



nce upon a time there was a highly respected shipyard in the city of Prosper that provided the vast majority of income for its Kingdom, Winnfor. The shipyard made every type of floating craft, from tiny fishing boats to mighty warships. The kingdom had recently recovered from a dismal economic time through the wise leadership of Prince Roger, who oversaw the entire shipbuilding process, and his father, King Magnus. Now that it was clear the bleak times had ended, Magnus decided to meet with Roger and his councilor, Roman.

“And so, father, I think we can conclude that the worst is behind us. I must say, the kingdom is very fortunate to have survived these terrible times. Many other kingdoms have fallen into ruin during these dark days. Your wise leadership has saved us from that fate,” Prince Roger said as he finished his report.

King Magnus only half listened to his son. He found himself more concerned about the next set of problems facing his realm, and gave little thought about the past successes. “Yes, Roger, this news is very good indeed, but it appears we have new problems that need our attention. Roman’s report from the Counsel of Merchants has caused considerable alarm.”

Roman glanced through a window at the sundial sitting on the balcony, very aware of the time demands on the king. “Yes, Your Highness, the merchants are not happy at the moment. It should be noted that now that times are better, the merchants have come to the kingdom in droves. They have come to buy our latest trading vessels, which they consider to be far superior to any other.”

“That must be the good news, Roman,” the King said. “Now let’s hear the bad news.”

“They cannot obtain our products when they need them,” Roman said. “The docks have none of the new merchant ships available for sale. Those that want to order a ship complain that the lead times they are quoted are far too long, and getting longer with each order. Even when we get an order for a ship, we rarely deliver the product on time, Sire. Many merchants have offered to pay twice the normal price, just to get their hands on one of our ships in the near future. But we just don’t have them.”

“Because of these problems, merchants are threatening to go to Dostrice to buy ships,” added Prince Roger. “Their ships are poorly built, slow, and expensive – but at least they are available. These merchants need ships, Father, and are willing to go anywhere to get them.”

“I was under the impression the docks were full of ships for sale,” said Magnus.

“They are all fishing boats, not the merchant ships,” said Roger.

“Can’t we sell those to get more gold into the Treasury? The gold flow is becoming a concern,” said Magnus.

“The fishermen realize that we have more supply than demand. They are negotiating prices that are below the cost of the material used to make the boats. We are agreeing to those prices just to get the gold,” said Roger.

“The bad news gets worst, your Majesty,” said Roman. “We didn’t order enough sail cloth to build the merchant ships, and we now have to expedite the material to the shipyards by dragon. This is expensive, creates chaos in the shipyard, and the cloth often ends up getting a bit crispy during shipping. We also have far more anchors than we need, since we paid very little to our supplier when we purchased them. The warehouses are full of rusting anchors.”

“Sweet Mother of Moses, how can this be? I thought we had spent many golds on seers, wizards, and trade masters to prevent just these problems!” Magnus growled. “Bring them to me, Roger, so I can figure out which one to toss into my dungeon!”



The next day, King Magnus held court with Roger, Roman, and leaders of the groups he had requested. “Let’s start with the Seer Forcasta. It seems your group is to blame here, wouldn’t you agree?” asked Magnus.

Forecasta stood and said, “As I have said many times before, Your Highness, our visions are not 100% accurate. They would improve if I had the number of seers and crystals I requested last year, but you have withheld the gold necessary to obtain these resources. I foretold at that time that our visions would suffer as a result, and that is what has transpired. As for the fishing boats, Emarpe and Manu are to blame for making more than is required. Do not blame the seers, your majesty, for it is not our fault,” Forcasta said.

Magnus turned toward the wizard Emarpe. Emarpe was one of the greatest wizards in the land, especially when it came to ship building. He only had to take one look at how a vessel was put together, and then murmur a spell that could magically create scrolls. These scrolls became both purchase orders for materials and work orders for the various guilds in the shipyard. The guilds would then make and assemble the parts that were on the scroll. He was also one of the richest men in the kingdom due to this powerful gift.

Emarpe was furious that Forecasta was bold enough to blame him, and he jumped up, shouting, “Do not accuse me, witch, for I only create orders based upon your visions! If you cannot handle that responsibility, perhaps the seer who takes your place can, while you rot in a dark cell! As for the additional fishing boats, I created those schedules at the request of Master Manu. I cannot be held accountable for trying to help another leader out of a jam. You can be sure, Sire, that I will not be making that mistake again!” With that, Emarpe flopped down to his chair, wheezing and coughing. “I can make better use of the damn crystals, too,” he said after he had settled.

Master Manu, in charge of the guilds making the ships, rose with a tired and frustrated look on his face. “Your Highness, I must deal with the chaos that others have thrust upon me. I am being told to do what Emarpe tells me, but it rarely makes sense. I cannot make things without all the materials, Your Highness, and a ship that lacks a tiller or a mast is just flotsam. Right now, the shipyard is full of flotsam. But know I have visited the dungeons before, your Highness, when my efficiency numbers began to drop. I had to PUSH these extra fishing boats to the docks to help me keep my measures high. As a result, I must take the scrolls from Emarpe and enchant them with Excelsor crystals in order to manage my area and prevent another visit to your dark and moldy rooms. You can also blame Sales for not getting those boats sold – they should PROMOTE these valuable vessels to get them off the docks. Adding to the confusion is Priestess Leana, who rails against Emarpe’s instructions and demands that I do what she asks.” Manu sank slowly into his seat, emitting a long sigh. “I might as well ask for stronger crystals, too, since everyone else is asking for them,” he said to himself quietly.

Princess Leana rose smoothly and spoke quietly. “These problems, Your Highness, would all be eliminated if the shipyard followed the PULL commandments. The only thing we can say for certain about Forcasta’s visions is that they are always wrong, and do not take into account demand variation. If the forecasts are wrong, then Emarpe instructions are wrong, and so there is little need for him. You should banish him from the kingdom, Sire, so at least the many golds he requires would stay in the Treasury. It would also allow me to directly control Manu, and drive his production based upon demand. I would reallocate his crystals and instruct him in our ways so that he will stop working if there is no demand. I realize these decisions are difficult, but we must make sacrifices now in order to ensure our future, regardless of the time it takes to put into place!”

Then the room erupted into chaos, as each expert defended their area, casting spells of blame at each other with their pointed fingers. “Enough!” Magnus roared, causing the room to be instantly silent.

“You **WILL** come up with a solution, or all of you will end up in the dungeons, where you will be tortured with endless Powerpoint presentations!” Magnus growled. The experts gulped as their eyes widened with fear. “Now be gone and only come back to me when you **ALL** have agreed upon a solution.” The experts rose and walked to the door, whispering accusations at each other like school children as they left.

The room became quiet, as Roger and Roman watched the King, who had closed his eyes, his forehead rested upon steepled fingers. Finally, Roman coughed quietly. Magnus looked up at him and said, “Do you have something to add, Councilor?”

“Perhaps the answer does not lay with these experts, Your Highness. It may be time to “Think out of the Kingdom” so to speak. This problem is not unique to our land, and a conference of experts is meeting in the near future in a neighboring kingdom. It may make sense to send our experts to this conference, in the hope that they will gain knowledge that will bring them to a consensus on a viable solution,” said Roman.

“Fine,” said Magnus. “But book passage for yourself and the prince as well. And remember, there is plenty of room in the dungeons.”



The small band that had traveled from Winnfor was now strongly motivated to find a solution they could all support. But as the conference started to wind down, a growing sense of dread began to emerge. They sullenly compared their thoughts on possible alternatives as they consumed a beverage made from ground pits of a local cherry. Many solutions were too costly, some were too academic, and others just lacked common sense. As Emarpe half listened to the others talk, his eyes drifted around the room. He came out of his reverie with a sudden start as he recognized a name - a name he had not seen written nor heard spoken in many years. He realized he was staring at the spine of a book being read by a mage. The mage was sitting in the corner of the room, the table in front of him covered with books and scrolls. Intrigued, the wizard walked toward the mage, while the others stopped speaking and watched Emarpe leave.

“I know of the wizard who wrote this book, mage, but it does not look the like the same tome I studied. Does it contain the same science that I learned from the high wizard Orlicky?” Emarpe asked in a curious tone. The others had followed the wizard to the table, listening as he spoke.

The mage looked up, smiling. “Ah, yes it does, my Grace, but it contains new science as well. It now includes wisdom from your sect, Priestess,” the mage said, looking at Leana. Both Emarpe and Leana flipped through copies of the book, while the rest studied the scrolls on the table that summarized the new science. The mage continued, “**PULL** is powerful tool, but adding the concept of **POSTION** as it relates to buffers magnifies its impact.” After spending a few minutes studying the chapters of the new science, the wizard and the priestess looked at each other, trying to gage each other’s reaction.

The prince finished reading his scroll. “This may contain the answer we seek, “ he said, after looking at the wizard and the priestess, “but we have little time before we leave and even less time to present a solution to our King. How can we learn more, mage?”

The mage spoke. “You will need to speak with the high wizard Charol. He can open a portal between kingdoms, your Highness, and spend an hour with you using a magic called the “Webinar.” Charol will

teach you the basics of this science, which we call Demand Driven MRP or just DDMRP. He will also answer any questions you have. That should allow you to gain enough knowledge to present to your King.”



When the experts had returned to Winnfor, they used the Webinar to meet with Charol. When it was done, the Prince said, “I have to agree that this DDMRP solution makes sense – common sense. I am surprised that we did not think of this ourselves. I finally have some hope that we can agree on a unified solution. It seems to solve the conflicts that exist between all of us.”

Leana agreed. “It follows our tenets well, my Lord, and expands our knowledge. We must undertake this quest as soon as possible.”

Emarpe chimed in with his support as well. “It will improve my magic, Sire, and help me use the visions Forecasta relays to me while still creating scrolls based on demand. After all, her visions can not be 100% accurate!” He winked at Forecasta, who laughed and nodded in agreement. Everyone else in their group concurred that this was the method they must present to King Magnus.



The King was thoughtful after hearing the presentation, and then looked around the table at each expert to gain an insight into their support. All nodded in agreement. Finally he smiled. “Tell the dungeon master he can go home early!”

Later that evening the group (who now called themselves “The Planners”) enjoyed a round of ale at the local pub, “The Broken Bottle.” The prince stood and spoke after their glasses were full. “We have taken a great step forward, my fellow Planners,” he said, “and we should celebrate the King’s blessing. I have seen your passion for your areas of expertise, and I am impressed. But I have also seen your passion for our kingdom, and the desire to have it flourish, and I am moved. But know this,” he said, now looking into the eyes of each person at the table. “Our story is just beginning. Our first quest – to use DDMRP as a pilot in part of the shipyard – will be difficult and challenging. But I have confidence – not only in our solution, but also in my colleagues. Here’s to our success!”

“Success!” the group shouted, and took a long gulp of their ale. But instead of drinking into the wee hours, the band of friends found themselves sketching out ideas on napkins and putting together plans – until the pub owner finally had to kick them out.

Interested in what the Planners saw in the Webinar Portal? Go to [www.demanddriveninstitute.com/contact.html](http://www.demanddriveninstitute.com/contact.html) to see more about DDMRP!



Or go to Amazon and search for DDMRP to find Orlicky's Material Requirements Planning 3/E

