SECTION ONE

1

Project Management Lifecycle

SECTION I: PROJECT MANAGEMENT LIFECYCLE
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Section I Introduction

There are two different lifecycles that work in conjunction with one another throughout the course of every project. The ***project*** lifecycle describes the tasks that must be completed to produce a product or service. Different project lifecycles exist for specific products and services. (For example, the lifecycle followed to build a house is very different from the lifecycle followed to develop a software package.) The project ***management*** lifecycle defines how to manage a project. It will always be the same, regardless of the project lifecycle being employed.

One of a Project Manager's challenges is to understand how to align the specific project lifecycle with the project management lifecycle. Project tasks and project management tasks are concurrent and ongoing, and can be associated by project management deliverables. The Project Schedule, for example, contains both project and project management tasks. Phases in the two lifecycles will overlap, depending upon the project lifecycle being employed. The Project Manager needs to be aware of how the inputs and outputs of one lifecycle affect and shape the other.

The material in this section is organized according to the project management lifecycle. While no two projects are exactly alike, all projects should progress through the same five project management phases:

1. In Project Origination an individual proposes a project to create a product or develop a service that can solve a problem or address a need in the Performing Organization. The Performing Organization then submits the proposal to an evaluation and selection process. If selected, a budget or further management commitment for the project may also be required before a Project Manager is actually assigned and the project is authorized to progress to Project Initiation. Depending upon the standards and practices of the Performing Organization, a time delay between the project's proposal and selection and its actual initiation may occur.

2. At the beginning of Project Initiation, a Project Manager is assigned. The Project Manager works with the Project Sponsor to identify the necessary resources and team members needed to further develop the key project parameters – Cost, Scope, Schedule, and Quality (CSSQ). The Project Team documents its charge in the form of a Project Charter, which is based on the Project Proposal, which includes the initial Business Case. Approval of the Project Charter by the Project Sponsor authorizes the designated team to begin the initial planning effort. The initial Project Plan resulting from Project Initiation differs in the level of detail and the validity of its estimates from Project Origination, and must be at a level sufficient to acquire any additional resources needed to progress to the

next phase. The Project Plan also includes plans for involving and communicating with all the parties that are affected by the project, as well as identification of an initial set of foreseeable risks that can threaten the project. At the conclusion of Project Initiation, based on the initial planning documents, the Business Case is revised and re-evaluated and a decision is made to either halt the project, or proceed to Project Planning.

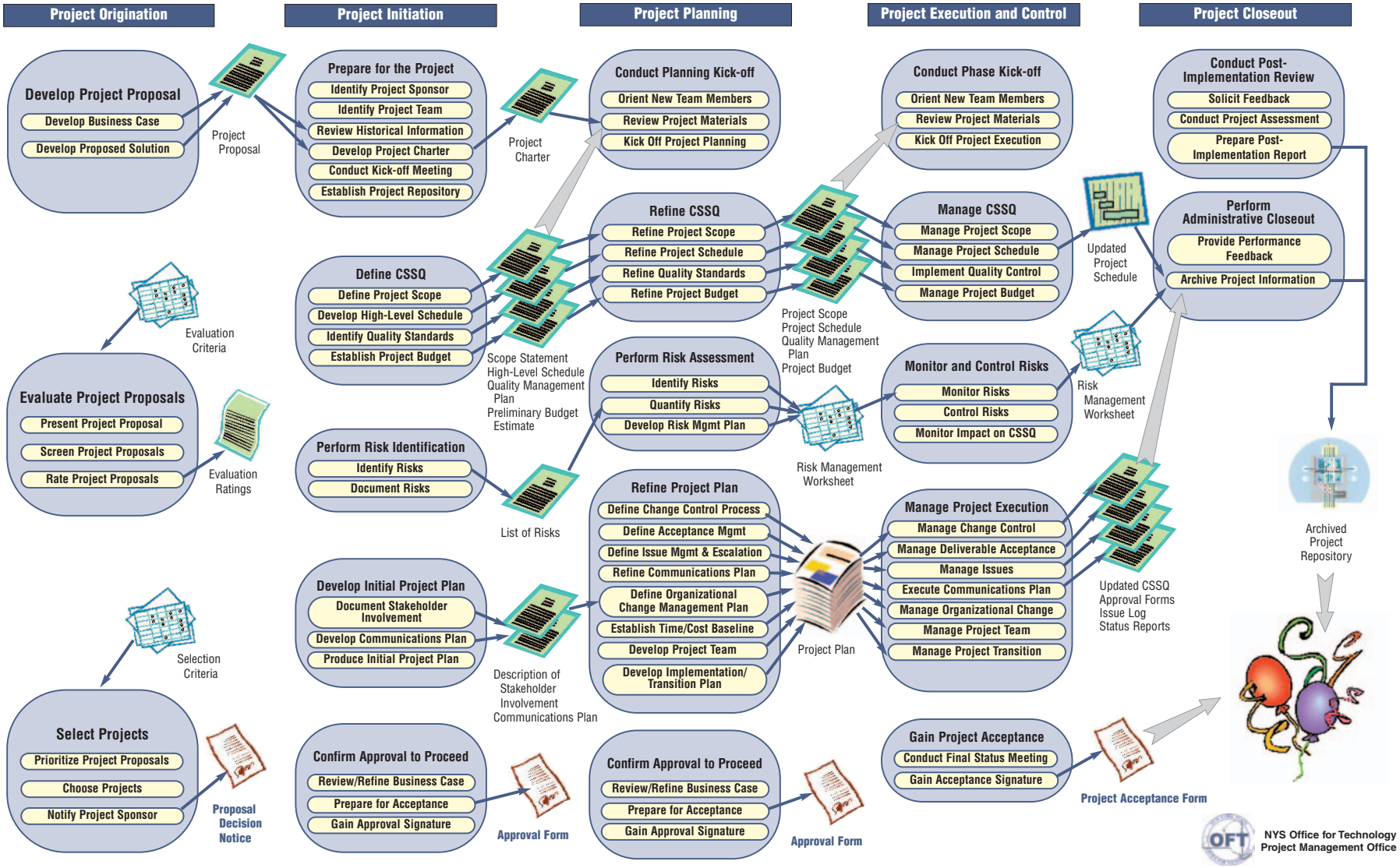
3. Project Planning builds on the work done in Project Initiation, refining and augmenting CSSQ and Project Plan deliverables. Usually, additional members join the Project Team, and they assist the Project Manager in further elaborating the details of the Cost, Scope, Schedule and Quality. A number of key elements are added to the Project Plan, including project-specific items such as change control, acceptance management and issue management, as well as externally-focused items such as organizational change management and project transition. The initial list of project risks is augmented, and detailed mitigation plans are developed. Project Planning marks the completion of the Project Plan – i.e., no work is left uncovered. However, some of the later phases of the project work may continue to be planned in more depth (e.g., Transition and Implementation details may not be developed until later in Project Execution). At the conclusion of Project Planning, the Business Case is revised and re-evaluated based on the completed planning documents and a decision is again made to either halt the project, or to commit the resources necessary for Project Execution and Control.

4. Project Execution and Control is where most of the resources are applied/expended on the project. A significant number of team members will join the project at the beginning of this phase. The primary task of the Project Manager during Project Execution and Control is to enable the Project Team to execute the tasks on the defined Project Schedule and develop the product or service the project is expected to deliver. The Project Manager uses the processes and plans prepared during Project Initiation and Project Planning to manage the project, while preparing the organization for the implementation of the product/service and for transitioning the product/service responsibility from the Project Team to the Performing Organization.

5. In Project Closeout, the Project Team assesses the outcome of the project, as well as the performance of the Project Team and the Performing Organization. This is accomplished primarily through soliciting and evaluating feedback from Customers, Project Team members, Consumers and other stakeholders. The primary purpose of this assessment is to document best practices and lessons learned for use on future projects. Key project metrics are also captured to enable the Performing Organization to compare and evaluate performance measurements across projects.

The following diagram illustrates every phase, process and task in the project lifecycle.

Figure 0-1 *NYS Project Management Guidebook* The Project Management Lifecycle



Project Roles and Responsibilities

Throughout this ***Guidebook***, reference is made to specific roles that must be performed at various times throughout the life of the project. The following section provides an overview of the various roles that are required on projects, what the responsibilities are for each role, and some examples of how organizations have filled those roles on projecs of varying size.

There are many groups of people involved in the project lifecycle.

The **Project Team** is a group that is responsible for planning and executing the project. It consists of a Project Manager and a variable number of Project Team members, who are brought in to deliver their tasks according to the Project Schedule.

- The **Project Manager** is the person who is responsible for ensuring that the Project Team completes the project. The Project Manager develops the Project Plan with the team and manages the team's performance of project tasks. It is also the responsibility of the Project Manager to secure acceptance and approval of deliverables from the Project Sponsor and Stakeholders.
- The **Project Team Members** are responsible for executing tasks and producing deliverables as outlined in the Project Plan and directed by the Project Manager, at whatever level of effort or participation has been defined for them. On larger projects, some Project Team members may serve as **Team Leaders**, providing task and technical leadership.

The **Project Sponsor** is a manager with demonstrable interest in the outcome of the project who is responsible for securing spending authority and resources for the project. Ideally, the Project Sponsor should be the highest-ranking manager possible, in proportion to the project size and scope. The Project Sponsor initiates the Project Proposal process, champions the project in the Performing Organization, and is the ultimate decision-maker for the project. The Project Sponsor provides support for the Project Manager, approves major deliverables, and signs off on approvals to proceed to each succeeding project phase. The Project Sponsor may elect to delegate any of the above responsibilities to other personnel either on or outside the Project Team.

Performing Organization Management (POM) includes all members of the organization's management team that may exert influence on Project Team members or be affected by and involved in the development and implementation of the product of the project. The committees that are formed to evaluate and select proposed projects for the Performing Organization are comprised of members of the Performing Organization Management.

- The **Project Proposal Team** is a group responsible for preparing the Project Proposal in the Origination phase. It is organized by the Project Sponsor.
- The **Project Selection Committee** comprises members of the Performing Organization Management team who meet on a regular basis to evaluate Project Proposals and select projects for initiation. They maintain the Project Proposal rating models and project selection criteria.

Customers comprise the business units that identified the need for the product or service the project will develop. Customers can be at all levels of an organization, from Commissioner to entry-level clerk. Since it is frequently not feasible for all the Customers to be directly involved in the project, the following roles are identified:

- **Customer Representatives** are members of the Customer community that are identified and made available to the project for their subject matter expertise. Their responsibility is to accurately represent their business units' needs to the Project Team, and to validate the deliverables that describe the product or service that the project will produce. Customer Representatives are also expected to bring back to the Customer community the information about the project. Towards the end of the project, Customer Representatives will test the product or service the project is developing, using and evaluating it while providing feedback to the Project Team.
- **Customer Decision-Makers** are those members of the Customer community who have been designated to make project decisions on behalf of major business units that will use, or will be affected by, the product or service the project will deliver. Customer Decision-Makers are members of the POM responsible for achieving consensus of their business unit on project issues and outputs, and communicating it to the Project Team. They attend project meetings as requested by the Project Manager, review and

approve process deliverables, and provide subject matter expertise to the Project Team. On some projects, they may also serve as Customer Representatives.

Consumers include all the people that will use the product or service that the project is developing. Consumers internal to the Performing Organizations may also be Customers.

Internal Stakeholders include all the people that are in any way affected by the new product or service within the Performing Organization. This may include the Project Team, the Performing Organization Management, Customers, as well as Customer co-workers who will be affected by the change in Customer work practices due to the new product or service; Customer managers affected by modified workflows or logistics; Customer correspondents affected by the quantity or quality of newly available information; and other similarly affected groups.

External Stakeholders include all the people outside the Performing Organization that are in any way affected by the new product or service. Within the context of New York State Government, this group may include the Legislature, the Executive Chamber, other agencies, the media, and the citizens. Consumers may also be External Stakeholders.

Vendors are contracted to provide additional products or services the project will require and may be members of the Project Team.

The following examples illustrate how agency titles map to project roles on small, medium and large projects. Each example includes project description, comparison of project roles and agency titles, and a project organizational chart.

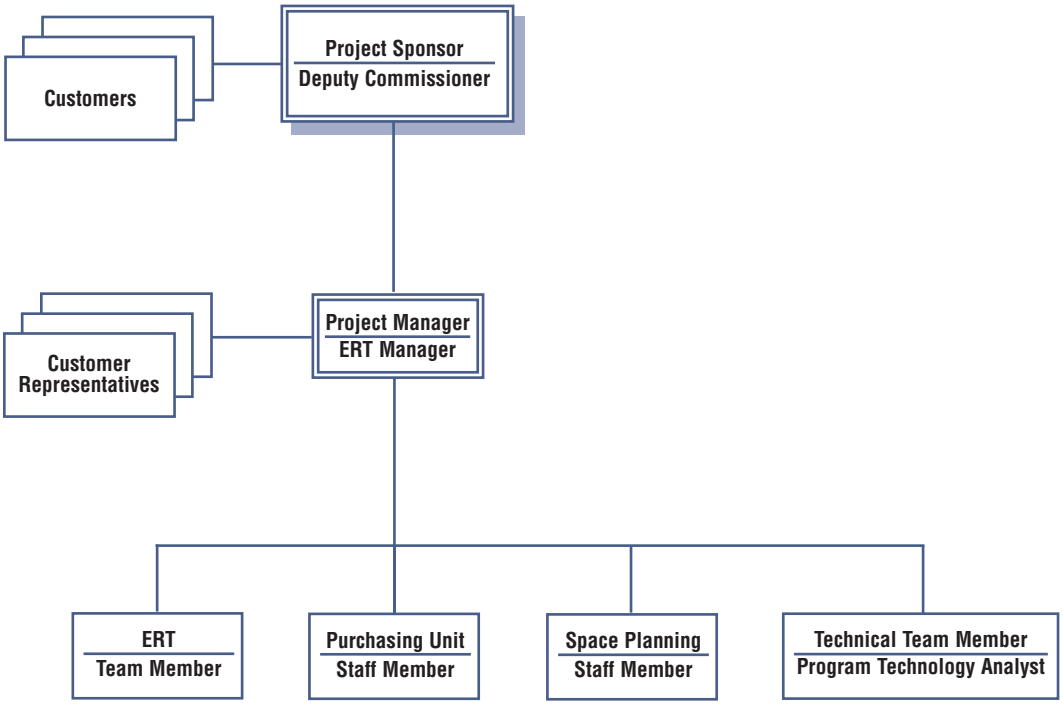
Example 1 – Small Project

Project Description:

The creation of a Security Research Lab is an example of a small project. The following is a summary of the roles filled on the Project Team:

PROJECT ROLE	STATE TITLE
Project Sponsor	Deputy Commissioner for Policy/Standards, OFT
Project Manager	Emergency Response Team (ERT) Manager (Person responsible for development and implementation of the Security Research Lab)
Team Members: Technical Member	Program Technology Analyst
Team Members: Purchasing Unit Staff Member	Purchasing Assistant
Team Member: Space Planning Staff Member	Office Services Manager
Customers	OFT Security, Network and Application units and other state agencies.
Customer Representatives	State Agency Information Security Officers (ISO's)
External Stakeholders	The purpose of the project is to provide an environment for the Emergency Response Team (ERT) to simulate attacks with viruses and hacker tools so that appropriate countermeasures may be developed. Thus, stakeholders include the Legislature, the Executive Chamber, the citizens, and all agencies within NYS.
Internal Stakeholders	Emergency Response Team

Figure 0-2 Organizational Chart for Example 1 – Small Project Example



Example 2 – Medium-sized Project

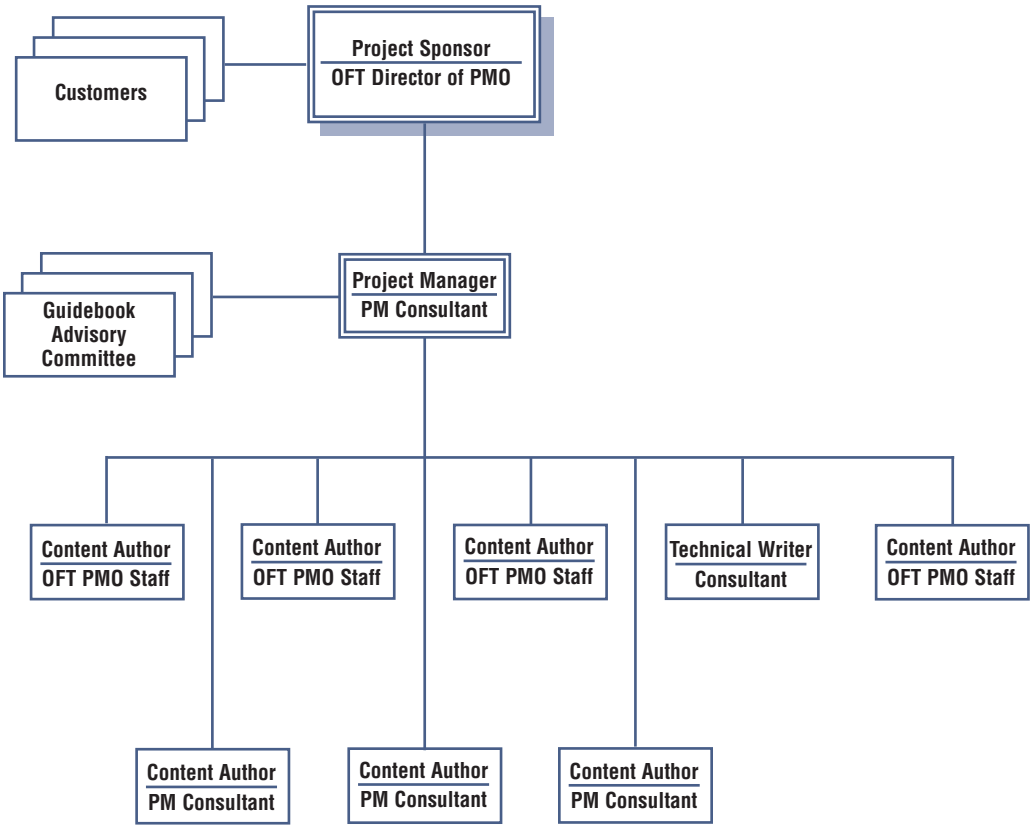
Project Description:

The definition of the New York State Project Management methodology and the creation of this ***Guidebook*** was a medium-sized project. The following roles were filled on the Project Team:

PROJECT ROLE	STATE TITLE
Project Sponsor	Director of Project Management Office, OFT
Project Manager	Contract Project Manager (A contractor was hired to fill this role because the OFT PMO was not staffed when the project was begun.)
Team Members: Content Author (4)	Program Technology Analysts (3), OFT Administrative Analyst Trainee (1), OFT
Team Members: Content Author (3)	Consultant (Experienced professional Project Managers)
Team Member: Technical Writer (1)	Consultant (Experienced professional Technical Writer)
Customers	All New York State government entities, Project Managers in state agencies, in particular.
Customer Representatives	The Guidebook Advisory Committee was made up of representatives from approximately 20 state agencies. Their titles ranged from Directors of IRM (grade level varies by agency) to Managers of DP Services (G27). We also solicited input from several G23 to G25 level staff members that serve in project management capacities.
External Stakeholders	The purpose of the project is to improve the success of projects undertaken in NYS government entities. Thus, stakeholders include the Legislature, the Executive Chamber, the citizens, and all agencies within NYS.
Internal Stakeholders	OFT is the Performing Organization, so by definition internal stakeholders must reside within that organization. All OFT Program Directors are internal stakeholders, as all of their projects will be managed using the product (methodology & ***The Guidebook***) of this project.

Subject Matter Experts	OFT Strategic Assessment and Acquisition Team, OGS Procurement Group, OFT Counsel's Office, OFT Contract Management Office.

Figure 0-3 Organizational Chart for Example 2 – Medium Project Example



Example 3 – Large Project

Project Description:

The New York State Workers' Compensation Board OPTICS project was a large-sized project. The following roles were filled on the Project Team:

PROJECT ROLE	STATE TITLE
Project Sponsors	Chairman of the Workers' Compensation Board Designees in his absence were the Executive Director, the Deputy Executive Director
Project Manager	Director of the Information Management Services Division

Teams

There were many different teams at various points in the project lifecycle. Asterisks mark team members that were dedicated to the project for the duration of their involvement.

Team	Sub-team	Team Roles	##	Comments
Re-engineering Procurement Team		Team Lead	1	Project Manager
		Team Members – Technical Evaluators, Customer Representatives	4	Project Manager, Technical Managers
		Team Members – Financial Evaluators, Subject Matter Experts, Finance	2	Financial Analysts
	Selection Committee	Committee Members, Customer Decision-Makers	3	Deputy Executive Director, Senior Managers
Re-engineering Study Team		Team Lead	1	Project Manager
		Team Facilitators, Subject Matter Experts, Re-engineering and Change Management	5	Price Waterhouse Change Management Practice
	Core Team	Team Members, Customer Representatives	15	Individuals from every functional area, ranging from M-4 Managers to Grade 14 Individual Contributors
	Guidance Team	Team Members, Performing Organization Management	25	Mid-level managers from all regions and functional bureaus
	Executive Steering Committee	Team Members, Customer Decision-Makers	6	Chairman, General Counsel, Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director Operations, Deputy Executive Director Administration, Deputy Executive Director Compliance
*Imaging Team		Team Lead	1	Manager, Data Processing Services
		Team Members, Subject Matter Experts, Application Development (contractors)	3	
		Team Member, Subject Matter Expert, Imaging Technical Specialist	1	Systems Programmer
Imaging Outsourcing Procurement Team		Team Lead	1	Project Manager
		Team Members, Technical Evaluators, Customer Representatives	4	Project Manager, Technical and Functional Managers

Team	Sub-team	Team Roles	##	Comments
		Team members, Financial Evaluators, Subject Matter Experts, Finance	2	Financial Analysts
	Selection Committee	Committee Members Customer Decision-Makers	3	Deputy Executive Director, Senior Managers
Application Development Team		Team Lead	1	Chief DPS
	Data Conversion Team	*Team Lead	1	Manager, Data Processing Services
		*Team Members, Subject Matter Experts, Data Conversion Analysts/ Programmers	3-5	Senior Programmer/Analysts
		Team Members, Customer Representatives/ Decision-Makers	2-5	SG-14 up to M-1
	Application Conversion Team	*Team Lead	1	Manager, Data Processing Services
		*Team Members, Subject Matter Experts, Programmer/Analysts	10	Mix of contractors and State staff
		Team Members, Customer Representatives/ Decision-Makers	2-5	SG-14 up to M-1
	Design Team	*Team Lead	1	Manager, Data Processing Services
		*Team Members, Subject Matter Expert, Business Analyst	1	
		Customer Representatives/ Decision-Makers	12	From Grade 6 to M-3
	Development Team	*Team Lead	1	Manager, Data Processing Services
		*Team Members, Subject Matter Experts, Development/Design	15	
Technical Infrastructure Team		Team Lead	1	Director of Technical Services

Team	Sub-team	Team Roles	##	Comments
		Team Members, Subject Matter Experts, Technology Deployment	Up to 30	Technical Services staff were deployed as needed
Facilities Team		Team Lead	1	Director of Facilities Management
		Team Members, Subject Matter Experts, Facilities Management	3-5	Deployed as needed
		Team Members, Subject Matter Experts, Real Estate Specialist	2	OGS
Implementation Leadership Teams	Overall Manager		1	Manager – Continuous Improvement
	One team per district	Team Lead	1	District Manager
		Team Members, Subject Matter Experts in various operational areas	4-10	District Staff
Imaging Conversion Teams		Team Lead	1	Project Manager
	Imaging Rules Team	Team Lead	1	Manager, Data Processing Services
		Customer Representatives/ Decision-Makers	15	From each region
	Imaging Contractor	*Production staff	Peak 300; steady state 100	Specific staff varied as facility and service was developed and then implemented, and peaked, again as conversion and then fell to steady state
Re-engineering Process/ Procedures Development Team		*Team Lead	1	Administrative Analyst
		*Team Members, Subject Matter Experts, Technical Writing	5	
		*Team members, Subject Matter Experts, Application Development	2	
		Customer Representatives/ Decision-Makers	3-5	
Training Team		Team Lead Curriculum Developers	1 3	Manager of Staff Development

Figure 0-4 Organizational Chart for Example 3 – Large Project Example

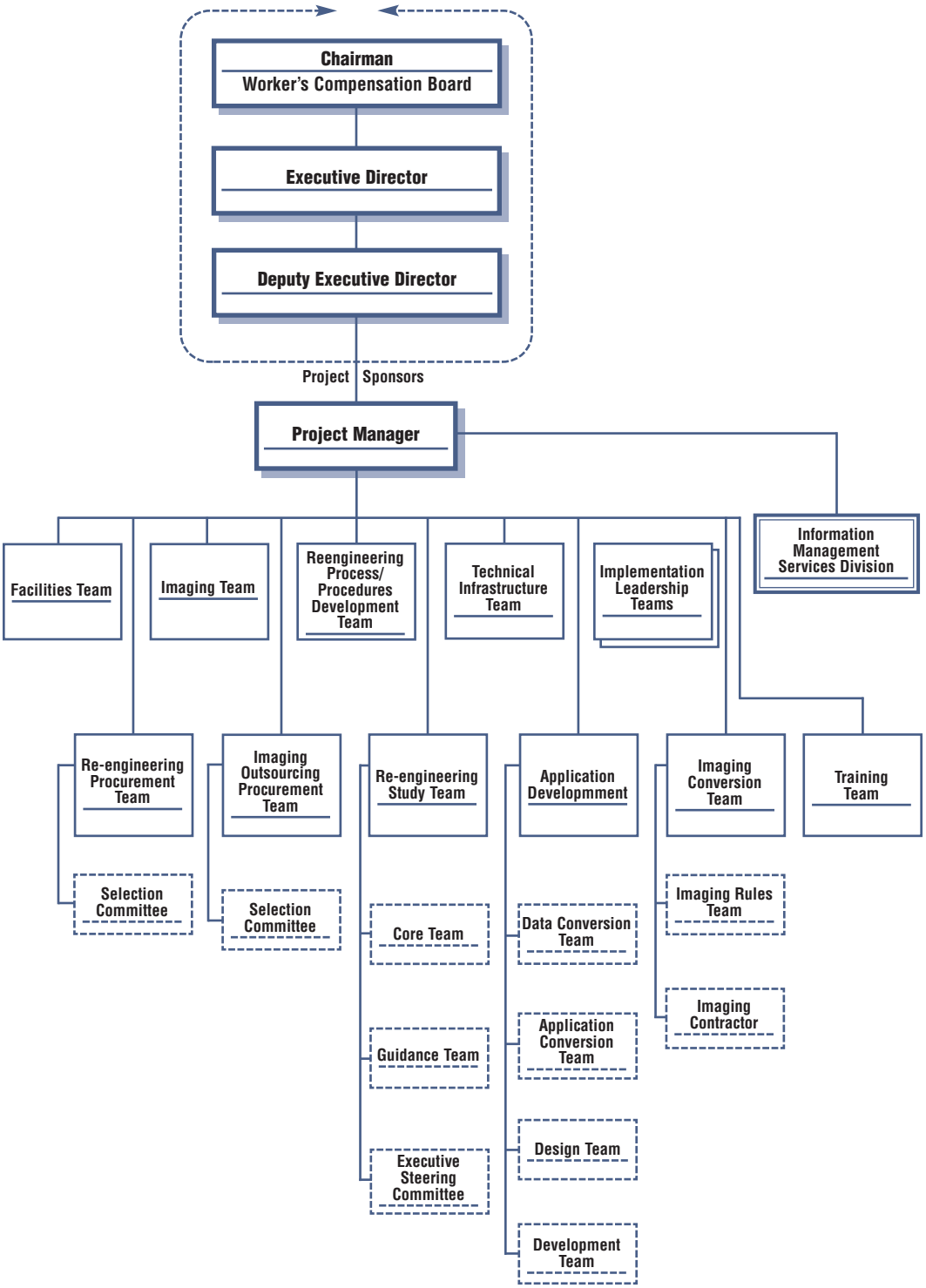


Figure 0-5 New York State Project Management Life Cycle Templates

Phase	Template	Description	Page in Text	Page in Appendix
All Phases	Project Status Report	Written by the Project Manager, this report summarizes project activity and is issued at pre-determined intervals (weekly) throughout the project.	95	39
All Phases	Project Deliverable Approval Form	Indicates Project Sponsor acceptance of deliverables attached and approval to proceed.	110	53
Project Origination	Business Case	Defines the business need for the project and supports the Project Proposal with objective analysis of the costs and benefits of doing the proposed project.	26	17
Project Origination	Project Proposed Solution	Defines the technical solution for how the project's product will support the organization's business need and strategic plan.	29	19
Project Origination	Proposal Decision Notice	Identifies the decision of the Project Selection Committee and communicates that decision to the Project Sponsor and other Stakeholders.	40	21
Project Initiation	Project Charter	Provides authority to establish the project. It is the contract between the Project Team and the Project Sponsor.	61	23
Project Initiation	Project Initiation Kick-off Meeting Agenda	Outlines a meeting agenda for an effective kick-off meeting.	65	27
Project Initiation	Project Scope Statement	Documents the deliverables of the project, its results and/or quantifiable objectives.	72	29
Project Initiation	Project Schedule Worksheet	A preliminary high-level schedule of the entire project.	77	31
Project Initiation	Project Quality Management Plan	Identifies and documents standards for each project deliverable.	81	33
Project Initiation	Preliminary Budget Estimate	Documents a preliminary estimate of the cost to complete the project.	87	37
Project Initiation	Project Communications Plan	Defines how often information will be disseminated, including the format and media to be used to reach the desired audience.	99	45
Project Initiation	Project Plan	The compilation of Project Initiation deliverables that ultimately guides the execution and control of the project.	104	49
Project Planning	Project Planning Kick-off Meeting Agenda	Outlines a meeting agenda for an effective kick-off meeting.	135	57

Figure 0-5 (Continued)

Phase	Template	Description	Page in Text	Page in Appendix
Project Planning	Project Budget	Refines cost estimates based on increased detail in Project Scope and Schedule.	146	59
Project Planning	Project Risk Management Worksheet	Ranks risks based on the likelihood and impact of risk occurrence, and details risk mitigation plans.	150	61
Project Planning	Project Change Request	Documents and defines requested changes.	158	63
Project Planning	Organizational Change Management	Defines and documents a plan to manage the changes that could occur in an organization as a result of implementing the product of the project.	168	67
Project Planning	Project Team Training Plan	Describes the skills required for team members and training target dates.	174	71
Project Planning	Project Implementation and Transition Plan	Describes implementation activities, their timeframes, and the transition of responsibility to the Performing Organization.	179	73
Project Execution and Control	Project Execution and Control Kick-off Meeting Agenda	Outlines a meeting agenda for an effective kick-off meeting.	207	77
Project Execution and Control	Progress Report	Produced by each Project Team member, this report documents time spent on tasks and provides estimates of time needed to complete tasks.	213	79
Project Execution and Control	Project Acceptance Form	Indicates Project Sponsor acceptance of the project deliverables and approval to proceed to the next phase.	250	81
Project Closeout	Post-Implementation Survey	Tool for soliciting feedback on the project.	270	83
Project Closeout	Post-Implementation Report	Summarizes feedback on project effectiveness, lessons learned, best practices and key project metrics.	280	91
Project Closeout	Project Respository Table of Contents	A suggested list of project-related materials to be maintained.	288	97

1 PROJECT ORIGINATION

Purpose

The purpose of Project Origination is to evaluate projects proposed for the next planning cycle and to reach a consensus on the projects to be selected. During this phase, the strength of a project's Business Case is tested, and the viability of the Proposed Solution is explored. A determination is made as to whether the project is consistent with the agency's strategic plan and affordable within budget guidelines.

The Project Proposal process may actually be part of the budget cycle, serving as the justification for budget requests. In this case, Project Proposals may need to be created a full budget cycle prior to the project's anticipated initiation.

Other factors that impact Project Origination include statutory requirements, regulations, legislative restrictions, and civil service rules.

Each organization has its own approach to green-lighting desired projects. The approach outlined below is only one of many possible variations of the evaluation and selection process. There are some general principles, however, that apply to any effective evaluation and selection process:

- The deciding body must have enough information about the merits of the project's Business Case and the viability of its Proposed Solution to make a meaningful evaluation;
- The competing projects' merits must be evaluated and compared using a consistently applied methodology;
- The selection process must take into consideration the project's fit with the organizational mission and strategic plan.

List of Processes

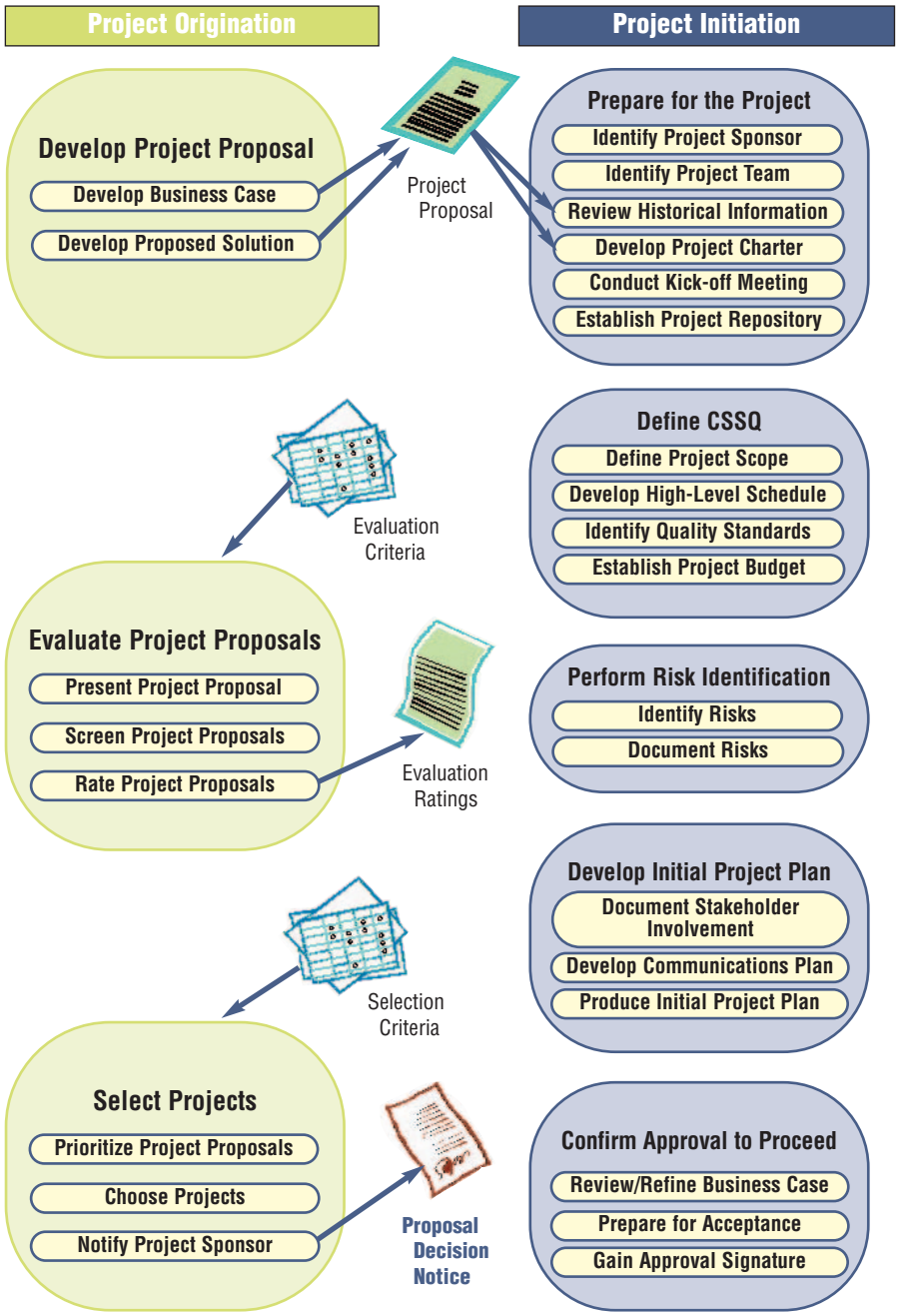
The three major processes in this phase of the project management lifecycle are:

- **Develop Project Proposal**, where the initial Business Case is made, and initial project parameters are defined;
- **Evaluate Project Proposals**, where cost/benefit analysis is performed, and the projects are evaluated against a set of specific business criteria; and

- **Select Projects**, where a consensus is reached on the project's feasibility and relative importance in comparison to other proposed projects, and a decision is formally made regarding the Project Proposal.

The following chart illustrates all of the processes, tasks, and deliverables of this phase in the context of the project management lifecycle.

Figure 1-1



List of Roles

The following roles are involved in carrying out the processes of this phase. The detailed descriptions of these roles can be found in the Section I Introduction.

- Project Sponsor
- Project Proposal Team
- Project Selection Committee

List of Deliverables

Since a Project Manager is not usually assigned to the project at this time, members of the Performing Organization Management prepare and review Project Origination deliverables.

Figure 1-2 lists all Project Origination tasks and their deliverables (or outcomes).

Figure 1-2

Processes	Tasks	Task Deliverables *(Outcomes)*
Develop Project Proposal	Develop Business Case	Business Case
	Develop Proposed Solution	Proposed Solution
Evaluate Project Proposals	Present Project Proposal	*Project Proposal Understanding*
	Screen Project Proposals	*Proposals Removed from Further Consideration*
	Rate Project Proposals	Evaluation Ratings
Select Projects	Prioritize Project Proposals	*Prioritized Proposals*
	Choose Projects	*Selected Projects*
	Notify Project Sponsor	Proposal Decision Notice

1.1 DEVELOP PROJECT PROPOSAL

Purpose

Before a project can be selected for initiation, a persuasive case must be made for its viability given current organizational priorities. In **Develop Project Proposal**, the initial Business Case for the project is formulated, and all information required for project selection is formalized in the Proposed Solution. A proposal for a project may come from any place in the Performing Organization, but someone must be identified as the "owner" of the proposal, and must serve as Project Sponsor, at least through the evaluation and selection process. The Project Sponsor may be in executive management, in a specific functional program area, or a representative of the Customers or the Consumers within the Performing Organization.

Roles

- Project Sponsor
- Project Proposal Team

Since information from the Business Case is included in the Proposed Solution – and vice versa – the tasks to develop those documents should be performed not consecutively, but concurrently, with one document informing and influencing the other.

Tasks

1.1.1 Develop Business Case

The Business Case is one of the defining documents of the project, providing information necessary to support the decision to launch the project at the end of Project Origination and to continue the project in subsequent phases. The Business Case must identify an existing business need and lay the foundation for developing a potential solution to meet that need. The cost of implementing the solution must be estimated and compared to the benefits gained, and justification for the potential project should also depend on whether the project is consistent with the orga-

The tasks to Develop Project Proposal are:

- Develop Business Case
- Develop Proposed Solution

nization's mission. For a sample Business Case template, see Figure 1-3, the New York State Project Business Case.

The Business Case must provide a compelling case for the project. A careful study should be made of expected benefits to the organization implementing the project. An analysis of the costs, benefits and risks associated with the proposed approach can be made, and the justification necessary to obtain the proper level of commitment from the decision-maker(s) can be formulated. Once an original cost estimate for the project is derived during Develop Proposed Solution. The Business Case can also identify special funding sources available for the proposed initiative, and should align the project's costs with the agency budget cycle. If the project is going to span multiple budget cycles, a multi-year strategy for project funding should be discussed with the agency fiscal officer, who may find it useful to review the Business Case with another constituency – the Division of the Budget (DoB).

During Project Origination, any estimates are acknowledged to be high-level at best. As the project progresses through the Initiation and Planning phases, those estimates will become more precise as more is learned about the true parameters of the project, and additional go/no go decisions will be made based on the latest information. It is also important to note that, in order to define project parameters with adequate precision, Initiation and Planning will require substantial resources, and initial estimates should reflect that fact.

Before presenting the proposal for evaluation, the Project Sponsor should have the Business Case reviewed by the people most intimately familiar with its imperatives – Customer Decision-Makers.

The Business Case will continue to be a critical component of the decision-making process throughout the entire project management lifecycle – from the initial decision to proceed with the project to the decisions made at periodic project reviews to continue, modify or terminate the project. At the end of each project management phase and whenever there is a significant change to the project or the business function, the Business Case will be reviewed and re-validated.

Figure 1-3 New York State Project Business Case

New York State
Project Business Case

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

Project Name: _____ Date: _____

Agency: _____

Business Unit/Program Area: _____

Project Sponsor: _____ Project Manager: _____

*Enter the **Project Name**.*
*Enter the current **Date**.*
*Enter the name of the **Business Unit** or **Program Area**.*
*Enter the name of the **Project Sponsor** and the **Project Manager** (if known).*

Business Need/Problem:

*Briefly describe the **Need** or **Problem** driving the proposed project.*

Solution (as described in Proposed Solution):

*Briefly describe the product of the project that would resolve the Business Need or Problem, and the **Solution** proposed to create it*

Consistency/Fit with Organization's Mission:

Describe how the project is consistent with the mission or provide rationale if it is not .

Figure 1-3 (Continued)

Anticipated Benefits: (both qualitative and quantitative)

*List all **Anticipated Benefits** resulting directly from the project. Specify the ways there will be measurable improvement of new capabilities. Consider the implications of NOT doing the project – what benefits would be missed?*

Original Cost Estimate: (from Proposed Solution)

*Provide **Cost Estimate** for project from proposal.*

Cost/Benefit Analysis:

*Briefly justify the **Costs** for the identified **Benefits**. Include quantitative analysis, e.g., calculations of anticipated savings, costs avoided, Return On Investment, etc.*

Special Fund Sources:

*List and describe any **Sources** for project funding. Are there grants that will be applied for? Are federal funds available? Is a charge-back to the Customers planned?*

1.1.2 Develop Proposed Solution

A Proposed Solution starts with the summary of the business need (abstracted from the Business Case), defines the optimal solution to address that need, and describes how the solution fits into the organization's strategic plan.

The Proposed Solution should include an evaluation of all alternatives considered, and a justification of the solution selected. The basis of time and cost estimates for the Proposed Solution (expert judgment, availability of historical data on similar projects, Request For Information (RFI) responses, etc.), as well as the accuracy of the estimates (+/- 100%, +/- 50%, etc.), should be documented. Some initial risk factors should be considered, along with strategies for mitigation. An initial assessment of the project's impact on the organization is made, laying a foundation for a successful transition at the end of Project Execution and Control.

It may be advisable to include a description of the project's profile/visibility, documenting, for example, whether the project is required as a result of federal or state legislative action, gubernatorial or executive mandates, or agency program priorities. In general, highly visible projects will receive higher priority.

If the Performing Organization uses standard evaluation forms/formats, the Proposed Solution may include a "self-assessment" performed by the Project Sponsor or the Project Proposal Team. Such a self-assessment may assist the Project Sponsor to realize weaknesses in the proposal before formal submission for evaluation and selection.

The Proposed Solution should also identify legislative, regulatory, and policy systems that will facilitate, compel, or constrain the project. For example, the project may be funded by a specific line item in the recently passed state budget, or the project may be constrained by necessary interfaces to state or federal funding and/or control/oversight agencies. All affected Stakeholders should be identified.

It is highly advisable to have an independent party verify the Proposed Solution and associated estimates.

The completed Proposed Solution is combined with the Business Case to complete the Project Proposal, which will be presented to the project evaluation and selection process.

Figure 1-4 New York State Proposed Solution

New York State
Proposed Solution

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

Project Name: _____ Date: _____

Business Unit/Program Area: _____

Project Sponsor: _____ Project Manager: _____

*Enter the **Project Name**.*
*Enter the current **Date**.*
*Enter the name of the **Business Unit** or **Program Area**.*
*Enter the name of the **Project Sponsor** who is the contact person if more information is needed, and the **Project Manager** if known.*

Summary of Business Need for the Project (from the Business Case):

Briefly summarize the Business Case. This section should include identification of the Customers and anticipated Consumers of the project's product and a description of the particular business problem or need the project will address.

Proposed Solutions / Project Approach:

Alternatives considered	Why chosen/not chosen

*This section should include a description of the **Solution** being proposed and others that have been considered. Describe why this solution was selected instead of the others, and why the others were not. The decision should summarize the strategy that will be used to deliver the project and identify high-level milestones and dates. It is possible that a single solution cannot yet be recommended; in that case, indicate when – and how – the decision is likely to be made.*

Figure 1-4 (Continued)

Project Objectives:

*Briefly describe the **Objectives** of the project.*

Consistency/Fit with Organizational Strategic Plan:

*Describe how this project and its objectives specifically support the organization-wide **Strategic Plan**?*

BUDGET/RESOURCES:

Estimated Costs:			
Type of Outlay	Initial (Development)	Annual (Recurring)	Remarks
Hardware			
Software			
Supplies			
User Training			
Consultant Services			
Other:			
TOTAL			
Estimated Resources/Personnel:			
Program Areas	hours	hours	
	hours	hours	
	hours	hours	
Information Services	hours	hours	
Consultant Services	hours	hours	
	hours	hours	

*Enter the **Estimated Costs** for each of the items listed, both **Initial**, during project development, and **Recurring**. Add any **important** relevant information under **Remarks**. Enter the **Resources/Personnel** estimated for the project and the number of hours required of each resource during the **Initial** project period, and then **Annually**.*

Figure 1-4 (Continued)

Risks:

*List and briefly describe **Risks** to the project that you have identified.*

Organizational Impact:

*Briefly describe the **Impact** the project will have on the organization.*

Additional Comments:

Enter any other information that may be important to the project.

Deliverable

- **Project Proposal** – a document describing the project that is submitted by the Project Sponsor to the selection process. It comprises the **Business Case** and the **Proposed Solution**, which include such items as a description of the product, the benefit to the performing organization, alignment with the organization's mission and strategic plan, a high-level estimate of the required resources, costs and timeframes, and any other information specifically required by the Performing Organization for selection consideration.

1.2 EVALUATE PROJECT PROPOSALS

Many organizations generate multiple proposals for various new initiatives on a continuing basis; however, budgetary and other constraints allow only a fraction of those efforts to occur. Choosing the right projects, which support the organization's mission and assist with the implementation of its strategic plan, becomes a crucial activity, starting with an objective evaluation of proposed initiatives. **Evaluate Project Proposals** presents an approach to rating competing proposals in a methodical, impartial fashion; the results are indispensable to the success of the subsequent project selection process. Organizations may implement this process in a variety of ways – from relying on unilateral decisions of a chief executive or designee, to convening cross-functional deliberative councils. The tasks presented below are designed to illustrate the components of an effective proposal screening and evaluation process, and not to prescribe a particular format required to reach a desired objective.

Roles

- Project Sponsor
- Project Selection Committee

The frequency of an organization's evaluation/selection process may be dictated by many factors, including the size of the proposed projects, the vacillations of the budget cycle, and the occurrence of external mandates and internal imperatives.

1.2.1 Present Project Proposals

Because the quality and level of detail among typical Project Proposals tends to vary a great deal, it is beneficial to allow the Project Sponsor to make a case for the project in person. This also allows decision-makers to ask questions and gather additional information on the spot, without resorting to more formal – and slower – channels of communication. The presentation should be based on the Proposed Solution and the Business Case, but it can take many forms – from a formal slide presentation to an informal run-through of existing material. The objective is to allow the decision-makers to interact with those who best understand the business reasons for the initiative, and its Proposed Solution.

The tasks to Evaluate Project Proposals are:

- Present Project Proposals
- Screen Project Proposals
- Rate Project Proposals

1.2.2 Screen Project Proposals

Before a great deal of effort is expended on rating, prioritizing and selecting presented projects, it may be useful to screen competing proposals by asking some important questions, such as:

- Does the project support the organization's mission?
- Does the Proposed Solution align with the organization's strategic plan/technical architecture?
- Is there an available/plausible funding source for this effort?
- Does the project's cost/benefit analysis justify its initiation?

Unless a project is legislatively (or otherwise) mandated, simply working through these questions will result in elimination of some proposals from further consideration. The Project Sponsor should be notified, and the decision should be documented on the Proposal Decision Notice form (see Figure 1-7).

1.2.3 Rate Project Proposals

Rating of Project Proposals is generally performed by executive management or by a group designated by executive management (Project Selection Committee). The group may meet on a regular or an as-needed basis to perform this function, or the rating of proposals may be an integral part of the organizational strategic/tactical planning and budgeting process.

The process is usually formal, with specific forms/formats and procedures. In smaller organizations, however, it may be more informal, and may even be combined with the selection process. In these cases, a brief presentation to the Commissioner, Director, or other organization head may be all that is required to commit resources (funding, personnel, equipment, etc.) and initiate the project.

Proposals are generally rated according to a set of specific business criteria. The process may include a broad technical review to determine if the proposal follows current agency standards and technical architectures. The funding associated with a project is also a critical component of the rating process. A Performing Organization may have unique rules regarding funding for proposals. During Project Origination, the Project Sponsor must identify whether funds are expected from the Performing Organization's current/future operating budget, or whether additional funding sources are available.

The level of approvals needed may vary depending on whether the project exceeds or falls below defined thresholds. Thresholds may be based on cost, involvement of more than one functional area, project needs within or outside of standards and procedures, or other areas specific to the Performing Organization. The rating process generally assigns a score to each project, to inform the selection process. See Figure 1-5 for a Sample Project Rating Matrix.

Figure 1-5 Sample Project Rating Matrix

SAMPLE PROJECT RATING MATRIX

	Project Name	Project Sponsor	Strategic Alignment*	Risk*	Cost/ Benefit*	Total
1						
2						
3						

*Each of these categories would have a separate matrix or worksheet as supporting documentation, which would typically roll up to a single rating within each category. These worksheets should be standard across projects to provide comparative rankings.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Mandatory Requirement:

0 Initiative not mandatory
1 Initiative inferred by or strongly suggested in law, regulation
2 Initiative specifically required by law, regulation

Alignment to Mission, Goals, & Objectives:

-1 The initiative does not map to any mission, goal, or objectives
0 Explicit documentation somewhat maps this initiative to missions, goals, and objectives.
1 Explicit documentation clearly maps this initiative to missions, goals, and objectives.
2 Accomplishment of mission, goals, and objectives is highly dependent on this initiative and clear documentation exists which supports this assertion.

Process Improvement:

-1 Initiative does not assist or generate process improvements.
0 There is documented evidence that the initiative will assist or generate process improvements within a workgroup.
1 There is documented evidence that the initiative will assist or generate process improvements across a division.
2 There is documented evidence that the initiative will assist or generate process improvements across the agency.

Other categories that might be included within strategic alignment include:

- Consequences of not doing the initiative
- Impact on Internal and/or External Customers
- Cross-Functional/Organizational Impact
- Scope of Beneficiaries

RISK

-1 The initiative's impact depends on another initiative not yet completed – AND – scheduled risk mitigation actions have not been identified.
0 There are no predicted or foreseen adverse impacts on the initiative's schedule – OR – the initiative's impact does not depend significantly on any other initiative yet to be completed.
1 There are no predicted or foreseen adverse impacts on the initiative's schedule – AND – there are no major interfaces with other initiatives or systems.

COST/BENEFIT

-1 The cost estimate is highly dependent upon uncontrolled variables (e.g., availability of external funding sources, changes in component pricing or maintenance contracts) and is therefore subject to significant change (>10%).
0 Situation may arise which may cause this year's costs to vary by no more than 10% of estimates.
1 Measures to identify in a timely manner and reduce variances between the actual cost of work performed and the budgeted cost of work performed are clearly documented.
2 Measures to identify in a timely manner and reduce variances between the actual cost of work performed and the budgeted cost of work performed are clearly documented – AND – cost estimates are not significantly dependent upon identifiable uncontrolled variables.

A simple method to compare projects uses pairwise comparisons. For all projects being considered, make a comparison between two projects and determine which has the most overall value to the organization.

The example below shows a pairwise comparison done for five (5) projects. When a project is compared to itself, the result is NA. (Ex.: row 2, column 2) First, compare Project A across row 2 to each of the other projects. Next, compare Project B across row 3 to each of the other projects, and so on. When done comparing, total the scores across each row and note that number under "Rating" in column 7. The highest number indicates the highest rated project.

A more detailed process could also be developed which evaluates the projects for a variety of specific criteria (priority, cost, benefit, etc.), and then the ratings combine for an overall score.

Figure 1-6 Sample Pairwise Comparison

	Column 1 ____	Column 2 ____	Column 3 ____	Column 4 ____	Column 5 ____	Column 6 ____	Column 7 ____
Row 1 ____	Project	A	B	C	D	E	Rating
Row 2 ____	A	NA	1	1	1	0	3
Row 3 ____	B	0	NA	0	1	0	1
Row 4 ____	C	0	1	NA	1	0	2
Row 5 ____	D	0	0	0	NA	0	0
Row 6 ____	E	1	1	1	1	NA	4

Project A is of greater value than Project B
Project A is of greater value than Project C
Project A is of greater value than Project D
Project B is of greater value than Project D
Project C is of greater value than Project B
Project C is of greater value than Project D
Project E is of greater value than Project A
Project E is of greater value than Project B
Project E is of greater value than Project C
Project E is of greater value than Project D

Final Ranking:

Priority	Project
4	E has the highest value
3	A
2	C
1	B
0	D has the lowest value

Deliverable

- **Evaluation Ratings** – a score assigned to each project as a result of the project evaluation process. The ratings are used during project selection to rank projects in terms of their overall benefit to the Performing Organization.

1.3 SELECT PROJECTS

Once the Project Proposals have been uniformly and objectively rated, it is necessary to prioritize them to reflect how they compare to one another in various aspects, including supporting current organizational priorities, the mission and the strategic plan. At that point in the **Select Projects** process, a decision can be made as to how many of the top-rated proposals can be accommodated by the agency's budget, resources, and ability to absorb organizational change. Whether the project is approved, declined, or sent back for additional information, the Project Sponsor must be notified, and the decision documented.

Roles

- Project Sponsor
- Project Selection Committee

1.3.1 Prioritize Project Proposals

Quantitative ratings derived through the evaluation process make the prioritization process a simple matter of sorting the higher scores to the top. However, it may be useful to review the generic rating criteria once again and decide if some additional

The tasks to Select Projects are:

- 1.3.1 Prioritize Project Proposals
- 1.3.2 Choose Projects
- 1.3.3 Notify Project Sponsors

measurements are needed. Complying with legislative mandates or executive chamber initiatives, for example, may trump even well conceived process improvement opportunities. These are the factors evaluated to determine a project's feasibility and its relative importance in comparison to other proposed projects. Whatever the final set of criteria, they should be documented and applied equally to each competing proposal, to enable a fair and competent selection process.

1.3.2 Choose Projects

A committee of executives from the Performing Organization usually makes project selection decisions. Even if the Commissioner or other agency head (Chairman, Director, etc.) makes the final decision, a Project Selection Committee generally reviews and develops recommendations. It may be useful to, once again, invite the Project Sponsor to make a presentation to the Committee and answer questions.

The Project Selection Committee must choose projects that, in combination, will provide the best investment for the Performing Organization. The Committee considers competing priorities in determining what is best for the whole. All proposals must be evaluated in the context of other proposals, current projects and ongoing operations in order to set priorities and determine resource availability. This process may be accomplished through discussion and vote, or the Committee may use specific tools (software, spreadsheets, etc.) designed to facilitate comparison of the proposals.

The projects chosen as a result of this process may not necessarily reflect what is best for an individual employee or a single work unit. Sometimes a lower-priority project will be approved simply because it is low-risk or low-cost, and can deliver needed benefits or services. Sometimes a project can be undertaken because it needs few resources, and can be performed while larger initiatives are delayed. Projects may be approved for immediate action or with a delay for obtaining resources. It is also possible that a proposal could be returned to the Project Sponsor for further development without approval or rejection.

Choosing a project does not necessarily guarantee that the project will be undertaken by the Performing Organization. That is generally dependent upon the availability of necessary funding. Each Performing Organization may have a different process whereby chosen projects are actually authorized to proceed to Project Initiation.

1.3.3 Notify Project Sponsors

Once the decisions have been made, it is imperative to document them and to explain their rationale to the Project Sponsors and other Stakeholders. One of three outcomes can occur:

1. A decision is made to proceed with the project. In this case, a determination must be made when Project Initiation can begin. At that point a Project Manager must be assigned to the project. The finance office must be brought on board to ensure adequate funding for the project, and control agencies may be notified that the project is being initiated.
2. A decision cannot be made on the project without some additional information. In this case, the specific information required for an informed decision should be documented, and communicated to the Project Sponsor, along with some guidelines for submitting the proposal again in the next evaluation/selection cycle.
3. A decision is made to decline the proposal. In this case, a detailed explanation for the decision should accompany the message, outlining where the proposal came up short in the screening, evaluation, prioritization and/or selection.

In all three cases, the same Proposal Decision Notice can be used to document and communicate the decision (see Figure 1-7).

Figure 1-7 Proposal Decision Notice

New York State
Proposal Decision Notice

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

Project Name: _____ Date: _____

Agency: _____

Business Unit/Program Area: _____

Project Sponsor: _____ Project Manager: _____

*Enter the **Project Name**.*
*Enter the current **Date**.*
*Enter the name of the **Agency** requesting the project, and the **Business Unit or Program Area**.*
*Enter the names of the **Project Sponsor** and **Project Manager** (if known).*

Proposal Decision

Decision	Indicator	Date
Project Proposal Approved		
Additional Information is Required for Decision		
Project Proposal Declined		

*Put a check-mark in the **Indicator** box next to the decision made. Enter **Date** of decision. Make sure to fill out corresponding section below and forward back to **Project Sponsor**.*

Project Selection Committee Signatures

Project Selection Committee Member Name	Signature	Date

*Enter **Project Selection Committee** member names in the first column; members **sign** and **date** the form in the corresponding boxes.*

Figure 1-7 (Continued)

Project Proposal Approved

Target Date for Project Initiation start:

Project Sponsor Assigned:

Project Manager Assigned:

If known, indicate target date for start of Project Initiation.
*Enter names of assigned **Project Sponsor** and **Project Manager**.*

Additional Information Required for Decision

Specific Additional Information Required:

Proposal re-submission date for the next Project Selection Cycle:

Other comments:

*Provide guidance to the **Project Sponsor** on specific information required for an informed decision, along with guidelines for re-submitting the proposal again in the next evaluation/selection cycle.*

Project Proposal Declined

Explanation of decision:

Screening results:

Evaluation results:

Prioritization/Selection results:

*Provide a detailed explanation for the decision to decline the Project Proposal. Outline where the proposal came up short in the **Screening**, **Evaluation**, **Prioritization** and/or **Selection**.*

Deliverable

- **Proposal Decision Notice** – a formal document indicating one of the three possible outcomes of the Project Selection process: proposal approval and project selection, request for additional information, or proposal declination. The Proposal Decision Notice is used to document the Project Selection Committee's decision, and to communicate it to the Project Sponsor.

Project Origination End-of-Phase Checklist

How To Use

Use this checklist throughout Project Origination to help ensure that all requirements of the phase are met. As each item is completed, indicate its completion date. Use the Comments column to add information that may be helpful to you as you proceed through the project. If you elect NOT to complete an item on the checklist, indicate the reason and describe how the objectives of that item are otherwise being met.

Figure 1-8

Item Description	Page	Completion Date	Comments	Reason for NOT Completing
Develop Project Proposal:	**24**			
Formulate business need/ problem and anticipated benefits to all parties	24			
Review project's fit with organization's mission	24			
Identify project objectives	28			
Research potential approaches and solutions	28			
Identify and recommend one (or more) chosen solution(s)	28			
Review solution's fit with organization's strategic plan	28			
Estimate costs of all resources and materials required for the project, both initial and recurring	28			
Identify potential project risks	28			
Identify organizational impacts of the project	28			
Identify any legislative, regulatory or policy dependencies or implications of the project	28			
Perform project cost/benefit analysis	28			
Identify project funding strategies	28			
Complete Business Case and Proposed Solution forms	28			

Figure 1-8 (Continued)

Item Description	Page	Completion Date	Comments	Reason for NOT Completing
Evaluate Project Proposals:	**32**			
Submit Project Proposal to the Selection process	32			
Schedule and conduct proposal presentation	32			
Identify and/or utilize proposal screening criteria	33			
Identify and/or utilize proposal rating criteria and methods	33			
Select Projects:	**37**			
Identify and/or utilize proposal prioritization criteria	37			
Evaluate projects' requirements vs. organizational capacity	37			
Recommend projects for selection	37			
Choose projects for initiation	38			
Notify Project Sponsor of unfavorable screening outcome	39			
Document decision process and outcome for each proposal	39			
Complete Proposal Decision Notice forms	40			
Get signatures from Project Selection Committee members	40			
Notify Project Sponsor(s)	41			

Measurements of Success

Success in Project Origination is not only receiving permission to proceed on the proposed project, but also understanding the executive decision, which often results in a greater understanding of the organization's mission.

During Project Origination, certain assumptions and projections are made regarding the main project parameters – cost, benefit, scope, and timeframe. These initial estimates are used to rate the project under consideration against all other competing initiatives. The main measurement of success for Project

Origination is the consensus of the Performing Organization Management that the projects were weighed fairly, and that the ones with the most compelling Business Case received a green light.

Before the final project selection, it is possible to assess how successfully the evaluation process is proceeding by utilizing the measurements outlined below. More than one "No" answer indicates a serious risk to the desired consensus described above.

Figure 1-9

Process	Measurements of Success	Yes	No
Develop Project Proposal	Have the anticipated benefits been reviewed and accepted by the Customer?		
	Does the expected outcome of the project support the organization's mission?		
	Does the Proposed Solution address only the agenda described by the business problem?		
	Has an independent party assessed the estimated costs and resources?		
	Does the Project Proposal make clear how various approaches/solutions were considered and evaluated, and why a particular solution is being proposed?		
Evaluate Project Proposals	Was the project rated on all of the following: ◆ Strategic alignment? ◆ Risk? ◆ Proposed Solution? ◆ Cost? ◆ Benefit? ◆ Funding?		
	Were the evaluation criteria applied equally to all projects under consideration?		
Select Projects	Does the Project Proposal Team understand the reasons for the project's approval or declination, or for additional information that is required?		
	Is there a consensus among the Performing Organization Management that the selection process was objective and fair?		

Phase Risks / Ways to Avoid Pitfalls

Selecting the wrong project is a very costly, and sometimes devastating mistake that many organizations make. Even a great idea may not be worth expending the resources or accepting the associated risk. Or the project may simply need to be delayed until more resources are available or the associated risk can be mitigated. Selecting the right projects in the wrong combination and, therefore, overextending the organization's resources can be just as devastating. It is not always easy to see why good Project Origination procedures, resulting in a well thought out selection of projects, are so critical to the success of the Performing Organization. Hopefully, now that you have read this section, it is easy for you to understand and you can help others see the light!

What are some of the key elements of Project Origination that require the most attention? The following table identifies processes and tasks that are highlighted in this section.

Figure 1-10

Process	Task	Why is it important?
Develop Project Proposal	Develop Business Case	This document is the basis of the project's acceptance or rejection not only in this phase, but throughout the rest of the project lifecycle.
	Develop Proposed Solution	Having the proposed solution approved before launching into project activities protects the project team, the project, and the whole organization from anarchy.
Select Projects	Choose Projects	Selection of the projects with the greatest value and greatest chance for success is key to the success of any organization.

PITFALL #1 – IT'S NOT THAT EXPENSIVE, LET'S DO IT!

A high-level cost/benefit analysis must be included in your proposal. It might initially appear that a wonderful benefit to your employees is to supply donuts every day. It might build morale. It might increase their energy levels from the sugar high. However, what are the costs? Good donuts cost money. Could agency funds be expended elsewhere for greater benefit? Is there a less distracting morale builder? There may be decreased productivity as the post-sugar slump hits. Should fresh fruit be considered instead? Cleaning costs might increase as crumb trails cover the floors. You might need to hire pest control as the ants and mice move in. Should the idea of an agency-provided snack be vetoed, as the outcome would actually be more of a problem than it is a benefit?

Your proposal must clearly show that you have at least considered the cons as well as the pros. It must show that you have examined the costs as well as the benefits. It must exhibit that you've considered the long-term ramifications as well as the short-term gains.

PITFALL #2 – CHICKEN BEFORE EGG, INITIATION BEFORE APPROVAL

It's very tempting to get the project started before you get final approval as a way of showing management what a great idea it is. ("I'll show them what a good idea this is and they won't be able to say no!") For novice Project Managers, and for organizations first implementing a formal methodology, it may be very easy to go too far into Project Initiation and Project Planning while you create the proposal for the project. ("Once we expend the resources to do the planning, it doesn't even make sense to turn down the Project Proposal.")

Moving into Project Initiation and Project Planning before the project has received approval through the project selection process can lead to wasted time and resources, especially if the project is not ultimately approved. If this is done repeatedly, it could lead to a loss of trust in those involved – the originator of the proposal as well as the selection committee and the Project Sponsor. A delicate balance must be maintained between providing enough information to adequately support your Project Proposal and expending too much time and effort (read "expense") at this phase. But don't ever throw anything out! If you accidentally gather more information than you need, save it for Project Initiation and Planning after your proposal IS approved.

PITFALL #3 – ONE-PLUS-ONE DOES NOT EQUAL TWO

Selecting the proper combination of projects to be worked on simultaneously within an organization is often a delicate balancing act. If Project A is going to take six months, and Project B is going to take eight months, you cannot conclude that working on the two projects simultaneously means they will both be done at the end of eight months. Both projects may require the same resource during the first two months. Even if both projects are very high priority, it may make more sense to delay the start of one for several months to allow resources to concentrate in one place. The outcome may very well be that more total work can be accomplished.

For example, if you have one staff person doing a task in two different cities that requires three days each, she can get both tasks done in 10 days if she spends three consecutive days in city A and three consecutive days in city B. However, if you make her do both by spending one day at a time in each city, you add travel days and weekends for a total of seven additional days.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Scenario 1:																			
A		X	X	X															
Travel	X				X			X				X							
B									X	X	X								
Scenario 2:																			
A		X							X							X			
Travel	X		X		X			X		X		X			X		X		X
B				X							X							X	

This may seem to be an extreme example, but it has a similar effect to going back and forth between tasks. It takes time to repeatedly wrap up and pick up new tasks. Too many projects at once can result in so much task thrashing that very little gets done.

Determining the proper combination of projects to be done at the same time requires that each project have clear resource requirements and time schedules. At a high level, this can be determined during Project Origination. Dependencies between projects must be considered at this time.

PITFALL #4 – CONGRATULATIONS! YOUR PROJECT WAS SELECTED. NOW WAIT.

The vagaries of the state budget process are such that months, if not years, may have elapsed between that euphoric moment you learned that your dream project passed its final Origination hurdle, and the day that you, wizened, weary and bedraggled – but infinitely more astute – actually performed the first Initiation task by asking, "Whazzit all about?"

Often, by the time the project actually gets going, original players have either gone to bigger and better things, or have forgotten all about your puny little project, and the only thing that stands between your success and oblivion is good documentation. Dust off that old Business Case; dig out that forgotten Proposed Solution; and shake that Proposal Decision Notice into any face that dares to challenge your authority to proceed.

Anticipate – and mitigate – the consequences of the likely delay by developing good Origination documentation, keeping it ready and up to date, and keeping your eyes peeled for good candidates for the eventual Project Team.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why should project selection be done at the enterprise level? I know how to run my division!

No one has expertise in every area. Division heads do not usually know all of the activities in every other division. How often have you seen more than one division inventing solutions to the same problem? Not only do you waste resources developing multiple solutions, you then continue to waste resources maintaining two solutions to one problem. An enterprise view, with appropriate executive oversight, of all initiatives is vital to coordinate activities and maximize productive use of time.

How am I supposed to make the Commissioner (Chairman, Director, etc.) understand the importance of this proposal? They are just too far removed.

It is your responsibility to provide information that is sufficient to enable the Performing Organization's executive management to understand the value of your project in the written proposal.

Show the benefits. Identify the targeted Customers. Explain the significance of the product. Illustrate the value at the level necessary to promote a clear understanding. Use the proposal to educate the executive management on the merits of your idea.

Why should we expend the time and effort to create a proposal when we could just start doing the work?

If everyone followed this philosophy, the organization would be pulling itself in so many directions that perhaps nothing of value would ever get done. Managers and executives need to manage the work of the organization to ensure its alignment with its mission. Proposals provide executive management with the information they need to manage the organization's resources.

Why should we wait for their approval?

Forging ahead without the appropriate approvals results in wasted resources if the proposal is declined, significantly altered, or delayed. For example, moving ahead without approval could cause you to use technology that executive management has already chosen to replace and you will now have to start over with a new hardware and software platform. The executive staff representatives on the selection committee may be privy to information that is not publicly announced yet. It is the responsibility of the executive staff to determine the priorities that staff is to address.