Module C8 - Handing Over to Business-as-Usual
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Aim and Objectives for this Module

This module describes the process for transferring responsibility of the project to the business-as-usual organisation and the provision of ongoing support.

After studying this module you should be able to:

• Select an example project and describe the types of ongoing support that could be required.
• Explain the conditions that should be in place before a project can be accepted into business-as-usual.
• Describe the purpose of SLAs and KPIs.
• Look at a solution that has been accepted into business-as-usual and match up some of the key performance indicators with the requirements in the service level agreement.

Summary

1 Transferring Responsibility for the Project into Business-as-Usual

An important consideration throughout the project lifecycle is the ability of the business-as-usual organisation to take responsibility for supporting the project solution after implementation.

Ownership of ongoing support is handed over to the business-as-usual organisation after acceptance into business-as-usual is complete.

2 Acceptance into Business-as-Usual

Acceptance into business-as-usual may also be referred to as acceptance, acceptance into production, acceptance into service and so on. Irrespective of this, it is a key milestone in the project lifecycle. At this point the project transfers responsibility and ownership of the solution to the business users and the support organisation.

There are three main conditions that need to be met before achieving this milestone, as follows: solution acceptance; user readiness; and support organisation established. Section 2 provides examples of how these conditions are met in a typical project.

3 Establishing SLAs and KPIs for Support

At the point where the solution has achieved the business acceptance criteria the support organisation will establish methods and controls to support the solution as part of business-as-usual.

During the support preparation phase, service level agreements (SLAs) and key performance indicators (KPIs) will have been determined. Service level agreements define the agreed services provided by the support teams to the business for the operation of the solution. Key performance indicators measure and monitor the performance of the service level agreements.
1 Transferring Responsibility for the Project into Business-as-Usual

An important consideration throughout the lifecycle of a project is the ability of the business-as-usual organisation to take responsibility for supporting the project solution after implementation. This may require:

- Training for new users
- Training and support for existing users
- Troubleshooting support
- Support and maintenance of technical elements of the solution
- Third-party maintenance arrangements
- Ongoing operational requirements.

The solution design can be used when considering the aspects that require ongoing support. It may be possible to determine how this support can be delivered, such as by using in-house teams or third parties.

Responsibility for and ownership of ongoing support is handed over to the business-as-usual organisation after the acceptance into business-as-usual process has been completed. This is a critical milestone in the project lifecycle.
2 Acceptance into Business-as-Usual

Acceptance into business-as-usual may also be referred to as acceptance, acceptance into production, acceptance into service and so on. Irrespective of this, it is a key milestone in the project lifecycle. At this point the project transfers responsibility and ownership of the solution to the business users and the support organisation. There are three main conditions that need to be met before achieving this milestone, as follows:

- Solution acceptance
- User readiness
- Support organisation established.

While transferring the responsibility of the solution, the information and experience gained throughout the project needs to be collected, collated, stored and made available to the business-as-usual organisation. User readiness will be assisted by knowledge transfer from the project team to a point where the business is no longer dependent upon the project team.

This information and experience is collectively known as the project’s knowledge base and it is formally handed over within the acceptance into business-as-usual process.

Only when these conditions have been met can the project be formally accepted into business-as-usual and the handover completed.

2.1 The Conditions for Acceptance

The following diagram and table give an example of some of the conditions that may be required for acceptance of responsibility by the business-as-usual organisation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Establishing the knowledge base</th>
<th>Known errors that have been accepted by the business and project team need to be collated and details of any workarounds made available.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comprehensive documentation relating to the solution must be made available to the support teams. The contents of this may include details of the business acceptance criteria, the solution design, detailed specifications, user manuals and training material.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Training for users and support staff should take place and incorporate any relevant documentation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Acceptance

Ensure solution availability meets requirements

Establish the support arrangements

Confirm the solution is “fit for purpose”

Establish support teams and areas of responsibilities

Agreed SLAs and KPIs

Support and project change request communication channels

Comprehensive solution design

User and support staff training

Details of the user base

Details of accepted known errors

Establish the knowledge base
Details of the user base should be compiled to include details of departments, names, positions, locations and contact details.

### Establishing support arrangements

- The communication channels for support and project change requests should be established and disseminated to all users. This helps to ensure that the processes for seeking assistance or requesting a change to the solution are clear and unambiguous.
- Service level agreements (SLAs) and key performance indicators (KPIs) may need to be established between the users and support teams. These help to ensure that the level of support available to the users is appropriate and measurable. These agreements may also be in the form of contracts with third parties.
- The areas of responsibility for the support teams need clarifying and documenting. The aim of this is to ensure that there is no overlap of responsibility, as this can lead to confusion and a failure to provide sufficient support to the users.

### Confirming that solution is “fit for purpose”

- It is important to ensure that the solution is stable and bedded down before the project relinquishes responsibility for the solution.
- The ongoing availability of the solution needs to meet the business’s and users’ requirements and should be determined within the business acceptance criteria. The support teams should consider this aspect when establishing their service periods.
- Details of the testing carried out and the subsequent acceptance by the business should be provided, to demonstrate to the support teams that the project solution has met the business acceptance criteria.
3 Establishing SLAs and KPIs for Support

At the point where the solution has achieved the business acceptance criteria the support organisation will establish methods and controls to support the solution as part of business-as-usual.

During the support preparation phase, service level agreements (SLAs) and key performance indicators (KPIs) will have been determined.

Service level agreements define the agreed services provided by the support teams to the business for the operation of the solution. The purpose of the service level agreements is to determine the types and levels of support that will be provided to the users of the solution, including factors such as levels of availability, recovery times and so on. Service level agreements are negotiated and agreed between the business (which defines its requirements) and the support teams (who define their ability to deliver, thereby setting realistic expectations).

Key performance indicators measure and monitor the performance of service level agreements. They can be used to monitor the continual ability of the support teams to deliver the service levels agreed. They also provide a method for measuring the service levels contained within the service level agreement over a period of time.

Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service level agreement states:</th>
<th>The support team must provide a telephone answering service to the users between 08:00 and 18:00 Monday to Friday to receive and record all queries or issues.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key performance indicator stipulates:</td>
<td>The support team must answer 95% of all inbound calls within six seconds between 08:00 and 18:00 Monday to Friday.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If one of the project’s deliverables is to establish service level agreements and key performance indicators between the users and support organisations, the following diagram gives an example of how this may be achieved.