

PRINCE2 PROJECT METHODOLOGY

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Introduction

Effective project management is essential in absolutely any organization, regardless of the nature of the business and the scale of the organization.

From choosing a project to right through to the end, it is important that the project is carefully and closely managed. This is essentially the role of the project manager and his/her team of employees.

Managing and tracking the progress of a project is no easy task. Every project manager must know and communicate to his/her team all the project goals, specifications and deadlines that need to be met in order to be cost-effective, save time, and also to ensure that quality is maintained so that the customer is completely satisfied.

The project plan and other documents are therefore very important right through out the project. Effective project management, however, cannot simply be achieved without employing certain techniques and methods. One such method is the PRINCE2.

PRINCE2 . What is it?

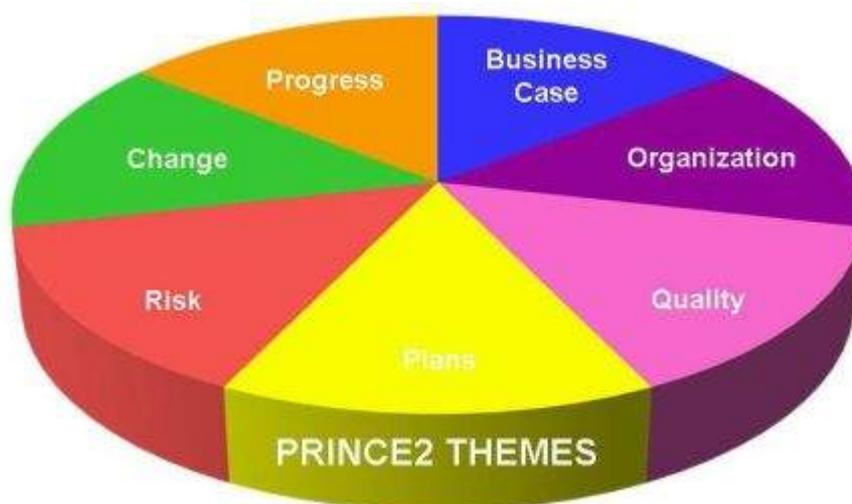
PRINCE stands for **Projects in Controlled Environments**. Dealing with a bit of history, this method was first established by the Central Computer and Telecommunications Agency. It is now referred to as the Office of Government Commerce.

It has since become a very commonly used project management method in all parts of the world and has therefore proven to be highly effective in various respects.

The method also helps you to identify and thereafter assign roles to the different members of the team based on expertise. Over the years, there have been a number of positive case studies of projects that have used PRINCE2 project management methodology.

This method deals with the various aspects that need to be managed in any given project.

The diagram below illustrates the idea.



In the above diagram:

- The seven principles shown in the above diagram must be applied if the project is to be called a PRINCE2 project. These principles will show you whether and how well the project is being carried out using this particular project management method.
- Similarly, the themes of PRINCE2 refer to the seven principles that need to be referred to at

all times during the project, if the project is to indeed be effective. If adherence to these principles is not carefully tracked from the inception of the project through to the end, there is a high chance that the project will fail entirely.

- The processes refer to the steps that need to be followed. This is why this method is known as a 'process-based' method.
- Finally, with regard to the project environment, it's important to know that this project management method is not rigid. Changes can be made based on how big the project is, and the requirements and objectives of each organization. PRINCE2 offer this flexibility for the project and this is one of the reasons why PRINCE2 is quite popular among the project managers.

The Pros and Cons of the Methodology

One benefit of using this method over others could be said to be the fact that it is product-based and it also divides the project into different stages making it easy to manage. This is sure to help the project team to remain focused and deliver a quality outcome at the end of the day.

The most important of all benefits is that it improves communication between all members of the team and also between the team and other external stakeholders, thereby giving the team more control of the project.

It also gives the stakeholder a chance to have a say when it comes to decision making as they are always kept informed by the issuance of reports at regular intervals.

PRINCE2 also ensures that improvements can be made in the organization. This is because you would be able to identify any flaws that you make in projects and correct, which of course would help you to a great extent in the long run.

The flexibility of PRINCE2 allows these changes to be made run-time. Although there can be some implications and issues to the project schedule when certain changes are done run-time, PRINCE2 offers some of the best practices to minimize the impact.

Your team will also learn to save a lot of time and be more economical when it comes to the use of assets and various other resources, thereby ensuring that you are also able to cut down on costs a great deal.

When it comes to disadvantages, PRINCE2 does not offer the level of flexibility offered by some of the modern project management methodologies. Since project management, especially in software industry, has grown to a different level, PRINCE2 may find difficulties in catering some of the modern project management needs.

Conclusion

It should be kept in mind that PRINCE2 is a very complex method and cannot be carried out without special training. Failure to understand precisely how it works could lead to a lot of problems and difficulties whilst carrying out the project.

PRINCE2 guidelines can be selectively applied to certain projects that do not last long. This makes the method even more flexible and thereby more appealing to dynamic organizations and projects.

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