

Lessons Learned: Sharing the Knowledge & Next Steps

May 16, 2006

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Session Objectives

- Use a methodology for the capture, classification, storage and dissemination of lessons learned
- Use tools, guidelines and techniques for facilitating lessons learned sessions
- Understand the importance of repositories as planning and decision support tools
- Utilize information from repositories

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Lessons Learned Defined

The learning gained from the process of performing the project. Lessons learned may be identified at any point. Also considered a project record, to be included in the lessons learned knowledge base

Source: Adopted from the *PMBOK® Guide* -Third Edition

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Common Beliefs

- Every project is different and learning from one project is not applicable to other projects
- There is not enough time for learning. We have to complete the project.
- Nothing ever happens after lessons learned are captured.

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Learning (1 of 2)

- Project managers, team members and leadership can learn from previous projects
- How to learn
 - Reviewing lessons learned from previous projects prior to starting a new project
 - Documenting lessons learned from current projects

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Learning (2 of 2)

- What can be learned
 - Project management processes and tools
 - Technical work of the project
 - Business processes
 - Leadership and teamwork



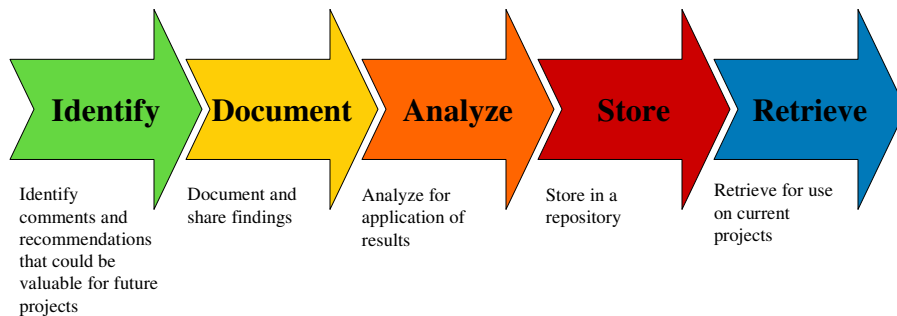
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When to Capture

- Planning
- Different time frames based on project criticality and complexity
 - At the end of a project
 - At the end of each phase
 - Real time – when you learn the lesson

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Lessons Learned Process



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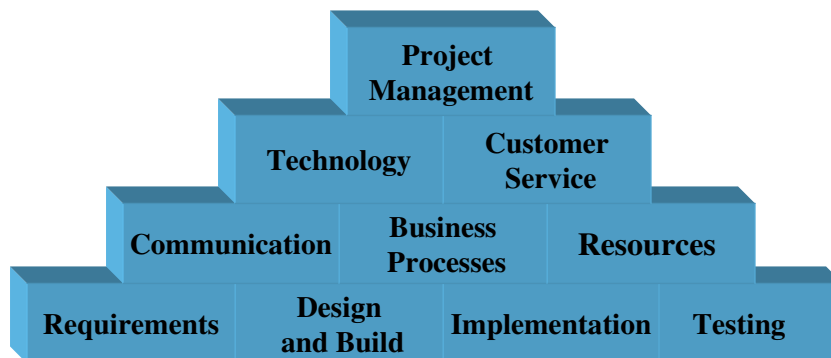
Identification



- Issue lessons learned surveys/questionnaires to the team for completion
- Conduct brainstorming sessions based on survey results and key questions
- Capture strengths, weaknesses and recommendations

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Categories



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Category: Project Management



- PM Process
 - Project Charter
 - Project Schedule
 - Issues Management
 - Risk Management
 - Time Reporting
- Project Performance
 - Project Objectives
 - Project Assumptions
 - Project Deliverables
 - Review and Approval
 - Comparison of Actual
 - Teams

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Questionnaire



Project Management

- Issues were documented and resolved in a timely manner
Agree 0 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Disagree
- The project schedule was distributed to the team
Agree 0 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Disagree

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Key Questions



Project Management - Issues

- What did we do right?
Issues were identified and recorded in a database
- What did we do wrong?
Issues were not resolved in a timely manner
- What do we need to improve?
Issues escalation process

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Lessons Learned Session



- Facilitation
 - Someone other than the project manager
 - Prepare in advance
- Always ask the three key questions
 - What did we do right?
 - What did we do wrong?
 - What do we need to improve?

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Reporting Lessons Learned



- Detailed report to project team
- Executive Summary
- Formal report to leadership
- Store lessons learned reports with project documentation

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Formal Report to Leadership



- Background
- Lessons learned process overview
- Summary of results
 - Project strengths – what went well
 - Project weaknesses – what went wrong
 - Recommendation summary – what we need to improve
- Detailed results by category
- Next steps

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Analyze



- Determine process improvements
- Determine training needs/update existing training programs
- Develop trend reports
- Determine which lessons should be stored in the repository

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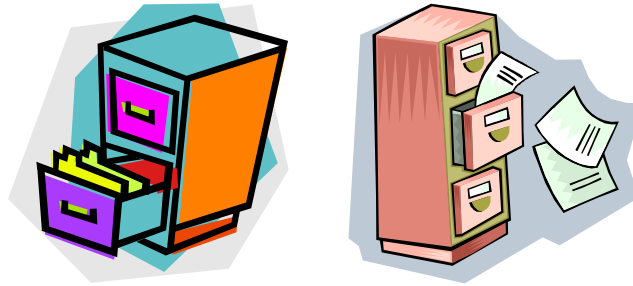
Lessons Learned Repository



- Store lessons learned in a manner that allows users to easily identify applicable lessons learned through information searches
- Stored lessons learned should be periodically reviewed for usefulness

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How to Use a Lessons Learned Repository



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What Is the Best Tool?



- There is no one answer
- Work with Company software currently available
- Must have reasonable access across the Company's intranet or LAN

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Successful Software Tool



- Establish standard template to capture lessons learned information
- Create easy to use software screens for data entry
- Create easy to use *search capability* on key data fields and key words
- Develop easy to read output reports
- Provide ability to generate metrics reports

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Lessons Learned Tool Examples



- IBM: LotusNotes
- Novel: Linux Systems, Linux Desktop, OpenOffice, iFolder
- Microsoft: SharePoint, Word, Excel, Access
- Oracle

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Lessons Learned Template



- Lesson learned statement
- Discussion of activities
- Recommended actions
- Categories
- Keywords
- Root cause

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Key Words



- Data fields to aid search
- One of the determinants of success in utilizing lessons learned
- Key words: vendor, process improvement, software upgrade

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Lessons Learned Reports



- Establish standard report formats
 - Project Summaries
 - Lessons Learned
 - Best Practices
 - Key Words
 - Metrics
- Easy to generate
- Easy to read

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Lessons Learned Report Output Project Summary - 1



Published	Title	Project	Country	Analysis
Mar 04	Taking a Toll	Tollcollect	Germany	Unrealistic expectations by politicians can not be met by project teams.
Apr 04	A Derailed Vision	Transrapid	China	Maglev high speed train running almost empty – located far away from its users.
Jun 04	Burst Bubble	Covisint	USA & Netherlands	Failed platform project for automotive procurement without management support.
Aug 04	Digging Deep	Boston Big Dig	USA	Influenced by politics, the project suffering from extreme cost and schedule overruns.
Sep 04	Murky Waters	Progetto MOSE	Italy	A private consortium in Venice does not provide the level of transparency to gain public trust.
Oct 04	Mars or Bust	Beagle2	United Kingdom	A Mars Lander project getting into troubles caused by unrealistic schedule and budget constraints.
Nov 04	River Deep	Columbia River Deepening	USA	The deepening would not be sufficient to re-win big container ship business but threatens the natural balance of the Columbia River.
Dec 04	A Galactic Letdown	Bremen Space Center	Germany	Indoor theme park project left without visitors due to lack of efficient marketing and interest focus.

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Lessons Learned Report Project Summary - 2



Published	Title	Project	Country	Analysis
Jan 05	Lack of Support	Child Support Agency Software	United Kingdom	Unclear scope and lacking risk management strategy are causes for false support payments.
Feb 05	Mutual Disagreement	Philadelphia Elevated Train	USA	Unresolved disputes between customer and contractor jeopardize project.
Mar 05	Polluted Progress	Sidney M5 Tunnel	Australia	Technical glitches and health risks for stakeholders ail a major road tunnel project.
Apr 05	Slow Motion	Chicago Irish Famine Memorial	USA	Part-time project manager not sufficient on a multi-million dollar project.
May 05	Train Delay	Taiwan High Speed Rail	Taiwan	"Best of Breed" approach mixing Japanese and German Technologies too complex for team.
Jun 05	Fusion Confusion	ITER Fusion Experiment	EU, S. Korea, China, Japan, Russia, USA	A disputes on location (France or Japan) debilitates a project for A future source of energy.
Jul 05	Information Overload	DHCP, Vista, CoreFLS	USA	Replacement of outdated MUMPS computer system at the US-Department for Veterans Affairs suffers from bad data quality.

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Lessons Learned Report Project Summary - 3



Published	Title	Project	Country	Analysis
Sep 05	High Hopes	Stealth Joint Strike Fighter F35, Eurofighter Typhoon	USA, EU	Too many conflicting stakeholder expectations remain unmanaged.
Oct 05	Credit Check	HM Revenue and Customs Computer System	United Kingdom	Tight schedule and corrupt data result in false tax revenue payments.
Nov 05	Drilling Down	Sakhalin II LNG Exploration	Russia	Stakeholders of the high risk project remain unformed of schedule and cost problems.
Dec 05	Social Security	LiMux (Linux for Munich)	Germany	Old operating system for municipality PCs jeopardizes data security.
Jan 06	Intensive Care	Thailand Ambulance Procurement	Thailand	Unrealistic and unstable specifications delay purchase of emergency equipment.
Feb 06	Out of Sight	SOFIA Large Airborne Telescope	USA, Germany	Underestimated system needs and cross-cultural conflicts delay project.
Mar 06	Unnatural Selection	Various Projects to control cane beetles and toads	Australia	Trying to solve a problem in 1935 caused a new problem today, solving this today may cause further problems.

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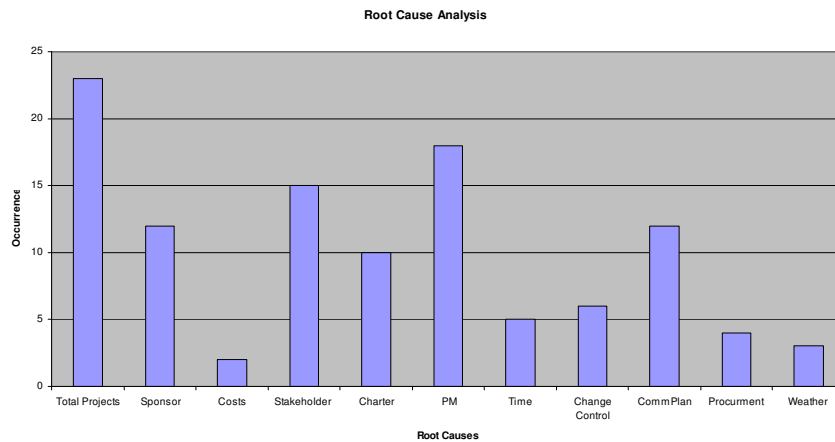
Lessons Learned Report – The Lessons



Lesson 1:	There is no project success without a common understanding and agreement on the project scope.
Lesson 2:	The project manager's role description is essential.
Lesson 3:	The project sponsor's support is necessary too.
Lesson 4:	Do not freely add organizational to technical complexity.
Lesson 5:	Stay aware of key stakeholders.
Lesson 6:	Analyze the impacts of your project on its environment.
Lesson 7:	Analyze the impacts of legacies before you integrate them.
Lesson 8:	Be proactive in quality, risk and integrity management.
Lesson 9:	Ensure candor, common language and methodology. Avoid excessive politics.
Lesson 10:	Where possible, avoid unrealistic expectations.
Lesson 11:	Document, document, document.

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Metrics Report Example



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Using Lessons Learned - Value



- Review lessons learned before starting a new project
 - Share information with the team in project kick off meeting
 - Early risk identification
- Prepare Metrics Executive Summary Reports
 - Necessary cultural changes
 - New or enhanced training
 - New or enhanced policies and procedures

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Presentation Summary



- Have management commitment
- Have a documented lessons learned process with supporting tools
- Evaluate Lessons Learned Metrics
- Use lessons learned to generate best practices

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NOTE: The previous slides were presented at the 2006 PMI EMEA Congress in Madrid, Spain by co-presenters Sharon Sikes & Sandra Rowe

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Class Exercise

- 5 minutes – review Case Analysis
- 10 minutes – identify as many lessons learned from the article as you can – be ready to name top five from your article
- 2 minutes
 - Identify Project, Country and Analysis
 - Share top 5 lessons learned
- Identify common lessons learned

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Intensive Care

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Out of Sight

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Drilling, Downed

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Train Delay

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Information Overload

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