

SECRETS TO TAILORING A PPM METHOD IN JUST 30 MINUTES

Do your Programmes and Projects want to know how to right-size MSP® or PRINCE2® but have no idea where to begin? We've put together these secrets to help you get started.

IDENTIFY THE DECISION-MAKER AND THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR MANAGING THE INITIATIVE.

For a programme this will be the SRO and the Programme Manager. For a project it will be the Project Board Executive and the Project Manager. They are the people you need to spend half an hour with. If they haven't been appointed yet, your first priority must be to ensure they are appointed. Assuming you are in a PMO and don't have the authority to do this, you'll probably need to have a chat with your own senior executive.

All the following steps assume that you have been able to secure half an hour with one, or ideally both, the decision maker and the person responsible for managing the initiative, and that steps 2-5 will be undertaken in conversation with them.

TALK THROUGH THE KEY PRINCIPLES OF THE METHOD TO IDENTIFY AREAS LIKELY TO NEED ATTENTION (5 MINUTES)

For PRINCE2 consider the currency of the business case, role-clarity and appropriateness, and whether the project is managed using stages, products and exceptions.

For MSP consider alignment to strategic intent, what level it is being led at, how stakeholders are being engaged at that level, whether there is clear picture of future outcomes and whether the programme is being managed with sufficient focus on benefits, the future capability and the relationship between them.

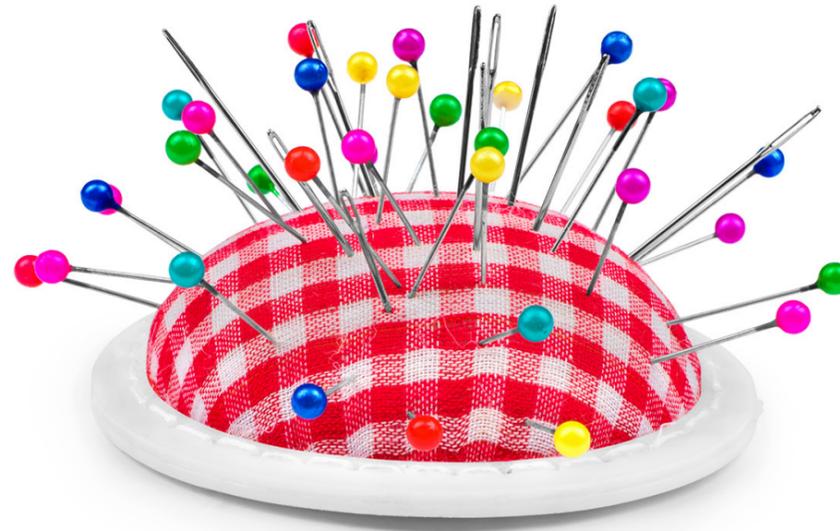
TALK THROUGH THE MAIN THEMES OF THE METHOD TO IDENTIFY AREAS LIKELY TO NEED ATTENTION (10 MINUTES)

This step must be informed by the discussion of principles.

Assuming that the Business Case is valid, for both PRINCE2 and MSP the most important thing to get right is the Organization. Discuss the key roles and how they are currently being discharged.

After Organization has been addressed, look into what exists in terms of Plans. For a project this would involve looking at levels of plans and whether they are product-based and properly resourced. For a programme it must look more broadly and in particular whether the plans for business change and benefits realization are in place.

The third key area to look into is whether basic controls are in place – for PRINCE2 this means the Progress theme, for MSP the Planning and Control Theme. Dealing with risks and issues and changes are important, but none of these things can be done unless a basic but effective regime is in place for tracking progress against plans.



DISCUSS HOW INFORMATION IS CURRENTLY BEING CREATED AND COMMUNICATED (10 MINUTES)

The intent here is to understand how much effort is being put into creating project/programme management information such as plans and reports, and whether the way this is being done is effective.

Often managers put too much effort into producing voluminous documents that are transmitted upwards in the organisation, but are rewarded with little real engagement or understanding.

One of the simple secrets to tailoring PRINCE2 and MSP is to encourage those in management roles to use face-to-face discussion as the primary form of communication, and to do the minimal amount of paperwork necessary to ensure shared understanding and an adequate record of the basis for decisions and decisions-made.

SEEK COMMITMENT FROM THE DECISION-MAKER TO A TAILORING ACTION PLAN (5 MINUTES)

Based on discussion of the key principles, main themes and the information-culture you should now have a picture of areas for attention. Make recommendations to the decision-maker and the person responsible for managing the initiative about tailoring required, and seek their commitment to next steps.

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