



The *Simply Projects*[®] Method Explained

Date: October 2009
Issue: V2.0

Produced by:
WPM Group
Mollington Golf Course
Mollington
Chester
CH1 6ND

1 WPM Approach to Corporate Project Management

The WPM approach to improving Corporate Project Management is based on the introduction and implementation of a Project Management Method. The approach sets out to establish a plan that will address the following:

- Customising the Method to meet your in-house requirements
- Develop a Communication Strategy
- Training Needs Provision
- Implementation Management and Planning
- Delivering the Method using browser-based technology
- Looking to the future to provide Portfolio and Programme Management functionality

This approach incorporates an in-built flexibility that is adaptable to the needs of individual organisations.

1.1 The *Simply Projects*[®] Method

WPM's *Simply Projects*[®] Method is documented in a single volume comprising of five self-contained booklets, all based on the PRINCE2[®] Project Management Methodology.

The booklets guide staff on how to manage projects. A key feature of the Method is the classification of projects into three types by reference to a set of pre-determined criteria that apply to all your projects and are applicable across the organisation. These types determine the level of management effort required for each project. This is explained in detail in Section 2 of this report.

- Booklet 1: Essentials
- Booklet 2: Managing a Low Risk Project
- Booklet 3: Managing a Medium Risk Project
- Booklet 4: Managing a High Risk Project
- Booklet 5: Reference Information

The Method requires that the Essentials booklet be followed at the start of all projects, and then the Booklet appropriate to the Type of the project used for the remainder of the project. The Reference Booklet or PRINCE2 manual would be used where required.

The booklets have been written to be easy for Project Managers to follow, taking the project chronologically, rather than being a reference book where the reader has to know where to look to find the topic of immediate interest. In particular, the Low Risk Project booklet (for simple projects) uses the minimum of project management jargon to make it easy to read for relatively inexperienced project managers.

The booklets make the PRINCE2 methodology easy to understand and apply to projects in the real world.

1.2 Templates

WPM has a set of document templates available to make it easier to run projects consistently, regardless of the underlying technical delivery mechanism. Throughout, the Method refers to the products and templates that would be of assistance for the size of project being run. These provide common reporting of management information to enable comparisons to be drawn between disparate projects.

These templates have been produced in MS Word and MS Excel format and contain the organisation's logo. They contain invaluable help on what each document section should contain using the MS Office Comments feature.

See Section 3 of this document for more information about how these templates are used.

2 Project Types

A crucial element in the way projects should be managed is an initial assessment to decide into which category a project should be placed.

The assessment will determine whether each project is a:

- § Low Risk (simple project)
- § Medium Risk (medium project)
- § High Risk (complex project)

Once this assessment is made, the amount of management that the project needs will be clear. For a short, low-risk project a light touch is needed. For anything of any length and complexity, full project management with associated documentation will be necessary to maintain effective control. Then there are those in-between projects that require only part of the full set of management documentation to maintain the appropriate control.

The assessment of risk type must be carried out at the earliest opportunity, preferably when the Project Mandate is produced. It should be completed before the Project Manager for the project is chosen, because the project risk type will determine the level of competence and experience the Project Manager needs.

As a precaution, the Project Manager should review the Project Type during the Initiation Stage of the project. This will ensure that the correct level of management is applied during the project.

The basis for assessing the risk type of a project is to use criteria applicable to all projects and allocate a score to each. The resultant total score is then compared to predetermined breakpoints that allocate the project risk type.

Criteria used for assessment will vary for each organisation, but are likely to include most of the following:

- § Forecast Project Cost (external/internal)
- § Forecast Project Duration
- § Deadlines imposed externally
- § Political Profile
- § Payback period
- § Stakeholder Involvement
- § Using External Suppliers
- § Have we done this before?
- § Confidence in delivery

The assessment of a project's type is typically recorded on a scoresheet, such as the one shown overleaf.

Project Sizing Scorecard

Criteria	1	2	3	4	5	Score
Cost in £1000	<10	10-25	25-160 x	160-1,000	>1,000	3
Length in months	1-3	4-9 x	10-12	12-18	>18	2
Deadline Imposed Externally?	No		Yes x		Yes, with Penalties	3
Payback Period	< 6 months	6-12 months x	1-2 years	2-3 Years	>3 years	2
Stakeholder Involvement	Single service	Multi Dept and/or regular partners x	New Partners	Stakeholder opposition		2
Using External Suppliers	None		Yes, known supplier x		Yes, new supplier	3
Have we done this before?	Many times	Once or twice	Yes, but with limited success x	Not the same as this	Never	3
Confidence in delivery	High		Medium x		Low	3

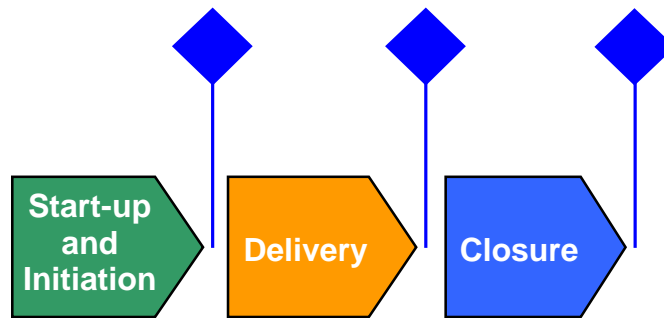
Low Risk = 8-15
 Medium Risk = 16-27
 High Risk = 28-40

Total Score = 21

This project is assessed as Medium Risk

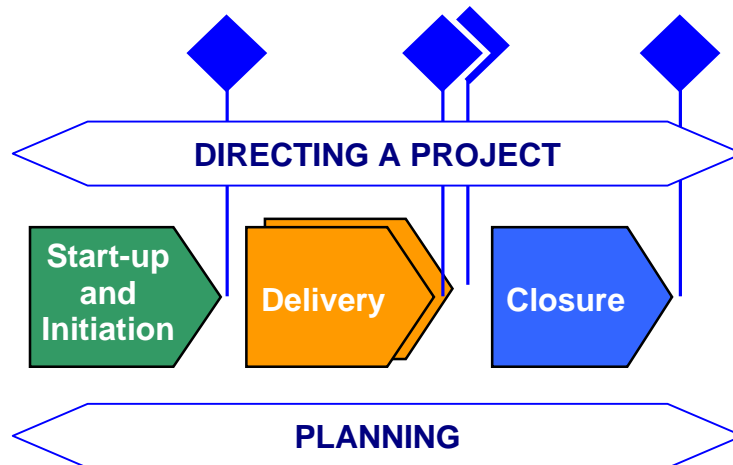
Low Risk Project

A low risk project will have a single delivery stage. The direction for the project will come from a trimmed-down Project Board, usually consisting of the Project Executive and Senior User (the Executive assuming the Senior Supplier role too). A minimal set of documentation will be used to manage a Low Risk project.



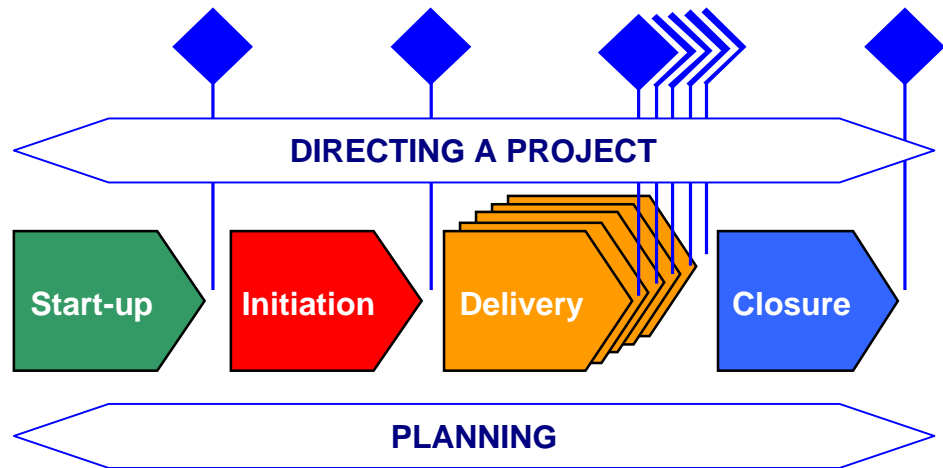
Medium Risk Project

A Medium Risk project has a full Project Board and could have more than one delivery stage. A partial set of documents will be used to manage a Medium Risk project.



High Risk Project

High Risk projects would have multiple delivery stages and the organisation's Senior Management Team, or delegated responsibility, on the Project Board. The full set of project management documents will be used.



In the Medium Risk and High Risk diagrams above you will note that both Directing a Project and Planning span all stages of each type of project. These two activities are undertaken throughout the life of the project by the Project Board and Project Manager respectively. The initial planning undertaken in the Start-up/ Initiation stage of a Low Risk project is usually sufficient to complete the project.

3 Template Usage

As the level of the project risk increases, so do the number of templates that are required to manage the project.

The following table lists all of the templates within WPM's *Simply Projects*® Method and shows how they are applied to projects of different Types:

Template Name	Used in Low Risk Projects	Used in Med Risk Projects	Used in High Projects
Business Case		X	X
Business Case (Light)	X		
Checkpoint Report		X	X
Checkpoint Report (Light)	X		
Communication Management Strategy		X	X
Control Registers	X	X	X
End Project Report		X	X
End Project Report (light)	X		
End Stage Report			X
Exception Report		X	X
Exception Report (Light)	X		
Follow-on Actions			X
Highlight Report		X	X
Highlight Report (Light)	X		
Lessons Report	X	X	X
Post-Project Review Plan			X
Product Description	X	X	X
Project Product Description			X
Project Brief			X
Project Initiation Document		X	X
Project Initiation Document (Light)	X		
Project Mandate	X	X	X
Project Organisation Structure			X
Project Plan		X	X
Quality Management Strategy			X
Stage Plan		X	X
Risk Management Strategy		X	X
Work Package		X	X

4 Conclusion

The *Simply Projects*[®] Method has been written to be fully compliant with the industry best-practice methodology, PRINCE2. It provides a practical approach to the effective implementation of this methodology, without falling into the trap of imposing a bureaucracy on project management teams. It provides consistency across an organisation, as the method is truly generic in its implementation – it can be laid over any number of different technical delivery mechanisms, but will provide comparative reporting and assessment information.

The *Simply Projects*[®] Method has been implemented in various organisations having a turnover of up to c£500M p.a. and a very diverse set of operations. Equally, it has been applied to much smaller organisations with workforces numbered in hundreds rather than thousands.

A documented project management method is the foundation on which sound project management practice can be built.

Simply Projects[®] is best of breed, and WPM have the capability and experience to ensure it is implemented effectively in any size and type of organisation.

The *Simply Projects*[®] Method Explained

This Method has been designed and developed by the following from an original commissioned by Kirklees Metropolitan Council.

WPM Group
Mollington Golf Course
Mollington
Chester
CH1 6ND

For further information contact:

Tel: 01244 852 544

Fax: 01244 852 544

enquiries@wpm-group.com

www.wpm-group.com

Some organisations currently using the *Simply Projects*[®] Method:

Penwith District Council

North East Lincolnshire Council

South Somerset District Council

Kirklees Metropolitan Council

Forest Heath District Council

The Royal Parks

Boston Borough Council

Harcourt Education

High Peak Borough Council

Pioneer Investments (Dublin)

Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council

Westminster Adult Education Services

© 2009 WPM Group

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. No part of this document may be reproduced, transcribed, or used in any form or by any means – graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, taping, web distribution, or information storage and retrieval systems – without the prior written permission of the publisher WPM Group.

PRINCE2[®] is a Registered Trade Mark of the Office of Government and Commerce (OGC)