A case study of background of technology project

Business

Background of Technology Project The Project to be studied is an implementation of a work assignment and tracking system in an IT department in a medium sized company. The IT Department before the project was started, had undergone a management change and a reorganization due to corporate cost cutting and restructuring. The previous structure of the IT organization was teams of people that support specific applications In the system, and the business users of a particular application contacted the team assigned to their application for system enhancements and support.

There was no system for managing and tracking projects and tasks, and it was left to the managers of each team to handle project procrastination, assignment and tracking.

This structure was changed to a pooled resource structure where IT staff people were grouped by functional areas (such as mainframe support group, PC support group, web applications, etc). The IT structure was no longer hierarchical and the work was no longer handed down In a top down approach thus creating a need for a systematic way of managing people and tasks to function effectively.

OSDL (Systems Development Life Cycle) The Life Cycle for this particular project did not exactly match the order of the phases as described In the Systems Development Life Cycle concept. Because of the Immediate reorganization of the IT organization, current projects encountered delays and the IT procedures and tasks were disrupted. This prompted a need for a quick reshuffling of work between the new groups and a quick and dirty way

to manage the work at hand and incoming work until a better system is implemented.

Initiation The Inhalation of a system (or project) begins when a business need or opportunity Is identified.

This happened for this project when a CIO was appointed to head the new IT organization and was asked to reduce head count by pooling the resources while at the same time still provide timely and effective service to the business users of the IT systems and applications. System Concept Development Phase In this phase of OSDL, the business need has been approved and the approaches for accomplishing the concept are reviewed for feasibility and appropriateness.

Several approaches were considered for tackling the problem in the IT department. The first approach was an Excel spreadsheet to list all IT personnel and their assigned tasks UT tens turned out to De too cumbersome Ana Nora Tort several persons to use house developed web based system was also considered and was in fact implemented but was cancelled since it was not flexible enough to handle the different tasks of the different IT groupings and the different sources of work . An Len- requests.

The last approach was either to buy an existing package that would fit the requirements and customize it for the IT organization's structure and procedures or develop one in-house. Planning Phase In the planning phase, the concept/approach is further developed to describe how he business will operate once the approved system is implemented, and to define project

resources, activities, schedules, tools, and reviews to ensure the products and lord services provide the required capability on-time and within budget.

The planning phase for this particular project was being done while simple solutions were being used and implemented since there were time constraints and something had to be in place right away. A team was assembled to look into existing applications within the company or packages out in the market that would fit the acquirement and assess its flexibility and long term viability for the organization. That team also had to come up with a process flow of how work will be handled in the new IT structure to help in the use of the short-term solutions and to help in finding a long-term solution.

Finally, two long term approaches were proposed.

One was that of customizing the packaged software that was currently being used by the Help Desk to track PC and Mainframe work requests for PC Technicians and Mainframe System Programmers, which was from a company called Remedy. The other was to develop a work flow system in-house. Requirements Analysis Phase In this phase, functional user requirements are formally defined and delineate the requirements in terms of data, system performance, security, and maintainability requirements for the system.

The functional user requirements for this project detailed all the different tasks that an IT organization performs and the information that needs to be tracked for each such as requester, status, assigned IT person etc. One of

the main requirements gathered was that of accessibility of the work flow system.

Different people will be entering work requests such as business users and help desk personnel and the seer interface and performance requirements for the two types would be far different.

So the chosen system should have flexible interfaces and need to communicate work status and results back to the requester in a medium that is accessible company wide. Another main requirement is that the system can be implemented quickly and should be flexible enough to easily add features in the future. Design The physical characteristics of the system are designed during this phase. For this project, after reviewing the requirements, the only option that would work was an out f the box solution such as the Remedy Action Request System.

Since it was already being used by the Help Desk team, it has already proven itself as a flexible and reliable system to use. As a help desk software it allows entry of work request, assigns work, allows a way to log the progress of a request and stores all the history regarding a request. Design was simply a matter of finding out the customizable options and features in Remedy and designing it for the different IT groups formed.

Since help desk work was different as compared to application development work, woo type of request were designed and one was for support/problems and one was an enhancement to the system or major project that have subtasks and involved lots of people with different roles and responsibilities. For the IT staff a client server platform was needed for faster execution, and

for accessibility and ease of use, a simple web-based interface was designed for the business users since they don't need to see too much detail.

Since company wide communications was done through email, work assignment, status and results need to be communicated through this medium.

Development, Integration , Test and Implementation Phase The four phases for this project was combined into one because of the time constraints and since it was a packaged software approach and the main components no longer needed development and testing. Most of the development involved loading tables that the package uses such as logon ids, departments, user data etc, and the customization of the user interfaces.

The necessary components of Remedy were installed and hooked up with the web servers and the email system. Before final roll, it was given a trial basis by one representative in each IT group ND finalized based on the recommendations of each representative. Once the work flow system was ready, the IT staff were trained on how to use it and how work should flow through the organization. Conclusion The project as a whole went through a couple of cycles of the OSDL due to different implementations.

But the final result was relatively successful since it incorporated the ideas that Trapper suggested in his article " Getting an edge on the competition" which was about process management. According to Trapper, process management " should also cover the establishment of actual development phases and activities, reaction of a workflow among participants, and selection and implementation of tools and techniques best suited to the task.

This was accomplished by the Remedy AR system. I née customized Remedy AR system also Incorporated ten two principal source AT best practices as listed by Trapper which is industry best practice and ones developed within the company. The Remedy AR System already had the industry best practice since it is a widely used system and the company best practices were incorporated through the customization of the system based on recommendations of the different IT groups.