



Project Management Organization's Methodology

Tina Montgomery; *EPC Group.net*
PMO Director, SharePoint Architect

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Inefficiencies and uncertainties are a broad range of burdens that a project can face during planning and implementation for organizations of all types and sizes. In order to alleviate the harmful consequences, the Project Management Organization (PMO) utilizes a phased approach to deliver projects on time, budget, and within scope, as well as to ensure quality, for the purpose of guaranteeing ample returns for the client's investment. Every project follows the following phases: Initiation, Planning, Execution, Control, and Closure. Throughout each one of these phases, deliverables are given to the client and stored on EPC Group's Project Web Access intranet page. The benefits are not only realized to the client, but also to the organization who is implementing the project in the form of consistent behavior across projects and greater precision, returns to scale, efficiency on customer delivery and increased customer satisfaction, and symbiotic organizations. This white paper discusses the ATLAS Project Management methodology and how an organization and its clients can gain from its consistent use in project planning and implementation.

PROJECT INEFFICIENCIES AND UNCERTAINTIES

Whenever a project begins, every organization faces a slew of potential problematic issues: time delays, exceeding budgets, bureaucratic hurdles, and unplanned resource necessities. These are only a few of the complexities that may arise as possible negative consequences of project development and implementation. With these complications come the potential damaging effects of increased life-spans of projects, financial burdens, or even the decline in a company's reputation with future clients.

In response, inefficiencies and uncertainties are among the areas that an organization must attempt to eliminate by astute adherence to the principles of economics and proactive risk management. The basic mission of economics is to properly allocate resources, time, and funds most efficiently. Meanwhile, risk management attempts to minimize the uncertainties that can emerge unexpectedly. A proper framework to handle these harmful consequences becomes a prerequisite for any project implementation.

The framework has to ensure also that all the stakeholders within the project have a designated role. Furthermore, it must be truly integrated as to where interdependencies are created and maintained amongst the stakeholders. As a final point, all projects must be delivered according to certain constraints: scope, time, and cost. These parameters form together and are dynamic in nature. When one changes, it directly affects the others. For instance, exceeding the time constraints may mean increased cost and reduced scope. Each time this occurs, the quality of delivery, which is encapsulated by the three constraints, is affected.

The pictorial representation below illustrates this concept:



A Project Management team must take in to consideration these three constraints and other issues aforementioned when confronting project planning and implementation.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION'S ATLAS METHODOLOGY

As a service to its clients, EPC Group manages its projects by utilizing the Project Management ATLAS Methodology, a standardized best practices approach defined through real world best project management practices. Every project follows the project management life cycle outlined below:



- **Initiation:** During this first stage, the project is defined, how the project will be managed is determined, and the timetable of when the deliverables will be completed is identified. The Statement of Work is signed, Scope and High Level Requirements are defined, and the Project Manager (PM) is chosen.
- **Planning:** Project Planning includes the tasks required to produce a valid and attainable project schedule. This schedule contains the activities necessary to fulfill the requirements characterized in the Initiation phase, based upon the best solution recommended. Required resources are identified, confirmed, and assigned to the tasks with estimates of labor effort. Additionally, critical technical resources are identified, estimated, and incorporated into the schedule as well for acquisition and installation purposes.
 - Supporting plan definitions are also completed during the planning phase of the project. These include defining the communication plans, escalation procedures, change management plans, etc.
- **Execution:** The implementation begins with an initial kick-off of the project in which all team members are briefed on the objectives of the project, the methodology to be employed, the procedures to be followed, the project schedule, and each individual's roles and responsibilities.
- **Control:** Project plan and procedures are monitored and measured to spot variances from the plan. Controlling also includes taking preventative actions in anticipation of possible problems, including issue and risk management, holding weekly status meetings, and collecting resource actual hours worked.
- **Closure:** Conducting project closure meetings, finalizing project closure reports and archiving artifacts.

Phase End Assessments/Reviews: Phase end assessments/reviews are performed with the client to review all deliverables within a phase and to determine if the project is a go or no go to the next phase.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT DELIVERABLES

In addition to the phase objectives, Project Management deliverables are expected throughout the lifecycle as tangible evidence of the status of the project. All project documentation will be stored on the Project Workspace Site within EPC Group's intranet. Below is a list of deliverables that are expected during each phase of the project:

- **Initiation:** During the initiation of the project, the SOW is signed and a project manager is assigned.
- **Planning:** During the Planning Phase, a Project Definition Document is created to house all initiation and planning deliverables. This document is reviewed and approved by the client prior to the kick-off of the project. The project schedule milestones and controlling procedures are maintained within this document as well.
- **Execution:** The project kick-off will be performed with project team members to ensure consistent communication and understanding of the project objectives, expectations, and processes.

- Kick-off presentation and all supporting documentation are delivered.
- **Control:** During the Control phase, the project will be monitored in various areas.
 - **Weekly Status Meetings:** Status meetings will be held with the project team and key stakeholders to track and communicate project status and progress.
 - Agenda
 - Meeting Minutes
 - Action Items
 - **Project Status Report:** A formal project status report will be provided to the stakeholders on a weekly basis.
 - **Collection of Actual Hours expended on the project task:** Hours are logged by the resources directly into Enterprise Project Management (EPM). Once the PM approves the hours, they are applied to the project schedule and, then, will assess the impact and maintenance of the schedule to keep the project on track.
 - **Risk and Issue Management:** All issues and risks are tracked in the Project Workspace and are also covered in the weekly status meetings.
 - **Change Management:** All changes to the project will follow the defined Change Management process and will be tracked in the Project Workspace. All changes to the project must be approved by the Change Control Board.
- **Closure:** Once all deliverables have been completed and sign-off has been obtained from the client, the project will move into a project closure state. Surveys are sent to the project team members and stakeholders to gather information needed.
 - **Conduct Closure Meeting:** During the closure meeting lessons learned are gathered and project statistics are shared with the team.
 - **Closure Report:** All final project information and statistics are documented in this report and are provided to the client, as well as archived with all project documentation in the Project Workspace site.

POSITIVE PROJECT DELIVERY

EPC Group's employment of this roadmap for the promotion of our customers' projects has led to numerous instances of the benefits outlined in the time, cost, scope, and quality figure. The following are a few accounts of where the PMO ATLAS Methodology has ensured the best results to guarantee customer satisfaction:

- **Efficient Time Management:** In a case involving a branch of the U.S. Military, a delay in obtaining hardware occurred as a result of the client. Owing to efficient time management and scheduling, the Project Management was able to change task logic and overlap a few activities that would allow the project to be kept on track for delivery. Because of this effort, EPC Group was able to get the environment in and system in for User Acceptance Testing (UAT), as scheduled. The client was satisfied, and no commitments were missed.
- **Cost-Effectiveness:** By tracking the actual hours spent and cost on the U.S. Military branch's project, the Project Manager has been able to determine also that the project is under budget. In doing so, this has allowed EPC Group to work with the client to meet some special reporting needs that were requested that still were in scope. The expectations of the client were exceeded.
- **Staying within the Scope of the Project:** On a project involving a biotherapeutic company, the client determined that international site visits were necessary to gain buy-in on the project requirements; therefore, a change request was submitted to add these to the project schedule. These were in scope as defined in the project. However, the change in the requirement impacted the overall timeline of the project and would cause significant impacts to all project milestones. During these discussions, the client decided they wanted to add additional functionality to the defined project and these were not in scope. The client was informed that these additional items could be done. A

Change Request would have to be submitted though, and the timeline and cost would increase due to these request. After seeing the impacts, the client then agreed to hold the items and continue with the defined scope and would add these items as future enhancements at a later date.

- **Quality Delivery:** On the same biotherapeutic company, we have phase end and deliverable reviews to ensure we have quality products that are being delivered. At the end of each phase, the client and EPC Group review all the deliverables, schedules and state of the project. From this review lessons learned are applied and go/no go decisions are made. For each major deliverable internal reviews are conducted and then final reviews are conducted with the client to ensure quality. The client provides signs off before moving on to the next phase. This ensures quality and customer expectations are being met. In addition to these activities, a requirements matrix is developed to track all requirements from beginning to end that way we can ensure all requirements have been met, and tested. At the end of the project, there is a closure meeting where all project lessons learned are documented and stored for next project review.

CONCLUSION

With the utilization of the Project Management Organization (PMO) ATLAS Methodology, an organization can realize the benefits of efficient time management, cost-effectiveness, and staying within the defined scope of the project, while ensuring quality delivery, as evidenced by the preceding anecdotes. By following the phases outlined, an organization not only reduces the inefficiencies and uncertainties that could result, but also benefits their own organizations, as well. The following are more potential resultants:

- **Consistent behavior across projects and greater precision:** All projects will follow the same methodology, so a cross-sectional analysis of the aggregate projects can be made to determine where improvements can be made. If one phase lags consistently behind the others; then it is possible to mend the imperfections.
- **Returns to scale:** As is the case with greater efficiency, the project management methodology leads to greater returns to scale on the delivery process to customers. Each successive implementation achieves greater precision to the delivered product and lowering the opportunity costs associated with the implementation to the organization and client.
- **Efficiency on customer delivery and increased customer satisfaction:** The streamlining of the PMO ATLAS Methodology allows for organizations to deliver highly efficient results to its customers without extreme variation as a result from increased returns to scale, meaning consistency and continued/increasing customer satisfaction.
- **Symbiotic organizations:** One consequence of the methodology not usually touched upon is an organization that works as one to achieve the optimal results for its clients. The interrelatedness between stakeholders and the phases of the methodology enforces that each individual must react to changes and collaborate with one another within the organization to conform to these changes; thus, project delivery is at its most efficient.