

Best Practice

Service: Consulting
Solution Suite: Project Management
Best Practice: Selecting Tools and Technology
for the PMO and Project-Based Organization

Overview

During the years of developing our consulting practice, clients have repeatedly asked us for recommendations regarding tools and technology to assist their project management office and/or the project-based organization as a whole. As professional management consultants, and in order to develop unbiased recommendations, we have remained “technology neutral” in our preference or support of any one tool or technology. The questionnaire below generally facilitated by a senior practice consultant is utilized as a base of discussion to provide a clear picture of the organizations current and future needs as well as assist us in narrowing down the “field” of tools and techniques in our industry specific benchmark/database files.



Section 1 Project – Program Related (PPR)

1. What industry/industry's is your organization involved in?
2. Does your organization predominantly engage in project management, program management or both?
 - a. If both, please specify an approximate ratio of projects and programs.
3. How many resources (organization wide) participate in your portfolio of projects/programs?
4. How many active project or program managers does your organization currently utilize?
 - a. Do future plans call for an increase or decrease of these resource numbers?
5. Based on your project/program portfolio, please answer the following questions:
 - a. Percentage of projects or programs: under 6 months duration _____
 - b. Percentage of projects or programs: 7 to 18 months duration _____
 - c. Percentage of projects or programs: 19 to 36 months duration _____
 - d. Percentage of projects or programs: greater than 36 months duration _____
6. Based on your project/program portfolio, please answer the following questions regarding project budget (sum of direct and indirect costs):
 - a. Percentage of projects or programs: under \$250K project budget _____
 - b. Percentage of projects or programs: \$251K - \$2M to 18 project budget _____
 - c. Percentage of projects or programs: \$2.1M – \$10M project budget _____
 - d. Percentage of projects or programs: greater than \$10M project budget _____
7. For projects listed above, what is the percentage of internal projects versus for hire projects?
8. Does your organization manage project/program work internationally?
9. Does your organization utilize virtual teams for project/program work?
10. Does your organization utilize a standardized project/program management life cycle?
 - a. If yes, does the life cycle utilize defined stage gate criteria?
 - b. If yes, does the life cycle require specific initiation reviews?
 - c. If yes, does the life cycle require specific phase-end reviews?
11. Does your organization utilize standardized risk management practices?
12. Does your organization utilize; a) standardized scheduling practices, and, b) dedicated scheduling resources?
13. Does your organization track a) project costs including resource costs or, b) just resource hours?
14. Does your organization utilize Earned Value Management techniques for project control and status reporting?

15. Do project/program managers utilize open-issues databases for storage and dissemination of open issues (in & out)?
16. Does the organization currently utilize resource loading – leveling practices for project, program, and/or portfolio management purposes?
17. Does your organization utilize standardized change management practices?
18. Does your organization utilize standardized document management practices?
19. Does your organization utilize any form of Project Management Office (PMO)? If yes, proceed to Section 2)

Section 2 Project Management Office Related (PMOR)

1. Is the current PMO; a) A virtual PMO (center of excellence), or b) A full service and full-time staffed PMO?
 - a. What is the current charter of the PMO?
2. How many resources does the PMO employ?
 - a. Please elaborate on their roles (current and future).
3. Is the PMO involved; a) through a project/program's total life cycle, or; b) only in certain phases?
4. Does the PMO assist project/program managers in duration or cost estimating?
5. Does the PMO assist the project/program managers with project scheduling?
6. Is project/program governance a role of the PMO?
7. Does the PMO develop, track, and report against organizational metrics for projects/programs?
8. Does the PMO participate in formal project/program reviews?
9. Is the PMO centrally located or geographically dispersed?
10. Does the PMO interface with any other organizational PMOs?
11. Does the PMO interface with strategic leadership for long-lead portfolio planning?
12. Please list any current tools and technology currently employed and its status of deployment.
13. Please elaborate on the organization's current and enterprise architecture environment.