ILX Consulting

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UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL OF YOUR PEOPLE & PROCESSES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In a complex and fast-moving world, many organisations are finding that they are not achieving their objectives – yet they cannot put their finger on the reasons for this. Perhaps they are experiencing outcomes that are not going to plan. Perhaps project teams do not seem to operate as the sum of their parts and fail to reach their full potential. Organisations in this position want to find the best way forward to succeed more readily but often do not know where to start to identify the problem.

It may be that organisational processes are stuck in a model that is no longer working. In many cases changes to process will trigger complex reactions with consequences for internal governance of regulatory compliance. The organisation may not be sure how to change that model, or does not know which component in that model needs to change first. There are a lot of moving parts in any business and it is not always clear what the consequences will be of swapping those parts around. If you are not certain of the most effective way to modify or replace elements of a faulty process, you might end up causing more damage.

On the people side of the equation, most organisations have teams that are made up of employees or contractors with a lot of different abilities and different experiences. The ideal is to make those teams as high performing as possible. So organisations need to understand the key factors for success required to develop that team most effectively and then plan how to enable the team to reach its full potential in the business.

This whitepaper will set out guidance for organisations looking for a roadmap to address these issues. With strategic support, organisations can review their processes and people against Best Practice standards effectively and gain insight into what to evolve in order to get more of the results they want.

THE CHALLENGE TODAY

People and process are the two linchpins that secure organisational frameworks encompassing the way people work and how the organisation is set up. The challenge is to identify the drivers for change to these structures and deciding where to invest to make those changes and achieve goals.

Once an organisation has defined and described its organisational processes, it is a useful exercise to map these against international models that are considered to be the recipe for success, but these are not always accessible to the non-specialist. Just picking up a Best Practice model like the Project Management Maturity model and reading it will not necessarily translate into more effective ways to get what you want from your projects.

DRIVERS

To navigate a pragmatic route through decisions about how or whether to integrate new models, organisations need to be confident that the resulting framework will be robust enough to deliver the required results. Commonly, organisations are seeking the best way to react to external changes, increase efficiency or fix issues. Perhaps they are not executing on their delivery as well as they could or there is an issue of unpredictability. Any number of factors might be a trigger for thinking about refining the delivery process of programmes or projects:

1. If there is a skills gap in achieving the desired project or programme goals;
2. If the organisation does not have effective succession planning and it has uneven distribution of ability across teams;
3. If the organisation is frustrated by not being able to achieve more or increase the capacity of projects;
4. If the organisation is over reliant on one supplier, or if something is happening with their relationship with the supplier;
5. If the organisation feels its customers are more demanding than they should be, perhaps as a result of issues with methods of engagement or project control.

Until recently many organisations relied on single tried and tested project management approaches, such as PRINCE2®. However the growing popularity of agile methods and the launch of PRINCE2 Agile™, alongside the increasing reach of ITIL® and the choice between US and UK project management standards for multinationals, have all contributed to drive organisations to re-evaluate their frameworks for projects and programmes.

Everyone is trying to do more with less. Everyone is looking to cap capital expenditure and trying to demonstrate efficiency in their delivery of services but some organisations are ahead of the pack when it comes to identifying issues and putting in place a plan to tackle them. Organisations in regulated industries are accustomed to complying with standards, and expect their activities be guided by standards that are accepted Best Practice. They know there is a need to do some planning and hard work in order to get the most out of those standards. Healthcare, financial and pharmaceutical organisations are also used to being externally assessed and changing their practices as needed.

In these sectors, organisations have known for some time that organisational strength is demonstrated by conformance to standards and, increasingly, this view is coming to be shared by every organisation that runs projects and programmes. Whether they are a retail chain or a manufacturer they are evaluating whether they are getting the best results from their resources.

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>
> **Mike Saville,**
> Head of ILX Consulting

THE WAY FORWARD

A number of possible factors could be constraining an organisation's efforts to be at the top of its game. Sometimes closing a knowledge gap is exactly what's needed and training can go a long way to addressing issues but sometimes the issues are more complex. Making sure the team has the required capability is one thing but it is also necessary to consider the capability of the organisation they are working in and ask yourself:

• Is your process driving the behaviours you want from the team?
• Is your organisation ready to benefit from the capability delivered by the training they have invested in?
• What pace of change can the organisation sustain?

It is a great start to equip the team with the latest Best Practice approaches but that has to be part of an organisation-wide development plan to get maximum benefits from the training and increase project capability. If Governance is not joined-up and this can torpedo plans for change. Where organisations are not getting the results they need or expect or if they need to meet a new requirement they are increasingly tapping into impartial, specialist help. Organisations can benefit from specialist support to introduce a more effective model for governance and to carry out change management for the transformation.

A DIFFERENT APPROACH

Organisations are generally aware of the need for more maturity in their management of people and processes – the issue is how to achieve this. PWC's third global survey on the current state of project management1 found that although project management maturity levels are on the rise, most organisations desire a higher maturity level. The report states: *"Approximately 32.1% of organisations are continually striving to reach higher maturity levels by seeking to strengthen effective team-building and skill development activities to improve team performance and promote high productivity, work quality, and good morale. However, most organisations also require improvement in organisational structure, human resource management, and quality assurance... We also found that higher maturity yielded higher performance within the five key performance indicators – delivering projects on time, within budget, to scope, to quality standards, and with the intended business benefits."*

ILX's unique assessment tool enables diagnosis of where the issues might be and informs a root cause analysis. For each assessment ILX designs a solution tailored closely to requirements then plans the transition so that the organisation can demonstrate the effectiveness of the change they have achieved. Every organisation is different but all benefit from a long-term partnership when it comes to tackling major organisational change. ILX works hand in hand with you to support you and anticipate your needs during the transition phase.

> *"Higher [project management] maturity yielded higher performance within the five key performance indicators – delivering projects on time, within budget, to scope, to quality standards, and with the intended business benefits"*
>
> PWC's third global survey on the current state of project management (2012)

DIAGRAM

ILX's assessment tool incorporates self-assessment and a 360 degree assessment that helps ILX consultants to establish baseline capability in areas including personal competence and project management competence for individuals or for organisations, risk management and change management.
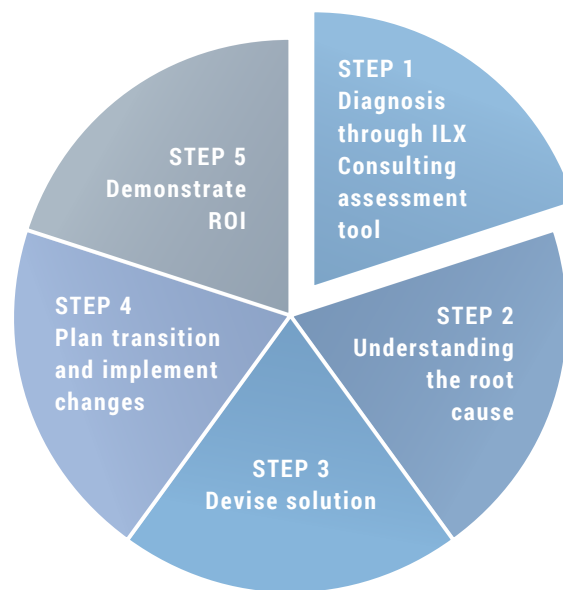
CASE STUDY: IDENTIFYING THE ISSUE – PROCESS OR PEOPLE?

One large organisation based in the Gulf States had a requirement to be a lot more efficient but did not know how best to achieve that. The options were to hire more efficient project managers or to have better governance to drive efficiency. ILX assessed the organisation's processes and people to see how effective they were. ILX also assessed the complexity of the firm's projects to establish which projects it should invest in.

ILX was able to identify a set of projects that were most likely to be challenging for the organisation and determine the root cause of the challenges. It became clear that the organisation didn't need to retrain project teams in particular skills such as finance management, because it had sustainable skills in those areas, but it did need to change its governance routine to make sure it held project managers to account for meeting financial targets and managing spend.

Armed with this knowledge, the organisation was able to invest in making changes that would have a real impact on the bottom line and avoid wasting money on unnecessary training.

WHY TRAINING IN ISOLATION IS NOT ENOUGH

Many companies are investing heavily in Best Practice training such as PRINCE2®, Managing Successful Programmes (MSP®), Management of Risk (M_o_R®), ITIL® and Portfolio, Programme and Project Offices (P3O®). However many organisations are not seeing the full benefit from their training investment because organisational process simply do not support the approaches recommended during training. There is a real risk that organisations will then rush to try to fix the problem by taking a fragmented approach to addressing the need to control better project and programme outcomes. This may affect a range of activities such as complex change management programmes, rolling out a new product or service in a new territory, or managing a multi-million dollar assignment with an internationally skilled workforce.

There is a pressing need to go beyond just identifying what the best training course might be – and this deeper consciousness of better outcomes is where businesses can gain a significant competitive advantage. Armed with actionable data, an organisation can identify the area needing change and invest in that one particular area that has potential to make the difference across the organisation. How? By combining our unique assessment tool with expert consultants who can analyse that data, ILX Consulting will help organisations to find the most effective route to unlock the potential of your people and processes.

To find out more contact mike.saville@ilxgroup.com

ABOUT ILX GROUP (ILX)

ILX Consulting helps global organisations to improve the efficiency of workforce skills and organisational processes. Its consultative approach is a five step process: diagnostics of skills gaps and assessment of organisational procedures; mapping of best practice methodologies and frameworks and reaching an understanding of the root cause of issues or reasons why outcomes may not be what is expected; devising a solution to address the issues raised in the diagnostics phase; planning and implementing the transition or call to action; and finally demonstrating return on investment from the recommendations.

A combination of proprietary assessment tools and senior ILX consultants ensures that clients achieve their desired business objectives and meet industry specific governance and regulatory requirements.

ILX Consulting supports customers around the world and has offices in the UK, Middle East, India, Australia and New Zealand.

ILX Consulting is part of ILX Group. Founded in 1988, ILX is an internationally recognised provider of professional learning and consulting solutions. For further information visit www.ilxgroup.com or follow ILX on Twitter @ ILXGroup, or Facebook www.facebook.com/ILXGroup.

REFERENCES

[1] Insights and Trends: Current Portfolio, Programme, and Project Management Practices 2012 – The third global survey on the current state of project management.
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