White Paper 2016-11

Project Value Delivery's Project Control Golden Rules

The main objective of Project Control is to enable the Project Manager and the Project Sponsor to take decisions derived from an accurate current knowledge and understanding of reality, with the aim to reach a successful Project outcome. We have derived 14 Golden Rules covering Project Control activities. They constitute the core of the capability for Project Control to become a trusted strategic advisor to the Project Manager

In all instances, 14 Golden Rules need to be followed when it comes to Project Control.
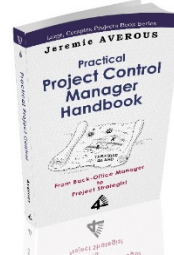
1. **Accountability:** Covering the entire Project scope, designated 'Scope Owners' take ownership for their Schedule, Cost and Risk (including update, forecast and action-taking). The Project Manager is ultimately accountable for the entire Project. Project Control supports and challenges 'Scope Owners' and raises issues of consistency and consequential impacts of events.

2. **Alignment with clear Project Objectives:** establishing clear detailed Project Objectives is an essential pre-requisite as it will inform the build-up of the Project baseline, monitoring system, and strategies.

3. **Urgency of building Control at Project Start-Up:** Very significant effort has to be devoted at Project start-up to establish a full baseline including breakdown structure, together with efficient data generation, flow, exchange protocols and compilation with the aim to minimize later data crunching efforts and leave sufficient time to analysis.

4. **Maintenance of a consistent and comprehensive Project Model:** Project Control Manager is responsible for the maintenance of a consistent Project Model describing accurately the Actual situation together with a full Forecast reflecting the latest knowledge of the Project Team.

5. **Candid Reflection of Reality:** The Project Model must reflect candidly the reality of the Project progress status and associated re-forecast, however difficult or annoying this reality could be.

6. **Immediacy principle:** It is essential to reflect in the Project Model significant new variances as soon as their occurrence is known (e.g. internal or Client's instruction to proceed), at least in terms of order of magnitude, even if their exact final value has not been fully assessed.

7. **Keep space for Forecasting activities:** successful Project Control minimizes actual data gathering and crunching, and leaves sufficient time to forecasting activities.

8. **Weak Signals and Consequential impacts identification:** as part of its consistency assurance role, the Project Control Manager's key role is to keep abreast of Weak Signals and to detect possible consequential impacts of changes or variances and needs to ensure that they are understood and communicated.

9. **Maintain effective Management of Change and External Interface Management:** those two transverse processes are essential in maintaining control of the Project and the Project Control Manager must ensure that they work effectively, with the appropriate interfaces with the rest of the Project.

10. **Monitor Project team effectiveness and health:** effective teamwork is a prerequisite for Project success. Making sure the Project team demonstrates at all times proper alignment and effectiveness is essential. When needed, the Project Control Manager should foster focused workshops to ensure alignment and commitment.

11. **Challenge data with respect to Reality and implement independent data-check and Project reviews:** always challenge reported data by ensuring an independent check program including visits to sites and independent audits and measures. This should also include external reviews and peer reviews.

12. **Develop relevant Key Indicators and visual dashboards:** constantly develop, update and renew a limited set of both long term and short term indicators to measure performance and inform Project decisions. One of the best ways to foster team alignment is to produce and update visual dashboards posted on the workplace that include relevant key indicators.

13. **Develop and implement a Main Contract strategy:** from a few months into the Project, the Project team should be able to verbalize a clear Main Contract execution strategy, taking into account cultural aspects, and demonstrate that it is subsequently consistently implemented.

14. **Develop and implement a Project Close-Out process from Project start-up onwards:** to ensure effective close-out, a specific process needs to be implemented throughout the Project, from the start-up onwards.

Find all these principles of Project Control Management exposed in a comprehensive manner in our new Handbook,
Practical Project Control Manager Handbook
(now published, available in Paperback and Kindle versions!)

[all links to Amazon.com]