

## IT PROJECTS AND THE BENEFITS REVIEW How do you measure the success of your projects?

In recent times we've been hearing a real need from government and private sector organisations for increased focus on the benefits review phase of IT projects. CIOs and IT Managers tell us their project teams often don't manage this activity well. In some cases there is no benefits review at all.

So, we thought we'd summarise the process and why there's a big upside to completing the review phase.

### 1. Why do it?

Well, put simply, so you can claim the Benefits! Benefits cannot be claimed until they've been realised so the project must be reviewed. Realising proposed benefits enables your IT department to confidently ask for further investment in the next initiative.

Sharing a success story raises the profile of IT at the corporate Boardroom table. Demonstrated savings and/or increased revenues earned from great technology projects should be communicated.

However, there has been much publicity about troubled IT projects in recent years. So, demonstrating effective governance of projects is becoming an important requirement. IT departments can expect a greater focus on how and when benefits are being tracked.

The benefits review also informs the Portfolio Office (if you have one) and the business, about future investment decisions.



Maximise your opportunity for successful project delivery and minimise risk.

The Benefits Review is discussed in our recently released eLearning program for Sponsors and Project Control Boards.

The eLearning is:

- the only Australian program of its kind
- cost effective and time efficient to roll out
- recommended for all levels of Government and Private Sector organisations
- for use with business or ICT projects

## 2. When do you do it?

The PRINCE2® methodology is commonly used for project management in Australia. It stipulates benefits are initially defined in the Business Case document and then in a Benefits Review Plan. It's important that benefits and the measures that prove they have been realised are discussed early in the project. If there isn't a benchmark or an "as is" position known, it's possible to establish one then and a target for measuring expected improvement.

The actual review however, usually doesn't take place until after project closure. Checking whether expected outcomes are still relevant and on track, should occur at various points throughout the project lifecycle.

Following that process, assures the business the investment is being well managed. When additional funding is required or a stage gate boundary needs to be passed, demonstrating the project is being actively tracked and is expected to realise the benefits will help.

As changes impacting projects often occur throughout the project lifecycle, updating the Benefits Review Plan is also important.

The date for the expected final review should be carefully considered as too early may not prove the expected benefits resulting in the need for a further review, at a later stage.

## 3. How do you make it happen?

Ensure your project manager has included specific measures for financial and non-financial benefits in your detailed Business Case and Benefits Review Plan.

We also recommend planning for the post project activities is done during the earlier phases of the project and thought given as to how the Benefits Review will be resourced. In some organisations, the Project Management Office is able to assist the Sponsor with this task.

If you'd like to learn more about our services or eLearning program for project governance please contact us.

Successful Projects; eLearning  
for Sponsors and Project Control Boards

### The Benefits Review Plan

- Produced at the Project Initiation Stage
- Senior User has important role
- Should contain analysis describing the way in which benefits from the project will be measured



*The Benefits Review is covered  
in our eLearning.*

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