

# Developing a Project Management Best Practice

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Session PSD02



PMI®  
Global Congress  
NORTH AMERICA 2009

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# Agenda

- Overview
- Case Study: School District
  - Background
  - Developing a Project Management Mindset
  - Developing Roles, Competencies and Assessing Skills
  - Strategic Learning and Mentoring Plans
  - Knowledge Base Support
  - Progress and Next Steps
- Summary



# What is a Project Management Best Practice

- A best practice is an idea that asserts that there is a unique method or process – through research and application – that is more effective at delivering a particular outcome than any other technique, method or process. - Wikipedia definition; businessdictionary.com
- A best practice is an optimal way currently recognized by industry to achieve a stated goal or objective. - OPM3® Overview, PMI®, Page 9



# Why Establish a Project Management Best Practice

- Consistent practices enable organizations to:
  - Effectively manage project resources
  - Align projects to strategic goals
  - Better track and report on project progress
- Overall...reduce the time and money spent on ensuring projects are a success



# Prepare the Organization

- Communicate the value add to the organization for establishing a project management best practice
- Develop a team of champions to help in the promotion of the initiative



# Case Study: School District Background

- Working on projects was not easy
- School board involvement
- Best practice from a School District's perspective
  - Tools and templates
  - Develop project plans
  - Report on project status
  - Share information



# Case Study: School District Develop a PM Mindset

- Teacher meetings were held to discuss:
  - Value of a developing a best practice
  - Benefits to the teachers and to the district
  - Sharing of ideas from teachers
  - Tie back to previous training sessions and success already being realized



# Case Study: School District Develop a PM Mindset (cont.)

- Executive overviews were provided to administrators and principals
  - Focus on results of ROI study of pilot training program
  - Presentations by board members



# Case Study: School District Develop Roles

- Project management roles are informal
  - First and foremost: teachers
- Need for:
  - Project Leaders
  - Project Team Members
  - Project Administrators
- Project Manager role always Administrator



# Case Study: School District Develop Competencies

- Competencies developed for each role
  - Project manager
  - Project leader
  - Project team member
  - Project administrator



# Case Study: School District Develop Competencies

- Project Manager
  - Risk management
  - Strategic project planning
  - Resource allocation
  - Budgeting
  - Negotiating
  - Communications
  - Relationship management
- Project Leader
  - Resource management
  - Influencing
  - Communications
  - Team leadership
  - Managing budgets
  - Time management
  - Problem solving



# Case Study: School District Develop Competencies

- Project Team Members
  - Influencing
  - Communications
  - Time management
  - Team work
  - Assertiveness
- Project Administrators
  - Scheduling
  - Time management
  - Communications
  - Team work



# Case Study: School District Assess Skills of Individuals

- Assess against the competencies
- Data from past projects
- Data from basic 5-day training program
- One-on-one interviews
- Small group interviews



# Case Study: School District Strategic Learning & Development Plan

- Baseline: 5-day Basics of Project Management Program – *COMPLETE*
- Additional training based on specific role on projects
  - Negotiating
  - Influencing skills
  - Team management



# Case Study: School District Formal Mentoring Program

- Partner with external organizations
  - Individuals with project management experience
- Partner with Board members
  - Past and current – with project management experience



# Case Study: School District Portal: Knowledge Base

- Microsoft SharePoint® site to share information
  - Tools/templates/processes
  - Best practices knowledge base
  - Listing of all project resources – internal and external
  - Track project status
  - Maintain project schedules and budgets
  - Track available resources and resource allocation
  - Examples of completed project plans



# Case Study: School District Progress and Next Steps

- Portal is a collaboration/information sharing forum
- Re-assessed progress at 3, 6 and 9 months to determine additional needs/adjustments necessary



# Summary

- Define what “best practice” means to the organization
- Remember that communication is key in rolling out a successful best practice
- Measure progress frequently – show small successes to keep everyone moving in the right direction
- Remember you will make changes – be flexible