

# Messenger

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## Program Management, Part 2

After finishing last month's Messenger about Program Management, I realized there's so much more information that I wanted to share. So, we're going to continue our look on this topic. This month we'll look at the Program Management Life Cycle.

First, let's look at how it differs from the Project Life Cycle. The first main difference is that the Program Life Cycle manages outcomes and benefits, while the Project Life Cycle produces deliverables. Programs often have an extended life cycle as some projects transition to operations while other projects are only just being initiated. Projects generate deliverables at the completion of their life cycle, and the resulting benefits flow into the program. The capabilities delivered by several of the program's projects may need to be integrated in order to provide some or all of the program's benefits.

There are five phases in the Program Management Life Cycle. Let's take a look at each one.

### **Phase #1 - Pro-Program Set Up**

Pre-Program Set Up establishes a firm foundation of support and approval for the program. You must understand the strategic value of the proposed business change and identify the key decision makers/stakeholders and their interests. During this phase, you will define the program objectives and their alignment with the organization's strategic objectives. Some factors to



consider at this time are: shared resources across projects, program duration, participation across corporate entities, and dependencies on deliverables between projects to create a set of benefits. As you're selecting/approving programs, take into account the total available resources, preliminary budget estimates, benefits analysis, strategic fit with organizational goals, and risks.

### **Phase #2 - Program Set Up**

Program Set Up provides direction on how the program will be managed and defines its key deliverables. You will align the mission, vision, and values for the program with the organization's objectives. An initial detailed cost and schedule plan for setting up the program and outlining plans for the remainder of the program will be developed. You should create a program architecture that maps out how the projects within the program will come together. Most importantly, communicate with stakeholders and gain support.

### **Phase #3 - Program Management and Infrastructure**

During this phase, you will establish an infrastructure that will support the program and

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***There's nothing so rewarding as to make  
people realize they are worthwhile in this  
world.  
Bob Anderson***

# The Mathis Group's Messenger

Merry Christmas!

The Mathis Group would like to wish you a very merry and blessed Christmas season!



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its projects as they deliver the expected benefits. It will include program-specific governance areas such as processes and procedures and program facilities. The program organizational structure will support the controlling and monitoring of the program and its projects. It is what makes decisions for the program.

#### ***Phase #4 - Deliver the Benefits***

This is when the core work of the program begins. It ends when the planned benefits of the program have been achieved or a decision is made to terminate the program. During this phase, you will initiate the component projects of the program and coordinate the deliverables to create the incremental benefits.

The program management team is responsible for initiating projects to meet program objectives and managing transitions to the target goal. They are also to ensure that project managers adhere to established project management methodologies and that project deliverables meet their business/technical requirements. This team will identify issues and risks to guarantee appropriate corrective or mitigation actions have been taken. Coordination of efficient use of resources across the program and project activities is in their care.

#### ***Phase #5 - Close the Program***

There are three times to close a program: when all program work is completed and benefits are seen, when activities lead to the shutdown of the program organization and infrastructure, or when there is a transition of on-going operations to other groups. Throughout this phase, you will review the status of benefits with the stakeholders and program sponsor, disband the program organization and program team, and provide any customer support necessary.

It is necessary to understand the Program Management Life Cycle in order to have a successful Program Management Office. When we do our part to get projects done, the whole organization will benefit.



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