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Module Seven:
Practical CSM Framework Phase 5: Adoption Implementation
Workbook Two

Welcome back to Module Seven of the PracticalCSM.com Certified Customer Success Management Professional training course. As you know, this is the second framework phase that deals with the very important topic of adoption. Phase 4 dealt with adoption planning and this phase – Phase 5 – is all about adoption implementation, and this is Workbook 2 within this module.

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Module Seven: Workbook Two

Practical CSM Framework Phase 5: Adoption Implementation – Agenda

- Adoption Task Management
- Adoption Activity Measurement and Reporting
- Best Practices for Handling Problems
- Adoption Project Completion

In Workbook One we looked at the role of the CSM as the assistant and guide to the customer's SPL during the adoption implementation process. In particular we discussed the utilization of project and program management principles and best practices to manage the adoption implementation process, preparing for project kick-off, and managing people during this implementation process.

In this workbook we will move on in the discussion and we will examine the following: the management of adoption tasks, measuring and reporting on adoption activity, handling problems that arise during the adoption implementation process and we will finish with a discussion on criteria for adoption project completion.

Adoption Task Management

- The management of all the tasks and activities associated with larger, more complex adoption implementations can at times feel overwhelming
- It can be harder for the CSM than for customer stakeholders, since the CSM may have less direct control and/or authority over the implementation

For some adoption implementations and especially for the larger, more complex ones, the management of all the tasks and activities associated with it can at times feel overwhelming. For the CSM it can sometimes be even harder than for an internal-to-the-customer resource such as the SPL or other key customer stakeholder, since the CSM may also feel at one step removed from the action and therefore less in control of the situation than they would ideally wish to be.

There are a couple of techniques that the CSM can borrow from project management best practice that can be of great help in regaining and/or maintaining that control which we will review together now.

Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)

- WBS or "work breakdown structure", is a project management best practice technique for subdividing tasks into a series of smaller component parts called work packages
- Each work package has its own specific deliverable, which is a definable and measurable result to be achieved from completing that particular task

You may recall that Chapter 9 of the training manual describes the concept of WBS or "work breakdown structure", which is a classic project management best practice technique for subdividing tasks into a series of smaller component parts called work packages, where each work package (ie each part of the total project) has its own specific deliverable (ie a definable and measurable result to be achieved from completing that particular task).

Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)

- A work package is an individual task or activity that will have a specific and definable result called a *deliverable*
- It can be allocated to a person to carry out in order for that deliverable to be achieved
- Each work package has its own specific deliverable, which is a definable and measurable result to be achieved from completing that particular task

The key to using WBS is to understand what constitutes a “work package”. A work package is an individual task or activity that will have a specific and definable result called a *deliverable* and that can be allocated to a person to carry out in order for that deliverable to be achieved.

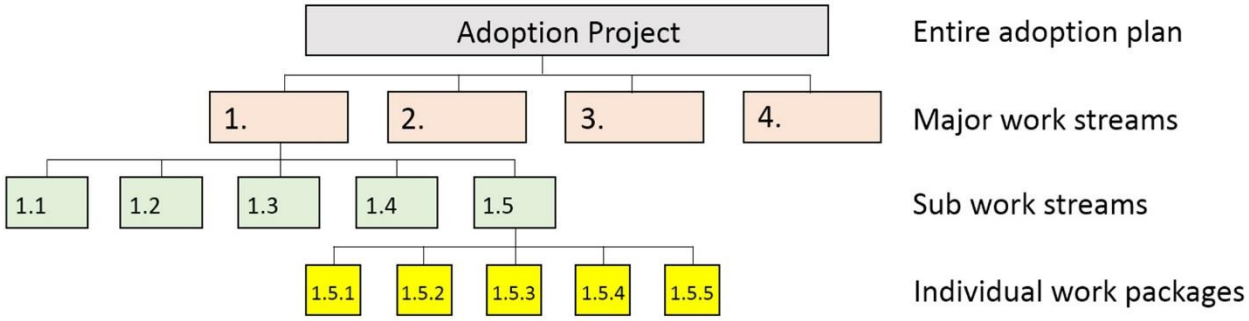
Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)

- A work package is a "discrete unit of work" that results in an objective being accomplished that moves the overall adoption process towards completion
- The adoption plan is broken down into major parts called *work streams*.
- Major work streams can in turn be broken down into smaller sub work streams

A work package can therefore be thought of as a "discrete unit of work" that once completed will result in an objective being accomplished that will in turn move the overall adoption process one step further towards completion.

To get to a definitive list of tasks or work packages, the project manager goes through a series of "chunking" exercises, where first of all the entire adoption plan is broken down into its major parts which in project management parlance are called work streams. These major work streams can in turn be chunked or broken down into smaller sub work streams, and this process can be repeated as many times as necessary until the CSM arrives at individual tasks.

Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)



The illustration here shows the overall adoption project being broken down into four major work streams, and it then shows that the first work stream is itself then broken down further into five sub work streams, and that the fifth sub work stream contains five discrete work packages. The completion of all the individual work packages within a work stream will of course indicate that this work stream is itself completed. So in this example, when work packages 1.5.1 to 1.5.5 are all completed then work stream 1.5 will have been completed. Also when work streams 1.1 through 1.5 have been completed then work stream 1. will have been completed, and of course when work streams 1 to 4 have been completed then the entire adoption plan will have been completed.

Perhaps in this illustration the major work streams 1 to 4 represent the four phases of an adoption plan, and the sub work streams 1.1 to 1.5 represent each IG that will receive training within Phase 1, and in turn work packages 1.5.1 to 1.5.5 represent each of the communication, training and other supporting activities that will be delivered to IG 5.

Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)

- This system of chunking tasks into smaller units is logical and simple, and provides a way to:
  - ensure all tasks are planned for
  - allocate roles, budgets and resources
  - track and report on progress at all stages during the adoption implementation process
  - ensure that everything gets done

This system of chunking or breaking down tasks into smaller and smaller units until you reach the level of individual activities is both a very simple and a very logical one, and provides a clear way to ensure all tasks are planned for, to allocate roles, budgets and resources, to track and report on progress at all stages during the adoption implementation process, and to ensure that everything gets done that needs to be done.

Because the WBS concept is so simple and so powerful, CSMs are recommended to make use of it in all but the very simplest of adoption programs. For smaller projects there's no need to purchase and learn any specific project management software tools, just a simple Microsoft Word document or Microsoft Excel workbook or the use of a similar office productivity tool will be sufficient to document the structure you create in most cases.

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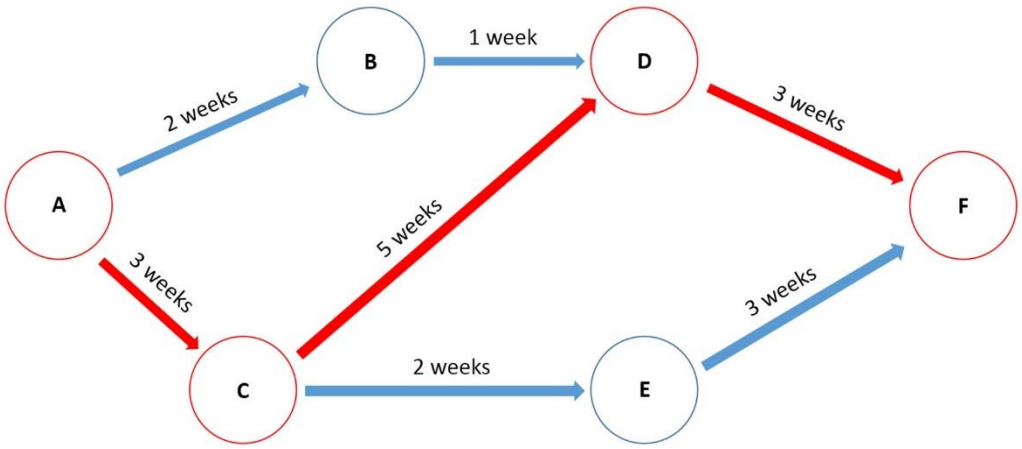
Module Seven: Workbook Two

The Critical Path Method (CPM)

- The critical path method (CPM) enables CSMs to determine the longest route through the "network" of activities)
- This enables the CSM to determine overall project duration, and define which activities will be most critical to manage in terms of the time they take

The other best practice technique that we can borrow from the project management profession and which almost all CSMs will find highly beneficial to them is the *Critical Path Method* or CPM. The idea of the critical path method is to find out how long is the longest route through all of the activities that need to be completed (referred to as the "network" of activities), in order in turn to calculate how long the project will take, and which activities will be the ones that are most critical to manage in terms of the time they take, since these are the tasks that fall within that critical path and are therefore the ones that will speed up the overall project if they are completed early and slow down the overall project if they are completed late.

The Critical Path Method (CPM)



In the illustration here the circles represent tasks or activities within the adoption implementation plan going from left to right in terms of project time so that the circles on the left represent the activities or tasks that happen earlier in the adoption program and those on the right represent the activities or tasks that happen later in the program. In the CPM technique these are referred to as *nodes* within the network of all activities. The red line represents the longest path through the network – in other words the greatest length of time from start to finish for the project to take, when you take into consideration the start times, durations and dependencies of all of the different tasks and activities. Nodes that are connected by these red lines are representative of the tasks or activities that are in the critical path and that between them will therefore determine the overall project duration.

There are six steps to using the CPM. These are:

Six Steps to Using CPM

1. Specify each activity

Step 1. Specify each activity

This step can be completed using the work breakdown structure or WBS technique described above.

Six Steps to Using CPM

2. Sequence the activities

Step 2. Sequence the activities

The sequence of activities will be determined by practical considerations (such as availability of the instructors in a particular location) and by dependencies upon other activities (for example when training on a new process cannot go ahead until the new process has been designed, approved and documented)

Six Steps to Using CPM

3. Draw the network diagram

Step 3. Draw the network diagram

This is a graphical representation of the adoption program, using named or numbered circles to represent the activities and with arrows linking the activities together in the direction of time in which the activities occur and where the activity on the right is dependent upon completion of the activity on the left. If no dependency exists then no line needs to be drawn.

Six Steps to Using CPM

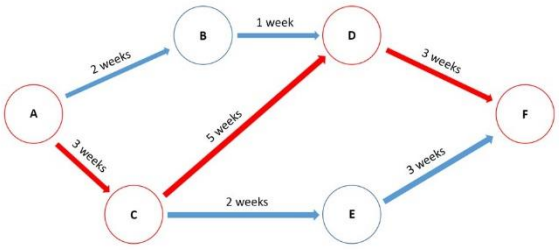
4. Estimate activity durations

Step 4. Estimate activity durations

For each activity, the time taken to complete it (ie its duration) should be estimated and this can then be written on any arrow going from that activity to a later activity.

Six Steps to Using CPM

5. Identify the critical path



Step 5. Identify the critical path

To find the critical path is a matter of simple mathematical logic. In the example shown, the critical path is A to C to D to F, since C cannot commence until 3 weeks after A, D cannot start for a further 5 weeks after C, and F cannot start for a final 3 weeks after D.

Six Steps to Using CPM

6. Monitor and update

Step 6. Monitor and update

The final step is for the PM (project manager) to monitor progress and update the network diagram as the project moves forwards, so that the data in the diagram is always as accurate as possible and hence the estimate of time remaining in the project is also as accurate as possible.

Adoption Task Management Using WBS and CPM

- Use WBS or "work breakdown structure", for subdividing tasks into a series of smaller component parts called work packages
- Use CPM or "critical path method" to determine the longest route through the "network" of activities

Between these two project management techniques of the work breakdown structure WBS and the critical path method CPM, we hope that CSMs can help their customers to get a firm grip on what adoption tasks need to occur, arrange these tasks in a logical order, understand overall adoption completion timeframes and manage the adoption tasks through the entirety of the adoption process to ultimate completion.

Let's turn to an important topic that often causes problems for CSMs, which is the topic of measurement and reporting. Obviously these two items go together hand in hand since you cannot report on what you do not measure (or not to any degree of accuracy anyway) and since there is no point in taking measurements if you are not going to analyze their meaning and report this meaning to decision makers. Hence we will look at both measurement and reporting as one combined activity. Incidentally, all of the concepts that we discuss here are equally applicable to the next phase in the Practical CSM Framework, namely Phase 6: Value Realization.

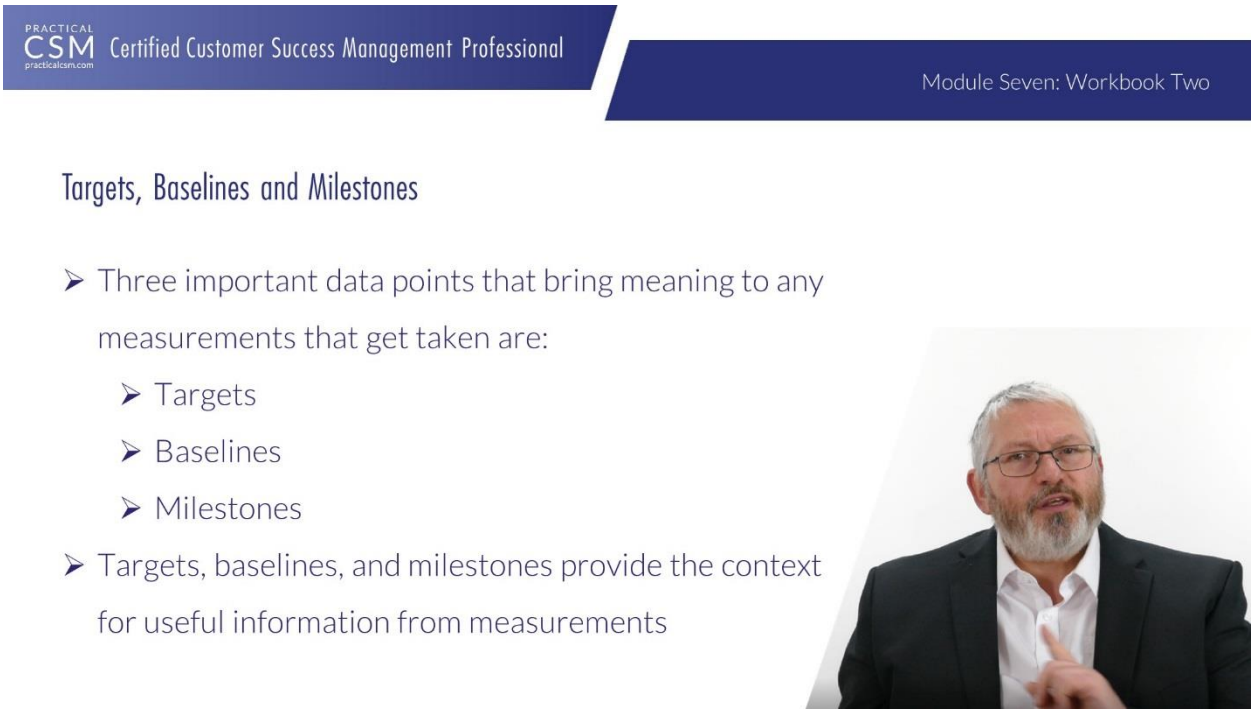
How Much to Measure?

The first decision to make is on how many measurements to take. The path of least resistance is to take as few measurements as possible, since every measurement taken means effort expended to take the measurement in the first place and then to analyze it for meaning, and then to interpret that meaning into a report for senior decision makers to review. CSMs do not want to make a rod for their own back or indeed for others' backs either, so there is no point in taking unnecessary measurements. On the other hand of course, both customers and the CSM's own company will need to know what is happening and whether or not the activities that are occurring are achieving the desired results.

Adoption Activity Measurement and Reporting

- Measurement work is determined by two factors:
  - How many different "things" are being measured?
  - How often does the measurement of each "thing" take place?
- Critical components of the adoption plan or activities where the outcomes are hard to estimate in advance may need more measurements at shorter frequencies

How much to measure is determined by two factors – firstly how many different "things" are being measured and secondly how often the measurement of each "thing" takes place. Obviously the more things you measure and the more often you take those measurements, the more work will be created. There is a trade-off therefore between not enough measurement, leading to insufficient information and too much measurement, leading to loss of efficiency due to additional workload. The CSM needs to determine how much measurement is "enough" in the specific circumstances of their customer's adoption initiative and plan accordingly. Critical components of the adoption plan or activities where the outcomes are not so easy to estimate in advance may need more measurements at shorter frequencies than less critical components or activities where the results are fairly certain in advance. Common sense needs to prevail, and the CSM should discuss the topic of measurement with the SPL and other key stakeholders to determine a strategy that works for both the customer and the CSM's company.



Targets, Baselines and Milestones

Three important data points that bring meaning to any measurements that get taken are targets, baselines, and milestones. Many measurements do not on their own supply a great deal of useful information without context, and well defined targets, baselines, and milestones are what provide this context.

Target

This is the desired end result from the activity.

It's the "outcome" that is being hoped for, not for the adoption program as a whole but for the specific task being measured.

As with all outcomes, to be truly meaningful the target should be well specified with at least three criteria of quality (what it is), quantity (how much of it is required) and deadline (when it must be attained by).

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Baseline

The initial measurement that is taken before the activity itself starts.

This start point is analogous to the start point of a journey, just as the target is analogous to the destination of a journey.

By knowing both the baseline (ie the start point) and target (ie the destination) it is possible to understand how much progress is being made in terms of movement from start point to destination or from baseline to target as each measurement is subsequently taken.

Milestone

These provide way markers en route to the ultimate destination

They enable progress towards that destination to be better understood.

Sometimes significant achievements can be used as milestones

If no obvious significant achievements are available for use as milestones then a simple percentage of progress at set times can be used.

Targets, Baselines and Milestones

- CSMs should agree targets for all activities with the SPL and other stakeholders
- For activities with sufficient complexity or time durations, they should also agree milestones
- Finally they should ensure that a baseline measurement is taken right at the start before activity commences.

CSMs should agree targets for all activities with the SPL and other stakeholders. For activities with sufficient complexity or time durations, they should also agree milestones for checking progress en route to overall target achievement. Finally they should also either agree on what the baseline is if it is obvious, or agree that a baseline measurement needs to be taken right at the start before activity commences.

Reporting

- Raw data can sometimes be difficult to interpret and understand
- Before it can be used by management some thought may need to be given as to how best to display it

Now let's look at the reporting side of things. Raw data can sometimes be difficult to interpret and understand. Before it can be used by management some thought may therefore need to be given as to how best the data should be displayed.

Reporting

- With an adoption program, what is being measured is progress towards preparing users for new tasks
- For simple tasks measurements are taken once at the beginning (baseline) and once at the end (outcome)
- For longer or more complex activities, multiple measurements might be taken at regular intervals

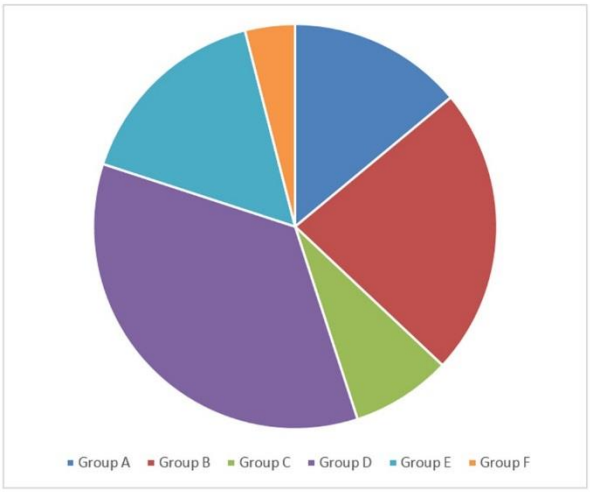
Typically with an adoption program, what is being measured is progress towards preparing users for the performance of new tasks. For some tasks the measurements are taken once at the beginning (baseline) and once at the end (outcome) or even just once at the end only. For longer or more complex activities, multiple measurements might be taken at regular intervals or after major achievements, as discussed previously.

Reporting

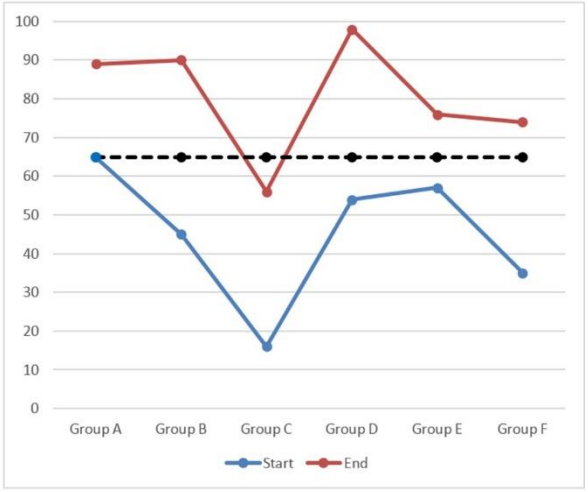
- When viewing this data in isolation much of it might be straightforward and need little interpretation
- When multiple data is combined, things might become harder to understand
- This is where the use of charts to illustrate data begins to become an attractive proposition compared with just simply looking at the raw data itself

When viewing this data in isolation much of it might be straightforward and need little interpretation – for example “We’ve just started” or “We’re half way through and on track to reach our target” or “we’ve finished and we reached our target” are all very straightforward messages in the data. However if you start to combine the data for all of the activities within a phase or within the adoption program as a whole then things might get a little harder to understand at first glance. This of course is where the use of charts to illustrate data begins to become an attractive proposition compared with just simply looking at the raw data itself and trying to interpret its meaning.

Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D	Group E	Group F	TOTAL
14	23	8	35	16	4	100



	Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D	Group E	Group F
Start	65	45	16	54	57	35
End	89	90	56	98	76	74
Min Std	65	65	65	65	65	65



For example perhaps the pie chart on the left shows the amount of resources spent on adoption for each of the six IGs in the adoption plan, expressed as a percentage of the whole. Looking at the numbers tells us a great deal, but for most people, showing the percentages as “slices of a pie” gives them a more visceral feel for the ratios between resources spent on each IG.

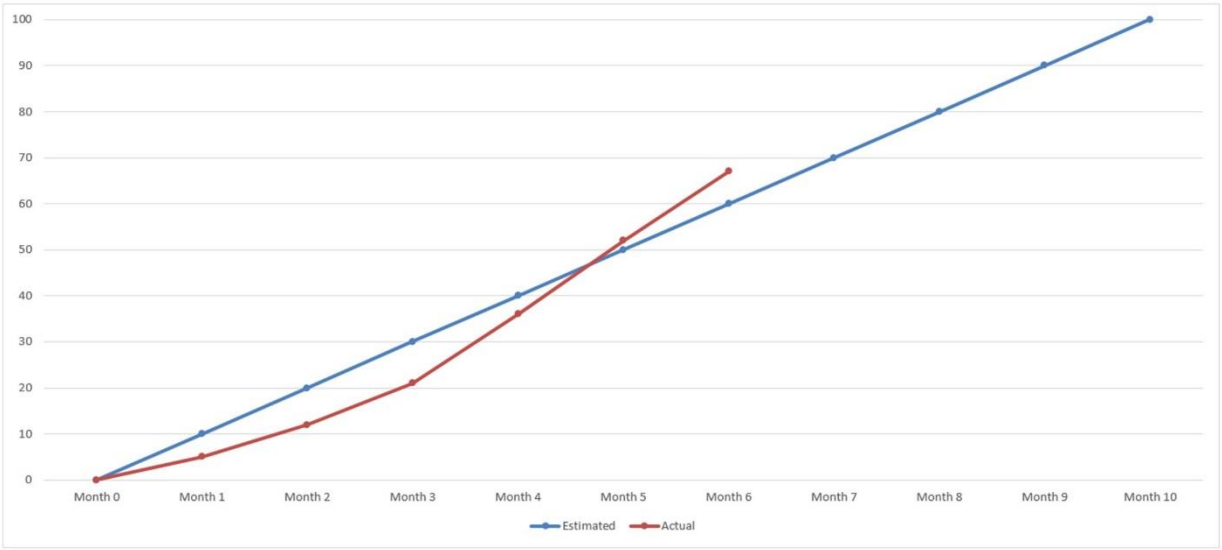
As another example, perhaps the line chart on the right shows the results of testing the user’s knowledge or skills before and then again after they receive the training that was provided for them within the adoption plan, shown against a “minimum standard” indicator of 65%. The chart makes it immediately apparent which of the groups might need some further attention to get them over that 65% minimum standard threshold, and also perhaps explains why that might be the case.

Reporting

- When we're not looking in the data for something as simple or straightforward as whether or not a specific target has been reached, we're usually looking for patterns or trends
- A graphical representation of the data can make a big difference, since people tend to find it far easier to analyze patterns and trends in pictorially

Generally speaking, when we're not looking in the data for something as simple or straightforward as whether or not a specific target has been reached, we're looking for patterns or trends – in other words we're looking to find the direction that the data indicates the activity we are measuring is going in. With this type of data, a graphical representation of it can make a big difference, since people tend to find it far easier to analyze patterns and trends in a pictorial representation of the data than they do just by looking at the raw numbers.

	Month 0	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9	Month 10
Estimated	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Actual	0	5	12	21	36	52	67				



In this example we're using data to predict the future. The blue line represents the predicted level of completion of the adoption plan from start point (Month 0) to end point (Month 10), whereas the red line shows actual progress up to the current month (Month 6). What we can see is that after a bit of a rocky start in the first three months, the adoption implementation is now going really well, and if it continues at this same rate it is likely to finish early – perhaps somewhere between Month 8 and Month 9 – but in any case there's no cause for concern about completing the adoption plan on time. Perhaps it was this same representation of the data in Months 1, 2 and 3 that alerted the key stakeholders to the fact that the adoption implementation was not happening fast enough and caused them to amend the plan in order to facilitate the faster rate of implementation seen from Month 3 onwards.

Reporting More Than the Facts

- Quite often key decision makers are removed from "the action"
- Although they have the authority to make decisions, they are usually not the right people to be able to identify why the problem exists and what should be done to overcome it

One final point on reporting information – especially when reporting to decision makers. Quite often the key decision makers are removed from "the action" and although they have the authority to make any decisions that need to be made (for example to authorize additional spending from Month 3 onwards to speed up the rate of implementation in order to hit the ten month target), they are usually not the right people to be able to identify why the problem exists and what should be done to overcome it.

Reporting More Than the Facts

- If you want decision makers to make a decision, it makes sense not just to present the raw facts but also to provide an interpretation of the facts for them
- If the situation calls for it, you might also propose a recommendation for an action or course of actions for them to consider

So when reporting the current position to decision makers, if you also want those decision makers to make a decision, it makes sense not just to present the raw facts but also to provide an interpretation of the facts for them and if the situation calls for it, to propose a recommendation for an action or course of actions for them to consider and (hopefully) approve. This action or course of actions would of course need to be justified and would also need to be costed and predictions as to likely outcomes with and without the proposed change should be shown, so that the decision makers have sufficient information (together with your response to any questions they may want to ask you of course) to make their decision. This could for example be the decision to live with the consequences of not taking any action, or it could be the decision to go ahead with your proposal to take action and accept the additional costs involved in time or money or resources, etc, or some third alternative that they negotiate with you or decide for themselves.

The point is that as CSM one part of your role during adoption implementation is to assist the SPL and other key stakeholders to report information to decision makers in a way that helps them as much as possible both to understand what progress is being made and to make any necessary decisions to amend the plan in the light of this progress in order to ensure the adoption implementation is successful.

Best Practices for Handling Problems

- Problems are most likely to surface and need dealing with swiftly and effectively during *Practical CSM Phase 5: Adoption Implementation*
- Adoption is generally a shorter event with a specified endpoint that itself is part of the desired outcome
- Problems that arise during adoption can therefore be particularly frustrating for the customer

Of all the stages of a customer engagement that the CSM will work through, it is during Practical CSM Phase 5: Adoption Implementation where problems are most likely to surface and need dealing with most swiftly and effectively. This is because this is the phase that is likely to contain the most activity that will occur in the "real world" and will also be likely to involve the most number of people and deliver the greatest amount of change. And not all of that change's impact will be definitely known in advance, particularly where new products or services are involved, or where for example where there is new technology embedded within those products and services, or where your company has customized the solution to meet a customer's unusual or non-standard requirements.

So with all of this real world change going on during the adoption implementation phase, it is reasonable to state that if problems are going to occur, it's likely that this is when they will happen. Also, unlike the next phase of the framework (namely Value Realization) which may take place over many months or even years, the adoption implementation is generally a much shorter event with a specified endpoint that itself is part of the desired outcome. To put it in simple terms, customers quite understandably will generally want to get their adoption implementation program over with as quickly as possible so that they can get on to the value realization stage of their initiative as soon as they can, in order to start realizing the value from the solution they have purchased. Problems that arise at the adoption implementation stage can therefore be particularly frustrating for the customer if they are likely to end up delaying the completion of adoption.

To prevent minor issues becoming major problems, it makes sense to ensure that adoption activities are carefully monitored and progress is continually measured against meaningful milestones, so that the SPL, the CSM and other key stakeholders are alerted as soon as possible to any potential difficulties, and can therefore take action early on to deal with those difficulties before they escalate into major problems. The first problem handling best practice then, is to ensure ongoing monitoring of activity and results occurs in order to proactively root out potential problems as early on as possible, rather than waiting for those problems to increase in size and complexity.

Best Practices for Handling Problems: Problem Management Process

- Have a problem management process in place that is kicked off as soon as a problem, or even a potential problem is spotted. For example:

Step 1: Identification
Step 2: Documentation
Step 3: Classification
Step 4: Prioritization
Step 5: Diagnosis
Step 6: Resolution
Step 7: Update Records

Our next recommendation is to have a problem management process in place that is kicked off as soon as a problem, or even a potential problem is spotted. This doesn't have to be complex. Something like the following seven step process can work very efficiently: Step 1: Identification, Step 2: Documentation, Step 3: Classification, Step 4: Prioritization, Step 5: Diagnosis, Step 6: Resolution, Step 7: Update Records. Let's run through these seven steps briefly, one by one:

Step 1: Identification

This step occurs immediately after a potential problem is spotted

The idea of identification is specifically to understand what is happening

This would include where the problem is occurring, when or in what circumstances it occurs, and what results from it happening

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Step 2: Documentation

Once the problem has been identified, the knowledge base of existing or previous problems can be searched to see if this is a “known problem” that has occurred before

If so then the previously documented steps to fix the problem can be followed

If not, in other words if this is a brand new problem, then it needs to be logged or documented both for future reference and also in order to deal with it efficiently right now

Step 3: Classification

In this step, the CSM should determine what type of problem this is, and then classify or categorize it accordingly.

For example is it a problem relating to insufficient budget or funding, is it a problem related to non-availability of end users, is it a problem relating to a lack of training resources, or is it something else?

It is recommended that you keep the number of categories or types of problems as small as possible to avoid complexity – for example maybe around a half dozen problem categories will suffice.

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Step 4: Prioritization

This is where the CSM, SPL and stakeholder team need to rank the problem in terms of its importance to the adoption implementation program and therefore in the importance of dealing with it.

Again, a simple ranking system is preferable – perhaps ranking from 1 to 5, where 1 is the lowest priority to deal with and 5 is the highest.

Step 5: Diagnosis

Now that the problem is understood in terms of its affect and type and also now it is known to be a new problem and its priority level has been decided, the team can determine what (if any) actions should be taken to deal with it, who should take those actions and of course when those actions should be taken.

At this stage (ie after Step 5. is completed) the activity may need to be reported to a manager or management team such as a Governance Committee for approval.

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Step 6: Resolution

The agreed actions can now be taken and the problem resolved.

Where necessary, measurements should be taken to ensure that the problem really has been fully and successfully resolved, or at least resolved to the level that was expected, since not all problems can be completely fixed, or at least not necessarily straight away.

Step 7: Update Records

Where a new problem was discovered, the resolution should be documented alongside the new problem that was recorded in this earlier step for reference in the future should the same problem reoccur.

CSMs may find that their company and/or the customer's company has a software system and an existing process that handles problem management, in which case it may be necessary to follow the steps in this existing process and to document information within this software system, rather than following the process steps as outlined above.

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Module Seven: Workbook Two

Adoption Project Completion: Project Sign Off

- Project management best practice states that when a project is completed, the customer should sign to say that they are satisfied that this is indeed the case and to indicate their acceptance of its results
- This could be completed through a written report (more formal), or just an email stating what has happened and summarizing the results (less formal)

There's not a lot that needs to be said about project completion over and above what is already provided for you in the training manual, except perhaps to point out a couple of things.

Project management best practice states that when a project is completed, the customer should sign to say that they are satisfied that this is indeed the case and to indicate their acceptance of its results. An adoption implementation program can be thought of by the CSM as being a "project within a project", where the major project is the entire engagement for which a contract was drawn up and signed (if you recall we discussed this in Module Four, Video Two, where we looked at how to create and use a Customer Success Proposal). In this instance, and for this "project within a project" of adoption implementation, actual customer sign off would only be appropriate where the entire adoption implementation program had been taken on as a specific professional services contract. Otherwise it should be considered as being an internal project that is owned and managed by the customer itself, with the CSM playing the role of helper and assistant rather than formal project manager. As such then, any sign off that occurs would be an internal issue between the customer's project management team and the customer's business decision makers.

Now with that said, it is my own feeling that best practice dictates that the CSM should still gain some form of sign off from the customer that the adoption process has been completed and that the customer's users are now ready for value realization. This could be completed through some sort of written report that both parties (ie SPL and CSM) counter sign, or if a more formal approach is more suited to the situation then even something as simple as an email stating what has happened and summarizing the results and concluding with a statement that adoption is now completed could be sent to the SPL, requesting their confirmation in a return email.

Adoption Project Completion: Readiness for Value Realization

- The whole purpose of adoption is to prepare the customer's end users for Practical CSM Phase 6: Value Realization
- Whilst it might feel for the CSM like the major work is done, for customer stakeholders it might feel more like they have just arrived at the starting point
- Make sure you show empathy for this mindset

One final point to make is to draw the CSM's attention back to the whole purpose of adoption in the first place, which to prepare the customer's end users for the next Practical CSM Phase, namely the Value Realization phase. This next phase is the only one where the customer starts to see any value being returned from all of their investment to date in both the solutions components themselves (aka your company's products and services) and in all of the preparation, onboarding and adoption research, planning and practical activities that have thus far taken place.

It is important for the CSM to recognize then that whilst it might feel for the CSM like the major hurdles are now all behind them, and it's plain sailing from now on in, for many of the customer's key stakeholders everything up to now has just been the activity that gets them up to start line, and real effort is just about to commence. Empathizing with this viewpoint can be important, since the customer's decision makers are less likely to develop trust relationships with CSMs who cannot see things from their perspective, and from their perspective it is only *now* that the work of recouping the costs of investing the solution and ultimately in turning a profit on the deal can commence.


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