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EnterPlicity: The Art of Integrating Project Management into the Organization



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Introduction

Project management has become an accepted practice in organizations today. It is often viewed as essential for fixing problems with existing projects and processes, improving productivity, and getting things done more efficiently. Organizations often purchase software systems to help them with this process.

However, many organizations still struggle with the fact that project management discipline must be integrated into the organization. People must follow project management processes and principles in order for it to become successful. That means that people must change.

The purpose of this white paper is to provide insight into this process along with practical methods to make it happen. The purpose is not to cover the “science” of project management, but rather the “art.” How do we effect positive change?

The Benefits

The benefits of project management are much clearer today than they were even 10 years ago. Organizations that successfully integrate project management are more competitive and profitable.

In the late 1990’s, certain businesses owned by Lucent Technologies cut their project durations in half through integration of project management throughout the organization. The

impact on costs, productivity, and profitability was astounding.¹

However, many organizations still operate in a highly unproductive fashion. Some organizations have not made a serious effort. Others have made an effort but to no avail. Still others have had success but only on a marginal level.

What is the problem?
What causes some

organizations to succeed and others to fail? What does an organization have to do to truly achieve the desired results?

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The Problem

The problem is often times multi-faceted, but it can often be boiled down to two areas:

- Resistance to change
- Lack of leadership

Many articles, books, white papers, and other materials have been written regarding organizational change. People by nature do not like to change. A common saying is that unless the pain of staying the same outweighs the pain of changing, a person will not change. Change is hard work. It requires people to stretch, think outside the box, and even sacrifice.

How can we motivate people to change? How can we lessen resistance to change?

Lack of leadership is another problem. In his book “The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership”, John Maxwell states that “personal and organizational effectiveness is proportionate to the strength of leadership”.² Leadership is essential for implementing project management as it is for any organizational change.

How do we exhibit leadership? How do we use it to integrate project management into our organization?

Do I Have this Problem?

Your first reaction to this topic may have been that you desperately need to improve the project management in your organization. Alternatively, your reaction may have been that you have it all together and you do not need better project management.

In their article on “Enterprise Project Management,” the Product Development Institute³ highlights six symptoms indicative of a problem:

- Projects take too long
- There are too many projects active at any one time
- Periodically, many of the “active” projects are permanently removed from the list of active projects.
- Resources are multi-tasking across projects.
- People feel overworked and unproductive.

- There is continually frustration with the lack of speed of project efforts.

I would also add a seventh symptom: deadlines are missed or “last minute” needs result in frequent “fires.”

It does not make sense to formulate a solution without first identifying that there is a problem. Think about your own organization and whether or not you see these or similar symptoms.

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Key Components to the Integration of Project Management

It was stated previously that volumes of material have been published on the topic of organizational change. The purpose of this white paper is not to summarize or study all of that material, but to simply extrapolate some of the key items that are relevant in the area of integrating project management.

This would include the following critical components:

- Executive buy-in
- Leadership
- Accountability
- Communication

Executive buy-in is a must have. Without it, organizational change will not happen. That does not mean

that change cannot happen period. It is possible to integrate project management at certain sub-groups within an organization, perhaps even as a way to achieve executive buy-in. However, it does mean that true change cannot occur at the overall organizational level.

Leadership is also a critical component, and leadership is different than executive buy-in. Leadership needs to be demonstrated at each level in the organization, not just at the top level.

Accountability ensures that

Accountability ensures that *something* will happen if nothing is done. People cannot simply stay the same and ignore the change.

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the change.

Communication is an essential piece to reach out to people and reduce the resistance to change which is often times a by-product of a lack of communication.

How to Do It: Phase In

Now that we have discussed some of the principles, let us get to the practical topic. How do we integrate project management change into the organization?

This section will focus on two practical aspects. First, it will look at a step by step phased approach to integrating project management as

recommended by the Change Management Learning Center⁴. Second, real aspects of leadership that are integral to making this process a success.

We recommend viewing the process in three basic phases: Preparation, Implementation / Management, and Reinforcement. These phases are outlined below:

Phase 1: Preparation

- Set the vision
- Set the scope with executive approval
- Develop success criteria
- Prepare a “change team”
- Obtain input and ideas
- Develop training plan
- Define activities
- Communicate!

Phase 2: Implementation / Management

- Take action and implement plans
- Identify and remove roadblocks
- Meet regularly with “change team” and entire team
- Remember you are dealing with people

Phase 3: Reinforcement

- Collect and respond to feedback
- Manage resistance
- Implement corrective actions
- Celebrate success and build on momentum
- Follow-up training

Repeat the process for each integration area. For example, you may choose key projects or

processes to improve first before tackling other areas.

Phase 1: Preparation

The preparation phase is the time during which a concrete plan is laid, objectives are determined, and people are brought into the process.

A vision must be cast during this phase. What is the overall goal and objective? What do we want to accomplish, and what is most important? For example, do we want to meet deadlines X% of the time, reduce our project duration, allow for more projects, reduce the stress on teams, etc? This will guide us during the actual implementation and integration process.

A scope must be documented so that we know what it is we are seeking to change. This puts boundaries on the process and helps to ensure that people do not go “overboard.” It also helps people to feel secure. If we know what is going to change, and what is not, that gives us a sense of security. Also, have this signed off by an executive sponsor to ensure executive buy-in.

Keep in mind that scope can make or break this effort. Do not make the scope too large or obtrusive. Walk before you run. Identify those areas that could most benefit from increased project management before tackling *everything*.

Related to scope is success criteria. Identify the criteria that will be used to judge whether this is successful or

not. Is it the number of products released in the next year? Or is it reduction in the duration of projects? Or some other criteria?

Identifying a “change team” is a great method of achieving your goals. Who are the team members that can champion and lead the effort? As we will cover shortly, leadership is vital to the success of this effort. Identify a team of leaders that can take the message and leadership of the primary leader throughout the organization, large or small.

Obtaining input and ideas brings other people into the process. If they are left in the dark, they will feel alienated, insecure, and even angry. Some of the best ideas can be from people internal to the process and organization. Solicit their ideas and feedback. Let them know the objectives. Meet with them one on one, and in brainstorming sessions. This will go a long way towards bringing them into the process.

A training plan is required to be sure that people learn why project management is important and how to do it within their sphere of influence. This is a learning process and we need to identify ways that people can learn. This should be adequate but at the same time not overly burdensome.

A plan of activities, whether complex or not, is also needed. What actions are we specifically going to be taking to integrate project management? For example, we will hold regular meetings, evaluate our progress,

convert X projects or processes first, etc.

Finally, but certainly no less important, is communication. It will do you no good to develop and execute a good plan if you do not communicate them.

A primary source of resistance is that people do not understand where you

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are heading, how you are going to get there, and what you need

from them. Find creative ways to communicate this information to them.

Phase 2: Implementation / Management

The implementation / management phase is where we execute our plan. We take action and perform the activities that we have identified. This could include training, using new tools, etc.

During this time, you want to actively look for and remove roadblocks that are preventing a good integration of project management. What is in the way of success? Is it a habit or “old way” of doing things? Is it a lack of communication? Identify those items and find a way to remove them. This is one item that will not happen without achieving executive buy-in up front.

During this time, meet regularly with your “change team.” What are the

issues that you are experiencing? What are the successes? How is the plan proceeding? Also meet less so, but also regularly with the full team. What is the feedback? How could we adjust and do things better? What are the roadblocks?

Finally, remember that you are dealing with people. People have feelings. They may feel insecure, anxious, frustrated, and even angry. Recognize this. Take people to lunch. Take your team on an offsite exercise or event. Build relationships, and keep on communicating.

Phase 3: Reinforcement

The reinforcement phase is where we evaluate how things went, and build momentum on the successes.

During this phase, continue to collect feedback from people. Identify whether you are meeting the success criteria you identified and take appropriate corrective action.

Schedule follow-up training. Part of this process is a learning process. People need multiple opportunities and methods to learn. It is very helpful in the reinforcement process for people to go through follow-up training after they have been dealing with the change for a period of time.

Most importantly, celebrate success and build momentum. This will not be an overnight success and there will be problems. However, there will also be successes. Find these, and celebrate. Build momentum on them

and continue to do so as the overall success accumulates.

How to Do It: Leadership

If everything rises and falls with leadership, it would not be proper to cover this integrating project management without discussing leadership.

Leadership is critical at all levels of an organization that needs to

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integrate project management, whether that is an entire enterprise, small

business, division, or group.

Following are some key leadership principles from John Maxwell's book "The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership" that you can apply to integrating project management:

1. Chart the Course

As a leader, you must chart the course, or set the vision for the organization. If you do not know where you are going, you will never get there. This needs to be continually communicated to the organization.

2. Build Trust

Trust is the foundation of leadership. People will not follow you if they do not trust you. Trust is built on exhibiting the following three qualities:

- Competence: you know what you are talking about
- Connection: sincerely making an effort to connect with people
- Character: doing the right thing

General H. Norman Schwarzkopf said: "Leadership is a potent combination of strategy and character. But if you must be without one, be without strategy."

3. Empowerment

As a leader, empower other leaders within your organization (large or small). Do not horde "power." Ensure that other people have the flexibility to make changes to adapt to the vision and follow your lead.

4. Momentum

Get wins and build on them. Use them to motivate your team and move them in the right direction. A ship that is heading in one direction is more difficult to turn around than a ship that is standing still. If your ship is sailing in the wrong direction, it will take more effort to stop this movement and reverse the direction. However, before you know it, you will be building momentum in the other direction.

5. Create a Way to Win

We have all seen sports stars simply find a way to win. Identify and remove the roadblocks that are keeping you organization from achieving its goals. Find a way for your team to win.

6. Set Priorities

I will bet that everyone in your organization has a lot on their plate. Be sure that people are not simply busy, but busy doing the right things. Implement a practice of spending a few minutes each day to prioritize and ensure that what you are doing is aligned with the important goals and priorities. Have those in your organization do this as well.

7. Build Other Leaders

Identify other members of your organization that can be leaders. Model and teach leadership and the vision so that they can model it to others. This will multiply your efforts in ways that you simply cannot do by yourself.

Conclusion

Integrating project management within the organization is no easy task. It takes effort, work, and determination. However, by following the principles listed here and in other resources, it can be done. And when done correctly, it can have monumental impacts on your organization in terms of productivity, efficiency, profitability, customer satisfaction, and even employee morale and retention.

So start now. Knowledge without action will not accomplish anything. Put some of these principles into practice and see what you can accomplish!

About EnterPlicity

Team Interactions, Inc. is a privately held California corporation with headquarters in Carlsbad, California. The company was founded to provide streamlined yet powerful solutions to address the critical project management needs of organizations in various industries.

The company's products and services include the EnterPlicity Project Management System, training and other professional services. Team Interactions, Inc. works with organizations to effect stronger project management.

For more information, or for a free consultation on your project management needs, please write us at info@teaminteractions.com, call 760-655-4055 or visit www.teaminteractions.com.

References

¹ Product Development Institute, “Enterprise Project Management”, on the Internet at <http://www.pdinstitute.com/EPM.html>

² Maxwell, John. *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*. Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1991.

³ Product Development Institute, “Enterprise Project Management”, on the Internet at <http://www.pdinstitute.com/EPM.html>

⁴ Change Management Learning Center, “Integrating change management and project management - webinar highlights”, on the Internet at <http://www.change-management.com/tutorial-highlights-webinar1.htm>.