

Creating an Environment for Successful Projects

Action Plan Template

Name: I AM
 Organization: Where I Work
 Date: The Present



Project Based Organization score more less benchmark XOK

- Emphasis:
- Steps:
- Identify a core management team to sponsor a project management initiative
- Begin a public relations campaign to highlight the importance of projects and how we need to revitalize our approach in order to accomplish our mission
- Ask people on my teams to take accountability for overall success of each project—explain what this means and how behaviors can change

Strategic Emphasis score X more less OK

- Emphasis:
- Steps:
- Ask functional manager and staff to clarify organizational strategy with priorities for this next year
- Convene a guiding coalition to establish categories with attendant criteria for selecting projects in each category in order to meet larger goals
- Implement a simple portfolio management process immediately and work with other managers to develop a system to support it over the next 18 months
- Develop a sponsorship training overview and assign a sponsor to each project

Upper Management Support score X more less OK

- Emphasis:
- Steps:
- Bring in a consultant to get the attention of upper managers about their role to better support project-based work
- Begin negotiating deadlines for each goal and task
- Set priorities with managers and engage in dialogue about what to delay when something new gets added
- Ask team members what rewards they prefer

Project Team Support

score ____ benchmark ____

- Emphasis: X more less OK
- Steps:
- Negotiate better commitments for people's time on projects
- Formalize project startup events for each project—make sure sponsor is present
- Engage team in dialogue about purpose, vision, and mission statements.
- Bring in customer occasionally to share needs, review progress, and give feedback

Organization Support

score ____ benchmark ____

- Emphasis: more less X OK
- Steps:
- Standardize on a project management methodology so we use common terminology and set consistent expectations across projects
- Suggest core management team put a master list of projects together with time line; coordinate this list across the organization
- Pilot a project centric sub-organization on the org chart for one or two key projects

PM Information System

score ____ benchmark ____

- Emphasis: X more less OK
- Steps:
- Take more time to establish rapport and improve the environment for open communications
- Urge people to share ALL news (good & bad); provide constructive feedback when they do
- Set up a project web page and a place for all team members to share comments
- Ask key stakeholders what information they need and how they use it
- Shorten the monthly status report and provide a more potent executive summary

PM Selection & Development

score ____ benchmark ____

- Emphasis: X more less OK
- Steps:
- Begin culling PM selection process to get people enthusiastic and peaked to manage projects
- Get agreement with other managers about PM and team competencies that best fit this organization
- Encourage PMs to take internal courseware as well as participate in outside activities
- Set up monthly lunches for PMs to get together and informally share lessons learned, concerns, learn new topics

Learning Organization score ____ benchmark ____

- Emphasis: X more less OK
- Steps:
- Set up objectives for each project about desired performance, experiences, and learning
- More systematically list, prioritize, and act upon lessons learned from each project
- Begin each project by reviewing past project reviews and presenting to the team and management what do the same and what do differently on this project
- Change attitude by self (and eventually others) towards failures—these are opportunities to learn and improve, not berate ourselves or sweep under the carpet

Project Office score ____ benchmark ____

- Emphasis: more X less OK
- Steps:
- Act as a Project Office of One, until such time as the organization is ready to more standardize the process and establish a formal project office
- Plant seeds and start building a guiding coalition and harness internal support for a full service project office

Project Management Culture score ____ benchmark ____

- Emphasis: more less X OK
- Steps:
- Apply all the previous steps to help improve our relatively weak project management culture
- Demonstrate trustworthy behavior everyday and in every way
- Be a model of authentic leadership and act with integrity
- Call others to task (carefully!) when commitments are violated

Notes:

I'm inspired to think more systemically about these issues!