

Customised Project Management Training Case Study ***Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead***

The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead (RBW&M) approached a number of training organisations to undertake project management training. This was to accompany the publication of their revised internal project management methodology, SPRUCE (Specific Projects Running Under a Controlled Environment). SPRUCE is a practical, light touch methodology based on the principles of PRINCE2.

The training objective was to familiarise employees with the revisions to the internal methodology (SPRUCE) and provide them with practical project management tools and techniques they could employ on a day to day basis. Courses were to be run for employees across all parts of the organisation, from IT to front line service managers.

RBW&M selected Wellington Project Management as their training partner to help them develop project management capability within the organisation. We, Wellington, quickly developed a two day ***Introduction to Practical Project Management*** course customised to reflect the new RBW&M SPRUCE methodology. We cherry picked content from our library of over 10 days of project management training material to develop the course, exercises, and supporting material within just two days. During this time we also met with project management leaders at RBW&M to review the newly defined SPRUCE methodology. We provided our independent advice and recommendations on further enhancements to this new methodology, including the inclusion of a RACI (responsible, accountable, consulted, informed) Matrix.

Once the training material, exercises and end of course test had been developed these were presented back to RBW&M for their approval. A series of two day courses were then scheduled at locations and times convenient for RBW&M. The course was designed to take a practical approach with exercises accompanying each course topic, providing attendees with real tools & techniques they could apply immediately on their projects.

Uniquely, attendees of Wellington courses are encouraged to use their own project experience for each exercise. This enables attendees to relate the material 100% to their own projects, experience and environment. Other training providers tend to relate all exercises to a generic project scenario which attendees can find much more difficult to relate to.

Uniquely, Wellington also provide our clients with joint copyright ownership of customised training material. This allows RBW&M to distribute the training material to a wider audience using mechanisms such as publishing on internal web sites (Intranet) and shared drives.

Course topics included:

- What is Good Project Management
- The Organisation & the Project Team
- Define Your Project Lifecycle

- Techniques for Developing Your Schedule
- Practical Project Planning
- Using Deliverable Definition Sheets
- The RACI Matrix
- Practical Cost & Contingency Management
- The APM PRAM Guide to Risk Management
- Practical Change Control Management
- Stakeholder Management Techniques
- Team Development & Leadership Techniques
- What Makes a Good Project Manager?

Between 8 and 14 staff attended each course. Each attendee completed a course evaluation form where we received the following feedback:

Course provided practical advice I can immediately apply

Strongly Disagree	0%
Disagree	0%
Agree	21%
Strongly agree	79%

I found the course interesting and engaging

Strongly Disagree	0%
Disagree	0%
Agree	0%
Strongly agree	100%

I would recommend this course to colleagues

Strongly Disagree	0%
Disagree	0%
Agree	8%
Strongly agree	92%

RBW&M recognised that project management capabilities could be enhanced further with formal training in Microsoft Project. An often quoted analogy being “*you wouldn’t ask someone to use Microsoft Word if they can’t read & write, you wouldn’t ask someone to use Excel if they can’t count, so you should ask people to use MS Project unless they understand Critical Path Method*”. Many people in many organisations have access to MS Project without the benefit of any formal training. Unlike Word & Excel users often struggle to make best use of this software investment without formal training.

We therefore developed two customised one day courses; *Introduction to Practical Planning with Microsoft Project* and *Achieving More with Microsoft Project*. Attendees were able to attend both

days or opt to attend either the “introduction” or “achieving more” day, depending on their existing Microsoft Project experience.

Courses were run at training facilities convenient for RBW&M with Wellington providing the training software and were similarly well received by attendees .

In summary the RBW&M Policy & Performance Manager commented:

“The training was fantastic - well researched, thoroughly prepared and tailored to the organisation’s needs. We found it interesting, enjoyable and very relevant, regardless of the level of expertise we each had already. Even experienced project managers were able to take away new ideas and tips for better practice. Those relatively new to project management found the training stretching but accessible. The trainer was thought provoking and measured yet amusing and engaging.....an expert in this field.”