OMNIA WRITING SERVICES

Business Writing Sample

Gap analysis of project leadership, management and standards

Concept and approach   **Research**   **Report with findings and recommendations**

An international non-profit organisation wanted to understand what it needed to change or invest in for improving its project management capabilities and standards. I conducted a gap analysis by examining existing documentation and conducting interviews. My report included a description of the current picture, findings of the main gaps, proposed paths for meeting those gaps, and some tools for setting standards. The sample presented here contains extracts (slightly modified in places) of the report.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT VS. PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT

The management of portfolios is distinct from simple project management. It involves not only managing diverse projects, but also the different timeframes between them, the collective contribution they make towards strategic objectives, and the high-level risks and opportunities they might generate for the portfolio as a whole.

The organisation has not yet adopted portfolio project management as a formal approach for managing global initiatives, but there are certainly arguments for introducing it. To understand the differences between project management and portfolio project management, the following table sets out a comparison.

Project Management	Portfolio Project Management
A project starts and ends on specific dates according to its own project plan.	Projects that make up a portfolio may have different start and end dates. The portfolio itself may not have a definitive end date and will tend to operate within a multi-year framework or strategy.
Project management has a responsibility to ensure the monitoring of progress towards the project's outputs as well as its budget, schedule, risks, issues.	Portfolio project management has the responsibility to ensure the monitoring of progress of the constituent projects towards expected outcomes and overall scope, budget, risks, issues and schedule.

Project Management	Portfolio Project Management
and scope.	Another purpose of portfolio project management is to find ways of leveraging economies of scale and enabling collective impact

GAP ANALYSIS - SUMMARY

This gap analysis has identified nine main gaps related to standards, tools and training. Capacity is a prominent gap for headquarters and country offices alike, and features under both standards and training. For each gap, some suggestions for action or next steps have been proposed in Section F below.

GAP ANALYSIS - FINDINGS

1) Standards

Where are we now?	Where do we want to be?	How can we get there? What are our next steps?
Gap 1.1: Clear project management roles, responsibilities and reporting lines		
Gap 1.2: Global project leadership capacity and competence		
Gap 1.3: Agreed fundamental project management methods and standards		

2) Tools

Where are we now?	Where do we want to be?	How can we get there? What are our next steps?
Gap 2.1: Standardised project management tools for essential inter-office project management functions		

3) Training

Where are we now?	Where do we want to be?	How can we get there? What are our next steps?
Gap 3.1: a more comprehensive suite of project management training is needed to strengthen both the management and governance of projects		

ANNEX II – TOOLS FOR STANDARD SETTING

The tables below are ideas for appraising the applicability of processes, tools and training content across the offices. They are illustrative and not meant to be accurate at this stage. If found useful, they can be developed for the recommended actions for Gaps 1.3, 1.5, 2.1 and 3.1.

1) Project documentation requirements according to criteria
Criteria: high risk, medium budget (>$xxxxxxx), medium innovation, >12 months, multiple offices

Document	Conception	Definition & Feasibility	Initiation	Realisation	Termination & Evaluation
Project summary/charter	✓				
Project proposal - full		✓			
MOU		✓			
Risk assessment	✓	✓		✓	
Work plan		✓			
Project implementation plan			✓		
Resource plan		✓		✓	
Management plan		✓			
Annual plan				✓	
Risk log				✓	
Issue log				✓	
Monthly report					
Quarterly progress report				✓	
Annual report				✓	
Lessons learned				✓	✓
Final report					✓
Evaluation report					✓