



PROJECT MANAGEMENT TRAINING AND CONSULTANCY

CASE STUDY – Consolidating PM expertise

Client

Centrica Energy Upstream

Challenge

Develop standard processes and practices across project communities.

“We needed to join two disparate project communities to start working as a single team with one common governance set and standard processes and practices.”

Marshall Allerton, Projects & Wells Director – Centrica Energy Upstream

The story so far

Over a three year period, 20|20 Business Insight has provided a wide range of project management consultancy services, professional competency assessments and training services to Centrica Energy’s Upstream and Renewables divisions.

One of the outcomes of this ongoing working partnership has been the ability for Centrica to develop a standardised project management worldview and governance model based on current best practice and to ensure that its PM professionals are fully equipped to cope with the emotional demands and intellectual rigour required to manage complex, high risk project portfolios for a world class energy management business.

Stage gate process for developing best practice standards

Starting in 2010, 20|20 helped Centrica Energy Upstream to standardise on a single PM governance process. This initiative arose because the company recognised that following the acquisition of Venture Production plc that many practices, policies and experiences had come together from the previous parts into the new single entity that was Centrica Energy Upstream. As is frequently the case following mergers, the resulting entities experienced PM efficiency and effectiveness issues that were caused by process duplication.

The company's management team engaged 20|20 to help facilitate the integration of two disparate project management frameworks into a single set of processes and methodologies based on best practice guidelines. As part of this brief, 20|20 assisted Centrica by facilitating workshops in March 2011 to help the company's project management team develop a common 'stage gate process' supporting the creation of a single project delivery process with a single project lifecycle and unified governance standards.

"Bringing the two teams together presented a challenge because we had to combine fundamentally very different ways of working which included appetites for risk and a cultural approach to project management. One team was structured and exercised in a very traditional mode and the other in a very different mode which meant the approaches from start to finish were always varied, yet we needed to be a single unified team", said Marshall Allerton, Projects & Wells Director, Centrica Energy Upstream

Creating a standard approach

Working with 20|20, Centrica began consolidating the different project management 'worldviews', whilst at the same time, identifying how newer, cutting edge practices being adopted elsewhere in other organisations could be employed internally. Their aim was to agree a standardised approach to ensure commonality both across investment decision-making and progress reporting.

"We helped them to cherry-pick the best bits and have a single project lifecycle they could all understand and follow," explains Doug Littlejohn, COO at 20|20. "We also overlaid onto this our knowledge of PM best practice so we could continually validate what was being proposed against international standards."

Benefits of independent views

After completing this exercise Centrica's management team commented on the benefit of having an independent view given by an organisation such as 20/20

"20|20 did the initial work to help establish a framework for a single governance model at Centrica Upstream and they did an excellent job of facilitating the workshop to give us a central governance model," says Marshall Allerton at Centrica.