CORE CONCEPT

Project Governance and Improving Project Delivery Performance

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Technical depth: Practitioner · **Practical mode:** Case study

Introduction

Organisations approve projects on optimistic estimates, then govern them through status meetings that report green until the budget or deadline is already lost. Sponsors are unclear about the decisions they own, boards review activity rather than evidence, and the same causes of delay recur from one project to the next. This Core Concept course equips managers to design project governance that surfaces problems early and to raise delivery rates across a portfolio using recognised standards and forecasting methods. Participants work on case material from several sectors and leave with a Project Governance and Delivery Improvement Plan for their own organisation.

Course Objectives

- Measure current delivery performance and establish a baseline of schedule, cost and scope outcomes
- Design project governance structures, roles and decision rights aligned to ISO 21505 and PRINCE2
- Set tolerances, escalation routes and reporting that expose slippage before it becomes irrecoverable
- Improve estimate reliability using reference class forecasting and independent estimate challenge
- Diagnose recurring causes of late and over-budget delivery and select corrective interventions
- Produce a Project Governance and Delivery Improvement Plan with KPIs for executive approval

Target Audience

- Project sponsors and project board members accountable for project decisions
- PMO managers responsible for governance standards and delivery reporting
- Programme and senior project managers running high-value or high-visibility projects
- Portfolio and planning managers tracking delivery performance across initiatives
- Internal audit and risk managers reviewing project controls and assurance

Course Outline

Day 1: Delivery Performance and Governance Foundations

- Project Governance Definitions and Principles in ISO 21505
- Project Success Criteria: Iron Triangle, Outcomes and Benefits
- Delivery Rate Baseline Using Schedule and Cost Variance Data
- Causes of Project Failure: Optimism Bias and Strategic Misrepresentation
- Governance Current-State Assessment Using Sponsor and Board Interviews

Day 2: Governance Frameworks and Standards

- ISO 21502 Project Management Guidance: Governance and Control Practices
- PRINCE2 Seventh Edition Principles and the Organising Practice
- PMBOK Guide Eighth Edition Governance Performance Domain
- PMI Governance of Portfolios, Programs, and Projects Practice Guide
- IIA Three Lines Model Applied to Project Assurance

Day 3: Running Effective Project Governance

- Project Governance Structure and RACI for Sponsor, Board and Project Manager
- PRINCE2 Management by Exception: Tolerances and Exception Reports
- Project Board Decision Log and Meeting Protocol
- Status Reporting with Evidence-Based RAG Criteria and Trend Indicators
- Change Control Board and Scope Change Impact Assessment

Day 4: Improving Delivery Reliability

- Reference Class Forecasting for Cost and Schedule Estimates
- Independent Estimate Challenge and Three-Point Estimating
- Early Warning Indicators and Leading Delivery Metrics
- Project Recovery Planning for Red-Rated Projects
- Lessons Learned Root Cause Analysis Using Fishbone Diagrams

Day 5: Case Work and the Delivery Improvement Plan

- Major Capital Project Case Study: Governance Failure and Cost Overrun
- IT System Implementation Case Study: Recovering a Stalled Delivery
- Delivery Performance Dashboard Build Using Participant Portfolio Data
- Project Governance and Delivery Improvement Plan Drafting
- Executive Review Panel and Peer Challenge

Skills You Will Gain

- Project Governance Design
- Tolerance and Escalation Management
- Delivery Performance Analysis
- Estimate Assurance
- Project Recovery
- Decision Rights Mapping
- Lessons Learned Analysis

Why Attend This Course

- Return to work with a Project Governance and Delivery Improvement Plan for your organisation, already tested before an executive review panel
- Spot projects heading for failure months earlier through tolerances and leading indicators
- Challenge optimistic estimates at approval using evidence from comparable past projects
- Compare governance practice with sponsors and PMO managers from other sectors and countries

Conclusion

Delivery rates rise when governance asks the right questions early and acts on the answers. This course moves from measuring current delivery performance, through the principal governance standards and methods, to tolerances, escalation, forecasting and the recovery of struggling projects. The final day turns that material into a Project Governance and Delivery Improvement Plan that participants take back to their executives, giving them a structured and defensible programme for raising the share of projects delivered as promised.