

Programme and Project Management Training provided by Carnegie Enterprise

Reason for introducing programme and project management training to Aberlour

I was already a PRINCE2 practitioner when I came to Aberlour having worked south of the border in local government where it was normal practice. I introduced some of the principles and ran in-house seminars for managers. I also modelled it in practice. I realised that Aberlour did not have a structured approach to the development of new services and as a result many were over budget and out of time. There were no procedures for change control and being a geographically dispersed organisation it was impossible to track progress or to assess the benefits of one new service over another. Being a child-centred organisation new services were often started without any analysis of the products that would be necessary to achieve the final deliverable (more services for children). The same applied to other change initiatives – lots of enthusiasm and vision for the end state but lacking a route map to get there! We often set out to do one thing – but ended up doing another!

When I had sufficient buy in I commissioned bespoke in-house training for the senior management team.

Over time I recognised that project management in itself was not enough. The need for a portfolio and programme approach dawned on me. We had too many disconnected projects and no means of appraising the benefits of one over another. Also having undertaken work on a strategic plan, and detailed annual operating plan, we needed a framework to deliver. I did the 5 day MSP programme management course at Carnegie and the pennies dropped!

After some time introducing the principles 'by stealth' there was buy in from my team of Directors to undertaking MSP as a team. We also commissioned a one day overview for the next tier – the senior management team.

Benefits realised by the organisation as a result of the training

Benefits to business as usual:

Structure, change control, improved planning, more informed decision making, improved reporting frameworks, clarity about delegation/tolerance and when to escalate issues – these were all improvements to business as usual. Using the principles of management by exception and requiring mandates, briefs and risk logs had a positive impact in changing behaviour.

Specific Projects:

We delivered a major capital project on time and in budget using PRINCE2 that significantly increased our reputation with the commissioners and other funders. We have since used PRINCE2 with other specific projects and have tailored to suit.



MSP Training:

We have just finished the training and have not yet realised all of the benefits. However, Immediate benefits include the way it has united the Chief Executive's team, reduced silo mentality and enabled us to adopt a more corporate approach to management and development of the business. We were not previously specific about the benefits we hoped to realise through our activities and development and we certainly did not take time to define or appraise them – nor to think about the risks and consequences. We are rescoping next year's operational plan using a portfolio approach. Directors will be programme managers and all our activity will fall within the scope of a number of programmes. Some programmes are strategic, some maintenance, some infrastructure. We now have a complete framework for planning our future, appraising options, decision making, tracking progress, responding to external and internal drivers for change and being ready to take remedial action at an early stage. Work plans for departments and individuals will all be connected to specific projects or programmes.

Quality and Content of the Training Provided

Excellent!

Through two cohorts of PRINCE2, one of MSP, overview days of MSP and M_o_R and also a number of day programmes of introduction to PRINCE2. Different styles of delivery but quality consistent.

How Carnegie Enterprise responded to your requirements

With understanding, flexibility and sensitivity – they were willing to look at all options and they did all they could to understand our business, the people who would be on the programmes and any likely barriers to the training. They met with me beforehand, visited the premises, and provided feedback on each day.

While the course materials are not sector specific the trainers were able to help delegates relate it to their setting. We did explore the potential to develop sector specific materials with one of the trainers.

Having this training delivered in-house was the ideal solution for us. The trainer fitted around the organisation and team – a consultancy approach. I would definitely think about engaging them on a consultancy basis to help us embed the training and to assist us in rescoping our operational plan as a portfolio of programmes and projects. M_o_R will also play an essential part of this.

