

10 Reasons to Adopt P3O

If there was ever a time to deliver efficient and consistent change in an organisation, it is now and the OGC's Portfolio, Programme and Project Office (P3O) guidance sets up the structure to deliver just that.

1. Create a Structure.

Change is on the way but how often have you thought the right hand does not know what the left hand is doing? P3O is a way of providing joined-up support for launching business change. The Office of Government Commerce's (OGC) new guidance gives direction on establishing, developing and maintaining a decision-making and enabling framework or management environment for all levels and all kinds of change in an organisation.

2. Build a Balanced and Focused Portfolio.

Let's face it there's always a chance that projects picked or projects ditched are decided on boardroom clout and not the numbers. P3O can be a logical arbiter and filter. Companies can home in on programmes and projects that fit the overall strategy so the right ones are picked. They can create the right mix of change-the-business and run the business-as-usual operations. They can foster a climate of responsibility and accountability amongst all staff.

3. A 360 ° View of the Change Portfolio.

With the best will in the world individuals can't always get a complete picture of all the business change that's being wrought on a company. With P3O decision makers get a panoramic view of the portfolio, its progress, interactions, conflicts, risks and benefits against investments. Programme and project staff get a broad view and therefore understanding of the change agenda and how it relates to business strategy, as a result they implement change consistently.

4. Transparency.

Success, failure, problems now, problems in the future: everything is visible above the water with P3O so its staff can spot holdups, spot projects in trouble and escalate problems to the right level and allow investment management judgments to be made early.

5. Standardize and Improve.

P3O could almost be made for the virtual and digital world. It promotes standardisation, consistency of approach and delivery, assurance, training and a culture where past successes and failures are not forgotten but treasured and passed on as best practices to be used across the change portfolio and across geographic and time frontiers.

6. Manage Costs and Time.

As P3O brings standardisation, consistency, efficiency, common language, information on past schedules, budgets, methodologies, training methods, and so forth, it reduces start up and mobilisation timescales and makes for predictable, stickable delivery costs and times.

7. Flexible Structure.

Get the benefits of P3O by tailoring it to your company. The vision and goals of the sponsor, the size and maturity of the organisation, P3RM, all of these factors will influence the choice of model, the staffing and the pace at which you design, build and adopt P3O. A small company may only need one P3O expert; a large one, an army of them. One organisation may launch P3O quickly; another roll it out in stages.

8. Individual Benefits.

There is something for everyone. Senior managers will appreciate the structure for achieving strategic objectives. Programme managers can be consistent in their management and achieve standardized strategies within projects. Project managers can integrate with programmes and deliver consistent outputs. P3O also offers a career path which could be useful in this precarious employment era. More information is available from the [Project Management Office Special Interest Group](#).

9. Assurance.

When budgets are limited, costs high, project failures unthinkable, that's a time when portfolios, programmes and projects are watched like hawks internally and externally and are subject to scrutiny and challenge. P3O helps develop an integrated risk-based approach to independent assurance and reviews.

10. It Works.

No-one wants to throw good money after anything in these hard times unless there's a clear return. P3O can give that and [BT Design \(P3O: No Skeletons in the Cupboard at BT Design\)](#) show how it worked for them.

If you're still not sure if you really need P3O then try these tests:

- The OGC lists seven questions that will help you do just that; you'll find the list at the end.
- ILX Group Senior Management Training Consultant Steve Boronski's [effective formula](#) will tell you if you've already got one based on the questions: if you make X investment, will you get Y benefits and will it improve Z Key Performance Indicators?
- P3O training slots in perfectly with the OGC products such as PRINCE2, ITIL, MSP and M_o_R. It comprises [P3O Foundation](#) and [P3O Practitioner](#) level qualifications and is accredited by the [APMG](#). There is the guidance, support and documentation that you would expect and the OGC already provides a [P3O Online Repository](#).

The OGC's Seven Questions to put to Senior Managers:

1. Are all your programmes and projects really necessary?
2. Which ones will help you to deliver your strategy? What benefits will they give you?
3. How much is your change portfolio impacting the business?
4. How much is it costing you?
5. If your budgets are reduced, which programmes or projects could you put on hold – what would be the impact on the business?
6. Do you have the right people and skills? Are they available when you need them? When is it more appropriate to hire in contract staff rather than do it yourselves?
7. Are your managers delivering your programmes and projects consistently and well?

Useful Links:

- For a complete picture of [P3O](#) and what it can do head to the OGC.
- A bunch of useful [P3O downloads](#) can help you get to grips with this new guidance.
- The [APMG](#) provides a wealth of information about P3O and accredited training options.
- There are many [training and support options for P3O](#) that include e-learning as well as blended learning to make your money go further.

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