

Project Workload Management

Background

The client is the ICT department of a major humanitarian aid delivery organisation within the United Nations.

The ICT Director wished to understand the “project” work being undertaken by his department (450+ staff), the origins of that work and the effort being expended on it.

Our brief was to identify the projects and other work currently in progress within the department and to recommend processes and procedures to manage this workload more effectively in the future.

What We Did

Initially we interviewed the senior management team, project managers and other ICT service delivery staff. We identified in excess of 800 concurrent projects and found that the inflow of work requests was *ad hoc* and generally quite uncontrolled. The consequence of this was a tangle of conflicting and “nested” projects, many unknown to the management team, and which caused projects to take considerably longer to deliver than necessary, or desirable, for the business.

We discussed our findings with the ICT Director and agreed a three step approach.

- Developed and implemented a rigorous project request and approval process. The process was agreed within the ICT management team and then presented to the business, refined and rolled-out. The process involved up front assessment that enabled ICT to understand its work load and to manage the impact of new and changed priorities.

ICT		PROJECT APPROVAL	
		Procedure Description	
		Procedure ID: ICT_PFM_004	
Purpose:	To centralise the receipt of Project Requests into ICT and verify and approve requests prior to initiating related projects.		
Last Call Date:	18/02/2009	Version:	1.0
Last Editor:	C. Avoough	Owner:	Approved
Prerequisites:	Project Request from a Requester		
Preceding Procedure:	None		
Products/Outputs:	Approved Project, Requester/Owner Advice, Feasibility Assessment, Project Risk Analysis		
Succeeding Procedure:	TBA		
Associated Documents:	Procedure Flowchart, Procedure Configuration		
The ICT Director will be the author of the most relevant requesting information of this process.			
PROCEDURE STEPS			
Step#	Description		
01	Project requester completes the Project Request Form, print and signs a formal request. The request is submitted to either the requester's own email account or the email of the Project Owner.		
02	The PFO logs the request and assigns a unique identifier and a date of Receipt. PFO enters the request into the Requester Information System (RIS). If the request is received, the PFO provides the request to the Requester. PFO provides the request to the Requester. PFO provides the request to the Requester.		
03	PFO determines the appropriate Request Owner for the request and assigns a unique identifier and a date of Receipt. PFO provides the request to the Requester. PFO provides the request to the Requester. PFO provides the request to the Requester.		
04	The Request Owner is responsible for the request until it is formally requested to the Requester. PFO provides the request to the Requester. PFO provides the request to the Requester. PFO provides the request to the Requester.		
<p>PROCEDURE</p> <p>Day 1</p> <p>05 The Request Owner will review the Assessment (with any requested documentation) to PFO within one week and check the Assessment. An initial assessment to the request owner will be made. If the PFO identifies issues in the Assessment it has not been formally approved.</p> <p>If the Assessment is valid, the Requester will be notified of the request status. If the Assessment is not valid, the Requester will be notified of the request status.</p> <p>If it is not valid, modification to the request is due. The Requester will be notified of the request status. The Requester will be notified of the request status.</p> <p>If the Requester is not satisfied with the Assessment, the Requester will be notified of the request status. The Requester will be notified of the request status.</p> <p>06 Request Owner will assign a classification of the request (e.g. PFO will be notified of the request status. The Requester will be notified of the request status.</p> <p>PFO provides the request to the Requester. PFO provides the request to the Requester.</p> <p>For COMPLEX, refer to Step 12. For EXCEPTIONAL, refer to Step 13.</p> <p>SIMPLE</p> <p>07 PFO and Request Owner agree or submit Request Owner. If no contact owner then request is classified COMPLEX and go to step 12.</p> <p>PFO logs the request and assigns a unique identifier and a date of Receipt. PFO provides the request to the Requester. PFO provides the request to the Requester.</p> <p>08 PFO provides the request to the Requester. PFO provides the request to the Requester. PFO provides the request to the Requester.</p> <p>09 PFO provides the request to the Requester. PFO provides the request to the Requester. PFO provides the request to the Requester.</p> <p>10 If the owner identifies issues within the request that cannot be resolved then owner must return request to PFO for review. PFO will provide the request to the Requester and log the request. Go to step 12.</p> <p>11 PFO provides the request to the Requester. PFO provides the request to the Requester. PFO provides the request to the Requester.</p> <p>12 PFO provides the request to the Requester. PFO provides the request to the Requester. PFO provides the request to the Requester.</p> <p>13 PFO provides the request to the Requester. PFO provides the request to the Requester. PFO provides the request to the Requester.</p> <p>14 PFO provides the request to the Requester. PFO provides the request to the Requester. PFO provides the request to the Requester.</p>			

- Identified requirements for and managed a process to select a suitable Project Portfolio Management software tool. Once selected, we managed the implementation of the application which included a business alignment and prioritisation exercise for each current project.
- Coached the ICT Director and his management team in methods for effectively communicating and reporting on projects against the known portfolio of projects. We also worked with the management group to promote good project and reporting practice across ICT.

Results

- The business alignment process enabled 60% of existing projects to be shelved thus enabling the group to focus on, and deliver more quickly, projects that really mattered to the business.
- Combining establishment of the request process, business alignment assessment and portfolio tool implementation ensured an integrated, robust solution and a group of ready trained experts to lead the further roll-out of the application.
- Combining the effort to establish the request process, execute business alignment assessment and implement the project portfolio tool ensured an integrated, robust solution and a group of trained staff able to lead the further roll-out of the application.
- Enhanced up front assessment and visibility of the projects pipeline enabled ICT better to understand the impact of new requests and to work with the business to optimise and streamline the requested work load.
- Improved visibility and status driven reporting enabled the ICT director and his management team to hold better informed and more objective conversations with the business.