

eBook

Mastering Project Execution

Visibility and Control for Better Results

 **KEYEDIN**®

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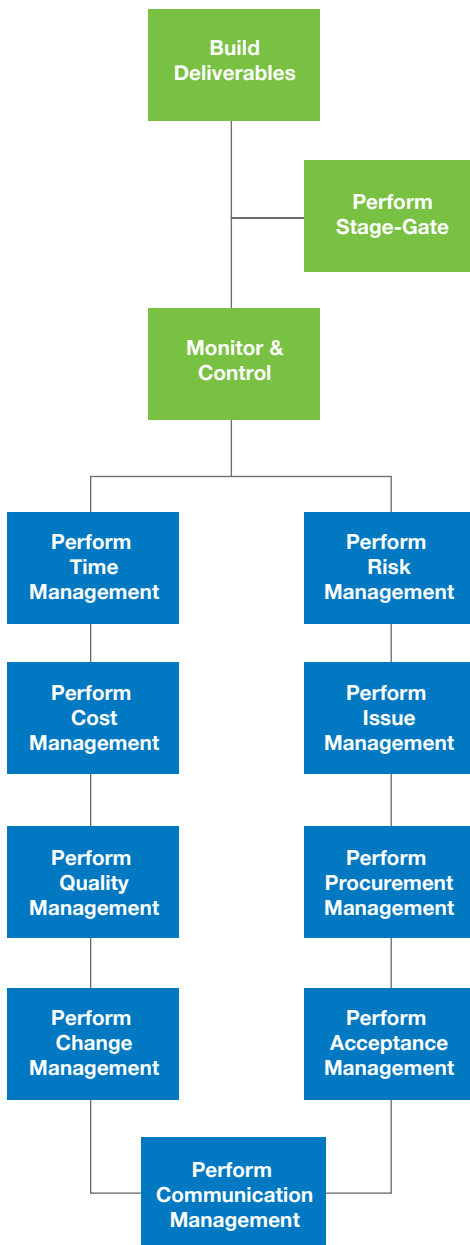
Introduction:

The Well-Run PMO

A well-run project management office (PMO) brings exponential value to the company. Research that explored the top 25% of project management offices, found that an effective PMO can have a significant business impact, including:

1. 43% improvement in strategic alignment
2. \$175K cost savings per project
3. 25% decrease in failed projects

These results are achieved through a coordinated, controlled, and complete, top-down effort. This starts with an efficient project intake process, followed by comprehensive portfolio management, where the most valuable mix of projects is compared and prioritized. Next, it is crucial to create a structured, consistent project planning discipline among your teams that aligns all of your resources into effective activities that not only meet deadlines and budgets but will advance business strategy. Only to the extent that you can manage the elements of project execution in one place will you be able to consistently deliver repeat portfolio successes and institutionalize project execution best practices (or avoid common pitfalls).



It's Time to Deliver

Project execution is the phase of project management that delivers the actual work, outputs and deliverables of a project (see graphic, to the leftⁱⁱ). Teams complete activities and check off deliverables, delighting—or dismaying—their customers at the end. As Rupen Sharma, PMP, a worldwide portfolio manager for the technology industry, puts it in his blog, “Your project plans are worth nothing without an impeccable project execution.”ⁱⁱⁱ

For project managers, the execution phase consists of managing people, processes and distributing information. However, there are two key linchpins of project success during this phase: communication and risk management.^{iv} That’s why, with this eBook, we have gathered specific and actionable project execution best practices in one place to ensure these and other harbingers of project success are virtually guaranteed.

Three Common Challenges that Derail Project Execution

There are three issues that our clients report when discussing project execution challenges:

1. They are inundated with emails and other forms of communication so that, finally, “everything is important so nothing is.”
2. Even simple questions take forever to answer, with team members having to call or email; search for documents on a shared drive, or in platforms like SharePoint—for relief that often comes too late to make a difference.
3. It’s difficult to gain project execution mastery when teams are working with a clunky or overly complex tool or a manual system that users don’t adopt.

If these issues sound like yours, follow this guide to create better, more effective project execution processes and leverage the technology that empowers them.

Three Essential Capabilities to Gain Productivity and Clarity During Project Execution



A central repository that shows what is coming up on the project schedule and what has been accomplished, allows teams to gain control and become more proactive in the PMO.

As stated earlier, much of this pain will be alleviated by better managing project execution processes, especially those related to solid, real-time communication and risk management. Read on to discover why these three areas of focus will help you end debilitating project execution problems.

1. Manage by exception.

Disruptive reactivity happens when team members become completely overwhelmed with too much information, and it's nearly impossible to prioritize. Everything is a firefight to just maintain the status quo. Reactivity also can happen when there isn't enough information to accurately plan and schedule upcoming tasks. A central repository that shows what is coming up on the project schedule and what has been accomplished, allows teams to gain control and become more proactive in the PMO.

If the PPM solution you are using highlights the deltas—the differences between where you are and where you need to go—you are well on your way to project execution mastery. Rather than just distributing an endless stream of project details, PPM tools should facilitate and streamline priorities for every contributor to the project, whether you are monitoring compliance, designing systems, or writing

code. Using personalized dashboards that show real-time project status information, including priorities, overdue assignments, risks, issues, and upcoming tasks, is one way to accomplish this. For those who are working on process improvements, clear governance rules will help streamline and move you forward. Here are three ways to start:

- 1) Institute a collaborative workspace rule or file share to focus communication;
- 2) Set up an email alias for the project team to get common alerts and ensure that the right people see the right activities; and
- 3) Create some risk management calendar checkpoints to assess progress and allow you to change directions if projects are going off track.



A central, shared communications tool within the PPM solution is the only thing that mitigates the risk of key information being lost...

2. Embrace a single source of the truth.

Real project execution power comes when the assigned work, related documentation, and team collaboration are all contained in one place. This happens when project management platforms are integrated with communication tools like email, at minimum, to track all relevant correspondence and truly act as a central repository.

A central, shared communications tool within the PPM solution is the only thing that mitigates the risk of key information being lost and allows the PMO to gain control from the convergence of assigned work and task plans; collaboration and resource deployment as one source of project truth. Secure access through mobile devices will enhance the usability and facilitate collaboration.

“ ”

The ideal time and expense tracking method for project execution includes a mobile platform that's friendly and fast and feeds right into the company's project management tool, and eventually to the financial system.

3. Easily integrate to maximize user adoption and productivity.

Leverage your team's existing systems preferences and ease adoption with cloud-based PPM tools that allow extensive native integration and plug ins. For example, when time and expense (T&E) data is integrated to PPM, services organizations don't struggle with outdated or incomplete timesheets to charge back other departments along a dangerously intermittent timeframe. They have complete information, protecting potentially millions of dollars that would have been missed or that were not coded appropriately for a particular cost center, causing headaches at best and profit shortfalls at worst. We've encountered numerous project teams that are dismayed they'll never gain control over time and expense reporting. If it's hard to use, folks just won't use it, or they'll make a lot of mistakes that will cost a lot of money. The ideal time and expense tracking method for project execution includes a mobile platform that's friendly and fast and feeds right into the company's project management tool, and eventually to the financial system. It also feeds into auto-reports that deliver predictive analytics that help control what happens with a portfolio from idea to intake and beyond. Once costs and budgets are aligned for time and expense tracking you won't find quoting error, scope creep, budget overages, and resource misallocation impacting profits.

In addition, integration to systems such as agile PM, customer relationship management (CRM), or accounting/finance systems will ensure that your project teams are maximizing utilization and streamlining adoption so that all data will easily roll-up in one central project portfolio management repository.

Exemplary Execution:

ROI Achieved by Companies That Excel

To ensure profitability of your portfolio, you need rigorous, ongoing performance monitoring during project execution that tracks not only that key stages are reached on time but includes granular insight into important deliverables, milestones, and the workload of your resources. Only this level of clarity and control will allow you to execute to goal and gain proactivity; collaborative power; and financial resource tracking that protects the bottom line.

One client was having issues managing its project execution, especially when it came to the back office (T&E specifically) and calculating future revenue. Now, KeyedIn Projects allows them improved productivity and complete visibility for their portfolio during project execution. In addition, output is fed into savings forecast for more accurate revenue projection. According to the company's Vice President,

“It is helping people change the way they operate, updating things as they went along and making their working pattern more efficient and effective.”

Still another client needed us to integrate with their existing CRM (**Salesforce™**) software and financial (**Intacct™**) solutions. Once we did so, they were able to go from a patchwork of spreadsheets, scheduling and project tools to a single platform, immediately improving project control and visibility.

If your organization struggles with the project execution challenges described in our client companies or in this eBook – including a lack of total collaborative enablement; a way to gain and use a “single version of the truth”; or inefficient time and expense tracking – it's time to consider KeyedIn Projects.



About KeyedIn® Projects

KeyedIn Projects enables your PMO to be more strategic, more efficient, and deliver greater business impact by allowing you to easily forecast and allocate resources, create and analyze portfolios, gain visibility to all your projects, and discover new insights through dynamic PPM analytics.

Start today by requesting a free product trial or by calling one of our PPM experts at +1-877-932-4402 or +44(0)1274 863300.

ⁱ State of the PMO 2016

ⁱⁱ Westland, Jason. "What We Liked: Project Execution," Max Wideman Blog, Accessed January 9, 2018, http://www.maxwideman.com/papers/life_cycle/execution.htm

ⁱⁱⁱ Sharma, Rupen, PMP, "Project Execution Process Group: Put Your Plan to Work," Brightspot PM blog, Accessed January 8, 2018. <http://www.brighthubpm.com/project-planning/1674-project-execution-putting-your-plan-to-work/>

^{iv} "How Well Do You Know the Executing Process Group?" Master of Project Academy, accessed January 2, 2018. <https://blog.masterofproject.com/project-execution-process-group/>



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