

A⁴ Results – a Strategic Project Management Approach to Process Improvement

Through strategic project management, government agencies can increase opportunities for success, turn aspirations into realities and maximize their process improvement investments.

In this White Paper, we share a proven approach to process improvement delivery based on industry leading practices and lessons learned from clients in the public and private sectors in various industries throughout the US and across the globe.



Introduction

For decades reports have reflected government's excitement about process concepts and methodologies and the possibilities of reducing waste, streamlining activities and improving service delivery.¹ Agencies have made significant investments in process improvement projects to address these opportunities. Although agencies report progress and understand the value of process discipline, there is still a great opportunity to improve the planning process and implement better measures to ensure intended benefits of a process improvement effort are realized and sustained.

For example, according to a recent study *"only 64 percent of government strategic initiatives ever meet their goals and business intent- and government entities waste \$101 million for every \$1 billion spent on projects and programs."*²

Given the proliferation of federal transformational projects, uncertainty of budgetary resources and the need to increase the value Americans receive for their tax dollars, Legislative and Executive Branches are requiring more successful outcomes from projects and programs.

When evaluating reports on challenges of business process improvement initiatives, many of the same reasons seem to surface; no business case, lack of strategic alignment, inactive executive sponsorship, resistance to change, etc. However, reasons such as no upfront planning or measured approach to monitor progress prior to completion are often undervalued or overlooked. A recent report³ developed by the US Government Accountability Office (GAO) entitled "DOD Should Improve its Planning and Performance Monitoring of the Military Departments" supports this theory.

A Model for Process Improvement

What is A⁴ Results

A⁴ Results is a model that utilizes a STEP (Strategies Targeting Efficiency and Productivity) change approach facilitated by a Stage Gate Review process to develop, manage and monitor process improvement and project management activities.

1. *Federal Government Business Process Reengineering: Lessons Learned*, U.S. General Services Administration, February 1994

2. *"The High Cost of Low Performance, Project Management Institute Pulse of Survey*, September 2016

3. *"Defense Business Transformation – DOD Should Improve Its Planning and Performance Monitoring of the Military Departments*, U.S. Government Accountability Office, December 2015

A Model for Process Improvement

The STEP summaries below represent a guideline with suggested tools for a process improvement initiative with cross department and agency impacts. However, one size does not fit all. Depending on the goals, budget, capacity and/or capabilities of an agency, slight adjustments to this model may be required.



Step One: Align

The purpose of this phase is to align departmental process improvement goals with the agency's strategic goals. To achieve goal alignment several activities are recommended:

Set process goals

Each process goal should have clear and measurable targets based on the strategic goals of the department and agency. To ensure goals are realistic and obtainable, it is important to consider the agency's and department's current capacity (financial and technology) and capability (skills, knowledge and change acceptance) to address and accept a process improvement effort.

Determine the methods and tools that will be used to achieve process goals

Be careful not to over-engineer process improvement or change efforts. For example, if the goal is to standardize, build awareness and/or increase adoption of existing processes, a project to develop standard templates and document processes may only be required. If the goal is to accomplish quick wins, "Workouts" have proven

to accelerate change and transformation. If the goal is to remove waste or reduce defects, Lean and Six Sigma methods and/or tools are best practices. However, a full pledge Lean or Six Sigma is not necessarily ideal for every process improvement effort.

Conduct high-level assessment of the current state

The primary purpose of this activity is to determine the maturity of existing processes, inventory and evaluate related projects (in flight or planned), validate improvement opportunities and recommend a prioritized list of projects required to address process goals.

A SIPOC (Suppliers, Inputs, Process, Outputs, Customers) diagram is typically used to document a high-level process map from beginning to end. A SIPOC diagram helps to focus team discussions and provides a common language and understanding of a process. After problems and issues have been identified, a prioritization matrix should be used to help rank process improvement efforts. Criteria used for ranking should be most important to the project or organization. Typical criteria used in a prioritization matrix



step 1 continued

are cost, level of effort required, duration, impact, ROI. Additional data should be captured to assess the current state. Gaps between the current and desired state should be documented.

Identify the appropriate fit and resources for desired roles

Roles and responsibilities to achieve specific goals should be documented and communicated. Typical roles for a process improvement effort are Governance Board Member, Project Sponsor, Six Sigma Black Belt, Project Manager, Process Owner, Subject Matter Expert, Change Leader/Agent and Stakeholder. Document a formal recruitment plan to identify and allocate resources required to meet project goals. The first position to consider recruiting is the Project or Program Manager. The Project or Program Manager should work with the Project Sponsor to develop the Project Charter and budget.

Announce the project and communicate the process goals

Document a communications plan that includes the purpose, owner, targeted audience, tools and frequency

of communications. Formal consensus of goals should be agreed upon before project initiation. Communications of the process improvement initiative should be shared within a timely basis.

Tools: Governance Model, Communications Plan, Business Case Templates, Strategy Correlation Matrix, The SEA™ (Standards of Excellence Assessment), Six Sigma SIPOC, Change Readiness Findings, Project Prioritization Matrix, and Benefit Realization Plan



Guiding Principles:

- Develop S.M.A.R.T. goals
- Organize around outcomes and not tasks
- Understand cross- department impacts

Step Two: Action

Implement and Deliver

Finalize a project plan to include specific tasks, milestones, deliverables, ownership, timing, dependencies and metrics to measure success. A governance model should be implemented to provide single ownership of delivery, monitor progress and track benefit realization.

Depending on the method and tools selected to achieve process goals (Step One: Align), a variety of working sessions could take place to initiate action: Lean Sigma “Work-outs”, Six Sigma DMAIC, Value Stream Mapping, Change Readiness Assessment, etc. To provide an objective view, these types of sessions are best facilitated by a resource external to the agency. Also, key Stakeholders from external departments impacted by potential change should be engaged in these sessions early. For additional information, contact us.

Process Owners should simplify process documentation as much as possible. During the implementation of a process change, resources need to be deployed and managed.

Activity milestone need to be measured and variances should be reported. Process and Goal Owners should address gaps in performance.

Tools: Lean Workout, Six Sigma DMAIC or DMADV templates, Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) processes and tools, Activities Based Costing Model, Balanced Scorecard, Stage Gate Templates and Balanced Scorecard



Guiding Principles:

- Develop “actionable” and “realistic” plans
- Integrate all stakeholder groups
- Share lessons learned after each milestone



Step Three: Adopt

Change and Sustain

Change is not instant. Agency leaders should communicate the vision for change often. Change events should be facilitated periodically to build awareness and excitement. Change Leaders, Change Agents or “Super User Groups,” should be identified to help build awareness, promote an environment of change and help to accelerate adoption. To ensure individuals successfully adopt the changes of how they will work, it is critical to provide required tools, training and communications within a timely manner.

Tools: Communications, Change Events, Employee Feedback, Change Readiness Findings, Training Plan, Lessons Learned Report, Balanced Scorecard (with metrics to measure change effectiveness and adoption rate), and Training Plan



Guiding Principles:

- Business goals as driver for change
- Treat process improvements as permanent practice
- Implement metrics to measure the effectiveness of change

Step Four: Account

Measure and Continuously Improve

Assess process improvement goals and measure change effectiveness after key milestones using a balanced set of quantitative performance metrics. This activity should not be deferred to the end of a project.

Training needs should be tied to performance plans and budgets and performance should be tied to compensation plans. Lessons learned should be captured, documented and shared in a centralized repository with agency-wide access and knowledge transfer should start at the beginning of the project or program. Successes should be rewarded often.

Tools: Status Reports, Benefit Realization Plan, Balanced Scorecard, Performance Plans, Lessons Learned Report, Training Plans, Communication Plan.



Guiding Principles:

- Measure, measure and measure
- Moments of truth before repeated mistakes
- Actively pursue suggestions and ideas

Conclusion

Effective and efficient processes are at the heart of a successful agency. Our A⁴ Results approach has proved to help improve efficiency and cost effectiveness for our clients. For example, one of our clients, a government agency, initiated a Continuous Improvement and Accountability Program called S.T.E.P. with the objective to improve the quality of service delivery and reduce the number of errors on traffic citations. They adopted the A⁴ Results approach and reduced number of errors on citations by 25% within the first month. Several other benefits were achieved as a result of process improvement efforts. For more information regarding this case study, please contact us.

Through strategic project management, your agency can increase opportunities for success, turn aspirations into realities and maximize process improvement investments. Consider “A⁴ Results” as your solution to benefit realization of your process improvement efforts.

About P³ Delivery

P3 Delivery is a management consulting firm that specializes in Strategic Program Management. We offer a comprehensive suite of services in project, process and performance management. Our team has an average of 15 years of management and industry experience. We have demonstrated experience successfully leading large Lean, Six Sigma, ITIL and strategic initiatives for clients in the public and private sectors.

Most of our Associate Team hold certifications including but not limited to the Program Management Professional (PgMP), Project Management Professional (PMP), Six Sigma Black and Green Belt, ITILv3 and Call Center Benchmark Auditor.

To provide feedback on this White Paper, learn more or request a consultation, please visit www.p3delivery.com

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Federal Records Management Solution



Implementing a Strategic and Scalable Records Management System

Executive Summary

Upward trends of big data, mobility, social media and cloud computing have left Federal organizations taking reactionary and band-aid approaches to records management. Due to budgetary constraints, agencies are often forced to settle with less than optimal solutions to support major decision-making efforts. Additionally, departments within each agency operate in silos when developing and governing a process for categorizing, managing, storing and retrieving records and information. As a result, each department maintains disparate data and records that cannot be readily integrated to meet the needs of the agency or provide results that will drive timely and informed decisions.

We provide a holistic approach to helping Federal agencies to proactively and effectively manage records in a cost-efficient way. This report provides insight into our unique Full-Service Delivery Model that is scalable and tailorable to meet an agency's program and funding capabilities.

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NARROW SOLUTIONS

Reliance on Narrow Solutions

Many organizations manage records by utilizing readily available and affordable tools as a narrow solution to address an agency-wide challenge. For example, agencies depend on SharePoint to serve as a central repository rather than a medium to facilitate decisions or for project collaboration. As a result, SharePoint is overwhelmed with large data files that do not add any value and users encounter storage and access issues that create additional inefficiencies and costs. Another erroneously implemented solution is the use of shared network drives. In the absence of a governance policy, standard operating procedure, taxonomy, and a classification scheme, the shared drive becomes an unstructured repository. In turn, users spend copious amounts of time going through a data labyrinth in search of answers.

Consequences of Failure

Information and records should not be considered byproducts of office work. Organizations should change their paradigm and appreciate the importance of records and effective management of those records. Information and records are evidence that organizations are meeting compliance requirements and achieving their mission and ethics standards. Consequences of a failed records management system, or a lack thereof, can lead to critical issues with some being irrecoverable:

- Communication Failures
- Poor/Rash Decision Making
- Loss of reputation due to poor records
- Substantial fines and sanctions against the organization
- Litigation risk due to failure to comply with regulatory and legal mandates
- Vital Loss of data in the event of a disaster or when an employee leaves
- Increased cost due to inefficiencies

Finally, by December 31, 2020, the directive by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) (Managing Government Records Directive M-12-18) requires all agencies to manage and retain records in electronic formats “to the fullest extent possible”. As the deadline quickly approaches, Federal agencies are rushing to implement a stop gap versus a sound and scalable records management system versus taking a more strategic and holistic approach. Agencies will scramble to find funds from internal departments to purchase services and applications for an interim solution or resort to settling with existing technology. However, an interim solution will only worsen the current challenges and create additional costs as departments continue to work in a vacuum, encounter accessibility and searchability issues, while risk meeting data/records management requirements and missing deadlines.

Full Lifecycle Delivery Model

As the Federal government moves closer to the 2020 deadline, it is critical for agencies to improve the performance and promotion of openness and accountability through refined records management practices and policies. Our Full Life-Cycle Delivery Model (Chart A) provides a holistic and scalable approach to developing, implementing, and sustaining an effective records management system.

Customer Partnership & Engagement

A key component of our delivery model is continuous collaboration and partnership with our client throughout the lifecycle. Our Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) will guide and engage with client stakeholders across the organization to promote transparency and user adoption of new policies and systems. This type of engagement empowers and advises the client leadership team to strategically implement and manage policies, systems, and overall cultural change.

Chart A: Full Life-Cycle Delivery Model



“eRM-as-a-Service” Pricing

From our work in various agencies, we recognize that many organizations struggle to identify and implement an effective Records Management (RM) System not due to a lack of functionality but because of funding constraints. Therefore, as part of our delivery model, we constructed “eRM-as-a-Service” pricing model which offers our Federal clients flexibility, scalability, and consumption-based pricing options. Our team believes in long-term relationships to ensure the success of our clients. Through this pricing model, we are adaptable to the funding challenges faced by Federal organizations. Based on our assessment of each environment, we provide customized modules of activities that allow the client to determine and select priority activities with the funding they have on-hand. Since modules are interrelated, program offices can “pick up where they left off” as funds become available.



S.T.E.P.™ Change

Recognizing the quality, risk and organizational change management requirements associated with a successful records management system implementation and leveraging over 20 years of project and program management experience, our team utilizes a S.T.E.P.™ (Strategies Targeting Efficiency and Performance) change delivery phased approach (Chart B) to deliver records management solutions, sustain business continuity, gain stakeholder adoption, achieve benefit realization and optimize an agency’s investments. The following chart provides an overview of our delivery approach which is tailorable to an agency’s business needs and rate of acceptance to change.

Chart B: S.T.E.P.™ Phase Approach for Developing and Implementing a Records Management System

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5
Assessment & Planning	Development of Taxonomy & Libraries	Prepare records for cataloguing and classification	Upload records and execute test schedule	Implement quality control for maintenance and sustainment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and engage with key stakeholders Locate, identify, assess all information assets Perform gap assessment of current processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with stakeholders to determine taxonomy for records Partner with stakeholders to design approve controlled vocabulary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft policies and standard operating procedures for records classification and management Prepare schedule for records cataloguing and uploading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop User Acceptance Test (UAT) of uploaded records Upload records and test all capabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop quality control plan for maintenance and sustainment Conduct user training Schedule follow-on meetings to ensure continuity of operations
MILESTONE Submit Project Management & Quality Control Plan	MILESTONE Confirm Taxonomies & Controlled Vocabulary Design meet ISO standards	MILESTONE Submit Policies & SOPs	MILESTONE Complete UAT of search and retrieval capabilities	MILESTONE Implement quality control for maintenance and sustainment

Quality and Risk Management

Two fundamental components, but often overlooked, of a successful records management system are quality and risk management. To ensure a records management system maintains records that are accurate, consistent and reliable, a systematic approach to quality and risk management is applied across the entire records management lifecycle.

A common pitfall many agencies encounter is waiting until the test phase to develop a quality and risk management plan, resulting in development gaps and rework in the overall implementation plan. Therefore, developing a plan for quality and risk management needs to occur early in the lifecycle, specifically during the design phase of a RM system, to ensure delivery requirements are met and realistic performance goals are established.

Governance policies and procedures to monitor performance must be documented to ensure quality and risks are at the forefront of the process and not as an afterthought. In partnership with the client management, the P3-OTMG Team will facilitate activities to capture performance expectations based on ground truth of the current process, environment, personnel, and technologies. This consistently applied technique will enable management to skillfully and continuously monitor process capabilities and adjust plans as needed.

Quality Standards

Depending on the client's environment and requirements, we will collaborate with the Chief Information Officer (CIO), program leaders and other stakeholders to clearly understand the agency's compliance requirements, quality standards/goals, and budget capacity to recommend a standard for developing taxonomies, controlled vocabulary design, and maintenance. For records management, one standard to consider is ISO 15489-1:2016.

ISO 15489-1:2016 defines the concepts and principles from which approaches to the creation, capture and management of records are developed. This part of ISO 15489 describes concepts and principles relating to the following:

- Records, metadata for records and records systems;
- Policies, assigned responsibilities, monitoring and training supporting the effective management of records;
- Recurrent analysis of business context and the identification of records requirements;
- Records controls;
- Processes for creating, capturing and managing records.

QUALITY AT THE FOREFRONT

ISO 15489-1:2016 applies to the creation, capture and management of records regardless of structure or form, in all types of business and technological environments, over time. We have a certified ISO Auditor who can work with your team to align your agency's environment to this standard.

In terms of a records management implementation, for several years we have utilized the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK), Six Sigma DMIAC and Informational Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) methodologies as our guideline for project, program, process and technology implementations. We have a team of over 15 consultants who are certified Program Management Professionals (PgMP), Project Management Professionals (PMP), Six Sigma Black Belts and ITIL Professionals ready to share best practices and transfer knowledge related to records management and other system implementations.

Sustaining an Effective RM System

To sustain effectiveness of an RM system, organizations need to consistently measure, test, and update plans to prepare for risks related to disaster recovery, security threats, and costs related to delays in record retrieval.



Guiding principles to consider:

1. **Promote and maintain a culture of quality** to minimize the risk of non-compliant and erroneous records. Create an environment to encourage transparency through communication of record failures and successes by providing tools to easily provide feedback.
2. **Train personnel** through continuous refresher courses.
3. **Align with existing quality methodologies strategies** whenever possible to prevent redundancies.
4. **Understand the role records play** in the current and long-term plans of the agency or organization including the legal and regulatory compliance standards for each record.
5. **Assess probability and impact of risk.** Understand what records are vital and the impact if lost or misused.
6. **Perform regular quality audits** to monitor performance and compliance. Benchmark performance against previous records management audit results to continuously assess improvement opportunities or trends of non-conformance. Also audit to see which records are aging or expiring.
7. **Partner with Legal and IT** to ensure information is managed in a way to achieve compliance and meet system requirements.
8. **Check for data integrity** through scheduled audits of record samples and activities documented in the quality management plan.

Conclusion

This White Paper provides Federal agencies with viable options for developing and implementing an effective RM system that is scalable and holistic. More importantly, the cultural and mind shift needs to percolate throughout the ranks of the organization to sustain the effectiveness and success of a RM system.

About P³ Delivery and OTMG



P³ Delivery is a management consulting firm built on the principles of Strategic Program Management. Our expertise, experience, and passion are in project, process and performance management excellence. We provide consulting, business process, program management, records management, administrative support and training services. We have over 15 years of experience delivering a wide range of projects and programs for clients in the public and private sectors throughout the US and internationally. We deliver industry best practices in establishing standards, policies and processes to drive project efficiency, effectiveness and accountability. We are also a certified 8(a) and woman-owned business.



On Target Management Group is a strategic management consulting firm formed by seasoned business professionals with a combined experience of over 50 years of Federal Contracting experience. Our success is built on a common vision - building high performance work environments. The company's cadre of successful executives leveraged their diverse relationship management and service delivery experiences to build a company culture that thrives on fostering and sustaining high employee morale and retention rate. It is this genuine and unwavering dedication to our workforce that generates the staying power required for OTMG to provide unparalleled services and to become recognized as one of the best places to work. OTMG is also a Woman-Owned Economically-Disadvantaged Small Business.

To learn more about RM solutions relevant to your organization, feel free to contact us:

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