

Excerpt

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White Paper

Changing the working culture
in project based organisations

Performance Improvement for Project Teams

_Introduction

This paper outlines the experiences of the author in changing Project Working culture in the IT functions of three global banks. These assignments involved improving project reliability and productivity. Although the organisations described in the paper were banks, the approach is generic and appropriate for other Project-Orientated Businesses.

Over the past five years there has been an increased interest by IT functions and business units to improve the way that they manage their project based activities. These changes have been made necessary due to the increased pressure on the technology groups caused by pressures for new or improved applications necessitated by market changes, desired reduction in costs or increases in regulation. Yet some have found that the benefits have been found to equip the businesses concerned for the next decade.



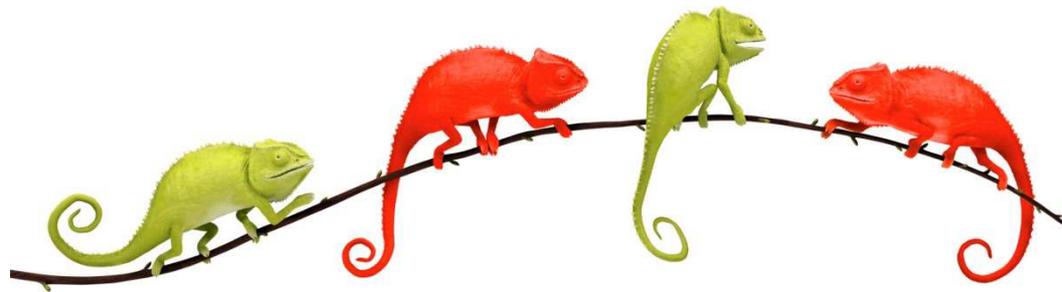
At the outset of this work the author referred to a number of academic business change models. While these models were interesting to create the agenda for change they did not specifically assist with setting the desired outcomes or with deciding what is needed to be changed or in measuring the effectiveness of the business change programme. It was therefore decided that a specific framework for the administration of project management change was needed.

The framework required should give an assessment of current use of project management techniques and behaviours give indications of areas for process improvement, staff education and measures of progress. It was also desirable that the same framework should be used to give a definition of the desired future state of project working. The paper presents three models and the way these were used to improve Project Working in these establishments.

_ Establishing the Baseline and desired Future State

The current state of Project Working was established by assessing the current working practices and behaviours against a model of excellence or Best Practice Framework. The Framework was developed and then tested against over twenty projects from different companies in Britain, Holland and the USA. Not only was it used for defining change; it has subsequently been used for Project Auditing and for Project Management competency assessment. The Best Practice Framework has definitions of activities under the following headings:

- _ Fundamentals,
- _ Scope Control,
- _ Organisation,
- _ Estimating and Planning,
- _ Quality and Control Procedures,
- _ Risk management,
- _ Progress Monitoring and Reporting, and
- _ Implementation.



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