Implementation Plan of PMO(Project Management Office) over EPMO(Enterprise Project Management Office) for Beneficiaries Success in Today’s Organizations

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Abstract- Project Management Offices (PMO) are typically setup for large projects where they help the project managers in collecting timesheets, collating status reports and financial data, tracking deliverables, coordinating issues and risks etc. The paper highlights the challenges faced by organizations having traditional PMOs and the need for an Enterprise PMO. The paper further discusses some differentiation of EPMO over PMO, the structure of EPMO in large and small organizations, EPMO responsibilities, benefits of EPMO and the factors critical for the success of EPMO in an organization. The further plan of implement or organize the organization using the EPMO and decreases the project failure and discusses the growing importance of Enterprise PMO in organizations.

Keywords- PMO; EPMO; Project Management; Program Management; Portfolio Management.

1. INTRODUCTION
Over last 10 years, the relevance of PMO in the organization has grown tremendously because PMOs have increased the project success rates and made project delivery more standardized and predictable. The PMOs are evolving with time and the PMO maturity level has been increasing. Having said that, organizations are now realizing some of the challenges in the way the PMO were traditionally setup. Before discussing these challenges, let’s see the basic difference between the type of PMOs and the level on which these PMOs operate.

The word “PMO” is used differently in different contexts. PMO could mean Project Management Office, Program Management Office, and Portfolio Management Office depending on the level of PMO operation. Briefly, here is what different type of PMOs

1.1 Project Management Office
Project Management Offices are typically setup for large projects where they help the project managers in collecting timesheets, collating status reports and financial data, tracking deliverables, coordinating issues and risks etc. Many PMO are not successful in addressing the strategic priorities of their organization because they are departmentally based and not enterprise-wide. This reduces their span of influence and limits corporate support. The research shows that PMO’s are more effective and can better impact the bottom line, when they are operating at the corporate enterprise-wide strategic level, rather than at the departmental level. According to a study, fifty-seven percent (57%) of survey respondents indicated that all levels within an organization had not embraced the direction of the PMO. However, sixty (60%) of interviewees who headed departmentally based PMOs indicated that all levels of their departments embraced the direction of the PMO. They struggle to maintain a strategic orientation because they are not set-up to affect the entire organization. This is because many project management offices started off from a grass roots approach. They were started by an individual or small group of individuals who saw the need to bring more control over the management of a portfolio of projects, which, although based on good intentions, lacked senior management’s direction and control. According to the research, initial effort on the part of the PMO usually included presentations to increase departmental awareness and provision of training for the management team to help ensure their
understanding. This helped the PMO to move from a grass-roots approach into a more formal structure. The next evolution of the Project Management Office is for it to move into the corporate side of the business. This allows the PMO to gain a strategic position within the organization and works to ensure that projects proceed on the basis of their strategic alignment to the objectives of the organization. A PMO that is organizationally based versus departmentally based is more likely to get executive support. After all, project management should not be a departmental strategy; it should be an organizational strategy. This is an example of what the Enterprise PMO structure looks like:

As the simple diagram in Figure 1 shows, the overall business and IT strategy and direction are first defined for the enterprise. Next, some enterprises create portfolios of programs and projects as part of the execution mechanism for business and IT strategies / direction. Therefore, we can think of programs as elements -- among others -- that an enterprise enables to execute its business and IT strategies / direction. To achieve the necessary linkage, oversight, and control we described above, programs must institute effective governance, which for program management is defined as follows: Governance, for a program, is a combination of individuals filling executive and management roles, program oversight functions organized into structures, and policies that define management principles and decision making. This combination is focused upon providing direction and oversight, which guide the achievement of the needed business outcome from the execution of the program effort, and providing data and feedback, which measure the ongoing contribution by the program to needed results within the overall business strategy and direction. The concept of governance has multiple dimensions: people, roles, structures, and policies. Overseeing and actively managing program work is a more complex undertaking than project management. Furthermore, programs are dynamic, not static. They must respond to external events and changing conditions. Therefore, an effective governance structure and set of governance functions must provide the means to identify, assess, and respond to internal and external events and changes by adjusting program components or features. A poor (or nonexistent) governance structure will leave the program in a continuously reactive state, constantly struggling to catch up with changing conditions.

1.3 Portfolio Management Office
Portfolio Management Offices are generally setup at Department/Business unit level to ensure the Department/Business unit projects are aligned to overall enterprise business objectives. They facilitate business prioritization of projects. Benefit realization and value management also form part of Portfolio Management Office responsibilities. The Portfolio Management Offices support the portfolio leaders with portfolio management activities. Not everything is hunky-dory with the way the PMOs operate today. While the department level PMO and Portfolio Management Office operate at a tactical level at best, the Program Management Office and Project Management office often function at operational level.

1.3.1- Effective Project Portfolio Management: The Case For An Enabling PMO

As the need for effective delivery and control of strategic and other projects increasingly becomes part of the must-do mix of enterprise capabilities, business leaders continue to look to the PMO model as a means to deliver fact-based data on an ongoing, real-time basis to support executive decision making, pro-actively direct staff resources based on changing priorities, and effectively forecast resource demand across a portfolio of projects. Several factors contribute to an ability to do this, including on-going mentoring and consulting support for project teams, consistent and visible sponsorship from the executive level, and the use of appropriate technologies for data management and analysis. The approach taken to ensure adoption, deploy a Project Management Information System (PMIS), and establish an organizational portfolio management capability requires financial and political investment. The question then becomes, what approach makes sense, and how does one minimize the inherent risk, either through reducing exposure or ensuring against failure? As an organization embarks on developing and maturing its project management and portfolio delivery competence, the positioning of existing capabilities can often serve as a platform for expanding on effective capabilities already established. Observation and ‘marketing of’ successes can also increase the desire to deploy a formal PMO and make the prospects for its success increasingly salient. Once the appropriate level of interest is established, the question of how and why to deploy a PMO is of great consequence for organizations considering such a move. As an organization embarks on developing and maturing its project management and portfolio delivery competence, the positioning of existing capabilities can often serve as a platform for expanding on effective capabilities already established. Observation and ‘marketing of’ successes can also increase the desire to deploy a formal PMO and make the prospects for its success increasingly salient. Once the appropriate level of interest is established, the question of how and why to deploy a PMO is of great consequence for organizations considering such a move. As an organization embarks on developing and maturing its project management and portfolio delivery competence, the positioning of existing capabilities can often serve as a platform for expanding on effective capabilities already established. Observation and ‘marketing of’ successes can also increase the desire to deploy a formal PMO and make the prospects for its success increasingly salient.

A seemingly obvious starting point is to pursue a standards-based approach by aligning with and deploying an industry-standard PM methodology. But before one considers moving forward with a traditional Project Management development program such as OPM3 or other standards based regimens from PMI, Prince2, and similar bodies, one should consider whether or not such an approach is initially necessary or if it could instead prove to be disruptive to current project delivery capabilities and ultimately fail to deliver the value promised.

2. WHAT IS EPMO?

Considering the challenges faced by the traditional PMOs, organizations are feeling the need for a business function that will help overcome the traditional PMO challenges. Therefore organizations especially that have global presence or having multiple business units are moving towards such structure that will allow them to overcome the challenges listed in the section above. Therefore these organizations are creating a business function that is referred to as Enterprise PMO (EPMO). Enterprise PMO (EPMO) is a centralized business function which operates at strategic level with the enterprise executives and
provides enterprise wide support on governance, project portfolio management best practices, mentoring, tools and standardized processes. EPMO ensures strategic alignment between business objectives and projects executed. EPMO does not eliminate the need for Project, Program or Department level PMOs. It simply complements these traditional PMOs. While the traditional PMOs operating at the tactical and operational level focus on doing the things right. Organizations having an EPMO and traditional PMOs get the right things done the right way (see Figure). So the EPMO help the overall organization achieve its strategic goals and in the process also helps better support the project teams.

EPMO differentiates itself from other PMOs mainly by the level on which it operates. It is mainly operates as a business function within the organization and reporting directly into one of the CXOs mostly CIO. With the authority that comes with being at this position the EPMO can effectively control the portfolios, programs and projects running across the enterprise. Its position is regarded close to the Portfolio Management function. Strategic alignment of business objectives with the projects, project prioritization, value management and benefit realization are some of the key responsibilities of EPMO. The EPMO is not restricted to governing only the IT programs but the sales PMO, finance PMO, marketing PMO, HR PMO functions will also be typically reporting to the EPMO. Therefore EPMO collaborates and supports cross functional projects. This results into better synergy between the projects running under different enterprise functions. In an organization that has global operations, the geographically dispersed PMOs will report to the centralized EPMO thereby providing much needed coordination between these multinational PMOs. In today’s uncertain business environment amidst the financial crisis where organizations putting more emphasis on cost cutting, better resource utilization and trying to do more with less, EPMO have become even more relevant. Another factor leading to rise in EPMO adoption is increasing globalization. Organizations are now having global footprint and it becomes ever so important to have a centralized PMO (EPMO) at the enterprise level overseeing all the projects undertaken in the organization.

Figure demonstrates the maturity levels of the Project Management Office, Program Management office and Enterprise Project Management office. Project support office/Project Management office often operates at operational level. Program Management/Department level PMO on the other hand often goes a step higher and operates at a tactical level. In addition they may introduce checks and reviews to improve the quality of the project output. Program level and Department level PMO bring the following practices to the table like creating program direction, having a governance structure within a department, manage vendors if vendors are involved in supply, ensure better risks and issues resolution, performing.

Figure 7 shows an example of typical EPMO structure in large organizations. EPMO is positioned as a business function operating at the very highest level (Usually the EPMO directly report to the one of the CXO). This demonstrates the vantage point the EPMO has in an enterprise to oversee enterprise wide projects.
**Figure 8** show how an EPMO may be structured in a smaller organization. Here we notice that there are not too many levels of PMOs in a small organization. Therefore all PMOs would report to a centralized EPMO.

This becomes a central office where the demand is captured and classified into strategic, tactical or operational demand. In organizations having only department PMOs and no EPMO, there might be conflict that project A running in department 1 had higher priority than project B running in department B. EPMO ensures that all projects are prioritized at this central office and thus there is no conflict of priority between departments on the projects.

**Resource Management** EPMO maintains a picture about the resource available to work on this demand across all departments of the organization. This central view of resource at EPMO helps in strategic resource planning resulting in better utilization of resource and improves efficiency.

### 3. PMO Development

The recommended PMO development roadmap consists of three primary phases: Plan, Implement and Manage. Each phase is broken down into a number of sequential steps. This document will walk through each step individually and elaborates as necessary on the various concepts and recommendations presented.

**3.1 Plan Phase**

The plan phase is organized around asking and answering why, what, how, who and when. The answers to these questions form the core information that flows into the PMO charter. The initial plan phase should not be exited until the PMO charter is complete and buy-in from key stakeholders and customers identified in the planning process has been confirmed.

**3.2 Create Statement of Purpose and Goals**

A simple statement of purpose and goals should serve as a guide for the PMO team and as a core communications platform to stakeholders. Potential goals include:

- Better alignment of project activity and business strategy and investments
- Consistent adherence to a project management process and methodology
- Improved collaboration and knowledge and best-practice sharing
• Resource pool readiness (training) and competency to meet evolving IT and business needs
• World-class resource utilization and capacity management
• Executive visibility to project, program and portfolio-level status, issues, risks, costs, etc.

3.3 Define Scope and Target Maturity

Your PMO goals (defined above) need to be put in context with respect to scope and target maturity. The scope dimension can be defined by three levels: Project, Program and Portfolio.

• **Project.** Focus is on PM training, mentoring, coaching; project-level budgets, scheduling, resources, deliverables, scope, risks and metrics.

• **Program.** Concern is with the coordination of business and IT projects, program planning, change/risk mgmt, coordination of project delivery and results measurement.

• **Portfolio.** These EPMOs focus heavily on benefits realization management; knowledge management, portfolio scope definition, overall investments and resource utilization, benefit and risk assessment, and performance monitoring.

Understanding your current level of IT/PPM maturity is critical to setting achievable IT organization maturity goals. The Capability Maturity Model Integration (CMMI) provides a widely used and standardized framework for describing the levels of IT organization maturity:

• **Level 1: Reactive** – Methods are undocumented and delivery, budgets and schedules are uncontrolled. Next level when: Methodology is defined for project tracking and scheduling, time tracking, resource assignments, project oversight and support.

• **Level 2: Repeatable** – Processes are not consistently used and projects regularly exceed budget and schedule. Next level when: Automated processes are in place for project budgeting, risk, issue and requirements tracking and resource management.

• **Level 3: Pro-Active** – There is a commitment to documented, standardized PM and delivery processes company-wide. Next level when: Automation of additional functions is in place such as financial management and business process modeling.

• **Level 4: Measured** – KPIs are specified and monitored regularly and project and program delivery is predictable and controlled. Next level when: There is evidence that an innovative process improvement culture has taken hold.

• **Level 5: Continuously Improved** – Processes are regularly extended to external entities and collaboration practices are state-of-the-art. A simple matrix defined by the scope and maturity dimensions can be used to depict where an organization may be today and where it hopes to be over a defined period of time through the tools and influence of the new PMO. In the example below, an organization currently describes itself as “project-focused” with respect to scope and “reactive” (Level 1) with respect to organizational maturity. The goal is to expand the scope of PPM practices to include program and portfolio management oversight while working towards “repeatable” (Level 2) maturity for project, program and portfolio management practices across the organization.

![Fig 11: PMO Scope](image)

3.4 Identify Core Services Needed to Achieve Goal

Now that the core PMO mission/purpose and scope have been defined, the next step is to identify the key services that the PMO will offer in support of its business goals. The graphic below describes various potential PMO services offerings ranging from business strategy alignment services to basic project activity visibility and coordination. Some organizations may focus on a few of these areas, while others take on all of these areas over time.

![Fig 12: Core Services Of PMO](image)

3.5 Define core service metrics

Metrics for managing the performance of each service offering need to be defined. The table below provides examples that are frequently used for various service offerings.

| Table 1: Core service Metrics |
3.6 Define business processes

The next step is to figure out how the services will be managed and delivered. The graphic below provides some high level descriptions of example delivery mechanisms which are typically deployed to operationalize various PMO service offerings.

### Table 2: Business Processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential Service</th>
<th>Example Metrics/Success Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business Strategy</td>
<td>Alignments to corporate strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology and process complexity</td>
<td>% of projects following approved methodologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration and knowledge management</td>
<td>% of issues resolved or transferred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development</td>
<td>% of certified PMs/POs trained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource management</td>
<td>% improvement in resource utilization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue &amp; Risk management</td>
<td>% improvement in issue resolution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target Delivery Mechanism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PMO system delivers strategic alignment functionality using listings, reports, and dashboards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology expertise and knowledge transfer delivered via training services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMO community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMO system document repository</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMO software platform (SLT + eLearning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core function of PMO software platform</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.7 Define Governance, Stakeholders, and PMO Team Structure

In this step, the PMO plan must address the various “who” questions. Who is going to deliver the service offerings that have been identified? Who is the customer for these services and who is the PMO accountable to for the delivery of these services? Specifically, the plan should:

- Identify direct reporting relationships and dotted-line sponsors/champions
- Define organizational structure and roles and responsibilities.
- Solicit and track stakeholder agreement.

3.8 Create Timeline and Identify Key Milestones

Of course, every plan must clearly identify key phases and milestones. This PMO starter kit recommends at least three primary phases: Plan, Implement and Manage. Some major milestones are suggested in the graphic below.

### Fig 14: PMO Timeline Chart

4. Implement Phase

4.1 Define Key Roles/Job Descriptions

The first step in the implementation phase is to execute the hiring plan. With the high-level team structure defined, it is now time to refine key role definitions and job descriptions and begin the recruiting process. Example role and job description summaries are provided below.

### Fig 15: PMO Job Descriptions

4.2 Gather Project Inventory and Analyze

For every active and proposed project, the PMO should gather basic information such as:

- Project name, description and scope
- Alignment (business unit, program, initiative, strategy, portfolio)
- Project type
- Project personnel (PM, project sponsor, project team)
- Requestor and internal priority
- Dates (plans, actuals)
- Financials (budget, costs, ROI, approved changes)
- Outstanding issues

**PMO Director Job Description:** Sets strategic direction. Defines, manages to and reports KPIS. Creates and maintains tool, templates, best-practice and methodology documentation.
PM Manager/Support Job Description: Manages the PM resources and provides PM coaching and mentoring. May serve as PM resource for strategic projects. Tracks organization-wide resource capacity and utilization recommending optimal allocation.

Training/Professional Development Manager Job Description: Assesses organizational and individual competency levels and skills to determine needs. Designs and delivers curriculum/service offering and certification program.

PMO Analyst Job Description: Maintains PMO dashboard and reports. Assists project teams with reporting and tracking. Provides systems support and administration (project inventory database, knowledge repository, collaboration platform, etc.).

4.3 Define Key Methodologies and Standards

In this step the key methodologies and standards are defined. This includes project execution methodologies that the PMO will support in terms of providing training, coaching, mentoring, tools and templates. This also includes providing standard definitions for project-related concepts and attributes such as issues, risks, change and trigger events, as well as standardized processes for associated actions such as assignments, qualifications, escalations, resolutions and communications.

4.3 Build Skills Assessment and Development Plan

Most PMOs are charged with improving the organization’s project management skill set and overall maturity and competency level. To accomplish this, an organizational skills assessment must be conducted to establish a benchmark. A development plan should be constructed – at the organizational and individual level – that focuses on closing the gap between the benchmark and the target skill or competency level. The resulting remediation plans should be developed in coordination with functional and resource managers. Optionally, a certification program may be implemented to validate and recognize competency and skills attainment. Systems should be leveraged to track development plans, training, certifications and feedback on training effectiveness. Outsourcing may be considered for some or parts of the skills assessment, development planning and training delivery process.

4.4 Build a PPM System Plan

The systems plan depends obviously on the initial and projected scope and scale of the PMO organization and project-intensive environments it serves. An appropriate solution can range from an Excel spreadsheet to an enterprise-class on-demand PPM system. As a result, it would not be meaningful to provide detailed guidance in this area beyond the following high-level best practices. Requirements should map to PMO service offering enablement such as strategy alignment capabilities, resource utilization, project execution consistency, best practice sharing and collaboration, integrated training administration and project tracking (e.g., status, issue, risk, schedule, time tracking). The system must provide an easy way to report on project, program and portfolio metrics that have been identified for each service offering. This includes the ability to easily compose, share, print and communicate dashboards and reports. Finally, make sure that there is a well-thought out plan to integrate with existing systems as necessary and there is sufficient emphasis placed on systems training. Solution training should be offered to everyone involved in the project management process.

5. Manage Phase

5.1 Conduct Project Reviews

Conduct periodic project and program reviews that focus on:
- For Projects
  o Consistent project planning, delivery and reporting
  o Ensuring the project is focused on scope and objectives
  o Task assignment and reporting process and results
  o Issues and changes
- For programs
  o Master schedule and rollup of issues/costs
  o Project dependencies being met and reported
- For both:
  o Assess team skills and offer training as needed

5.2 Establish a Project Monitoring and Management Model

For all in-flight projects it is important to operationalize a process for monitoring changes to status, issues, risks, costs, etc. This involves sub processes for detecting these changes, qualifying and/or quantifying the potential impact, communicating and escalating the impact to relevant stakeholders, and triggering plans of action for resolution or mitigation.

5.3 Work with Governance
Maintaining the support of the PMO governance entity will be critical to long-term survival. While governance is interested in project-level progress, they are more concerned with structural change and strategic process and direction. In this regard, they may look to the PMO to play an advisory or consultative role. As a result, the PMO should stand ready to make project recommendations in the following areas:

- Retaining: The PMO should be able to recommend and justify projects that should be kept alive.
- Killing: The PMO should recommend projects to discontinue based on metric results (performance), duplication of effort, lack of alignment with corporate initiatives, resource contention considerations, etc.
- Consolidating: The PMO should identify opportunities to consolidate disparate project efforts into a single project or program in order to achieve greater project execution efficiencies, outcome coordination or to re-focus efforts and resources.
- Reprioritizing: The PMO should be able to make recommendations regarding project priorities and opportunities to shift project resources.

5.4 Revalidate with Senior Leadership

Questions the PMO should be ready to answer at all times include:

- Are we providing value?
- Are any changes needed?
- Have we driven our organization’s maturity to the next level?
- Can we answer the critical questions?
- Are we doing the right projects?
- Do we know the current status of all projects?
- Are we managing, escalating, and resolving project issues?
- Do project and program managers have the right training?
- What is our overall resource utilization?

5.5 Mature your PMO

The CMMI maturity model described earlier in this document pertained to the maturing of the organization that the PMO serves. The PMO itself needs to mature as well. The PMO maturity model depicted below provides a starting point for modeling an appropriate evolutionary path in your organization. Since business context is unique for every enterprise (e.g., goals, business drivers, organizational structure, culture, etc.), any maturity model can only be viewed as a template and launching point for further discussion on how best to plot the most efficient and successful path forward.

Table 3: Maturity Level of PMO

5.6 What are the Critical Success Factors for EPMO to deliver the goods?

1. Positioning of EPMO is a critical success factor for an EPMO to deliver goods. Some organizations create EPMO for namesake and is not strategically positioned. Therefore it does not command the authority from rest of the organization and other department level PMOs. EPMO should report to one of the CXOs typically CIO.

2. EPMO should not be perceived by other PMOs to barging into their territory. Instead the PMOs and project managers should be made to understand that EPMO complements their work and is created for providing additional help. Proper organization change management plays an important role in introducing a new EPMO. If an organization is newly introducing EPMO to the organization, the introduction of EPMO should follow best practices of organization change management.

3. At the same time the executives should not be made to feel that EPMO is treading on their ground. There should be constant leadership support and buy-in for the EPMO to perform its role. After all the leadership gets benefitted from EPMO in many ways including having information to take critical decisions. So EPMO should be seen as a function supporting the organizational leadership and not overlapping their responsibilities.

4. It’s important that EPMO is established as a separate business function/group. So that it is not regarded part of IT, Finance or any other specific function. EPMO is supposed to support projects across all functions and not just IT.

5. It’s vital to have an organizational structure such that all PMOs directly or indirectly report to EPMO. Flow of Communication and escalation path should be clearly defined to avoid any bottlenecks.

6. For the EPMO to be effective it’s important that it is staffed with people having project management expertise and also business acumen. Since EPMO staff is required to understand the business vision and also provide coaching to the project managers.
7. Since EPMO is a centralized office, for EPMO to function effectively, it’s important to have a reasonable amount of standardization across the departments within the organization.

6. Conclusion

The concept of a PMO at an enterprise level (EPMO) is relatively new but large organizations and organizations having global footprint are adopting Enterprise PMO for the number of reasons discussed in the white paper. From here on the popularity and adoption of EPMO is only going to increase as globalization increases, departments becoming more diverse and dispersed across geographies and organizations becoming more cost conscious than ever before. The emphasis is on doing more with less and organizations want to review every dollar spent more than they have done is the past. Moving from what has been the traditional approach of having program and project level PMOs to a PMO at enterprise level is a logical step in increasing the PMO maturity level.

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