BEST PRACTICE

PRINCE2® 7

Project Management

A Pocket Guide

Bert Hedeman | Ron Seegers

Van Haren PUBLISHING

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PART I INTRODUCTION

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Chapter 1
Introduction

PRINCE2® Project Management is a generic project management method which focuses on the management aspects of projects. PRINCE2 has been designed to be adaptable, allowing it to be applied to any project. This is achieved by separating management from specialist activities, focusing on what needs to be done rather than prescribing how it should be done, and requiring that the method is tailored to the project's needs and context.

PRINCE2's strength lies in its flexibility and the fact that it is not industry-specific. Furthermore, except for the PRINCE2 planning technique, project management techniques are referenced but not prescribed.

1.1 The purpose of this guide

This pocket guide supplies a summary of the PRINCE2 method. It is intended to provide a quick introduction and a structured overview of the method, serving as a reference for those who have previously studied the method and wish to apply it in the day-to-day management of their projects.

1.2 Structure of PRINCE2 edition 7

The structure of PRINCE2® 7 is based on five integrated elements:

- *Principles* - Define the guiding principles of good practices which determine whether the project is genuinely being managed using PRINCE2.
- *People* - Involve understanding the needs, capabilities, and motivations of the people involved, as well as their interrelationships; this is crucial to the way the project is set up and managed.
- *Practices* - Describe the aspects of project management that must be addressed continually and in parallel throughout the project.
- *Processes* - Describe a step-wise progression through the project lifecycle. Each process provides checklists of recommended activities, products and related responsibilities.
- *Project context* - Relates to tailoring PRINCE2 to the specific project, as well as environmental factors.

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PRINCE2® 7 puts people in the centre of its method.

The five integrated elements of the PRINCE2 method are designed to work together. The practices ensure that the principles are continually applied during the processes in a way that fits to the project context.

1.3 What is a project?

A project is a set of related activities within a temporary organization that is created to deliver, according to agreed conditions, one or more predefined products or services. Within PRINCE2, a project is defined as:

Project - A temporary organization that is created for the purpose of delivering one or more business products according to an agreed business case.

Five characteristics distinguish projects from regular business operations:

- *Change* - Most projects are carried out in a changing environment, while also being the means through which the organization introduces these changes.
- *Temporary* - This is an essential condition for a project. Without this, there is no project. A project ends automatically when the predefined products or services are handed over to the business. Projects, by nature, are finite; they have a predefined start and end.
- *Cross-functional* - Projects involve a team of people with diverse skills and functions, typically from different organizational entities. This can occur within a single organization or across multiple organizations.
- *Unique* - Every project is different, even when an identical product or service is delivered. The context is always different, and there are always differences in objectives, or new team members or other parties are involved.
- *Uncertainty* - All the characteristics above result in uncertainty, which will always lead to additional opportunities and threats. You cannot exclude these; you can only manage them. Projects typically contain more uncertainties than regular business operations.

Projects are initiated to deliver products that enable an organization to implement change and realizse benefits in pursuit of its strategic goals. The temporary nature of projects allows all relevant stakeholders to unite to deliver the required products or services. A well-structured project management method provides the

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framework, focus, support and commitment, needed to ensure successful delivery. As organizational change becomes increasingly critical across both the business world and the public sector, projects have become essential to professional life.

1.4 What is project management?

Project management involves planning, delegating, monitoring and controlling all aspects of the project, as well as motivating those involved, in order to achieve the project objectives within the expected performance targets. Within PRINCE2, project management is defined as:

Project management - The application of methods, tools, techniques, and competencies to enable a project to meet its objectives.

The five characteristics of a project result in some common challenges, such as:
- Ambiguity about who is responsible and who is accountable for what aspects.
- Ambiguity about what to deliver, when and at what costs.
- Unrealistic expectations.
- Unavailability of resources.
- Difficulty in estimating durations, resources and costs.
- Uncontrolled changes.
- Difficulty in keeping the people informed, engaged and motivated.

The purpose of project management is to address these challenges. The aim is to control the specialist work to create the project product.

PRINCE2 includes seven aspects of project performance to be managed:
- *Benefits* - What needs to be achieved based on the output to justify the investment?
- *Scope* - What is part of the project and what is not?
- *Quality* - What are the requirements, and when is the project output fit for purpose?
- *Time* - When will the project start, key products be delivered, and the project end?
- *Costs* - What are the investment costs and the total cost of ownership?
- *Sustainability* - What are the project work and project output sustainability targets?
- *Risk* - How much risk is the organization prepared to take?

The project performance targets set the expected success levels against which the project management will be judged.

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1.5 The project context

PRINCE2 has been designed to be applied in any context, including organizational and commercial contexts, delivery methods, sustainable requirements, and project scales.

1.5.1 Organizational context

Users, suppliers and business decision-makers can come from the same organization, or they may come from different organizations with which they have commercial agreements.

- *Business* - The organization that provides the project mandate and the structure within which the project is governed and invests to realize the envisaged benefits.
- *User* - The individual(s) or organization(s) that will use or maintain the project products to enable it to realize the expected benefits. They may be internal or external to the business organization.
- *Supplier* - The individual(s) or organization(s) that provide the expertise, people, and resources required to deliver the project products. They may be internal or external to the business organization.

The business is responsible for realizing any benefits after the completion of the project.

Where a commercial relationship exists between the business and the supplier, the business is regarded as the *customer*.

A project may be part of a programme or portfolio structure, or be a standalone project reporting directly to the business management structure.

Programme - A temporary structure designed to lead multiple interrelated projects and other work in order to progressively achieve outcomes and benefits (to realize a strategic goal) for one or more organizations.
Portfolio - A temporary structure to provide optimal use of the organization's investment (or a segment thereof) in the changes required to achieve its strategic objectives.

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