

Project Prioritization Made Easy


KEEP IT AT THE TOP

JEFF KISSINGER, PMP, FCT, FCP, CSM


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Introduction

This presentation demonstrates how to...

- Build a system to choose and prioritize the right projects effectively;
 - Maintain and improve the system as needs change.
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Why Prioritize Projects?

- Further the vision, mission, values, and ends of the organization.
 - Make the best use of the organization's resources.
 - Do the right projects at the right time.
 - Facilitate successful projects.
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Two Types of Prioritization

- Determine which projects to work on.
- Determine the order in which to work on and complete projects.

A Bit of History

- Projects requests and prioritization at GRCC before August 2011.
- GRCC's PMO established in August 2011.
- Early attempts at prioritization.
- What went wrong?
 - Complicated request process.
 - Disconnected feasibility process.
 - Too many people and too many of the wrong people on the project prioritization committee.
 - Too many executive overrides.
 - No attention paid to actual capacity.
 - Too many projects.
- Reorganization of GRCC's PMO.
 - The entire process from requests to prioritization is changed in August 2014.


GRCC's Project Prioritization Process

- This is made up of seven sub processes.
 1. Project request process
 2. Project research
 3. Feasibility meetings
 4. Executive summary
 5. CIO scoring and approval
 6. Executive committee approval
 7. Appeals and executive overrides
 8. Approval

A project request can be killed at any step in this process.




The Importance of Alignment

- GRCC's IT PMO has one project request period: November through February.
 - Aligns with GRCC's budget planning cycle.
 - Aligns with standing meeting schedules of the IT directors, deans, executive team meetings.
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Project Request Process – Web Form

1. People request IT projects through a simple web form.
2. PMO project managers respond to the request within one business day.
3. The form generates a unique ID number that is tied to the request throughout its lifecycle.


Project Research

- Face-to-face interview with the project requestor.
 - Bring SMEs to the interview.
 - The PM is encouraged to talk the requestor out of their request.
 - Compile research and send it back to the requester for approval.
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Feasibility Meetings

- Project request research information is sent to the IT directors.
 - The IT directors meet with their teams to discuss the requests.
 - Feasibility meetings are held once a week until all requests are reviewed.
 - Active discussion about each request.
 - IT directors can kill project requests during these meetings.
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Executive Summary

- Research and feasibility information summarized into a one-page document.
 - It's now a request that will get prioritized.
 - Create a project record in MS Project Online.
 - Attach all project request information to the project record.
 - Inform the CIO once there are at least 10 project requests to score.
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Scoring Rubric – The Importance of Definition and Agreement

- The rubric was developed and tested carefully and signed off at the highest level.
- It constrains subjectivity to a minimum.
- Eight scoring categories.
 1. Alignment with GRCC vision, mission, values, and ends – Weight: 39.39%
 2. Regulatory Compliance – Weight: 18.3%
 3. Ability to support the project deliverables – Weight: 18.3%
 4. Barrier Removal – Weight: 7.48%
 5. Effect on Enrollment and Revenue – Weight: 7.48%
 6. Effect on Cost Reduction – Weight: 3.01%
 7. Positive Net Value – Weight: 3.01%
 8. Impact on project and support resources – Weight: 3.01%


CIO Scoring and Approval

- CIO reviews the requests and scores them using our approved rubric.
 - Built into MS Project Server's Portfolio Analysis tool.
- We only consider the top 20 requests.
- Any requests below the line are not considered.
- Initial scoring is reviewed with the PMO for advice.
- This revised scoring is reviewed with the IT Directors for advice.
- This revised scoring is reviewed with the deans for advice.
- CIO approves the list and brings it to the executive committee.


Executive Committee Approval

- This team meets once a month.
 - Comprised of four VPs and the college president.
 - They typically agree on at least 90% of the list.
 - Cage match over the last 10%.
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Appeals and Executive Overrides

- Appeals are processed through the VP of the department that originated the request.
 - All the executives have to approve any appeals, but the president can override them.
 - Each executive has one executive override (not often used).
 - But the project box only fits 20.
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Approval

- Final approval is typically given by June.
 - This is when project requests become projects.
 - Notify the project requesters of the fate of their requests.
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The Future

- We review the project request and prioritization process each year.
 - What works, what doesn't work, and what to do differently next time.
 - We automate anything we can.
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Questions?

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Thank you!

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