Project Management and Organizational Excellence

A Project Manager is accountable for the success or failure of a project. They plan, execute and close projects by defining the project, building a comprehensive work plan, and managing to the budget. By comparison, the Chief Executive Officer makes major corporate decisions, manages the overall operations and resources of a company, and acts as the main point of communication between the board of directors and corporate operations.

A recent participant at the workshop about the Organizational Excellence Framework, Jill Palitsky CPA (CGA), PMP, noted there are some similarities between using an excellence model at the project level and the corporate level. At Organizational Excellence Specialists, we value the time she has taken to share her thoughts as a guest author and interviewee https://youtu.be/JdMU5ZOvkqw

Jill says:

" It's all about process".

Why the Organizational Excellence Framework works well at the project level as it does at the corporate level?

Results achieved by organizations implementing the Organizational Excellence Framework include: good governance, trust in leadership, customer delight, employee engagement, continually improving work processes, strong supplier and partner relationships, better utilization of resources, balanced system of measurement, and financial results. The similar framework of an excellence model can be applied at the project level to ensure a successful outcome and provide a foundation to drive tangible results and measurements. It's the same "scalable" methodology provided by the excellence model's approach that can contribute to all goals whether the goals are driven by corporate or project objectives.

For example, **governance** at the corporate level will affect the way a company is perceived both inside and outside the company, and enable or inhibit how efficiently the company will react to external influences. Same goes for a project. Its success is hinged on making efficient clear timely decisions from project sponsors, project managers and stakeholders. The ability to make a decisive decision based on a well laid out governance will significantly increase the success of project objectives.

Leadership and a team or the organization's trust in that leader will impact or impede any project or organization objective. As Project Manager or Chief Executive Officer your ability to create a culture of expectations and a clear vision will outline your project or organization goals clear for all to understand. You can only go as fast as your slowest member is true at any level of your organization. A leader can enhance the team's performance by sharing the responsibility and making everyone accountable.

Doesn't everyone have a **customer** in some way or another? Customer delight is key to running a project and it starts on the first day and doesn't stop until you've closed the project. A customer relationship can benefit from routine checkpoints and commitment to aligned understanding of the project objective. It's essential you understand your customer's environment and market whether you're becoming a corporate partner or undertaking a simple server / software application upgrade project.

We can see similarities between process improvement within the Organizational Excellence Framework and within the phases of standard project management methodology. Project management use standard phases within any project:

1. Planning
2. Analysis & Design
3. Development
4. Testing
5. Implementation
6. Post Implementation Support
7. Lessons learned and closing

A project manager must ensure each phase is complete in order to proceed to the next phase. If, for any reason a prior phase is left incomplete, the subsequent phase will inevitably come back with issues to be resolved. **Work processes** are there to monitor and control the accepted system standards. They ensure benchmarks are met consistently or identify if corrective action needs to take place. Each project is reviewed in its entirety during the closing phase and we depend on continuous improvement as we identify avoidable challenges or issues during the lessons learned deliverable in our closing phase. Lessons learned are identified concerns to be addressed next time and to be avoided by implementing an improved process.

During the initial **planning** stage of the project, a Project Manager must identify key skills needed to deliver a successful project. A Project Manager must break down the project deliverables (work products) for each resource with a schedule and cost assumptions. It's a fine balance to apportion out the responsibilities to each resource, who will in turn return a quality product on budget and on time. Similar to running a corporation, any objectives or work products not delivered to satisfactory levels, either degraded quality, behind schedule or excessive costs are a disruption to business and mismanagement of any resource can extend to the success of corporate or project endeavors. Both

Project Managers and Chief Executive Officers must effectively utilize and **manage resources** to continue success of chosen objectives.

Key Performance Indicators or performance indicators are crucial to judging organization or project performance. We need to evaluate our efforts no matter how small. It could be argued an organization is just a multitude of inter-related projects. **Evaluating and measuring performance** for each area, whether it is an entire department in the organization or one resource on a project that is essential to improving our approach and overall success.

About the Author

Jill Palitsky, CPA (CGA), PMP is a Senior IT project manager who has worked as a project manager for the last 10+ years. Her career started as an accountant where she attained her CGA in 1999 and transitioned into project management when she ran a finance project at IBM for 2+ years. She attained her PMP designation in 2008 and has managed a variety of projects including all shapes and sizes of server and/or application implementations, a variety of network projects from simple firewall upgrades to pervasive projects like replacing core network switches. She has been responsible for projects migrating one server to outsourcing an entire corporation infrastructure including servers, applications, call centre, security, desktop and mail exchange. She has also worked in social media and deployed a number of websites, including customers Disney and Kimberly Clark.

About Organizational Excellence Specialists

Organizational Excellence Specialists is in the business of transferring knowledge to professionals about best management practices common to high performing organization and offering a toolkit these professionals can use to assist business, government and associations with the excellence journey. The toolkit includes a publication, scenario games, holistic and modular workshops, an automated assessment and reporting tool and a train-the-trainer program. Dawn Ringrose, Principal at Organizational Excellence Specialists is the representative for Canada on the Organizational Excellence Technical Committee QMD ASQ (OETC) and the Global Benchmarking Network (GBN) and is a Registered Education Provider for Project Management International. Several tools in the toolkit are being used to conduct the 'first global assessment on the current state of organizational excellence' http://organizationalexcellencespecialists.ca/activities/global-oe-index/ that was launched by the OETC and endorsed by the GBN and ISO Technical Committee 176.