>	<b>Minutes</b>
Remove cuffs	1.0	Handcuff Houdini	0.5
Remove Shackles	1.0	Shackle Houdini	0.5
Get out of mailbag	1.0	Put Houdini in mailbag	0.5
Get out of box	3.0	Sew up mailbag	3.0
Swim underwater to bridge	1.0	Put mailbag in trunk	0.5
Dry and Change	5.0	Place lid on trunk and nail	4.0
Light cigar	1.0	Chain up trunk	4.0
Make grand entrance	1.0	Hoist box to water	1.0
		Lower box to bottom	1.0
		Box fills with water	3.0
		Leave box on bottom	7.0
		Hoist box to surface	0.5
		Water drains from box	1.0
		Hoist box to land	2.0
		Remove chains	2.0
		Pry off lid	2.0
		Exhibit empty mailbag, etc.	0.5
		Hug Houdini	1.0

- Prepare a Gantt chart.
- Prepare a network diagram of the show.
- What is the shortest time it takes to perform the trick? (The Critical Path)
- Suppose it took Houdini twice as long to escape from his cuffs, shackles, mailbag and box. What affect would that have on the trick?
- What would be the affect if Houdini could indeed hold his breath for 7 minutes and failed to get out of the mailbag?

Note: Do not produce a table calculating ES, EF, LS, LF and Float times for this problem (Its way too much work!)