

Portfolio Management software

The Client

Group IT function of a FTSE100 company

Situation

The client operated an IT function with more than 3,000 resources, based both on- and off-shore. There was significant reliance on contract staff within the systems development area, with a relatively high turn-over of staff.

Challenge

The client was concerned that management information regarding the Development Portfolio was unreliable. In particular, there was a belief that the Portfolio Management software – a market-leading package – was inadequate for the client's purpose, and steps had already been undertaken to identify alternative tools.

Solutions

We prepared a structured questionnaire which focused on the processes within the client's System Development Life Cycle, from portfolio construction through to hand-over into 'business as usual'. This was used as the basis for 25+ interviews with managers at all levels involved in the lifecycle. Analysis of feedback from these interviews indicated that the root causes of the unreliable management information were:

- an operating culture where adherence to standards was not enforced.
- a lack of clarity and consistency in applying processes. These were exacerbated by the relatively high turnover of contract staff, which diluted knowledge of the organisation's processes

We then designed a programme which addressed improvements to processes, using a Six Sigma approach; changes to culture, to understand why processes were not adhered to, and how most effectively to remedy this; and a number of changes to the way the existing tool was being used.

Benefits

By understanding the root causes of the issue, the client avoided a potentially multi-£m software purchase which would still not have addressed this root cause, and would therefore have had a limited chance of success.

Instead, the client was able to address the operating culture which was one of the major hindrances to standardised management and project reporting across the development portfolio.