PM-Partners group

HELPING YOU GET BETTER RESULTS FROM YOUR PROJECTS, PROGRAMMES AND PMOs

4 Assurance Trends and Themes

To set your Programmes and Projects up for success

Delivery **Advisory** Capability

What is Assurance?

Assurance provides an independent and objective view of programme / project delivery and can generally be undertaken in one of three ways:

	DESCRIPTION	ADVANTAGES	WHEN
SET UP FOR SUCCESS	Assesses overall approach, stakeholder engagement, key risks, and governance structures to ensure that the correct fundamentals (as they apply to this unique initiative) are in place from the outset	» Ideal time to ensure delivery fundamentals are in place » Fast, expert and independent review to ensure the Project / Programme sets off correctly.	Start of delivery
HEALTH CHECK	Facilitates early identification of issues, and provides actionable feedback, thus enhancing overall delivery efficiency and effectiveness towards business objectives	» Opportunity to check that Set Up For Success recommendations have been actioned » Leverages experience of multiple projects / programmes and previous health checks to ensure key success factors are maintained.	During delivery
POST IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW	Assesses whether objectives were met, captures success and learnings, and provides actionable feedback for future initiatives with common attributes or approaches	» Provides an overall assessment of successes and learning opportunities to ensure knowledge is captured and reused for the benefit of future projects	After delivery

While Post Implementation Reviews in their own right serve a valuable purpose in capturing successes and lessons learnt, undertaking assurance activities only at the end of a programme or project has limited value to the initiative at hand. Early assurance provides timely capture of successes and lessons learnt, inclusion of recommendation into the current initiative, AND potentially benefiting other similar programmes and projects as early as possible.

Themes

1) **Sponsor engagement**, and appropriate matching of sponsor style to the initiative at hand, remains a critical success factor regardless of industry or business / technology focus.

   Consider: Is your Sponsor the person with most 'skin in the game', and is your Sponsor the person best suited to that role on this initiative?

2) Delivery **complexity is often underestimated**, with low estimates and limited budget / contingency compared to the eventual effort and budget required to deliver. A desire to maintain scheduled delivery dates exacerbates this pressure on complexity, and often results in a compromise on quality.

   Consider: How well does the approach match the level of complexity? And is time and budget contingency available if the situation changes?

3) **Stakeholder transition** is an important consideration in multi-year programmes and projects. People are promoted, restructures happen, and people take extended leave. The impact of this disruption can be mitigated by detailed resource and succession planning.

   Consider: Who are your key stakeholders, and do you have a succession plan for them if they move?

4) **Quality of testing** is difficult to plan for and to execute. Test strategies sometimes do not reflect the complexity of the solution. The ability to test the solution is often compromised by the lack of integrated, robust and production-like test environments.

   Consider: How well do your test environments support all projects in your portfolio?

Trends

1) We have observed that more and more organisations are not just talking about other delivery models, they are now also exploring ways to make this happen, and therefore determine the approach that best suits the organisation. A number of organisations are undertaking **'iterative' or 'Agile' delivery** in environments that have been **traditionally 'waterfall'**. Different approaches have been taken to manage the potential culture clash between these delivery models, and organisations are still learning the best way for these models to co-exist.

2) There is recognition that co-location of teams is important, but that it is not always practical with organisations spanning buildings and cities, and with many programmes and projects requiring vendor and/or offshore teams. This has led to a preference for at least a **'partial co-location'** model according to priority and risk. Organisational inertia often makes any easy co-location difficult, but the benefits of even a partial co-location make this worth overcoming.

3) There is increasing **reliance on vendors** to deliver complex and / or significant proportions of the overall solution. This places even more importance on the need to define and manage the vendor engagement appropriately – from vendor selection, to contract management, relationship management, and status reporting, then all the way through to Business As Usual transition.

4) Different requirements, products or business attributes are leading to **multiple business solutions** being designed and implemented within single projects and programmes. This is different to the traditional project model which assumes a single business solution against a single set of requirements. This approach requires clear definition of boundaries between solutions, but also clear understanding of touch points between solutions and the ability to test across solutions if necessary.

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Summary

While there are a number of recurring themes and trends in programme and project delivery, every situation is unique.

Some key questions to consider:

1. How relevant are these trends and themes to your organisation?
2. Do you have appropriate assurance activities planned for your programmes and projects, so that both common (themes and trends) and specific delivery attributes are managed efficiently and effectively?
3. **How well are your programmes and projects set up for success?**

PM-Partners group assurance services balance best practice and 18 years of industry knowledge to deliver one of the most powerful measures available, in order to either ensure or validate delivery success. In addition, our approach is focussed on providing pragmatic and practical advice, taking into account the unique environment for each customer. Each assignment integrates documentation review and feedback with completion of interview and workshop sessions. These sessions facilitate capture of 360-degree style feedback from sponsors, project managers, stakeholders, customers and team members.

PM-Partners group has completed a wide range of assurance assignments, including Health Checks and PIRs, for programmes and projects, and across a wide range of industries.

<p style="text-align: center">Interested in and Executive presentation on lessons learnt from over 200 Health Checks?
Contact us on 1300 70 13 14.</p>

Accountable DELIVERY

A flexible approach to project delivery based on over 18 years' experience in the execution of successful Projects, Programmes and PMOs.

We offer a range of project management delivery services broadly categorised as follows:

Extended Project Workforce

Where you require an extension to your team, a full team or a managed PMO with experienced and qualified people.

Professionals that are pre inducted and ready to start, supported by our service delivery managers providing objectivity, advice and assurance. Benefit: additional capability, scalability, accountability and value.

Project Delivery

Where you want us to take end to end accountability for managing your Project, Programme or PMO and require us to deliver a solution on your behalf. Benefit: surety of outcomes whilst reducing risk.

Project Resourcing

Where you want experienced and qualified people to work with your team under your management. Benefit: the right people for the right projects at the right time.

Build / re-energise operate and transition

Where you want to build or re-energise a complete project management environment. Benefit: successful delivery now and sustainable improvement handed back to you.

We can be an extension to your team, manage your team, deliver to agreed milestones or take accountability for business outcomes, depending on how you would like to engage.

Specialist ADVICE

Advisory services provide expertise, guidance and support to clients looking to develop, assess or improve their Project, Programme, Portfolio Management, PMO or Business Analysis practices.

» PMO design, review and development
» Consultancy and advice to enhance processes and systems
» Project health checks, assurance and governance
» Methodologies for project, programme and Portfolio Management
» Enterprise Project Management and Portfolio Management Systems
» Align Projects, Programmes and PMOs to the business

Powerful CAPABILITY

Since 1996 the PM-Partners group has helped 1000's of organisations and individuals achieve their professional development and certification goals.

The PM-Partners group is Australia's most highly certified project management specialist.

We educate and certify over 5000 professionals each year and provide courses for:

» Project Management
» Programme Management
» Portfolio Management
» PMO
» Business Analysis

Accredited by all leading industry bodies

REDUCE YOUR OPERATING COSTS & DELIVERY RISK
with a flexible project workforce

Get access to the RIGHT people at the RIGHT time **TO RUN A CRITICAL PROJECT**

SAVE TIME, COST AND REPUTATION
with a project health check

IMPROVE SKILLS
across an entire project workforce

Get a PMO up and running **IN 20 DAYS**

"...across the brief and providing us with exactly the sort of project execution, business support and information we need whilst quickly developing trust and confidence among the executive team"