

Project Management

How Much Project Management?

Project management is the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities to meet project requirements. This is accomplished by using tools, & techniques, such as project planning, risk and issue management, communication, etc. These can all be applied with varying degrees of rigor depending on project demands.

In order for projects to be successful, it is important for the team to follow best practice management processes and complete associated documentation with the degree of rigor that best promotes successful achievement of objectives. Classifying work efforts assists in determining an appropriate level of documentation and management rigor to apply to such efforts.

Follow the steps below to classify your work according to the diagram. This classification process is iterative and may change throughout the effort's lifecycle.

1. Identify risk levels
2. Identify complexity levels OR dollar/budget size
3. Using data identified above, estimate where on the Classification Diagram the effort falls
4. Based on where the effort falls on the diagram, complete the appropriate documentation and apply the appropriate level of management rigor

EXAMPLES OF RISK AREAS

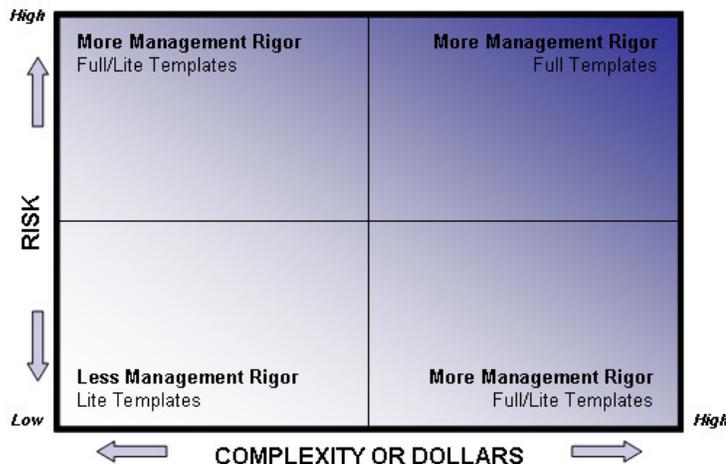
- Legal Risk
- Budget Risk
- Scope Risk
- Resource Risk

Characteristics of High Risk Efforts:

- A similar effort has not yet been completed successfully
- The effort has strict time or budget constraints
- The effort is utilizing/implementing new technology

Characteristics of Low Risk Efforts:

- A similar effort has been completed successfully within the last year
- The effort has sufficient time and budget to complete the required work
- The team is knowledgeable in the areas needed to successfully complete the work



As an example, the diagram above uses risk and complexity or dollars as determinants of rigor. The diagram illustrates that the greater the risk, complexity, or dollar/budget value, the greater degree of management and documentation rigor should be applied. Note that such classifications should only be treated as guidelines. Managers, in collaboration with project teams and within policy requirements, are responsible for determining the most appropriate levels of management and documentation rigor to best promote success.

EXAMPLES OF COMPLEXITY AREAS

- Number of partners
- Number of resources
- Number of implementation sites
- Effort Scope

Characteristics of High Complexity Efforts:

- The effort is large in scope, size, or timeframe
- The effort encompasses and/or crosses multiple CDC areas or is external to the CDC
- The effort has a large number of stakeholders



Characteristics of Low Complexity Efforts:

- The effort is small in scope, size, or timeframe
- The effort has sufficient time and budget to complete the required work
- The effort has a limited number of stakeholders

BEST PRACTICES FOR CLASSIFICATION

The more risky, complex, or expensive an effort is the more documentation and management rigor may be required. To what level rigor is applied should be at the discretion of the manager. However, when in doubt as to what level of rigor is appropriate, in most cases, more is always better.

What about Fast Track Projects? A fast track project is one that is initiated outside normal agency processes to meet a critical agency need in a very compressed timeframe, as approved by senior leadership. An example of such a project would be an emergency outbreak response.

Fast track projects often begin with little time to apply best practice approaches. As a result, management rigor becomes exponentially more important as under such extreme circumstances it is often acceptable to sacrifice documentation rigor in lieu of quicker deliveries. By default, doing so also increases risk.

The degree of documentation rigor applied may be less or more than recommended levels and should be applied as needed, at the discretion of the project manager. Fast track projects may start with less documentation or Lite templates and then eventually move to full templates with more detail documented and management rigor applied, as needed.

Upon project completion, best practice close-out activities should include finalizing documentation that there wasn't time to complete during the fast track effort. This additional information would then be included in the scope of topics examined during lessons learned analysis and knowledge gained applied to further the success of future efforts.

For more information about how much project management, the Project Management Community of Practice or the CDC UP please visit the CDC Unified Process website at <http://www.cdc.gov/cdcup/>. ■

Project Management Community of Practice

- **May 18, 2012**
Cloud Computing at CDC
- **June 22, 2012**
Project Change Management
- **July 27, 2012**
PM Best Practices – A Panel Discussion
- **August 24, 2012**
Enterprise Performance Life Cycle (EPLC)
- **September 28, 2012**
A Conversation with CDC Policy Leadership
- **October 26, 2012**
The Value of Alternative Analysis
- **December 07, 2012**
Managing Risk

For more information on the Project Management Community of Practice visit the PMCoP website at <http://www2.cdc.gov/cdcup/library/pmcop/> ■

CDC Unified Process Presentations

The CDC UP offers a short overview presentation to any CDC employee and/or contractor group. Presentations are often performed at your facility, on a day of the week convenient for your group, and typically take place over lunch structured as one hour lunch-and-learn style meeting.

Contact the CDC Unified Process at cdcup@cdc.gov or visit <http://www.cdc.gov/cdcup> to arrange a short overview presentation for your group. ■

Contact the CDC Unified Process

The CDC Unified Process Project Management Newsletter is authored by Daniel Vitek, MBA, PMP and published by the Office of Surveillance, Epidemiology, and Laboratory Services.

For questions about the CDC UP, comments regarding this newsletter, suggestions for future newsletter topics, or to subscribe to the CDC UP Project Management Newsletter please contact the CDC UP at cdcup@cdc.gov

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