

T&T Project Management Center of Excellence:

Communications Leader Promotes Project Management Leadership

As a world leader in communication technology, AT&T connects people from all around the globe. Just as consumers and businesses rely on AT&T services to stay connected, AT&T relies on internal resources, in particular project and program managers, to remain a best-in-class service provider.

Background

In an effort to institute common standards, foster a project management culture and improve individual and organizational competencies, AT&T established a Project Management Center of Excellence (PMCOE). The PMCOE targeted over 10,000 project managers, program managers and their supervisors, as well as holders of the Project Management Professional (PMP®) credential within the company, with the mission to be recognized internally as the resource for project management consulting, mentoring, training, processes, tools and techniques. Additional goals of the PMCOE included:

- Drive AT&T's culture to advocate, support and sustain professional project management

- Assess and improve AT&T's professional project management competency at all levels: individual, team and organizational

- Ensure the right processes, services and tools are in place and linked to support professional project management success

- Ensure pertinent information is communicated to the PM Community in the most effective manner possible

- Secure visible leadership champions to support PMCOE initiatives

- Facilitate creation of a project management community to promote exchange of information to improve project management practices

- Encourage, facilitate and support continuing education and development of the PMCOE team

The project was led by 11 PMPs with an expense budget that covered the cost of the team's professional development and the costs associated with the annual AT&T Project Management Symposium, a significant PMCOE initiative.

Challenges

The largest challenge the PMCOE faced was that during project activities, legacy companies SBC and AT&T merged, bringing together two distinct project management improvement organizations with slightly different areas of focus. This change forced the PMCOE to re-evaluate the project and determine how to appropriately fuse the strengths of the two organizations.

The PMCOE was also finding it difficult to determine the best way to support the over 10,000 employees that make up AT&T's project management community. Within the community, there are various business units all of which have different needs and concentrations. Additionally, not

only was the PMCOE tasked to support a large number of AT&T project managers, they had to also understand which services were most important to them.

Finally, effective and efficient communication would be a key element for the success of the PMCOE; however with such a sizeable and worldwide PM population, the PMCOE would have to determine how to best share valuable information on a large scale. Without appropriate communication, the PMCOE risked going unrecognized and not being used to its full potential.

Source: AT&T, Inc.