How should you monitor and control your projects? It's a good question, because everyone does it differently. We believe that the processes you use to monitor and control projects should be the same, regardless of the size and type of project you undertake. So read on, to find out how to effectively...

Monitor and Control Your Projects (Part 1)

After you've started up and planned your projects, you'll move into the Execution (or "delivery") phase in the project life cycle.

This is typically the longest phase in the project, as it's in this phase that the physical deliverables are built for the customer. Whether your project is to build a construction complex, computer system or land a space vehicle on mars, you will need to very carefully monitor progress and control delivery. Otherwise, your project could go off the rails.

So to monitor and control delivery, you need to implement 9 critical project management processes. We'll describe the first 3 processes here, and in the next newsletter we'll cover the remaining 4 critical processes or you.

Critical Process #1: Time Management

Every Project Manager knows that the customer expects their project to be delivered "on time". But how many Project Managers actually record every hour spent by staff on the project?

To ensure on-time delivery, that's what you need to do: implement a time management process. This process will help you to monitor the time spent by all of the members of your team, so that you can control how time is spent.

It's not just about "having great time management skills" either, it's about putting in place a process for recording time spent by staff by using timesheets and recording that time against the project plan.

That way, you can create an accurate picture of the current status of the project to determine whether or not it is likely to finish under / on / over the time allotted.

Critical Process #2: Cost Management

Monitor & Control Projects

Use these templates to monitor and control your projects...

Time Management

Time Process
Timesheet
Timesheet Register

Cost Management

Cost Process
Expense Form
Expense Register

Quality Management

Quality Process
Quality Review Form
Quality Register

Change Management

Change Process
Change Form
Change Register

Risk Management

Risk Process
Risk Form
Risk Register

Issue Management

Issue Process
Issue Form
Issue Register

Few Project Managers can tell you for every day of the project, exactly how much of their budget they have spent to date. The reason is that many of the project costs are often difficult to track, especially when they relate to the use of equipment and consumption of materials.

But to deliver you project within budget, you need to monitor and control all of the costs that accrue, on a very regular basis. You can do this by implementing a cost management process.

Cost Management is all about accurately recording project expenses, as they occur. By using Expense Forms and an Expense Register, you can monitor all project costs and control expenditure when unplanned expenses arise. You don't need to be an accountant, you just need to keep an eye on the overall project expenditure on a weekly basis and act quickly when any issues arise.

Critical Process #3: Quality Management

It's often said that the hardest thing to monitor is "quality". Most Project Managers find it difficult to determine exactly what the customer expects in terms of deliverable "quality", let alone measure the actual levels of quality achieved. But you must try.

To do this properly, you need to implement a Quality Management Process. By following this process, you can set quality targets to be achieved and gain agreement from your customer.

Then you can use Quality Assurance and Quality Control techniques to monitor and control the actual quality of your project deliverables. If your quality levels drop below the targets set, then you can take action to rectify it. By constantly reviewing quality levels and ensuring that they always meet the target, you can feel confident that your customer will sign off your project as complete, once all of the deliverables have been produced.

And there you have it. By implementing time, cost and quality management, you can take the first steps needed to properly monitor and control your project delivery.

Use Templates or a Methodology to monitor and control your projects effectively.

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