Project Methodology

SUMMARY

The university has adopted a project methodology for the evaluation and acquisition of information resources. As a result, University Computing and Telecommunications (UCT) established the Project Office, charged it with the responsibility of creating and administrating the project methodology, and assigned it the following goals.

1. Define, clarify, and document technology requests to determine business needs and benefit to the university.
2. Partner with users to evaluate possible solutions and determine the most viable alternative.
3. Respond quickly to keep the users engaged.
4. Provide timely and effective solutions to build confidence and trust.
5. Reduce duplication so that we manage the university's IT solutions and provide greater support.
6. Educate and inform the user so that the university develops a culture of stewarding technology.

To be effective, all new technology projects must route through the Project Office.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE METHODOLOGY

The adoption of the project methodology is justified through our legislative responsibility, best practice, and local experience.

LEGISLATIVE RESPONSIBILITY

Information resources and the technology associated with managing such resources is immense, complex, and growing at a rapid pace. The risk of duplicating solutions to solve similar problems across the campus is a high probability and recognized by the State of Texas.   As a result, the State of Texas enacted legislation (Texas Government Code §2054.001) directing the use of technologies across all state agencies, also referred to as the Information Resources Act (See §2054.002).

The Texas Department of Information Resources (DIR), http://dir.texas.gov, exists for these purposes and enforces the stewardship of information resources through Texas Administrative Code §216 which requires each state agency shall approve and publish a project methodology that communicates an agency-wide approach for project management practices.

BEST PRACTICE

Communities of Practices such as the Project Management Institute (www.pmi.org) and the International Institute of Business Analysis (www.iiba.org) stress the importance of identifying clear business requirements and managing the scope, schedule, and costs of projects to maximize return on investment.

LOCAL EXPERIENCE

Our professional experience repeatedly reveals the need to create collaborative partnerships between the business owners and information resource staff to solve the university's needs. The most successful technology implementations are determined by how well the user considers and works through the following domains.

1. Security factors: compliance with legal and contractual security-related obligations, security architecture, Information authorization, system authorization, application administration, authentication, access control, and data encryption in transit and at rest, physical security
2. Information Technology factors: network traffic, data integrity, system integrity, application integrity, monitoring services, business continuity & disaster recovery, contract terms, service level agreement, system availability requirements, API integration, performance requirements, storage requirements, integration with the university's authentication mechanisms, data retention
3. Non-tech factors: consistency with branding requirements, printing requirements, consumable requirements, training, cultural/workflow changes
4. Compliance factors: Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA), Sarbanes-Oxley Act, Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI)

METHODOLOGY

MAJOR VS. SMALL PROJECTS

UHCL, being a state agency, adopts DIR's methodology for classifying projects.

1. Estimate the size of the project (i.e. "major" vs. small) as per the criteria for a major project (Texas Government Code §2054.003).
2. If the project is determined to be a major project, then we use the Project Delivery Framework.
3. If the project is determined to be a small project, then we use an adapted version of DIR's PM Lite. UHCL's Adopted PM Lite Methodology

METHODOLOGY, SMALL PROJECTS

The Project Office has adapted the following model from DIR's PM Lite methodology.

Initiation	Planning	Execution	Closure
Define Problem	Research & Analysis	Project Schedule	Procurement or Development	Testing Plan	Post Implementation
Kickoff Meeting	Solution Review*	Milestone Timeline	RFP (Procurment)	Go-Live	Project Closure*
User Story Document	Planning		Testing & Training	Support Handover*	Lessons Learned
Business Case*	Project Charter*		Training Schedule		Completed

Assess Application Risk

Monitor & Coordinate Communications

Legend

- Process Group (PMBOK)
- Phase
- Document *An * Denotes a required document*
- Continuous Process