

**Report of IVM Northern Branch Meeting:  
PROJECT DELIVERY: THE RECIPE FOR SUCCESS –  
MIXING THE INGREDIENTS  
Held at Square One, Network Rail Offices, Piccadilly,  
Manchester  
16-06-2011**

## **Introduction**

The IVM Northern Branch held a participative workshop to offer views and hold a debate regarding the ingredients of project delivery most likely to facilitate a successful outcome. A theme connecting the ingredients was how Value Management principles, Tools and Techniques can add value. As the workshop developed, participant's views were sought on where and how most value can be added to deliver project success.

## **Purpose**

The aim was to give participants a richer knowledge of how to add value to projects.

## **Background**

In the fast moving world we live in, the pressure to achieve project success against a host of criteria including investment, risk, legislation, etc. leads to difficult choices having to be made to balance stakeholder needs. At the same time, projects must be managed within financial, quality, time constraints and other requirements which impose great pressure on project teams. The ingredients of project delivery most likely to facilitate a successful outcome and add the most value would be of considerable benefit to Project Managers, Project Engineers and a host of other functional staff in a range of sectors.

## **Workshop report**

IVM Members, who have all either worked or are working in projects and have many years cumulative experience in a range of key disciplines and project value creation, delivered four presentations to offer views and stimulate debate regarding the ingredients of project delivery most likely to facilitate a successful outcome. These were:

The Problem – Brian Vawser

Project Governance – Colin Bristol

Early Project Definition - How important is it? – Presentation compiled by Julie Warriner and delivered by Malcolm Risely

Managing Threats & Opportunities – Manjit Baines

Participant's views were sought on where and how most value can be added to deliver project success by splitting them into 3 teams and using two exercises as a framework:

Exercise 1 was structured around people's experiences of applying functionality, risk and opportunity management, including:

- What they believed the benefits to be
- What they believed the issues to be
- How did they think these issues could be resolved

Exercise 2 was structured around how projects should be defined in early stages including:

- What would lead to success in terms of project delivery
- How can Value Management assist this
- What tools would be beneficial to achieve success in early definition
- How can this thinking be embedded in an organisation?

Through sharing their experiences and discussing the questions posed in the exercises, each group generated a number of ideas, which were compiled into a meeting note and have been issued to each participant. Each participant related the ideas to their own working circumstances and situations resulting in the discovery of different aspects by specific delegates, which could be of benefit if applied to their project approaches. Examples of these are:

- a reinforcement of practices already in place in the participant's organizations, for example, Stakeholder analysis, identifying customer requirements and wants and needs separation in early project definition, followed up with alignment of stakeholder interests and stakeholder engagement throughout the project lifecycle
- the realisation that VM keeps the focus on functionality and project success definition and encourages a shared vision and sense of ownership of a project to ensure delivery of value for money, customer's needs and project success criteria
- the intent to examine a new tool or technique to identify eg. risk-scope-functionality relationships or ensure the differentiation between cost cutting and value

The plenary session explored a number of insights and concerns for which the group were appreciative of feedback from the presenters:

## **Partners**

- Competitive tender process can add real value through the sharing of ideas
- “Squeezing” the supply chain too hard can have serious adverse effects on value.
- Risk that change control can be used as a revenue stream by partners unless a robust process is developed and implemented

### **Value Management**

- Is an effective tool to break down barriers which can be created by people especially in terms of participant behaviours regarding functional/team loyalties
- It is critical that the right people in terms of skills, mix and powers should be involved in a VM study. Empowerment to make decisions via delegated powers is essential.

### **Stakeholder Involvement**

- Should stakeholders be included as study participants and be involved in the decision making process? - The answer depends upon their power, influence and particular project – this answer clearly builds the need for effective stakeholder analysis.
- Getting stakeholder/regulator viewpoint first hand can be much more powerful and realistic than obtaining offline / second hand point of view

### **Stakeholder Issues**

- Stakeholder conflicts may be more prevalent in public sector projects, sharing/airing issues can help resolution
- Facilitator skills are key in managing trade offs.
- Conflict can be resolved by developing criteria upon which to base decisions
- Stakeholder issues must not be allowed to “fester” it is important that we deal with these as soon as possible.

The participant’s left having fed back their views on the workshop as having given 4 useful presentations with a mix of themes. They were happy to have met a range of delegates with cross industry experience and like minded people with similar issues, resulting in a richer appreciation of how to add value to projects.

C Bristol  
IVM Northern Branch Secretary  
23<sup>rd</sup> June 2011