MOVE
ENGINEERING

Project
Management
System

# Process Redesign Proposal

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# INTRODUCTION

**Move Engineering (ME)** is successful at winning business and has been growth-focused for the past few years acquiring smaller civil engineering firms across the United States. Now that ME has reached a place of stability, the focus has turned inward to the internal processes that will determine its continued success.

# OBJECTIVE

Design and implement a solution for consistent project management practices that balance profitability, efficiency, and client satisfaction.

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# PERFORMANCE GAPS

**ME lacks a purpose, mission, and values statement** that all employees can measure their work against.

**Roles and performance expectations are not clearly defined and uniformly communicated.** ME lacks a formal employee evaluation system with feedback, rewards, and consequences to encourage exemplary performance.

**Tools, resources, and learning opportunities are not universally available** to all project managers.

# POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

For ME, I recommend a systemic approach to performance improvement. Strong systemic supports are like the foundation and beams that underpin a structure. A building is only as stable as its foundation and supports and a process is only as effective as the environment in which it operates. Additionally, the current lack of continuity in project management standards may be a symptom of larger issues that may impede MEs future success. Recommend introducing the following:

01

## Structure

Implement project management standards that reflect established and tested industry best practices while providing flexibility for ME's unique business model and clients.

Create Standard Operating Procedures for core business functions, develop a mission statement, and identify and codify a core values statement. Everything that ME does should reflect and support these documents.

Define each employees role and how that role contributes to and reflects ME's mission statement and core values.

02

## Empower

Define the Project Manager (PM) role, expectations, Key Performance Indicators, and describe the successful execution role.

Provide PMs with the skills, tools, and resources necessary for success as defined in the PM role description.

03

## Support

Create development and accountability pods consisting of a Senior PM who embodies the exemplary PM skills define in the PM role description and three to five less-skilled PMs. The Senior PM will a act as a coach and resource.

Build a team of accomplished project management Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to continuously identify and evaluate best practices for project management.

Define the role of management in offering support to PMs and describe how management will provide resources and expertise when needed.

04

## Accountability

Require accountability in each local office based on organization-wide SOPs and role descriptions and provide support for success.

Build a system for feedback and evaluation with clearly defined rewards and consequences for performance.

05

## Continuous monitoring and improvement

Create an advisory board comprised of management and the top performing PMs to continually monitor the health and effectiveness of ME's project management system.

# ACTION PLAN

## PRE-DESIGN

**Senior Management**

- Identify and enlist project champions.
- Create a charter for the project.
- Collaborate with consultant to create mission statement and statement of core values to function as a guiding star for ME.
- All decisions, actions, and pursuits should reflect and reinforce the organization's mission and core values.
- Create a composite sketch of the skills and attributes of an exceptional PM.

**LaTrice McGraw, Consultant**

- Evaluate ME's home and satellite offices and identify the top performing offices and individuals.
- Determine common traits (i.e. skills, experience, education, etc.), practices, and processes.
- Compare exemplary performers with average performers to pinpoint performance gaps and the environmental and behavioral conditions that create them.
- Quantify each employees potential for improvement.

**Consultant and Senior Management**

Create a description of the skills and attributes of an exceptional PM.

## DESIGN

**PM Individual Contributors**

- Top performers receive project management training and work toward project management certification offered by recognized project management leaders such as the Project Management Institute or the Construction Management Association of America (whichever best fulfills the solution objective and matches the organization's mission and core values).
- Project management teams led by certified and experienced PMs are an added value to clients.

- The remaining PMs who are not eligible for certification will receive professional training without certification and be assigned to a development and accountability pod led by an exemplary Senior PM where they will further hone their skills with intention of achieving certification in future.

**Consultant**

- Examine best practices and standards used by leading civil engineering firms and use existing industry tools and models for routine processes (e.g., use contracts created by the American Institute of Architects.)
- Develop SOPs that reflect both established best practices and the unique mission, core values, and culture of ME.
- Write SOP with input from Project Management Advisory Board (new) comprised of exemplary project managers and senior management. T
- he SOP will include a thorough description of each role involved in project management from the VP of Operations to administrative employees.

## PRE-CONSTRUCTION

**Management (Senior and Mid-level)**

- Provide training, tools, and resources to PMs (e.g., project management software that fits the model(s) that ME has selected.).
- Build or commission a digital knowledge repository for regulations, industry standards, local variations, national and local contractors, vendors, etc.
- Create a protocol for workload balancing that includes assigning visiting project managers on loan from another office to a Navigation Manager (create new role).
- Promote, reassign, terminate, and hire as necessary to match the right people to the right roles.
- Create a feedback system with rewards and consequences tied to the KPIs outlined in the SOP.

## CONSTRUCTION

**Consultant and Management**

- Implement SOP, new systems, and tools.
- Create accountability and support pods led by a Senior PM acting as a mentor to three to five less-skilled Project Managers.
- Appoint members to the Project Management Advisory Board. Board will develop a separate charter.

## CLOSEOUT

**Consultant**

- Evaluate the success of the project management solution at the results level:
  1) Did the solution achieve the desired results?
  2) Did ME benefit financially from the solution?
- Modifications will be made as needed until the answers to both questions meet the criteria established in the project charter.

## POST-CLOSEOUT

**PM Individual Contributors**

Project Management Advisory Board will operate as outlined in its charter in alignment with ME's mission statement, core values, and SOPs meeting at predetermined times and as needed, to ensure that the project management solution continues to achieve the desired results while continuing to benefit ME, its employees, and its clients.

The Project Management Advisory Board will be responsible for monitoring the health of the solution as the organization grows taking taking necessary steps to ensure optimal performance.

# CONSULTANT'S PROCESS

The basis of my solution and action plan is formed from information and data synthesized from interviews, informational research, and human performance tools. My process can be broken down into analysis, design, and development phases across three broad categories: people, external information and data, and tools.

## People

Fred Garvin, Vice President of Human Resources; Ted Purdy, Senior Project Manager; and Sarah Granger, Vice President of Operations; provided a wealth of information about construction projects, ME's structure and profit model, insight into the current project management processes, ME's resource management methods, and priorities. This information along with insight into industry best practices and norms provided by Erik Johansson, a civil engineer and project manager with twenty years of experience, allowed me to create a comprehensive overview of the workings of construction project management. Each interview provided insight into ME-specific practices, industry standards, and potential resources for addressing performance gaps to enabling me to design and implement a solution that fits MEs unique organization while incorporating established best practices and proven project management models.

## External Information and Data

Project Management as codified by the Project Management Institute's **Project Management Book of Knowledge** (PMBOK) has been in use for over twenty years and grew out of industry best practices in the construction business. **PMBOK** was a starting point for my research into construction project management. This led me to other sources such as the American Society of Civil Engineers and the American Institute of Architects.

## Tools

Implementing and sustaining enterprise-wide project management standards and practices requires analysis in three key areas: performance, forces, and alignment. Established evidence-based Human Performance tools were used to examine each.

*Performance*

Mager and Pipe's Performance Analysis model was used to examine the current state of project management at ME which yielded the potential performance gaps and potential solutions that form the foundation of this document.

Forces

Lewin's Force Field Analysis was applied to identify the driving and restraining forces at the systemic level that will influence the success of the project management solution at ME.

*Alignment*

Rummler and Brache's Nine Boxes model produced a comprehensive analysis of the ecosystem and culture of ME in its current state, revealed that the current practices and culture will not successfully support an enterprise-wide standardized project management system, and identified which specific behaviors and environmental factors must be addressed at the organizational, process, and individual levels to produce the optimal culture and infrastructure for success.

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