MS DIM 5102 Case Study, Summer 2016 – Jerry Valentine
Business Objective: Win at Jeopardy
Business Objective is clear, but .... incomplete

- My challenge was more in the ....so what? So what if the computer can win at Jeopardy.
- There was no quantification of this business objective.
- There were very little clear benefits communicated from investing a significant amount of time and energy into a computer that can win at Jeopardy.
- The primary context of the noted business objective appeared to be reputational...to help remind people of IBM and its contributions towards technology and innovation.
- From the perspective of a shareholder, I was left thinking...are they solving the right problem?
Business objective would need to be refined into both user and system requirements.

Development team approach included:

- Evaluating the **inputs→process→output** necessary to be successful in Jeopardy
  - Interpret unstructured questions, context, sarcasm, jokes, puns, etc.
- Breaking down the bigger problems into smaller contributing parts, a form of WBS (work breakdown structure)
- Teams concurrently work on components, a form of project management to help eliminate slack time and preserve the overall timeline determined by the critical path
- External experts were also consulted, utilizing the C of their project management RACI tool (Responsible Accountable Consulted Informed)
Development approach centered on...

- Iterations
- Prototyping
- Rapid Feedback
- Agile-like
- Spiral Method
- Short "waterfall" Cycles
...did he really say Toronto?
Lesson learned include:

- Take risks
- Iterations
- Rapid Feedback
- Consult others
- Contextualize objectives

OK to be wrong