# A.I.M PROJECT METHODOLOGY
Whitepaper

Overview

A ***project*** is defined as "a *temporary* endeavor undertaken to create a *unique* product, service, or result" (*A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge – PMBOK[®] Guide, Third Edition – Project Management Institute, 2004*). Projects are *temporary* because they have a definite beginning and a definite end. They are *unique* because the product or service they create is different in some distinguishing way from similar products or services. Additionally, a project's purpose is "to produce a set of deliverables within clearly specified *time*, *cost*, and *quality* constraints" (*Project Management Guidebook – Method123[©] 2003*). In contrast to ongoing, functional work, projects are governed by predefined *budget* and *resource* constraints that need to be carefully monitored to meet overall client expectations. It is understood that projects carry a certain level of uncertainty, or business risk, yet the benefits of organizational improvement that result from a successfully-executed project far outweigh such risks.

Efforts to meet or exceed client needs (identified requirements) and expectations (unidentified requirements) involve balancing competing demands among the scope of work, timeframes, expenses, quality of service, and individuals involved and affected by the changes.
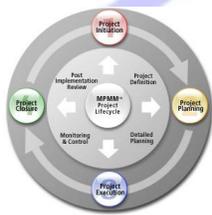
Thus, when there is a project, there is an inherent need for what is referred to as ***project management***, or "the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities in order to meet or exceed stakeholder needs and expectations from a project." (*A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge – PMBOK[®] Guide, Third Edition – Project Management Institute, 2004*). Unfortunately, it is this function that is given little to no attention in the project process.

Challenges

Generally, there are two ways projects come about – those that are *driven* by business demands, and those that are *discovered* while performing other business tasks. *Driven* projects result from organizational changes due to the changing business environment, such as reorganizations, upper-management decisions, and infrastructure changes. These types of projects typically call for short completion timeframes, whilst other aspects such as cost, quality, and resources – although important to the client – are given inadequate consideration in order to meet such timeframe demands. Projects like this are typically rushed through the process, and thus have a wide margin for error that commonly results in frustration. *Discovered* projects are different in that they typically don't necessitate the sense of urgency that characterize "driven" projects, and as such, aren't given the proper attention, if any at all. These types of projects either never get started, or they span an exceedingly long timeframe – in either case, there are adverse impacts to cost, quality, and resources. Last, but definitely not least, is *communication*

which plays a vital role in achieving the desired results – yet the paths of such communication are either not clearly defined or are lost in the political and/or social quagmire that often resides within a project!

The difficulty with most project management methodologies is that they are too complex, and thus are often disregarded. Although such methodologies, when discussing the project lifecycle, appear to be standard, they begin taking on a life of their own as each aspect of the project lifecycle "grows" in a flowchart of numerous levels, each more detailed than the first. This becomes overwhelming, giving the appearance that more time, resources, and money would be spent *managing* the project rather than *executing* the project! However, the reverse also holds true. Project management methodologies that are too simplistic end up not accomplishing the purpose of project management – meeting the client needs and expectations!
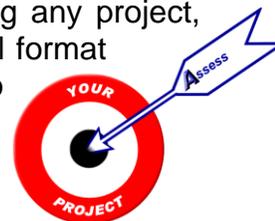
Solution

Overcoming the business challenges related to project management – that's Angus-Hamer Networking's A.I.M.! This methodology "targets" the *complete* and *thorough* management of the client project – encompassing needs, expectations, scope, time, procurement, budget, resources, communication, risk, and quality – in a plain, yet effective, process that is adaptable to fulfilling the needs and expectations of the client.

Components

The A.I.M. project methodology is comprised of three general, and essential, areas of project management that encompass the entire project management lifecycle. That lifecycle consists of **A**ssess, **I**mplement, and **M**anage. There exists a hierarchy of dependency among these areas when applied to a project as a complete solution. However, each area has the capability to be fulfilled independently, should the situation warrant such application.

The *first*, and all-encompassing area, is **A**ssess. Before engaging any project, information must be gathered, compiled, and presented in a logical format so as to allow all decision-makers involved with the project to ascertain, with relative confidence, the most beneficial solution by which to proceed. By nature, then, details pertaining to how to **I**mplement and **M**anage such solutions would, and should, be included in the **A**ssess area. This would include discovering client needs/expectations, risk assessment, procurement requirements, budget constraints, communication specifications, scope of work, timelines, resource allocation, and quality of service guidelines.

The *second* area is **I**mplement, where the end results are realized.   Once an assessment has been completed, which is vital to defining the true solution that will meet the client needs, the selected solution is put into place.   This is accomplished through procurement (if applicable) and completion of the scope of work along with specified deliverables within the defined timelines, taking into consideration budget constraints and risks involved as noted in the **A**ssess area, with a strong focus on communication throughout the entire process.   Deliverables are provided throughout this process as well. The **I**mplement area does not neglect the importance of ongoing management and maintenance of the provided solution, and as such, the **M**anage area is incorporated into the **I**mplement area under this methodology.
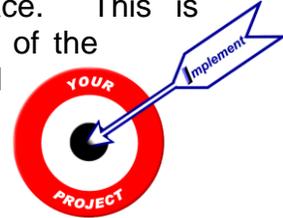
The *third* and final area is **M**anage.   Successful completion of **A**ssess and **I**mplement areas put the project "on target" for ongoing management and maintenance. This area is what institutes the continued success of the implemented solution. Quality of service guidelines are discussed and clearly documented in order to best meet the intended service levels moving forward.
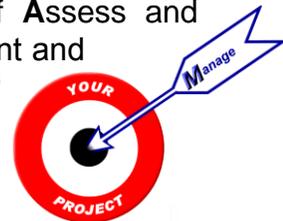
Summary
Angus-Hamer Networking's project methodology, A.I.M., has been developed to better serve the needs of the client. This is not only limited to education with respect to the entire project process, but is inclusive of the project management resources that Angus-Hamer makes available to its clients. So when considering undertaking that next project – remember, project success and client satisfaction – that's Angus-Hamer Networking's A.I.M.!

Contact Us
For additional information, or to request Angus-Hamer Networking's services, please e-mail sales@angushamer.com or call (916) 725-4000 and ask for the Sales Department.