



## TenStep Supplemental Paper

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10 January 2003

### **Introducing Project Management Techniques on a Project Team**

Project management presents a bigger challenge than just telling everyone on the team to do things a certain way. People who are not used to working within a formal structure and framework can sometimes rebel when they are asked to do it for the first time. These people will first tend to get negative and view the new processes a bunch of overhead, before they start to grudgingly see the value.

#### **Organizational change requires much more effort than just one team**

If you were trying to implement a project management discipline throughout your entire organization, the job would be much more complex and time-consuming. In that kind of an initiative, you are trying to perform a culture change to project managers, team members, functional managers and clients. When you implement project management processes on one project team, the challenge is much more contained and within your control. On the other hand, the benefits are obviously more limited as well. First, the value that you are providing is limited to your immediate project team. You will also have to create some of the processes and templates your team will use, rather than having a consistent set that your entire organization uses. When your entire organization is moving in the same direction, you will really start to see the overall value that good project management processes can provide.

To help you be successful, I recommend you look at five areas.

#### **Leadership**

As the project manager, you are the primary person to lead this change. You set the priorities and you set the tone for how the project is run. If you make sure to define and plan the project well, and then execute and control the project using good techniques, the other members of the team should follow your lead. But, if project team members see that you are not communicating well, and if they see you accept new scope requirements on your own, or if they see confusion on who is doing what, they will obviously question what they are doing. Don't let that happen to you. Talk the talk and walk the walk.

#### **Project management deliverables**

You cannot successfully introduce good project management discipline without implementing a set of processes that everyone can see and understand. This starts off with the planning processes. With a large project, it should be understood that you need a Project Definition and a workplan. You also need to have a process for managing issues, scope, risk, communication etc. These don't have to be long, tedious procedures, but they have to be at a level where people understand what is expected of them and how the project management processes work.



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### **Project management advocate**

Try to find someone on the team that can be an inside partner. The team will accept the new processes much more quickly if there is another team member who is also on your side. This person should be a senior individual whom the rest of the team respects. They don't have to be a cheerleader, but they will set a good example and encourage the rest of the team to go along with the work processes that have been established for the entire team.

### **Communication**

You should make sure that the team is aware of what you are doing and why. Explain to them the perceived value and benefit to the project. This is not a one-time message, but one that should be repeated over and over. This type of communication can take many shapes over time. For instance, you can catch someone doing something right regarding the project management procedures, and praise them for their effort. You can also track and publicize how the team is doing in terms of meeting commitments for schedule, cost and quality. It is very difficult to introduce a culture change without a frequent, ongoing and consistent message.

### **Training / awareness**

Lastly, after you have dealt successfully with the people dynamics and the required processes, you should make sure that no one has difficulty because of a skills problem. If your project were long enough, you would expect to receive a positive return on your training investment. You should think about providing short awareness training to the entire team, and then sending your team leaders or other project managers to more formal project management training.

### **Summary**

There are some advantages and disadvantage associated with trying to implement formal project management processes on a project team. In general, the successful implementation is within your control. If your project is large enough, you should easily see the value and you will have a chance to integrate project management processes successfully before the project finishes.



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