

Benefits of Maturing Your Project Management Discipline



OVERVIEW

Achieving a strategic level of project management maturity should be on the mind of every project-based business, especially professional services firms. Proposals, budgets, resources, estimate-at-complete (EAC) are activities a project-based business can't live without. In a perfect world, the project management activities will connect directly to time and financial systems. The integrated system (people, processes, and tools) will provide a level of visibility and control that will help mature your discipline and will improve execution success.

EVOLVING THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT DISCIPLINE:

Since project management depends on the strategic alignment of people, processes and tools it only makes sense to concentrate on the level of competency of each of these attributes throughout your capability evolution. Professional Services organizations are all on different journeys as it pertains to capability evolution. Which one of these levels of maturity accurately depicts your current maturity status?

Level 1 - AD-HOC

Achieving goals depend on individual effort and heroics. This is typically chaos and you might picture this state as people running around with their hair on fire.

Level 2 - BASIC INFORMATION

Basic project management processes are in place and the necessary process discipline exists to repeat earlier successes on projects with similar applications.

Level 3 - ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARDS

Processes are documented and standardized, with approved tailored approaches adopted as needed

Level 4 - QUANTITATIVE

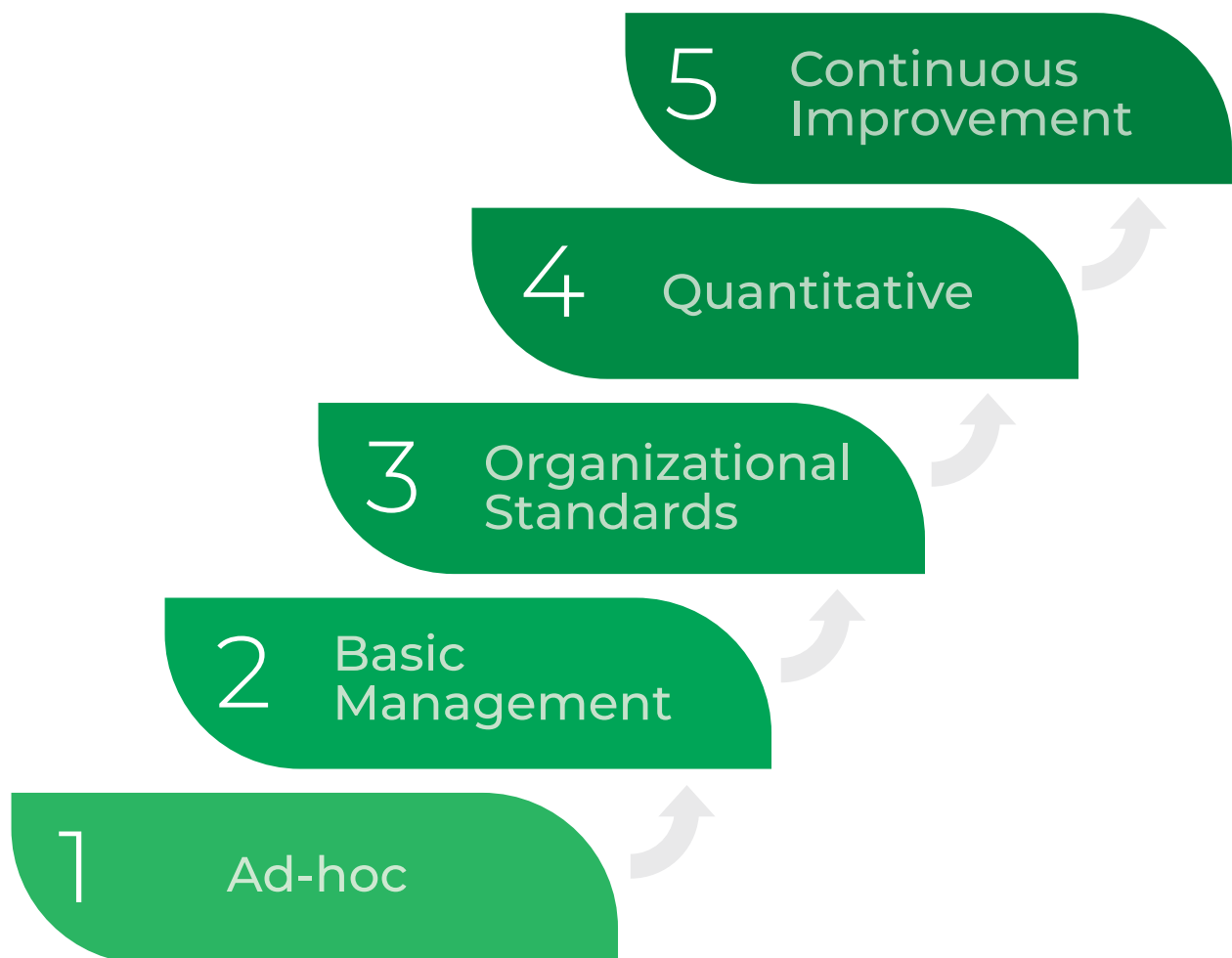
Detailed measures on process adherence and cost/schedule performance are quantitatively measured, understood and managed..

Level 5 - CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Continuous process improvement is enabled by quantitative feedback from the process and from piloting innovative ideas and technologies.

THE MATURITY LADDER

As an organization, it is important to decide what level is needed to achieve your business objectives. Some may say that level 3.5 is adequate and it will meet their needs. Others might need a complete managed process that is striving for optimization so a 4.3. Making that decision is key to establishing a road-map and overall timeline.



HOW TO MOVE UP THE MATURITY LADDER

Level 1 to Level 2

- Agree as an organization that you are ready to climb the ladder!
- Create and document policies and procedures
 - Policies should establish best practices for your organization
 - Assure they will help the teams be successful
 - Make sure there is a repository for easy access
 - Feedback loop to make sure policies are being followed
 - Create a self-audit plan
- Concentrate on the basics – scope, schedule, and budget
- Provide role-based training on policies and procedures
- Evaluate tools and evaluate future needs

Level 2 to Level 3

- Measure adherence of policies and procedures by the projects
- Listen closely to feedback at every level of the organization
- Evolve the procedures to be tailorable for different types of projects
- Compliance to policies and procedures for the organization
- Automation of the process with the right tools

Level 3 to Level 4

- Use data (historical and current) to drive business decisions
- Align forecasts and plans to corporate goals and objectives
- Utilize KPIs to directly influence achievement of business goals
- Consider past performance and apply learning to current forecasts
- Tools now support the process with minimal manual touches
- Continue role-based training for all stakeholders
- Pools training is a recurring activity

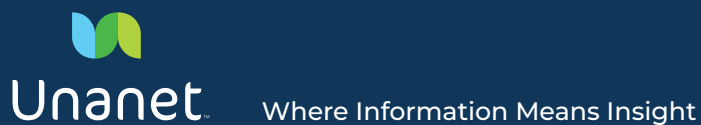
Level 4 to Level 5

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By working committing to mature your project management discipline you will realize the following benefits:

- Improved visibility and control into project performance
- Improved predictability and understanding of overall performance
- Increase in realized profitability
- Common organizational standards ensuring consistent reporting, reduction of rework, and reduced dependence on heroes.
- Optimization of the project management staff allowing them to focus on their customer, not on turning the crank.
- More efficient communication within project teams and to senior leadership.
- Delivery of real-time insight on project financials and enable resolution of identified risks.
- More on-time and on-budget projects which equals a delighted customer.

These benefits can be accomplished by partnering with Unanet both for subject matter expertise as well as an integrated tool for project, people, and financials.



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