

JONATHAN STARK
HOW TO HANDLE DEADLINES
WITHOUT AGREEING TO THEM

Video: <https://www.crowdfunder.io/jstark5>
Website: <https://expensesproblem.com>

Last project took something like 5-10x longer than expected.

STORYTIME

BigCo Responsive Redesign

Not me, not the client CEO, no one has control over the deadline. Committing to a deadline for a software project is like guaranteeing a sunny wedding.

No one has control over the deadline.

A software project is a **collaboration**.

You can only go as fast as the slowest person. You can encourage, enable, cajole, scream, yell, and so on. But you can't guarantee that everyone will be 100% responsive at all times.

The client is usually the slowest.

Usually, the software project is not the full time job of your client's employees. It's IN ADDITION to their full time job. This typically leads to unresponsiveness, or at least "things happening slower than expected"

WHAT TO DO?

- "Project will take AT LEAST x months"
- Don't accept "50% on delivery" terms
- LOTS of communication

EXCEPTION

Immovable Event

In the case of a project that has to be ready for some sort of event that is out of the client's control (e.g., a sales conference, political election, sporting event), I will agree to the deadline, but not the scope. "We'll get as much done as possible before the event." The deliverables need to be carefully prioritized and continuously released. Freeze code in the days or weeks leading up the event and debug the heck out of it. Once the event is over, coding can resume (if it makes sense to do so post-event).

QUESTIONS?

Video Q&A: <https://www.crowdcast.io/e/jstark5>
Website: <https://exceptionproblem.com>

Quite a bit of Q&A on this talk can be found here:

<https://www.crowdcast.io/e/jstark5>