

PMO SIG December 2012 Meeting Summary

Discussion Topic: Tough Situations at Work and How to Deal with Them

Project Team Across Wide Range of Time Zones

- Meeting times difficult or impossible, require inconvenient times for PM and/or team members
- Suggested approaches:
 - Rotate meeting times so impact is not always to the same group(s).

Weak Executive Support

- Suggested approaches:
 - Speak to executives in terms of risk. Executives understand risk. They may not understand or appreciate the details of project management.
 - Explain the impact of consequences, e.g. team reduction, budget cut, deadline change

“No Win” Project Circumstances

- Approaches depend heavily on the failing circumstances, PM’s realm of control, influence, support
- You may still be able to get a good reference of exit from project

Broad Steering Committee Meetings

- Suggested approaches:
 - Focus meeting agenda on issues, decisions needed, risks. Need to allow open discussion on these topics.
 - Document the meetings and distribute documentation to all participants

Dependent Sub-projects Execute Without Project Manager

- Suggested approaches:
 - Report the overall project and sub-project status as it really is.
 - Give the sub-team “enough rope to hang themselves”.
 - Offer to help the sub-team
 - Advise the sponsor of the sub-team circumstances, any concerns or recommendations

Circumstances Affecting Perception of PM

- Competition may exist between PMs
- Executive intervention creates stronger influence and weakens perception of PM
- Executives may not recognize power-influence correlation on project and team

Having the Wrong People on a Project or Project Phase

- Inexperienced people in lead roles
- Project Manager acts as “fill-in” for the lack of experience
 - Adds risk that PM detail roles will be lacking, due to PM filling other roles
- Suggested approaches:
 - Explain how you could do the project with the “right people” and what to expect with the current team

PM Job Description Includes PM, SME, Business Expert, Technical Expert, etc.

- Interviews tend to have liars on both sides – interviewer and candidate
 - Interviewer explains unrealistic expectations
 - Candidate discusses how (s)he is qualified to meet them
- Suggested approaches:
 - Interviewer and Candidate need to understand what is really important in the position (beneath what is discussed)
 - Outsource to fill expertise gaps

Surprise Project Upsets

- Suggested approaches:
 - The surprise needs to be explainable – have a good story
 - Consider who in the organization could have seen the surprise event coming and reacted to regain control. Often there is no one, if the event is completely unexpected.

Hard to Meet Target Dates

- Evaluation depends on external versus internal dates
 - Legal requirements, Y2K dates, etc. cannot be negotiated
- Suggested approaches:
 - Know the executives’ tolerance for slippage – the real meaning of “unacceptable”.

Next Meeting

Next meeting in January. Topic: “Coordination to roll out Agile in your organization”

PMO SIG Discussion Topics to Consider

1. PMO Practice
 - a. PMO Resources - Templates, Websites, etc.
 - √ b. PMO Best Practices to support learning and process improvement within project teams
 - c. Coordination to roll out Agile in your organization
 - d. PMO Governance and Portfolios

2. PMO Promotion
 - a. Looking at the PMO from the Outside
 - b. PMO Promotion in the Academic World
 - c. Promoting the value of the PMO
 - d. Explaining the benefits of the PMO

 3. Organizing and Starting the PMO
 - a. Defining the Role of the PMO
 - b. Supporting Organizational Decisions
 - c. The PMO and Cross Organizational Matrix Management
 - d. Lifecycle of a PMO, how to start one and pitfalls at different stages of the lifecycle
 - e. Where should the PMO be migrated into with a company that re-organizes, downsizes?
 - f. Criteria to establish a PMO in your organization - When does it NOT make sense to have a PMO?
 - g. Should the PMO be in-sourced or out-sourced? Why?

 4. Other
 - a. PMO Practices vs. Upper Management
 - b. Client Cultures
 - c. Model PMO Job Descriptions (Maude Fribourg has sample, find others)
 - d. Keeping PMOs Active
 - e. PMO – Current and Future
 - √ f. Working with a Multi-generational Workforce
 - g. PMO Myths
- ★ In progress
√ Completed

Attending: Adella Rosenthal, Agatha Podhaiski, Chris Memmesheimer, David Kabat, David Morgen, David Rabinowitz, Jason Fox, Louis Kural, Mayra Rodriguez, Richard Loeb, Sabina Margeton

December 11, 2012
8:15 – 9:15 PM

Chair: David Morgen, PMP

Scribe: Jason Fox, PMP
jpjfox@gmail.com