

Project Assurance Training Guide

Enterprise Project Management Office

Georgia Technology Authority

State of Georgia

www.gta.ga.gov

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Class Agenda

Project Assurance

Upon completion of this class, the student will gain:

- An understanding of Project Assurance and why it is necessary
- An overview of the EPLC Project Assurance Methodology
- Detailed knowledge of when to conduct project assessment, what to look for at each stage of the project's lifecycle and how to identify project 'gaps'
- A working knowledge of how to intervene in a project to build consensus for implementing solutions to close project 'gaps'

Class Agenda

Day 1

- 8:30 AM – Module 1 & 2: The Business Case for Project Assurance & Project Assurance Overview
- 10:15 AM – Break
- 10:30 AM – Module 3: Initiation
- 11:45 AM – 1:00 Lunch
- 1:00 PM – 2:15 PM: Case Study Exercise #1
- 2:15 PM – Break
- 2:30 PM – Module 4: Invest Plan/Case Study Exercise #2
- 4:00 PM – Adjourn

Day 2

- 8:30AM - Module 5: Design
- 9:15AM – Case Study Exercise #3
- 10:00AM – Break
- 10:15AM – Module 6: Development
- 10:45AM – Case Study Exercise #4
- 11:15 - Modules 7, 8, 9: Deploy, Operate, Dispose
- 11:45 AM – 1:00PM Lunch
- 1:00PM - Case Study Exercise #5
- 2:15PM – Break
- 2:30 PM - Module 10: The Intervention Process /Case Study Exercise #6
- 3:30 PM - Course Exam
- 4:00 - Adjourn

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Module 1

The Business Case for Project Assurance

Exercise 1 – Why Projects Fail

Using a personal experience, provide an example of each 'failure point':

1. **Lack of top management commitment:**

2. **Unrealistic expectations:**

3. **Poor requirements definition:**

4. **Improper package selection:**

5. **Gaps between software & requirements:**

6. **Inadequate resources:**

7. **Poor project management:**

8. **Lack of methodology:**

9. **Underestimating impact of change:**

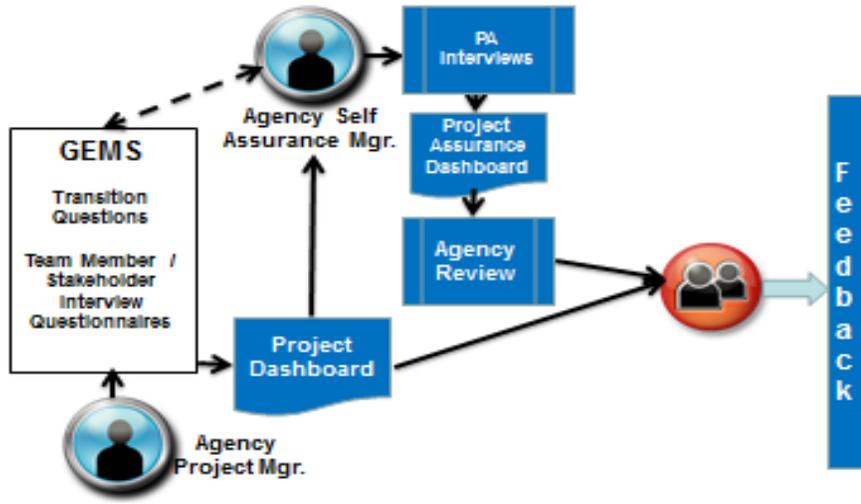
10. **Lack of training and education:**

Agency Self Assurance

The following diagram depicts the Agency Self Assurance Process.



The Business Case for Project Assurance



Slide #18

Georgia Technology Authority

Page 1-13

Notes:

Module 2

Project Assurance Overview

Build – Are we doing things the right way and doing them well?

In this process, we organize to determine whether the investment is sufficiently ready to be deployed and whether it will generate the benefits defined in the Plan Process. The outcome of this process is a determination on whether this initiative has the pre-requisites and the ability to run and operate based on the services defined.

The Build Segment consists of the following Stages:

- **Design** – Finalize technical requirements and prepare the design for development based on the business & technical requirements. The outcome of this stage is completion of business product/service design and successful completion of preliminary and detailed design reviews.
- **Development** – Develop code/configuration and/or capabilities required to deploy the business product/service. The outcome of this stage is completion of all product(s)/service(s) and associated documentation; user, operator, security and maintenance documentation, and test planning.
- **Deploy** – Thorough audit and testing of the requirements, design, coding and documentation. Create and establish operational performance measures, operating manuals, customer service plans and baselines. The outcome of this stage is completed acceptance testing, training, establishment of full production capability and completion of the Post-Implementation Review.

Notes:

Assess

The second phase of the Project Assurance Assessment Process is to Assess.

Project Assurance Assessment Process



Each Project Assurance Assessment is composed of the following seven steps:

Step 1: The expectations meeting. Each assessment begins with an expectations meeting. This is a meeting conducted with all the key project participants. At this meeting, the expectations for the assessment are discussed and agreed upon with all parties present. In addition, you should discuss the time line for the assessment of documents that are to be reviewed, the people that are to be interviewed, and the assessment review process itself.

Step 2: Review Stage Deliverables. After the expectations meeting has been conducted, your next step is to collect the relevant project documentation for this particular phase of the assessment. Based on the phase of the project, this documentation may vary. For example, during the project planning phase, the documentation may consist of the statement of work, the project charter, the resource allocation plan, the detailed project plan and the potential change management plan. Your purpose in reviewing the documentation is to gain an understanding of the project direction and the documentation that has been in place to guide the project, as well as to gain an understanding of project direction without having to conduct in-depth interviews about the project with each team member.

Notes:

Step 3: Cross-reference documentation. After the project documentation has been reviewed, the next step in the point in time assessment is to cross-reference the documentation. The interventionist should cross-reference documentation to ensure that there is consistency among project deliverables and to identify the gaps that may occur in expectations, costs, resources and budget, as well as to identify potential solutions.

Step 4: Interview key participants. After conducting a thorough review and cross-referencing of project deliverables and documents, it is a good idea to interview the people who wrote, approved and signed off on the documents. By interviewing key participants, the interventionist can determine if the project vision has been successfully translated into project execution. In addition, interviewing key participants helps the interventionist identify potential budget roadblocks, political concerns or other constraints that would not be apparent by just reading the project deliverables. Information gained in these interviews is critical to understanding the complexities of the relationships among the parties involved in the project as well as to understand what has and has not been successful in past projects within the organization. Interviews are also a great tool you can use to uncover people's fears and concerns and gain an understanding of what the organization is trying to accomplish. Without conducting interviews, the interventionist is left without a mechanism to build relationships with key project stakeholders that will allow for downstream issue resolution.

Notes:

Step 5: Determine areas of concern and recommendations. After all documentation has been reviewed and cross-referenced and all key participants interviewed, the interventionist now has the information needed to develop the areas of concern for this point in time assessment. Based on the project phase, the number of issues and areas of concerns will vary; however, the issues identified will represent gaps in terms of requirements, expectations, cost, budget, or resources. It is the responsibility of the interventionist to not only identify these issues and areas of concern, but also provide recommended solutions.

Step 6: Review findings with key participants. After the interventionist has developed a list of concerns or recommendations, it is time to review the findings with the key project participants. This process is actually done twice. First, the findings are reviewed during informal discussions held individually with the key participants to ensure that nothing has been misinterpreted in the point in time assessment and to make sure that the key participants are briefed on the findings prior to a meeting of all stakeholders. By having an informal discussion with the key participants prior to the formal meeting, the interventionist can gauge the team member’s reaction to the findings as well as preliminarily discuss solutions. This also provides the key participants with time to research findings that they may not have been aware of or brainstorm solutions prior to the formal meeting. The second time the findings are reviewed with key participants; everyone should be informed and aware of all of the issues and be prepared to discuss solutions. By being prepared in the first discussion, the participants have already bought into the recommendations and solutions. If they disagree, the interventionist can be prepared to defend the concerns and recommendations.

Notes:

Step 7: Final report/areas for follow-up. As a final step in the process, the interventionist documents the point in time assessment by summarizing the process for the point in time assessment and the findings and recommendations into a final report. This document marks the completion of the point in time assessment for this project phase. However, the final report serves as the input for the next point in time assessment. This is important because leftover action items or unresolved issues from the previous phase should be high on the interventionist’s list for the next point in time assessment. Unresolved issues from a previous phase will be included in the documentation review, and interviews for the next point time assessment will provide continuity between project phases to ensure that project failure points do not continue to go unaddressed.

Intervene

In the last stage of Project Assurance Assessment Process, your role is to present the findings of the assessment and to intervene in order to make necessary project changes. The Project Assurance Assessment Process outlines **how** to intervene by presenting the findings of the assessment and working with the project team to develop an implementation plan to address the findings.

Project Assurance Assessment Process



Notes:

- **Exit Criteria:** Exit Criteria is established as Stage 'fitness' measures that must be attained to successfully complete a given stage. This creates a defined measure of performance at key points in the life of an investment and provides the Business Owner with a means of gauging progress or performance. Exit criteria can be documents, deliverables or specific actions that must be accomplished. Generic Exit criteria is set to monitor the overall status of the investment. Stage Exit Criteria can include any necessary corrective actions needed to bring the project into alignment with the original goals, objectives and performance requirements.
- **Stage Gate Reviews:** Stage Gate Reviews are required at the end of the Plan and Build processes to provide a formal review of the Stage Exit Criteria. Periodic Project Reviews may be required during the Build stage depending on the complexity and criticality of the investment. In addition, annual Application Assessments will be required to revalidate the operational investment, depending on the complexity and criticality of the investment.

The Difference between Project Assurance Assessment and Stage Gates

The GTA Project Assurance Process will outline what to look for in the stage deliverables and exit criteria for each of the seven stages in the Enterprise Performance Lifecycle. The Project Assurance Assessment approach is to review and address project fitness during the phase to minimize the gaps that lead to project failure; whereas the Stage Gate Reviews are formal decision points to evaluate the project and determine if it should continue to the next phase in the Enterprise Project Lifecycle.

Module 3

Stage 1: Initiate

Project Assurance Assessment Process

Step 1: Conduct Expectations Meeting

Meeting Purpose: To set the expectations and timeline for the assessment.

Who Should Attend

- Business Owner
- Strategic Planner
- Program Manager
- Information Security Officer
- Procurement Officer
- Budget/Finance Officer
- Representative from Oversight Agencies

Expectations Meeting Template

Intervention #1 - Expectations Meeting				
Meeting Purpose To set the expectations and timeline for the point in time assessment.				
Who Should Attend The decision makers from the various project entities internal to the company (executives, business owners and technology). If external partners are engaged and relevant, then they should be included as well.				
Date:		Time:		Room:
Agenda:				
Notes / Minutes:				
Action Items:				
Attendees				
Name	Position	Phone	e-mail	Attend (Y/N)

Step 2: Review Stage Deliverables

Business Needs Assessment

The Business Needs Assessment is a document that outlines the current state of an organization, its desired future state and an evaluation of alternatives and recommendations of how to achieve the future state. Key components of the Business Needs Statement/Assessment include:

- Description of the current state or ‘as-is’ processes and systems
- Description of the challenges with the current processes and systems
- Gap analysis which validates the opportunity to improve a business process or correct a deficiency related to a business need
- Need for the acquisition of key items to include hardware, software and services
- Business and Technical Requirements of the proposed solution(s)
- Security and data privacy considerations
- Impact of the change the proposed solution(s) will have on the organization
- High level fit gap between the proposed solution(s) and the proposed processes, systems or organizational changes
- Analysis of alternatives with pros, cons and recommendations for moving forward
- Detailed Business Case for the Investment to include:
 - Project budget to include software, hardware, infrastructure, consultants, training, personnel and on-going support costs.
 - Cost Justification and Return on Investment (ROI) models

Notes:

Agency Project Request (APR)

The purpose of the APR is to communicate to GTA a high level overview of the business need and anticipated approach to meeting that need. Experience has shown that when the business engages with their technology partners early in the concept discussions it leads to a better common understanding of the requirements and solution alternatives.

The APR is a required document for any technology investment that is anticipated to cost \$100,000.00 or more. The cost should include all expenses associated with the investment, including maintenance and support over the first five years of operations (Total Cost of Ownership).

The new APR form is designed to capture information which will begin the conversation between GTA and the business owners. It is used internally (within GTA) to start identifying the appropriate resources to support early planning activities and engage the Infrastructure Service Providers as appropriate.

The key elements in the APR are:

- Business need and business drivers
- Alignment to agency and state strategic plan
- Basic funding information (source, availability and cost estimates)
- Anticipated timelines for the initiative
- Business benefit expectations

The form is located: <https://sps.gta.ga.gov/sites/projects/agency/default.aspx>

Notes:

Project Charter

The Project Charter is a document that outlines the project that will help the organization achieve its desired future state and how the project will be structured. Key components of the Project Charter include the following:

- A detailed statement of the business need and performance outcomes
- A description of the:
 - Project management structure
 - Project meeting structure
 - Issues resolution process
 - Change control process
 - Governance structure
 - Project organization chart
 - Risk plan

Notes:

Stage Deliverables Review Template

Documentation Review: Business Needs Statement		
Reviewer Name:		
Evaluation Criteria	Completeness	Comments
1. Description of the current state or 'as-is' processes and systems		
2. Description of the challenges with the current processes and systems		
3. Gap analysis which validates the opportunity to improve a business process or correct a deficiency related to a business need		
4. Need for the acquisition of key items to include hardware, software and services		
5. Business and Technical Requirements of the proposed solution(s)		
6. Security and data privacy considerations		
7. Impact of the change the proposed solution(s) will have on the organization		
8. Analysis of alternatives with pros, cons and recommendations for moving forward		
9. Detailed Business Case for the Investment to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project budget to include software, hardware, infrastructure, consultants, training and personnel. • Cost Justification and Return on Investment 		
Category	Description	Score
Completeness	1=incomplete deliverable or deliverable does not exist 2=deliverable needs to be more detailed 3= deliverable is complete	Click here to enter text.
Total Score		

Document Cross Reference Template

Reviewer Name: Click here to enter text.		
Documents to Cross Reference:		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Business Needs Statement 2. Agency Project Request 3. Project Charter 		
Items to Cross References	Consistency Score	Comments
1. Consistency in overall methodology for moving forward		
2. Gaps in functional and technical requirements		
3. Interdependencies between proposed requirements: business process, current software system version, hardware / software compatibilities		
4. Dependencies between timelines and business events		
5. Potential roadblocks due to organization structure		
6. Organizational gaps, impact of change and change management approach		
Category	Consistency	
Excellent	3 = Documents are consistent with one another with only minor gaps.	
Good	2 = Documents are consistent with one another with some gaps and omissions.	
Poor	1 = Documents are inconsistent with one another with major gaps and discrepancies.	
		Score

Step 4: Interview Key Participants

Who to Interview:

- Business Owner
- Strategic Planner
- Program Manager
- Information Security Officer
- Procurement Officer
- Budget/Finance Officer
- Representative from Oversight Agencies

Interview Questions

1. What are the business drivers/key objectives of this project?
2. What has been your process to get to this point in time?
3. What are your expectations?
4. How will you define and measure success?
5. How have similar initiatives in the past been handled? What was the result?
6. Is the agency/project team collaborating with any other agency?
7. Is there potential redundancy with any agency or SOG initiative?
8. Are you concerned that any key groups are not involved in the project at this point?
If so, who?
9. What is the current process for decision making? Who is accountable?
10. What issues and concerns do you have at this point in time?
11. What other events are occurring in the organization that may have an impact on this project?

Notes:

Key Participant Interview Template

Assessment #1	
Name:	Position:
Phone:	e-mail:
Date:	Time:
Question:	Response:
1. What are the business drivers of this initiative?	
2. What has been your process to get to this point in time?	
3. What are your expectations?	
4. How will you define and measure success?	
5. How have similar initiative in the past been handled? What was the result?	
6. Is the agency / project team collaborating with any other agency?	
7. Is there potential redundancy with any agency or SOG initiative?	
8. Are you concerned that any key groups are not involved in the project at this point? If so, who?	
9. What is the current process for decision making? Who is accountable?	
10. What issues and concerns do you have at this point in time?	
11. What other event are occurring in the organization that may have an impact on this project	
12. Other Questions	

Project Assessment Report Template

Project: Click here to enter text.	Reviewed by: Click here to enter text.	Date: Click here to enter text.
Assessment Process Summary Click here to enter text.		
Summarized Findings Click here to enter text.		
Project Management Click here to enter text. Issues / Areas of Concern Click here to enter text.		
Functional Areas Click here to enter text. Issues / Areas of Concern Click here to enter text.		
Technical Areas Click here to enter text. Issues / Areas of Concern Click here to enter text.		
Change Management Click here to enter text. Issues / Areas of Concern Click here to enter text.		

Project Assurance Assessment Report

Known Issues/Risks

Risk Description	Area of Risk	Impact	Probability of Occurrence
1. Click here to enter text.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
2. Click here to enter text.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
3. Click here to enter text.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
4. Click here to enter text.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
5. Click here to enter text.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
6. Click here to enter text.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
7. Click here to enter text.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
8. Click here to enter text.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
9. Click here to enter text.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
10. Click here to enter text.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

Recommendations:

Click here to enter text.

Case Study Exercise #1

Business Needs Statement Review

The State has initiated a project to implement an enterprise expense reimbursement system to automate the process for employee travel and expense reimbursements. The current process consists of a manual review of all expense reimbursements by the centralized payroll staff. Key executives believe implementing a web based system with automated approval reviews will improve the overall efficiency of the process and allow the payroll staff to focus on their core business operations.

The project is already underway and is currently in the **Design Phase**. Although all the project indicators are showing that the project is on track, the Steering Committee feels that something is not right and has asked you to conduct an assessment of the project and make recommendations for improvement.

Part 1

Read the Fictional Project Overview on pages 2-4 in the Project Case Study Supplement.

Part 2

Read the Statement of Business Need on pages 6-9 in the Case Study Supplement and evaluate the Statement of Business Need using the Deliverable Review Template on page 10.

Module 4

Stage 2: Invest/Plan

Project Stage Overview

In the Invest/Plan Stage, you still have your executives involved - they set the direction for the project. But now the project team is charged with finding and buying the software and services needed to implement the change.

By now the organization should have a project manager on the team and someone from the purchasing function. The project manager is interacting with both the business side as well as the technical side to make sure that all of the requirements are met.

In addition, the project team is putting together the project methodology, the project plan and the resource requirements, making the strategy more tactical resulting in a much bigger project organization comprised of technical, functional, change management and training project managers.

Potential Failure Points:

- Lack of top management commitment
- Unrealistic expectations
- Poor requirements definition
- Improper package selection
- Gaps between software and business requirements.
- Inadequate resources
- Underestimating time and costs
- Poor Project Management / Lack of Methodology

Notes:

Assessment Purpose:

To address the software and services selection; close the gaps between the proposed software and/or services and the business requirements; to ensure that there is a strong project management methodology in place; that the project has adequate resources and that the timeline and scope are realistic.

When to Conduct this Assessment:

The second intervention is conducted during the planning stage, towards the end of the vendor selection process, before vendors are finalized and negotiations begin.

What to Validate/Exit Criteria:

1. The full scope of the project has been adequately described in the Business Case and the high level requirements meet the business need.
2. Business Processes affecting the investment have been documented.
3. The Acquisition Plan has been approved by the Contracting Officer and there is obligated money for contract awards. All applicable contract clauses have been considered.
4. The Project Management Plan and component plans have been reviewed and appropriately updated. [This includes Risk Management, Acquisition Plan, Change Management, Configuration Management, Requirements Management, Communication Plan, WBS/Schedule, IV&V Planning, Quality Assurance, Records Management, Staff Development Plan, and Security Approach.]

Notes:

Project Assurance Assessment Process

Step 1: Conduct Expectations Meeting

Meeting Purpose: To set the expectations and timeline for the assessment.

Who Should Attend: Business Owner(s), Strategic Planner, Program Manager, Information Security Officer, Procurement Officer, Budget / Finance Officer, Representative from Oversight Agencies

Step 2: Review Stage Deliverables

The Acquisition Plan

A defined process for the procurement that outlines the all the steps in the procurement process which include:

- Requirements validation
- Consultation with procurement and/or legal
 - Identification of Service Level Agreement(s) (SLAs) and Memorandum(s) of Understanding (MOU) required for the project or procurement
- Consultation with Finance or Budget Officer
- Request for proposal development
- Vendor proposal evaluation process to include::
 - Response timeframe
 - Vendor demos & presentation
 - Site visits
 - Reference checks
- Vendor proposal scoring methodology for overall response (technical and financial)
- Final selection process and award notification

After all the procurement steps have been identified and the process flow has been developed, the procurement timeline should be established.

Notes:

Project Management Plan with Components

The Project Management Plan is a document that defines in detail how the project outlined in the project charter will be executed. The Project Management Plan includes the following:

- Accurate translation of the scope of the project from the contract/statement of work.
- High level timeline for implementation to include procurement, implementations and roll-out.
- Resource Requirements – (project team, consultants, additional FTE’s)
- Training required for the project team
- Work breakdown structure with multiple levels, activities and dependencies
- Project Management structure to include:
 - Meeting structure and issues resolution process
 - Change request process
 - Project governance structure, Quality Assurance and/or IV&V
 - Project organization chart
 - Risk assessment and mitigation plan
 - Records management
 - Security approach
- Approach for organizational change and training to set the structure for the project to include:
 - Stakeholder/Sponsorship Analysis
 - Change Impact Assessment
 - Communication Plan
 - Training and Support Plan

Notes:

Step 3: Cross Reference Stage Deliverables

Items to Cross References

1. Acquisition Plan and Supporting Documentation
2. Request for Proposal
3. Vendor Proposals, Contracts/Statements of Work
4. Project Management Plan with Components

What to Look For:

- Consistency within the RFP back to the requirements, timelines and costs outlined in the Statement of Business Need from the previous phase
- Gaps between the vendor proposals and the requirements requested in the RFP
- Changes in scope between the contract/statement of work and RFP
- Additional purchases, such as supporting software or hardware that will result from the selection of a particular vendor solution
- Ability of the organization to meet vendors proposed timeline
- Process for interviewing the vendor account managers or project team
- Transfer of scope, resources and timeline from Implementation Plan developed in the Strategy Phase
- Consistency between Project Charter and Detailed Project Plan
- Presence of all work streams as identified in the project charter and previous point in time assessments in the detailed project plan
- Integration of change management tasks into the detailed project plan

Notes:

Step 4: Interview Key Participants

Who to Interview

People relevant to the project including the: Business Owner, Strategic Planner, Program Manager, Information Security Officer, Procurement Officer, Budget/Finance Officer and Representative from Oversight Agencies

Interview Questions

1. Has an Alternatives Analysis been done to support the Business Case?
2. Are there any anticipated potential workforce disruptions, Labor Relations or Employee Relations issues associated with the project/investment?
3. Are there any potential workforce planning issues such as employee development and training, staffing levels, filling skill gaps with contractors, and/or A-76 activities associated with this project/investment?
4. Describe the procurement process to date?
5. How do you feel the process is going?
6. What are your impressions of the vendors/proposals?
7. What are your impressions of the project team?
8. Do you have past experience or relationships with any of these vendors?
9. Are there any key people missing from the procurement process?
10. What are your concerns moving forward?
11. What other event are occurring in the organization that may have an impact on this project?
12. How do you feel about the overall timeline?
13. What do you see as the impact of organization change?
14. How do you plan to address it?
15. Is project communication adequate?
16. Are decisions being made in a timely manner?

Notes:

Case Study Exercise #2

Request for Proposal Review and Cross Reference

Part 1

Read the Request for Proposal on pages 12-17 of the Case Study Supplement.

Part 2

Evaluate the Request for Proposal using the Deliverables Review Template on Page 18. Be sure to cross reference the information in the RFP with both the Business Needs Statement and the results of your evaluation of the Business Needs Statement.

Module 5

Stage 3: Design

Assessment Purpose:

The purpose of the fourth intervention is to ensure that: there are minimal gaps between the software and the business requirements, the organization understands the impact of the change and the project has adequate resources allocated to the project.

When to Conduct this Assessment:

Towards the end of the design phase after the initial drafts of the System Design Documentation have been developed.

What to Validate/Exit Criteria:

1. No outstanding concerns among stakeholders regarding design adequacy or feasibility
2. Design is adequately documented to allow effective and efficient development
3. Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery plans are adequately documented to provide clear procedures and responsibilities
4. Security Documents are as complete and accurate as possible
5. Variances from baselines have been identified and mitigated
6. The Project Management Plan and component plans have been reviewed and appropriately updated

Notes:

Project Assurance Assessment Process

Step 1: Conduct Expectations Meeting

Meeting Purpose: To set the expectations and timeline for the assessment.

Who Should Attend: Business Owner, Strategic Planner, Program Manager, Information Security Officer, Procurement Officer, Budget / Finance Officer and Representative from Oversight Agencies

Step 2: Review Stage Deliverables

System Design Document

- Fit-gap assessment of business requirements/processes to proposed solution to include plan for system configuration plan, required development, reports and interfaces
- Percentage of requirement gaps identified with priority and level of effort
- An overview of the entire hardware and software architecture and data design, including specifications for external interfaces
- All lower-level detailed design specifications of the Business Product, such as general system characteristics, the logical and physical data model, user interfaces, and business rules
- Requirements Traceability Matrix that describes how the system design will satisfy the functional, business, security, and technical specifications in the Requirements Document
- Definition of the release strategy
- Data conversion, interface and reporting strategy and design
- Change requests based on discovery conducted as part of design

Notes:

Business Continuity Plan

- The complete descriptions of the strategy and courses of action if there is a loss of use of the established business product (e.g., system) due to factors such as natural disasters or system or security failures
- Recovery time and recovery point objectives
- Backup procedures and responsibilities
- Post-disaster recovery procedures
- Validation that the business continuity/disaster recovery plans for all systems associated with this project/investment have been tested within the last 365 days

Test Plan

- Definition for all the types of tests (unit, functional, integration, system, security, performance (load and stress), user acceptance, and/or independent verification) that are to be carried out
- Test Case Specifications that describe the purpose and manner of each specific test, the required inputs and expected results for the test, step-by-step procedures for executing the test, and the Pass/Not Pass criteria for determining acceptance
- Description of the roles and responsibilities of individuals involved in the testing process and the traceability matrix
- Description of the resources needed for the hardware and software environments documented in the test plan

Operations and User’s Manual

- Identification and description of post go-live operations and procedures

Notes:

Step 3: Review Stage Deliverables

Documents to Cross References

1. System Design Document (Final)
2. Project Management Documents
3. Detailed Project Plan (Final)
4. Change Management and Training Plan (Draft)
5. Security Plan (Final)
6. Business Continuity Plan (Final)
7. Test Plan (Draft)
8. Operations and User’s Manual (Draft)

What to Look For:

- Indication that the percentage of software gaps equal the amount predicted in the procurement phase
- That the timeline for the design phase has been completed on time
- Additional scope has been added that will affect the development cycle
- Go-live date extension
- The resources listed in the project charter engaged in the project based on the original time commitment and are contributing to the project team
- Identification of dependencies between development, testing and training
- Identification of dependencies between development, testing and security/business continuity

Notes:

Step 4: Interview Key Participants

Who to Interview

People relevant to the project including the: Business Owner, Strategic Planner, Program Manager, Information Security Officer, Procurement Officer, Budget/Finance Officer and Representative from Oversight Agencies

Interview Questions

1. What are your concerns about the project?
2. Do you still feel that the overall timeline is reasonable?
3. What other events are occurring in the organization that may have an impact on this project?
4. Who is not engaged in the project that should be?
5. Based on the design session, do you see additional changes or impacts to the organization or users?
6. How do you plan to communicate change?
7. Are decisions being made in a timely manner?
8. Do you currently have a business continuity plan and when was the last time it was tested?
9. Are the contracts being fulfilled according to the award or approved changes?
10. Do you feel the budget is sufficient to meet the needs of the project? If not, do you have a contingency plan?
11. Have performance goal and project success criteria been developed and communicated? Do you anticipate any issues in meeting the goals?

Notes:

3. **Scope and Focus.** In many cases, key people in the design phase are often the same people who are going to be assisting with the testing and training. In the rollout, they are the ones who know the product, the business functionality and how the system needs to be configured to be effective within the organization. They are the validation input, the training input, and the message makers. In short, they are invaluable to your project's success.

- Who are your key people?
- Do you have enough key players?
- Are they overcommitted and causing bottlenecks?

Also, at the conclusion of this point in time assessment, it is appropriate to begin discussions about the go-live date. Ask yourself realistically, is it still in reach? Even if everything is on track, it's a good exercise to have these discussions so that they will not be taboo later in the project when they may be necessary.

Due to the 'disconnects' that occur during the design phase, be sure that scope, timeline, and resources are all in alignment. Because you have the Project Assurance structure in place, it is easier to communicate with the top level management with a dialog that lays out what is taking place and why that may extend the timeline of the project. At this point, you have everybody available that you need to solve the problem and there may be multiple solutions: resources can be added to the project, changes can be made to the go-live date or changes can be made to the scope of the system rollout in the form of a pilot or phased launch.

Notes:

Case Study Exercise #3

Project Plan Review and Cross Reference

Part 1

Read the Project Plan on pages 20-21 of the Case Study Supplement. Review the Project Plan for completeness based on:

1. The deliverables and processes outlined in the Enterprise Performance Lifecycle
2. The results of Exercises 1 & 2.

Part 2

List your findings and areas of concern on page 22 of the Case Study Supplement.

Module 6

Stage 4: Development

Test Plans and Reports

- A generally accepted methodology for testing that includes processes for unit testing, system testing, acceptance testing and performance testing
- Steps outlining the set-up of the testing environments/databases
- Finalization of the types of tests, the acceptance criteria for those tests, and the manner of testing
- Test plans, test cases, test files and/or test data defined and developed
- The evaluation of Performance Metrics
- Defect tracking and issue resolution process
- Documentation that acceptance testing been completed and the outcomes verify readiness for training and implementation
- A summary report created at the end of the test phases that completely documents the overall test results, including summarizing the test activities and describing variances including the identification of unexpected problems and/or defects that were encountered.

Training Plan and Schedule

- Description of the goals, learning objectives, and activities of the information that is to be provided to stakeholders who use and/or support the Software Product solution
- Complete and accurate documentation on the deployment of the Software Product
- Schedule of key communications, messages and delivery method for training and cut-over preparation
- Plan/schedule for the development of training materials
- A list of the required training classes, trainers and delivery methods
- A list of the users that need training

Notes:

Software Product

- The Software Product that results from the development effort satisfies the established requirements.
- If this is a software development effort, does the Software Product include the original source code, the binary executable, and the data repository?
- If this is a software development effort, has the developer transformed the logical information documented in the design phase and transformed it into source code?
- The necessary infrastructure and associated products have been acquired, configured, and integrated.
- The Software Product includes a Version Description Document that identifies and describes all configuration items that comprise a specific build or release of the Software Product.
- Static code has been analyzed to identify security vulnerabilities.
- A Validation Readiness Review has been conducted to provide assurance that the software that is about to enter system testing has completed a thorough unit/module/software integration test.

Operations and Maintenance Manual

- Description of the Software Product and the production environment.
- The information necessary for the operations, help desk and support staff, to effectively handle routine production processing, ongoing maintenance, and identified problems, issues, and/or change requests

Notes:

User Manual

- An explanation of how to use the established Software Product from a business function perspective

Security Risk Assessment

- A formal risk assessment including the analysis of the security functional requirements and the identification of the protection requirements
- Identification of all threats to and vulnerabilities in the information system; the potential impact that a loss of confidentiality, integrity, or availability would have and the identification and analysis of security controls

Implementation Plan

- Implementation Plan describes how the Software Product will be installed, deployed, and transitioned into the operational environment

Organizational Readiness Assessment

- Detailed cutover plan to include schedule and resources for go-live weekend
- Plan for end users support for cut-over and transition period

SLA's / MOU's

- Draft Service Level Agreement(s) (SLAs) and Memorandum(s) of Understanding (MOU) specifying each party's requirements, responsibilities and period of performance including performance guarantees

Notes:

Step 3: Cross Reference Stage Deliverables

Items to Cross References

1. Project Management Documents and Project Plan
2. Test Plans and Reports
3. Training Plan and Schedule
4. Software Product
5. Operations and Maintenance Annual
6. User Manual
7. Security Risk Assessment
8. Implementation Plan
9. Organizational Readiness Assessment
10. SLA's/MOU's

What to Look For:

- Any outstanding development items that are preventing testing and/or training from moving forward
- Dependencies that will prevent the system to be ready for the development of training materials
- Alignment between the timelines for communication
- Any significant defects, security concerns or show stoppers

Notes:

Step 4: Interview Key Project Team Members and Stakeholders

Who to Interview

People relevant to the project including the: Business Owner, Strategic Planner, Program Manager, Information Security Officer, Procurement Officer, Budget/Finance Officer and Representative from Oversight Agencies

Interview Questions

1. What are your concerns about the project?
2. Do you still feel the overall timeline is reasonable?
3. What other events are occurring in the organization that may have an impact on this project?
4. What are other opportunities to communicate change to the organization? What has worked well in the past?
5. Who is not engaged in the project that should be?
6. Based on the testing session, do you see additional changes or impacts to the organization/users?
7. How do you plan to communicate changes?
8. Are decisions being made in a timely manner?
9. As a result of the Development activities, do any of approved change requests for the project require modification in cost, schedule, scope, resources, or acquisition planning?

Notes:

Case Study Exercise #4

Interview Evaluation and Cross Reference

Part 1

On pages 24-26 of the Case Study Supplement, review the results of your interviews with the following project stakeholders:

- Tim Johnson, Director of Finance
- Sallie Jeffries, Software Vendor Project Manager
- Dale Barnes, IT Director

Part 2

1. Cross reference the interviews to each other and list your areas of concern on page 27 of the Case Study Supplement.
2. Cross reference the interviews to your results of Exercises 1-3 and list any additional areas of concern on page 27 of the Case Study Supplement.

Module 7

Stage 5: Deploy

Project Assurance Assessment Process

Step 1: Conduct Expectations Meeting

Meeting Purpose: *To set the expectations and timeline for the fifth assessment.*

Who Should Attend: : Business Owner, Strategic Planner, Program Manager, Information Security Officer, Procurement Officer, Budget / Finance Officer and Representative from Oversight Agencies

Step 2: Review Stage Deliverables

Project Management Documents and Project Plan

- Status Reports, Issue Logs, Risk Assessment/Mitigation Plan
- Critical issues or items of concerns
- Any risks that have a potential of being realized
- Plan performance on schedule, percent complete and ability to complete
- Changes to the go-live date and timeline
- Resources availability and utilization by the projects
- Level of effort and timeline for the development phase
- Project Acceptance Documentation

SLA's / MOU's

- Service Level Agreement(s) (SLAs) and Memorandum(s) of Understanding (MOU) specify each party's requirements, responsibilities and period of performance including performance guarantees

Notes:

Module 8

Stage 6: Operate

Project Stage Overview

The outcome of the Operations Stage is the successful operation of the investment against the current costs, schedule and performance benchmarks. At some point in the lifecycle of the investment, when the annual operational analysis indicates that the investment should be terminated to reduce cost-effectiveness in operations, changes in business requirements, changes in technology or that investment’s planned retirement date arrives a decision is made to dispose of the investment.

Assessment Purpose:

To ensure the continual operation and maintenance of the system and evaluate the continued investment in the system/technology.

When to Conduct this Assessment:

Annually. Beginning approximately one year after go-live.

What to Validate/Exit Criteria:

- 1. Annual review of the operation provides a framework for deciding what enhancements or modifications are needed or whether the Software Product should be replaced or disposed of.
- 2. Documentation and the training programs include input from stakeholders.
- 3. Variances from baselines have been identified and mitigated.
- 4. The Project Management Plan and component plans have been reviewed and appropriately updated.

Notes:

Project Assurance Assessment Process

Step 1: Conduct Expectations Meeting

Meeting Purpose: To set the expectations and timeline for the second assessment.

Who Should Attend: Business Owner(s), Strategic Planner, Program Manager, Information Security Officer, Procurement Officer, Budget/Finance Officer, Representative from Oversight Agencies

Step 2 - Review Stage Deliverables

Annual Operational Analysis

- A review of the EPMO evaluation and the performance metrics during operation to determine whether the Software Product is meeting original user requirements.
- List of new requirements or changes.
- A plan to analyze alternatives for deciding on new functional enhancements and/or modifications to the Software Product, or the need to dispose of or replace the Software Product altogether?
- Evaluation of system performance, user satisfaction with the system, adaptability to changing business needs or new technologies that might improve the system.

Disposition Plan

- Description of how the components of the operating Software Product will be handled at the completion of operations to ensure proper disposition of all the components and to avoid disruption of the individuals and/or any other Software Products impacted by the disposition
- An end of life security plan of the Software Product
- Methods for the deliberate and systematic decommissioning of the Software Product with appropriate consideration of records management

Notes:

Step 3: Cross Reference Stage Deliverables

Documents to Cross References: n/a

Step 4: Interview Key Project Team Members and Stakeholders

Who to Interview

People relevant to the project including the: Business Owner, Strategic Planner, Program Manager, Information Security Officer, Procurement Officer, Budget / Finance Officer and Representative from Oversight Agencies

Interview Questions

1. What are your concerns about the system?
2. Do any of the approved change requests for this project/investment require a modification in the financial analysis?
3. Do measurement indicators support the performance measures agreed upon?
4. Are contingency plan test dates for all systems associated with this project/investment within the last 365 days?
5. Is continuous security monitoring of selected controls conducted on an ongoing basis to ensure that maintenance patches and enhancements have not introduced any vulnerabilities?
6. Have the Operations Manual, Business Case Analysis, and Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery Plan been updated as required?
7. Looking back, what would you have done differently?

Notes:

Module 9

Stage 7: Disposition

Project Assurance Assessment Process

Step 1: Conduct Expectations Meeting

Meeting Purpose: To set the expectations and timeline for the second assessment.

Who Should Attend: Business Owner(s), Strategic Planner, Program Manager, Information Security Officer, Procurement Officer, Budget / Finance Officer, Representative from Oversight Agencies

Step 2: Review Stage Deliverables

Disposition Plan

- Description of how the components of the operating Business Product will be handled at the completion of operations to ensure proper disposition of all the components and to avoid disruption of the individuals and/or any other Business Products impacted by the disposition
- An end of life security plan of the Business Product
- Methods for the deliberate and systematic decommissioning of the Business Product with appropriate consideration of records management

Archives

1. Plan to preserve vital information including documentation of project execution and the data from the production system
2. Lessons Learned

Step 3: Cross Reference Stage Deliverables

Documents to Cross References: n/a

Notes:

Case Study Exercise #5

Determining Findings and Recommendations

Part 1

1. Review the results of Exercise 1 -4.
2. Using the Project Assurance Status Report Template on Page 29 of the Case Study Supplement
 - A. Complete Section 1 by providing an Overview of the Assessment Process
 - B. List your findings for Issues/Areas of Concern for the following sections:
 - I. Section 3: Project Management
 - II. Section 4: Functional Areas
 - III. Section 5: Technical Areas
 - IV. Section 6: Change Management
 - C. Summarize your findings in Section 2

Part 2

1. Based on the results of your Project Assurance Assessment, make your recommendations to improve the project's odds of success on page 30 of the Case Study Supplement

Module 10:

How to Intervene

Overview

The final stage of the Project Assurance process is to intervene. The Project Assurance process outlines **how** to intervene by presenting the findings of the assessment and working with the project team to develop an implementation plan to address the findings.

Project Assurance Assessment Process



Attributes and Behaviors and the Intervention Process

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to know that how you deal with people in difficult situations can be the most important component in project success. So far, you've learned about the critical intervention points and the point in time assessments that outline **when** to step in and **what** to look for at each step along the way. In this section, we'll take a look at the art of the intervention – or the **how** – in the form of the attributes and behaviors of a successful interventionist as well as processes you can use for conducting project interventions.

Notes:

The Attributes of the Interventionist

A successful interventionist has critical behavioral attributes that, when practiced together generate intelligent oversight and project synchronicity.

An interventionist is: objective, analytical, strategic and diplomatic

Attributes of an Interventionist

Objective	Analytic
Diplomatic	Strategic

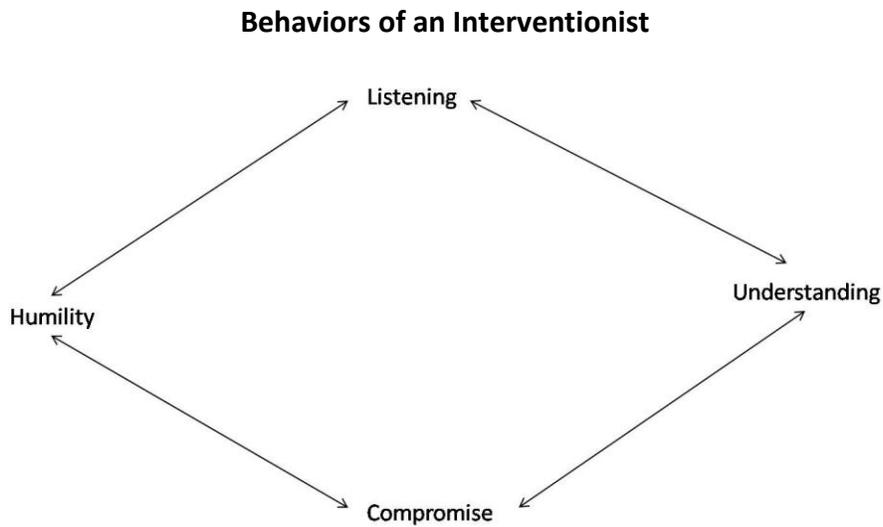
Prinzo, Rob. (2010). No Wishing Required: The Business Case for Project Assurance

Notes:

On Becoming an Interventionist – Behaviors

By now you know what a fan I am of ‘how’ things are done. The successful interventionist will master personal behaviors in order to achieve the desired goal: listening, seeking to understand, humility and compromise. Within the context of the four behaviors is their interrelationship. There is no hard stop to one behavior before another begins. For example, in seeking to understand an issue, you must listen well and carefully to what is said – and not said. In approaching a compromise, you need to disarm the natural oppositional response of resisting interference with humility.

This diagram shows the interrelationships of four interventionist behaviors that I believe will net you the greatest return: listening, understanding, compromise, and humility.

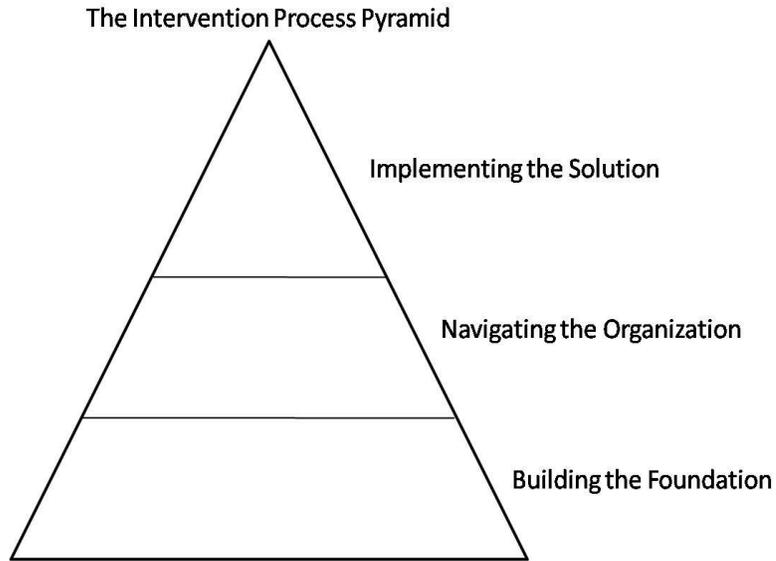


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Notes:

The Intervention Processes

Now that we have discussed the successful attributes and behaviors of the interventionist, we can outline the process for communicating project issues, building consensus and implementing solutions. The intervention process pyramid has three layers: building the foundation, navigating the organization and implementing the solution.



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Notes:

Navigating the Organization

Identify the Decision Making Process and Sources of Power

Here is a very effective (and possibly familiar) process for determining how decisions are made:

1. **Start with the obvious.** As simple as it may sound, start with information contained in the project documents such as the needs assessment, project plan or charter. These documents should contain at a minimum: the definition of project team members roles and responsibilities, the organization chart, issue resolution process and project governance structure.
2. **Validate the information through observations and interviews.** Ask questions such as “Can you make that decision?” “Who made that decision?” “What is that person’s role?” Once decision makers start to emerge, ask questions to determine whom the influencers are, such as “Whose advice does the decision maker seek?” or “What is their process for gathering information?”
3. **Observe how decisions are made.** As part of the assessment, attend a project governance meeting or steering committee meeting. Observe the process and communication patterns of the executives. For some organizations, such as vendors or consulting firms, the process is easy to assess, as there is usually just one person in charge of the account. Inside of an organization, the decision making power will be harder to diagnose.

Notes:

After you have determined the sources of power, it is a good idea to rate the project team members based on their role in the decision making process, the strength of your relationship with each team member and their accessibility. Rating the team members on these criteria will help in developing a strategy for communicating your findings.

Each project team member should be rated according to the following criteria:

Decision Role

- Decision Maker
- Influencer
- Champion
- Negative Influence
- Team Member/Contributor

Relationship Rating

- Strong
- Moderate
- Weak

Accessibility

- Easily Accessible
- Accessible
- Un-accessible

Notes:

Conducting Mini-Briefings

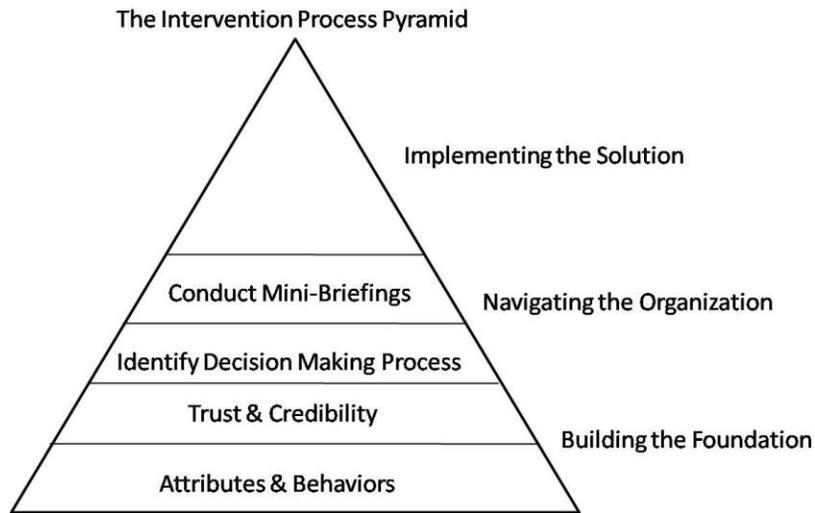
The mini-briefing can be a scheduled event or informal conversation where the interventionist provides an overview of the assessment and the potential recommendations. This pre-discussion serves several purposes:

1. **No surprises.** People have an opportunity to be prepared for a difficult discussion if necessary.
2. **Validate your findings.** It is possible that you may have misinterpreted or have been given incorrect information. If either is the case, then you will save yourself from an embarrassing situation and keep your credibility intact by validating your position ahead of time.
3. **Provide an opportunity to fix a problem.** Often times, executives may be unaware of a particular issue and the fix may be relatively simple. By providing them an opportunity to fix a problem, you are saving them from a potentially uncomfortable situation while building trust with that individual.
4. **Provide an opportunity to start thinking.** Whether it's about potential solutions or digesting your recommendations, getting everyone on the same page ahead of time helps when you get a group of executives together. If potential solutions are complicated, it is good for people to think through them before a meeting. It helps everyone to understand the solution and determine the pros and cons, preventing rash decisions that may be pressured by an executive in a position of power.

Notes:

Implementing the Solution

The final stage of the intervention process is implementing the solution. By this time, you have built the foundation consisting of trust and credibility and navigated the organization by determining the decision-making process. Next, you've validated your findings through the mini-briefings. Now it is time to assemble the project team and sponsors in order to present your findings and develop the action plan for solution implementation.



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Notes:

Negotiate Solutions

The final part of solution implementation is to negotiate solutions. It is probable that all of your recommendations will not be accepted or possible, given the parameters of the project. The key is to gain consensus that your findings have created legitimate concerns and need to be addressed. Any number of reasons – time, budgets or politics – may prevent the implementation of the solution as you see it. Therefore it is important to work with the executive team to (at an absolute minimum) acknowledge the risk, but ideally, to find alternative solutions to project issues. The solutions should be documented, added to the project plan or action item log and reviewed at the next point in time assessment.

The following are several tips and techniques used in successful negotiations:

- Don't Assume – Ask
- Ask for the whole list
- Look for variables
- Stay neutral, stick to facts
- Pitch high
- Trade, don't concede
- Don't agree to separate parts
- Ask "what if" questions

Notes:

In addition it is also important to understand both your negotiating style as well as the negotiating style of the people that you are negotiating with. Below are some of the common negotiating styles:

Module 10: How to Intervene

Summary

The Intervention Process Pyramid does a nice job depicting the process of communicating project issues, building consensus and implementing solutions. Built on a solid foundation of attributes and behaviors, we can see not only the traits of a successful interventionist, but also the process required to be successful as well. In summary, the four attributes – objectivity, analytical, diplomatic and strategic – work together with the four behaviors – listening, understanding, humility and compromise – to build the foundation for trust and credibility.

Trust and credibility help the interventionist ask the tough questions and observe the behaviors to navigate the organization, mapping the decision making process and conducting the mini-briefings. Successful organizational navigations create the collaborative environment necessary for group communication and negotiations.

The Intervention Process Pyramid



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Case Study Exercise #6

Conducting an Intervention

Part 1

Review the Project Team Relationship Rating Criteria on page 32 of the Case Study Supplement.

Part 2

Based on the relationship ratings, determine a high level strategy to communicate your findings and recommendations. On page 33 of the Case Study Supplement, outline your strategy for communicating with the following people:

1. Dale Barnes, IT Director
2. Tim Johnson, Finance Director | Project Sponsor
3. Mary Potts, CIO | Project Sponsor
4. Adam Bell, VP Vendor | Project Sponsor