

Directing a successful project with PRINCE2®

The role of senior management.

Introduction

As senior manager you are not only responsible to maintain the current business operations, but also to improve the business operations. Given that the pace of change in organizations accelerates, the focus of your attention is moving from business as usual to business change. The introduction of these changes happen typically by means of projects.

The responsibilities over business as usual don't give you the time to get involved in all details of every project. An effective framework with clear roles and responsibilities becomes a must.

This quick reference card provides you with the role of senior management in projects.

Profile Project Board Effort

- Strong involvement of the Project Board in the early phases of the project significantly raise the chances on success.



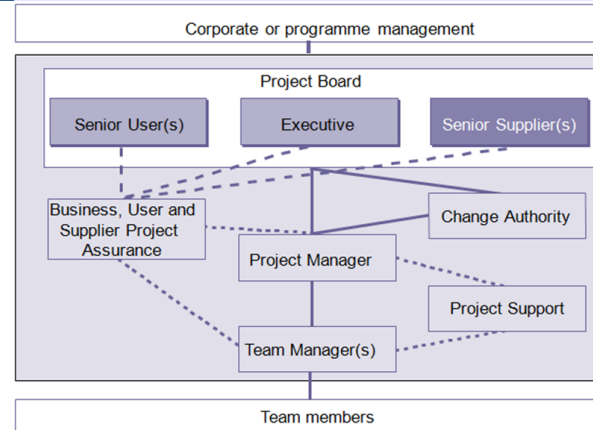
PRINCE2® Principles

- Continued Business Justification
- Learn from experience
- Defined roles and responsibilities
- Manage by stages
- Manage by exception
- Focus on products
- Tailor to suit the project environment

Project Board Duties & Behaviours

- Be accountable for the project
- Provide unified direction
- Delegate effectively
- Facilitate cross-functional integration
- Commit resources
- Ensure effective decision making
- Support the Project manager
- Ensure effective communication

The Project Management Team



The Project Board

- A guided coalition to support & direct the project
- Delegates management of the project to the Project Manager in a series of stages
- Stage boundaries are major control milestones
- If Project Manager can deliver within stage tolerances, no need for Project Board to keep close contact with the work
- Ensure project remains aligned to the organization's strategic aims

The Executive

- Ensure the project gives value for money
- Ensure a cost-conscious approach to the project
- Appointed by corporate or Programme Management
- Responsible for the Business Case
- Ensure the project is focused throughout its life on achieving its objectives and delivering a product that will achieve forecasted benefits
- Ultimately accountable for project success and is the key decision maker
- Vested in one individual

The Senior Supplier(s)

- Represents the interests of those designing, developing, facilitating, procuring, and implementing the products
- Accountable for the quality of products delivered by Suppliers
- Responsible for technical integrity
- Commits supplier resources
- Ensure proposals are feasible and realistic

The Senior User(s)

- Represents the interests of all those who will use the products of the project, and those who will maintain the products after closure!
- Monitor products against requirements
- Commits user resources
- Is responsible for specifying the needs of those who will use the products of the project
- User liaison with the project management team
- Monitoring that the solution will meet those needs within the constraints of the Business Case in terms of quality, functionality and ease of use
- Specifies the benefits and is held to account by demonstrating to corporate or programme management that the forecasted benefits are realized

The Project Manager

- Run the project on a day-to-day basis on behalf of the Project Board within the constraints laid down by the board
- Ensure that the project produces the required products, to the required standard of quality and within the specified constraints of time and cost
- Responsible for the project delivering an outcome that is capable of achieving the benefits defined in the Project Initiation Documentation

Project Assurance

- Delegated from the Project Board
- Monitoring all aspects of the project's performance and products
- Independent of the Project Manager
- The person or people filling a Project Assurance role may be changed during the project at the request of the Project Board
- Reports to the Project Board member(s) responsible for their appointment

Change Authority

- Delegated from the Project Board
- Approves responses to requests for change or off-specifications
- Can be partially assigned to the Project Manager
- Review and approve or reject all requests for change and off-specifications within the delegated limits of authority and change budget
- Refer to the Project Board if any delegated limits of authority or allocated change budget are forecast to be exceeded

The Project Lifecycle



Starting Up a Project

Purpose

- Answer the question “Do we have a viable & worthwhile project?”
- Prevent poorly conceived project from being initiated
- Do the minimum necessary in order to decide the project is worthwhile to initiate

Executive undertakes...

- Confirm understanding of the project
- Appoint Executive and Project Manager
- Incorporate lessons learned
- Design and appoint the project management team
- Prepare Outline Business Case
- Assist and advise the project manager in preparing the project approach, assembling the project brief, and planning the initiation stage

! Rushed initiation leads to a poor project
! Don't underestimate the effort for initiation
! Ensure a realistic plan is developed for the initiation stage, and later for the project plan
! Provide the Project Manager with sufficient resources and time for planning, monitoring and control during all stages of the project

Authorize Initiation

Purpose

- Decide to proceed into initiating the project; check viability, desirability, and achievability

Project Board undertakes...

- Review and approve the project brief
- Approve the initiation stage plan: commit resources!

Project Board communicates...

- A project initiation notification to keep stakeholders informed about project progress

Authorize the project

Purpose

- Decide to commit resources to the project as a business investment

Project Board undertakes...

- Approve the Project Initiation Documentation:
 - Confirm and approve the Business Case
 - Confirm and approve the strategies for quality, risk, configuration and communication management
 - Confirm lessons are reviewed and incorporated
 - Confirm risk assessment outcomes
 - Confirm validity and achievability of the project plan
 - Confirm the benefits review plan
 - Confirm the project management team structure
 - Ensure project controls are adequate
 - Review project tolerances
- Approve the next stage plan: commit resources! (for details see further)

Project Board communicates...

- A project authorization notification to keep stakeholders informed about project progress

Authorize a stage (or exception)

Purpose

- Provide the Project Board with an opportunity to
 - Review progress
 - Reaffirm the business viability
 - Give approval to the project manager to proceed based on an agreed stage (or exception) plan

Project Board undertakes...

- Review end stage reports
- Prior consultation for approval
- Approve a stage (or exception plan)
 - Is the current stage complete?
 - Do we progress on the basis of the plan for the next stage?
- Set tolerances
- Assess project viability
- Approve the next stage plan: commit resources! (for details see further)

Project Board communicates...

- Project progress to keep stakeholders informed

Give ad hoc direction

Purpose

- Ensure there is a consistent and thorough mutual understanding between Project Board, Project Manager, Project Assurance and external stakeholders throughout the project's life

Project Board undertakes...

- Be available for consultations
- Respond to requests; provide guidance and take decisions
- Respond to highlight (for information only) and exception reports (decide)
 - Or adjust tolerances
 - Or use influence to remove the exception cause
 - Or ask for an exception plan
 - Or request premature closure
- Respond to external influences

Project Board communicates...

- Advise to the project management team
- Project progress to keep stakeholders informed

Authorize Closure

Purpose

- To confirm that the project has been concluded in an orderly manner before the remaining project management team is disbanded
- Be assured that the products have been handed over and accepted (to those who will use and maintain them)
- Be assured that the participating organizations exploit any lessons

Project Board undertakes...

- Confirm handover and acceptance
- Approve the end project report
- Approve the benefits review plan

Project Board communicates...

- A project closure notification
- Celebrate successful projects
- Positive messages to corporate management, success stories, sales and marketing collateral

Post-Project

The project team is disbanded. The Executive must ensure commitment from corporate management to perform the post-project activities; such as benefit reviews and business case closure.