

## Project Management Maturity

It is worth reiterating that project management for many organisations is the channel in which they deliver returns on capital investment. Better project delivery leads to greater and perhaps, more importantly, a more guaranteed return on investment. Thus increasing project management capability is becoming much more attractive to organisations with a specialist project function.

Maturity models are essentially an efficient, industry recognised method of both measuring an organisation's capability and providing a foundation and method for increasing capability in a specific function. Organisations that use maturity models to develop their capability will either use them in a staged or continuous manner. That is to say, they will either develop from one stage to the next as and when the need arises or will continually strive to improve up through the levels until the needs of the organisation are met.

*Project Management maturity models was spawned from the almost 20 year old CMM (subsequently CMMI) models produced by Carnegie Mellon University and are widely used by consulting organisations and individual companies today.*

The levels of maturity are defined as follows:

1. Initial: There is no implemented process. What happens in terms of delivery (although it can be successful) is characterised as adhoc and occasionally even chaotic. Few processes are defined, and success depends very much on individual effort and 'heroics'.
2. Repeatable: Basic project management processes are established and by definition, staff follow these by rote. The necessary process discipline is in place to repeat earlier successes on similar projects.
3. Defined: The process is documented, standardised and integrated into an organisational structure. The key at this level is although the project management process is clearly defined, the process is flexible enough to meet the needs of any particular project and the staff involved are capable of flexing the process appropriately.
4. Managed: Detailed measures of the process and production quality are collected. Both the process and products are quantitatively understood and controlled and the data gathered is used to measure and improve delivery.
5. Optimised: Continuous process improvement is enabled by quantitative feedback from executing the process and importantly, from piloting innovative ideas and technologies, incorporating these into the standard process set when applicable. The aim is to introduce innovative processes to better serve the organisation's needs.

The benefits of using a maturity model include:

- 1) Being able to measure and baseline project management capability. This of course provides the perfect foundation to demonstrably increase project delivery capability.
- 2) A defined level of project definition, justification and approval at every stage ensuring a greater degree of control.
- 3) Gives a sense of purpose, belonging and identity to the staff involved in the project delivery function – an increase in morale and therefore project delivery.
- 4) Demonstration to customer and supplier organisations of your capability and initiates a platform to develop relationships and processes of partner organisations.
- 5) Improvement in project staff recruitment through clarity of roles, demonstration of commitment to the skill set and defined career paths.
- 6) *Clear tie-ins to the ISO 9000 series of standards.*
- 7) Ultimately better, more guaranteed return on investment.

Our real-life implementation of a formal project management maturity development used the standards for both generic project management maturity (PMMM) and specifically for the use of the Prince2 method (P2MM). Level 3 was achieved in both models – a world first concurrently at level 3 for any organisation.

In addition to the prestige associated with achieving both, the tangible results included:

- 1) Significant uplift in the delivery of projects - Improvement of successful project forecasting and delivery by 150%
- 2) Implementation of a common project 'language' enabling all functions across the organisation to understand exactly what is meant by project roles and commitments for project delivery
- 3) Cross collaboration and support across multi-disciplinary projects leading to increased resources being providing to ensure project success
- 4) 30% increase in surveyed project staff job satisfaction
- 5) Greater senior management commitment and involvement in project sponsorship and direction

For more information on this or our other engagements or to enquire how we can help your organisation achieve an increase in PM productivity [contact us here](#).