

Workshop Outputs

Overview

- The following slides contain the key lessons that emerged from your discussions at the workshops.
- Thank you for your input at these sessions!

Methods

- Most organisations are loosely based upon Prince2 with key controlled documentation and principles. This is very much tailored to their organisation's needs.
- Everyone uses a formal process / methodology - there are no individual systems.
- Methods can sometimes mask organisational barriers to successful project delivery.
- There is definitely benefit from a structured delivery methodology.
- Methods need to be flexible to an organisations needs.
- Recognised methods help to ensure effective and efficient delivery of projects and programmes
- Methods help to keep less experienced project managers on the right track
- Prince2 and other OGC methods are common sense, but need to be tailored appropriately to prevent bureaucratic overhead - must be "fit for purpose".
- Benefits management is too easily forgotten - it's the reason why we do our projects / programmes in the first place!
- Methods used have included regular enforced reporting to governance authority (Gershon Review)
- Using MSP / Prince2 as "toolkits", selecting appropriate elements and applying localisation where appropriate.
- Benefits identification, tracking etc is very underdeveloped as a discipline.

Doing the Projects Right

- You must define the minimum set of requirements that a project must produce from the methodology. That is what they will be audited against
- There needs to be authority behind the assurance role so that the reviewee understands the consequences of not complying.
- Need to question the cultural readiness of senior management - do they value the PMO contribution in this area?
- Need to be clear about the importance of key early products such as Business Case, Strategic Fit, Risk and Issue Logs, Plans and Gateway Reviews.
- All organisations had some assurance approach, which contained common concerns e.g. planning risks / issues and business cases.
- Very diverse depth of assurance activities - government department, external gateway reviews, internal and external audits.

Doing the Right Projects

- External influences can impact upon a business (and by default, the PPSO) which does impact upon the prioritisation of the portfolio e.g. Government, regulatory impacts, even Sarbanes-Oxley legislation in the US
- Pet projects impact upon all organisations (public and private), the difficulty is in discovery and management of the pet project and how (if justified) they can be brought into the mainstream portfolio.
- The governance organisation needs to manage differing drivers from separate silos.
- Can we (are we capable / willing) to deliver change management solely through project management?
- Portfolio Management (maybe within a PPSO's remit?) needs to be pitched at a level that suits the company, and depends on the organisational structure.
- The remit must be supported by the right level of authority, senior management support and effective branding.

Tool Selection & Usage

- The amazing pervasiveness of Excel in PMOs / PSOs - we all use it and we all couldn't cope without it!
- The effective use of tools is only as good as the process, buy-in, commitment, organisational acceptance, if the need is to provide good quality data.
- The tool in itself is not the answer.
- To use an appropriate tool, we first need to identify why we want to do something!
- Assess organisation need and then identify the best tool that meets that need.
- Weigh "off the shelf" against internally developed and don't get carried away with the technology!
- Once a tool is identified, plan the implementation... what capabilities are needed first... don't overwhelm the users!