

Process Professional Metrics Programme

A Case Study

The organisation concerned is a unit within a large government organisation dedicated to developing small IT applications.

The metrics programme described in this case study covers the planning, roll-out and first 9 months of metrics reporting and extended from June 1999 up to the first half of 2000.

Background

This metrics programme was implemented with the help of Compita consultancy as part of a process improvement programme. In common with all of the consultancy work carried out by Compita, the objective was to transfer the skills to the customer and enable them to become largely self sufficient.

The Plan

The client was a unit within a large government organisation dedicated to developing small IT applications. Compita was already helping with their process improvement initiative and the metrics programme formed part of the initiative.

The Programme

The programme was started with a workshop facilitated by Compita, and attended by key personnel from the unit. At the workshop Compita helped the unit to identify a set of business goals and then a set of measures to support the business goals. The business goals selected were in the areas of effort and schedule prediction, requirements management and rework.

Compita documented the results of the workshop and there was then a review with senior unit management to examine the strategy for implementing the metrics and collecting the data. The result of the meeting was that the number of measures was reduced and the programme more sharply focused. In order to set up baseline data an action was initiated to look at records from previous projects.

The initial workshop was held in June and the management meeting in August followed by the roll-out of the metrics in subsequent months.

Results

Initial metrics indicated that only one project in four were within 15% of its effort estimates. This was obviously an area for improvement. When a new estimation and project tracking process was put in place the result was that the majority of projects were well within the 15% margin of their estimated phase dates within 6 months of the new processes being implemented.

The rework metrics were showing that as much as 30% of the effort expended was being used in rework. When the new review process was rolled out this was dramatically reduced by up to 80% in one case.

The requirements metrics supported the feeling that there was a lot of changes to requirements during the development phase. This was measured to be as high as 20% of the total number of requirements implemented. With an improved requirements capture process this was brought down to less than 5%. As a result there was a dramatic improvement not only in the length of time it took to develop applications but also in customer relations.

Review

The client is well pleased with the improvements arising from the metrics programme and implemented via the process improvement programme. The extent of the success was reinforced by having numbers to quantify the extent of the benefits. The unit management was able to present the results of their programme to their senior management who authorised the unit to extend the programme. Senior management went on to extend the programme to other units and held up the unit as an example for others to follow.



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