Blog on Organizational Process Assets

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Confucius said “study the past if you would define the future.” (as cited in Ceston, 2013) The process of using organizational process assets in development of a risk plan is just that. A Risk Plan is to preemptively mitigate risk or at least have a plan to deal with threats and opportunities as they rise; most known organizational process assets exist due to past learning or experiences. Using past experiences provides a means to make educated assumptions, forecast reactions, and more accurately judge costs and time schedules for completing a project.

Discussion on Organizational Process Assets

“Organizational Process Assets are the plans, processes policies, procedures and knowledge bases specific to and used by the performing organization.” (PMI, 2013). Some good examples of these assets are listed in A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (2013) they include but are not limited to “Risk Categories, Common Definitions, Risk Statement formats, standard templates, [defined] roles and responsibilities, Authority levels for decisions making and lessons learn.”(p 315) There are also a knowledge based process assets, gathered from people resources such as lessons learned.

The experience of prior project team members, knowledge and judgement of leaders within and organization and Subject Matter Experts (SME) are examples of human organizational process assets. Using their experience when developing a risk plan can help you to more accurately evaluate for the risk appetite, tolerance, and thresholds with an organization; this in turn provides more accurate quantification. Risk strategies are developed based upon the quantifications and understanding of these three risk attitudes.

Personal Experience

In my work we use several of the organizational process assets. The two I’m going to focus on are procedures and knowledge based risk identification and mitigation. The Federal

Aviation Administration air traffic control procedures instruction is basically a conglomeration of polices developed from lessons learned. All these procedures are put in place to minimize the risk of a mishap during the risky business of flying. Thus by use of this organizational process asset future risk can be more effectively mitigated.

Most organizations don't fit into a predetermined procedural mold and Air Traffic Control is the same. The knowledge base from controllers experienced in local quirks, weather patterns and airspace difficulty is critical to efficiently controlling safety threat and exploiting opportunities within the operational arena. It takes nearly three years for a new controller to achieve initial competency. This time is used to gain valuable insight in to local operations and idiosyncrasies. The USAF has, in the last ten years, began hiring back retired supervisors to maintain that knowledge base and enhance safety.

Application to Estimating Activity Duration

Organizational process assets aid in developing an activity duration estimate by providing a historical record of performance, whether that is a human resource or a piece of machinery or process. It can provide indicators of delays such as shipping times reliability etc. These assets can come from past project reports, lessons learn, supervisory input, and from other's experience with the same project. Never be too proud to ask if anyone has experience with a process you might save yourself some time finding things the hard way. Networking a project or reaching out to other professionals can be a great resource

Conclusion

Organizational process assets are things that the organization has as a matter of record experience and network availability. These processes can be used in budgeting, risk management and scheduling.

References:

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