DEVELOP

A RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

FOR THE

NEW REALITY

RECLAIM PROJECT CAPACITY WITH REALISTIC RESOURCE MANAGEMENT.

Traditional project resource management doesn't work for IT.

As a result, resources are ex-allocated and over-worked, increasing stress and decreasing the quality of work. When resources are working on too many projects at once, some projects inevitably get delayed, which can snowball into many more projects being delivered late and over budget.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SUFFERS FROM A FUNDAMENTAL MISCONCEPTION ABOUT THE AVAILABILITY OF TIME.

40 HRS X **FTE** = **POTENTIAL CAPACITY**

In theory, people have 40 hours/week "available." Multiplied by the number of FTEs , this is the organization's "potential capacity."

REALISTIC RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IS ABOUT MATCHING THE TRUE AVAILABLE CAPACITY TO ALLOCATION.

New realities are complicating IT resource management

OLD REALITIES

The concept of resource management comes from the pre-World Wide Web era of rigid management hierarchies, pre-planned work, and infrequent interruptions. Work was predictable, so there was value in predicting the resources needed.

- Precise demand forecasts
- Rigorous project plans
- Fixed, hierarchical organizations
- High-compliance staff cultures

NEW REALITIES

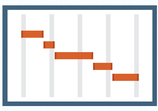
The 1990s brought increased prevalence of matrix management, diminished supervision of knowledge workers, massive multi-tasking, and a continuous stream of information and communications from the outside world. Work is no longer predictable, making resource projections very difficult.

Project Portfolio Management (PPM) was conceived in the old reality. But by the time PPM software was mature enough for enterprise IT, organizations had already begun living in the new reality of Agile project methodologies and matrix management organization.

Technologies and strategies change before traditional IT demand forecasts and project plans can be realized

OLD REALITIES

The old reality made the worker's tasks look like this:

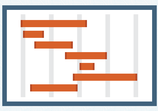


The old reality provided more stability and time for advanced, rigorous demand forecasts and planning.

IT work was largely viewed as a series of single-focus tasks.

NEW REALITIES

The new reality involves more tasks, more projects, and less of a coherent timeline:



The new reality is driven by increasingly rapid changes to technologies, strategies, and the factors that affect them.

Forecasts and plans are often outdated or even obsolete before they can be executed.

Organizations have adopted iterative and Agile project methodologies to deal with constantly changing demands, requirements, and opportunities.

Organizational structures have become flatter and more complex to deal with the breadth and speed of change

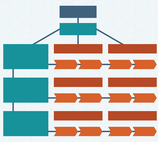
OLD REALITIES

In the old reality, there was a fixed hierarchy of vertical command and control, where workers reported to a specific manager for one specific project.

Priorities and decisions were communicated from the top down through a fixed chain of command.

Collaboration across or between vertical silos was

NEW REALITIES



In the new reality, the structure has moved toward a matrix of horizontal collaboration and communication, where one worker may report to multiple project managers at a given time, as well as one or more functional managers.

Assignments are rarely capacity driven; they're deadline and urgency driven. Responsibility for balancing supply and demand is on the worker, leaving them with three choices:

- Work longer
- Change scope
- Decide what cannot be completed

MAKE A GO/NO-GO DECISION

ABOUT DEVELOPING A RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR THE NEW REALITY

PORTFOLIO MANAGERS STRUGGLING WITH THE NEW REALITY HAVE THREE OPTIONS FOR DEALING WITH RESOURCE MANAGEMENT:

1 Accept the new reality and implement a right-sized resource management strategy based on realistic capacity estimates.

2 Continue to operate in the old reality that demands more capacity than is realistically available by hiring, outsourcing, or over-allocating people's time.

3 Do nothing and trust people to prioritize what gets done when their workload exceeds their capacity.

1 INFO-TECH PRESCRIBES TACKLING OPTION 1, AND CAN GUIDE YOU THROUGH WORKING WITH STAKEHOLDERS, TEAMS, AND MANAGEMENT TO REDUCE THE INHERENT WASTE CREATED BY THE NEW REALITY.

PROJECT STEPS

1. MAKE THE CASE

The validity and effectiveness of traditional, rigorous resource planning has long been an illusion. But new realities such as faster project cycles, matrix organizations, and high-autonomy staff cultures have made the illusion impossible to maintain.

2. ASSESS CURRENT STATE

It is important to have an idea of the organization's Potential Capacity but this is not how you should be planning to allocate your resources. You must account for non-project work such as operational or administrative duties before you can get an accurate picture of available or Realized Capacity.

3. TIME-TRACKING AUDIT

You don't need detailed timesheets to get a clearer picture of where time is currently spent. You can get a lot of insight into how time is spent by focusing on analyzing the effects of new realities, rather than trying to validate how time spent aligns with abstract categories.

4. DEFINE STRATEGY

Every level of granularity is an order of magnitude more difficult and costly to measure and manage than the one lower. For example, allocating time by weeks is substantially, not just incrementally more difficult than allocating by months. Determine which goals are realistic and fit your solution to your problem.

5. PILOT AND VALIDATE THE STRATEGY

Perform a reality check on your resource management strategy in order to test the validity of the strategy, the underlying resourcing needed to execute, and the appropriateness of the tools being considered.

6. DEVELOP A ROADMAP

The most effective and sustainable improvements to resource management go beyond tracking and allocating time. Eventually organizational and even behavioral changes may be required to make improvements. Accurate reporting is the first step in that process.

7. MEASURE VALUE

Don't add unnecessary process to your department unless it is actually increasing value. Focus your efforts to add rigor on the value created by the rigor that went in to the resource management strategy.

ALL MEANINGFUL WORK IS BEING PRESSED OUT BY THE ROUTINE WORK THAT SURROUNDS IT

It's spent before project work is assigned – on operations and support, reactive work, and consumed by continuous partial attention that has become a daily reality for everyone in IT.