



CASE STUDY

Increased PMO Maturity Allows Company to Focus on Innovation

PROJECT BACKGROUND

One of the world's largest plastic consumer container manufacturers faced challenges to meet deadlines for its innovative line of packaging. In the highly competitive industry of consumer product packaged goods, timeliness, expediting new products to market, and satisfying customer needs are key factors to maintain a company's competitive advantage.

The company's project management process lacked defined protocols and processes and projects often relied on individual style and direction. Documents were not publicly shared, therefore preventing the flow of information between key project stakeholders.

THE CHALLENGE

When IPM was engaged to conduct a project management assessment, several projects had budget overruns or missed deadlines. IPM conducted a formal evaluation of the company's current project management system and concluded that the company lacked consistency and quality of its project implementation, characterizing the maturity as a level 2: inconsistent. The lack of a mature Project Management Office (PMO) prevented the company from realizing its true potential and capitalizing on its innovation and developing new products.

The company's objectives included: increasing efficiency, quality, timeliness, budget forecast

accuracy, and customer satisfaction through a high performing PMO. With such diverse objectives, a one-size-fit all approach would not be effective.

IPM'S APPROACH

Following extensive stakeholder interviews, IPM identified areas for potential improvement including: more rigorous planning prior to execution, more effective use of project teams, better defined project scope, and emphasis on project closing activities.

IPM streamlined the company's nine-gate process and simplified it into four easy-to-follow steps. To leverage the strength of the project team and ensure all key stakeholders were able to participate in project planning and execution, the team developed an intranet-based project tracking system. IPM designed and customized 30 tools, templates, and forms for use with the project management process and identified five different project types.

To ensure sustainability and consistent application of the project management processes, IPM developed an electronic PM Handbook with customized workflows for each project type, a unique numbering system to track capital, and an on-line approval process. IPM established a sound platform for PMO growth and future development with tailored training courses for executives and sponsors, project managers, and project team members.

IPM also managed recurring challenges with the product specifications database system.

System development issues frequently impeded system availability, thereby impacting the ability for retailer and third party product manufacturers to populate specifications into the system. IPM responded to these issues by working closely with the system developer and other stakeholders to define both temporary workarounds and permanent solutions that enabled continued progress.

PROJECT RESULTS

Eighteen months following implementation, IPM revisited the company to assess the impact and sustainability of the PMO development project and application of the new tools, processes, and forms. The company showed significant improvement, increasing two levels on the PMO maturity scale, from inconsistent to nearing project excellence.

As a result of standardized processes and a mature PMO, the company benefits from synchronized resources, increased customer satisfaction, met deadlines, and efficient communication. With greater efficiency across projects and functions, the company can focus on innovation and developing new products.



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