California Inland Empire Chapter

TAKEAWAYS from previous month's speaker on PROCESS IMPROVEMENT...

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Diane Altwies
Steering the Ship: Project Management Processes for the RIGHT Reason

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Diane Altwies of Core Performance Concepts, Inc. addressed the topic of improving an organization?s project management processes. Since project management involves many different processes, it is important to determine which processes to target for improvement, and gain consensus from your organization so that chance of success is greatest.

First, consider your *organizational environment*: Different environments require a different approach. Is your project focused on internal or external customers, are you dealing with or as a vendor, or are you working in a virtual environment with remote resources? Each situation calls for different focus of attention; e.g., a virtual environment calls for high level of specificity for requirements and communications. Process improvement priorities will depend on the organization.

Next, *select a process to improve*. Have a continuous improvement mindset for project management in which you think of project management itself as a process improvement project. PMBoK is your tool belt for all processes; select the processes that will add most value, and have greatest chance for successful adoption in your organization.

As part of selecting the right process to improve, *quantify the cost of process improvement*. Diane shared a straightforward template for an Activity Analysis/Cost Worksheet that allows evaluation of any added cost to a project for process improvement vs. cost for a late project delivery. Select processes that are most cost effective for your organization?s projects. Contact her for the template.

Always *gain consensus* for the changes that will result from your continuous improvements. Be clear on the problem you are solving, what exactly is changing, who is impacted (including management), and ensure that there is agreement on priorities. Often a steady pace of incremental change leads to better adoption.

Finally, *reinforce continuous improvement*. Highlight successes, encourage people who are going through the changes and know that the PM processes will need continuous improvement.