



# Successfully Implement PPM by Avoiding These Common Mistakes

You've given presentations, sat through countless meetings, and after quite a bit of deliberation, you (or someone in your organization) decides there must be a better way to manage multiple projects. The good news is that there is a better way, and it's called project portfolio management or PPM. Whether you were leading the charge to adopt PPM or were tasked with implementation by upper management, there are a couple pitfalls that we can help you avoid so implementing PPM is a success.

## Diving in Head First

We know the excitement of rolling out a process that will greatly improve your organization. Upper management will finally understand resource capacity and be able to make realistic project portfolios. Project teams can start delivering on projects and everyone in the organization will be less stressed. You might be eager to get this started, but before you dive head-first into the pool, make sure you're not standing in front of the shallow end. To succeed in implementing a PPM process, avoid these six common mistakes.

### 1. Making the Implementation of PPM a One Man Show

Just because you can do something doesn't mean you should. Could you implement a PPM process alone? Yes. Should you? No. This process needs buy-in from everyone to succeed. When you recruit others to help you implement PPM, you give them the opportunity to not only learn about PPM firsthand, but also see how it can specifically benefit them. This will turn them into PPM champions that help convince others in the organization.

### 2. Implementing PPM Without Stakeholder Approval

In frustration or eagerness to solve a problem, you may have forgotten to get approval from all stakeholders to implement PPM. Better to ask for forgiveness instead of permission, right? Not



quite. Nothing will stop implementation faster than a stakeholder who is angry that they weren't consulted on such a crucial decision.

### 3. Implementing PPM too fast

Anything worth doing is worth doing right. When you implement PPM, you may be tempted to roll it out company-wide, but this will cause chaos. You're going to have bumps along the road to implementation, but these bumps are much more manageable when you are only dealing with a department or team rather than an entire company. You should perfect your implementation process by starting small and slowly rolling it out to the rest of your organization.

### 4. Using PPM to Micromanage

One of the biggest benefits of PPM is transparency. Transparency is absolutely necessary for making realistic project portfolios, but the flip side of this coin is the desire to micromanage. Let your project managers execute projects and don't get caught up in minute details. Failing to do this will only cause your project teams to reject the PPM process.

### 5. Keeping Teams in the Dark

When the portfolio board makes decisions about projects, their decisions must be communicated out to the project teams. Most of the time, project portfolio managers aren't intentionally keeping teams in the dark. It's easy to miscommunicate with teams or fail to communicate at all. Unfortunately, this will defeat the purpose of PPM altogether, so set aside time to make sure everyone is informed.

### 6. Not Sticking to the Process

Change is difficult and oftentimes people don't adhere to new procedures exactly. Maybe upper management approved projects without considering the agreed upon evaluation criteria or a project manager skipped a proposal coaching meeting. This might not seem like a big deal, but if you and your organization don't commit 100%, how will you obtain all of the benefits of PPM?

## Making PPM Work for You

PPM can make the difference between always falling behind on projects and completing projects that contribute to the corporate strategy. The process can be customized to suit your organization and doesn't require your teams to work any differently than they currently do. If you'd like to know more about how you can successfully implement PPM, you can check out our other helpful material, including our Meisterplan Checklist and our PPM Meeting Info Packet.

