



CASE STUDY

PMO Development Program Enables Biotech Leader to Execute Phase IV Projects More Reliably, With Less Risk

PROJECT BACKGROUND

A leading global biotechnology company had previously restructured its medical affairs department, creating a new project management organization (PMO) to help handle the team's ever-increasing lifecycle management projects. Their load numbered more than 90 investigative studies and 12 company-directed studies covering multiple indications. Despite great effort to convey the value of a dedicated project management group, old habits died hard. Projects continued to be run by the medical and marketing staff, with minimal collaboration, transparency, or consistency, as well as unpredictable timelines, missed scheduled milestones, and budget overruns. On the whole, the new project managers were marginalized and ineffective.

The company engaged Integrated Project Management Company, Inc. (IPM) to advance its project management capability, which enabled the project managers to take the reins and provide effective project leadership.

IPM'S SOLUTION

Through extensive interviews with the staff (project managers, clinical study managers, medical directors, regional medical liaisons, and others), IPM conducted a rigorous assessment of the department's project management skills, methods, and tools. Leveraging IPM's industry experience and the biotech's in-house knowledge, the team catalogued the gaps between the company's actual performance and its desired best practices. IPM then helped develop methodologies, tools, and templates to address these gaps. One such tool was an integrated project timeline, which enabled every member of the team to know exactly when his/her deliverables were due—as well as everyone else's. This kept the team members aware of the project's progress every step of the way.

IPM next developed a project management training program, tailored for the PMO staff. Project managers learned critical skills, such as keeping co-workers on schedule despite a lack of reporting authority; leading effective meetings; facilitating cross-functional decisions; and when and how to communicate issues up the chain of command.

To reinforce the training, two different IPM project managers

joined a commercial drug's life-cycle team to work side-by-side with the medical affairs project manager, serving as a coach and mentor. During the course of the project, IPM provided a hands-on direction in populating many of the new templates, including the creation of a detailed project plan, roles and responsibilities matrix, action items and issue resolution logs, risk assessment log, and a Communication Plan. In addition, the IPM project manager implemented a change control process to eliminate scope creep and moving targets.

IPM helped the project manager put an end to the information hoarding, which had previously been the norm, by demonstrating how transparency helped the team arrive at more predictable schedules and timely decisions.

Of greater importance, IPM guided the project manager to providing the appropriate level of information to each audience, from team members to senior-level executives. By creating templates and dashboards to capture relevant project information, the project manager could easily assemble regular summaries tailored to the needs of different recipients within the company.

PROJECT RESULTS

IPM successfully led the evolution of the PMO, complete with an arsenal of tools tailored to the company's culture, structure, and specific needs. Most important, its staff is now well trained in project management best practices, without which the best of tools are inadequate.

With the PMO demonstrating its value, the medical affairs team felt comfortable relinquishing the role of project leadership to PMO personnel. As a result, the team has eliminated much of the re-work and last minute scrambling that had become the norm. Employees across functions now collaborate with more unity and complete projects on time, more consistently, and with reduced project risk through focused planning and execution. Because of a solid project management foundation, their practices and principles can be applied to all projects going forward.

The company was so pleased with the result, that it recommended IPM and its approach to another leading biotech firm.



200 South Frontage Road, Suite 220
Burr Ridge, IL 60527
T 630.789.8600
F 630.789.7945
www.ipmcinc.com