5 PROJECT CLOSEOUT

Purpose

The purpose of Project Closeout is to assess the project and derive any lessons learned and best practices to be applied to future projects.

Project Closeout begins with a Post-Implementation Review. The review may start with a survey designed to solicit feedback on the project from the Project Team, Customers, Consumers and other stakeholders. Once feedback has been collected and evaluated, an assessment meeting is conducted to derive best practices and formulate lessons learned to inform future efforts. Ideally, the best practices and lessons learned should be stored in a centralized organizational repository, facilitating access and retrieval by managers of future projects.

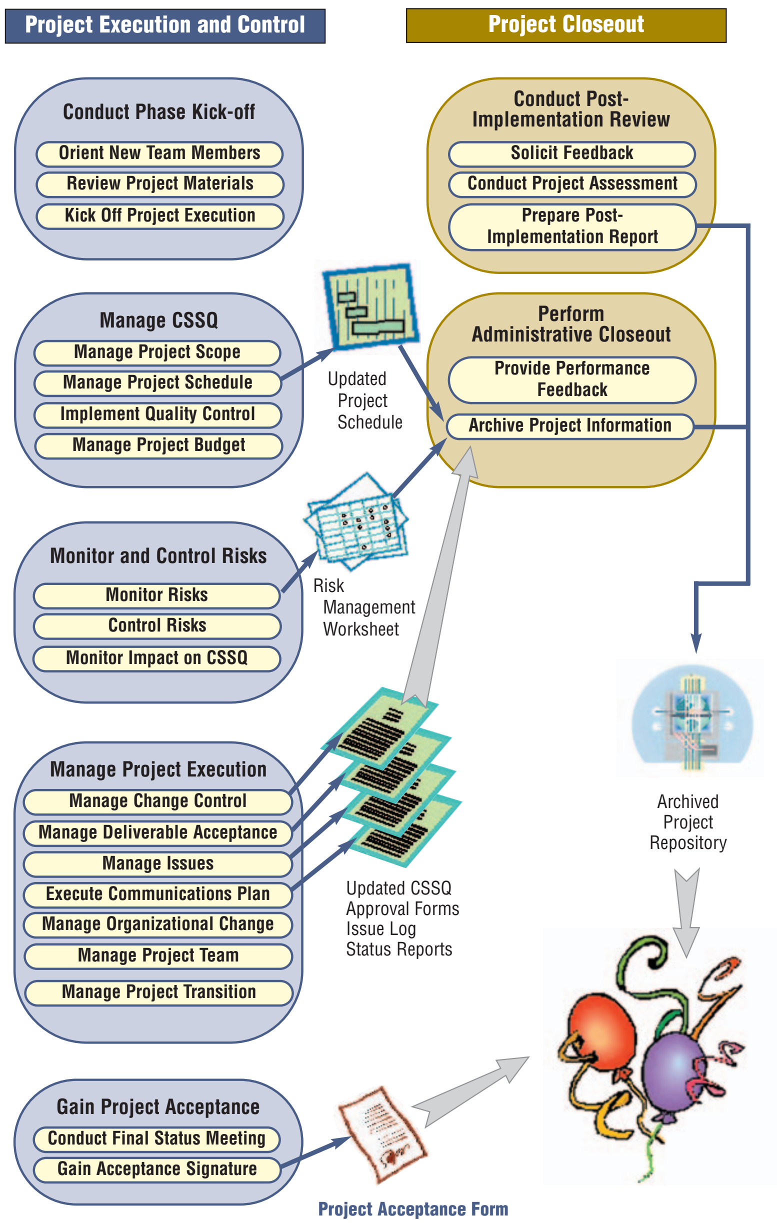
Project Closeout ends with administrative closeout – providing feedback on Project Team members, updating the skills inventory, capturing key project metrics, and filing all pertinent project materials into the project repository.

This phase consists of the following processes:

- **Conduct Post-Implementation Review,** where the Project Manager assesses the results of the project by soliciting feedback from team members, customers and other stakeholders through the use of a survey to gather lessons learned, best practices and performance patterns or trends, and communicate those results in the form of a Post-Implementation Report.
- **Perform Administrative Closeout,** where the Project Manager formally closes the project by providing performance feedback to team members, and archiving all project information.

The following chart illustrates all of the processes and deliverables of this phase in the context of the project management lifecycle.

Figure 5-1


Project Execution and Control
Project Closeout
Conduct Phase Kick-off
Orient New Team Members
Review Project Materials
Kick Off Project Execution
Manage CSSQ
Manage Project Scope
Manage Project Schedule
Implement Quality Control
Manage Project Budget
Monitor and Control Risks
Monitor Risks
Control Risks
Monitor Impact on CSSQ
Manage Project Execution
Manage Change Control
Manage Deliverable Acceptance
Manage Issues
Execute Communications Plan
Manage Organizational Change
Manage Project Team
Manage Project Transition
Gain Project Acceptance
Conduct Final Status Meeting
Gain Acceptance Signature
Conduct Post-Implementation Review
Solicit Feedback
Conduct Project Assessment
Prepare Post-Implementation Report
Perform Administrative Closeout
Provide Performance Feedback
Archive Project Information
Updated Project Schedule
Risk Management Worksheet
Updated CSSQ
Approval Forms
Issue Log
Status Reports
Archived Project Repository
Project Acceptance Form

List of Roles

The following roles are involved in carrying out the processes of this phase. The detailed descriptions of these roles can be found in the Section I Introduction.

- Project Manager
- Project Sponsor
- Project Team Member
- Customer
- Consumer
- Internal Stakeholders
- External Stakeholders
- Performing Organization Management

List of Deliverables

The major outcome of this phase is the Post-Implementation Report, which formalizes the feedback received from all involved parties, and identifies best practices and lessons learned. The output from the tasks performed as part of conducting a Post-Implementation Review serves as the building blocks for the report.

Of even more importance is the transfer of lessons learned and best practices from the Post-Implementation Report to an organizational repository of project management data.

The final deliverable of this phase is the Archived Project Repository.

The following table lists all Project Closeout processes, tasks and their deliverables.

Figure 5-2

Processes	Tasks	Task Deliverables *(Outcomes)*
Conduct Post-Implementation Review	Solicit Feedback	*Post-Implementation Survey*
	Conduct Project Assessment	*Project Assessment Meeting*
	Prepare Post-Implementation Report	*Post-Implementation Report*
Perform Administrative Closeout	Update Skills Inventory and Provide Performance Feedback	*Updated Skills Inventory* *Performance Feedback*
	Archive Project Information	Archived Project Repository

5.1 CONDUCT POST-IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW

Purpose

A project is considered complete when it has been successfully implemented and transitioned to the Performing Organization and approved by the Project Sponsor. At this point in the project management lifecycle, the responsibilities of the Project Manager are to assess how closely the project met Customer needs, highlight what worked well, learn from mistakes made during the project, identify patterns and trends, derive ways to improve upon processes executed throughout the project, and, most importantly, communicate results. The purpose of **Conduct Post-Implementation Review** is to gather the information required to meet those responsibilities, and to present the information in a Post-Implementation Report.

Roles

- Project Manager
- Project Team Members
- Project Sponsor
- Customers
- Consumers

5.1.1 Solicit Feedback

The most important measures of the success of a project are whether the product was developed and delivered successfully and how well the needs of the Customers have been met. The most effective way to determine these measures is to Solicit Feedback.

The tasks executed in support of Conduct Post-Implementation Review are:

5.1.1 Solicit Feedback
5.1.2 Conduct Project Assessment
5.1.3 Prepare Post-Implementation Report

The Project Manager should gather feedback using a survey appropriate to the project. Depending on the size and type of the project and the structure of the Performing Organization, different surveys may be required for different stakeholder groups, and surveys will need to be distributed to the appropriate individuals. At a minimum, feedback should be solicited from the Project Sponsor and Project Team members who performed the tasks in the Project Schedule. The Project Manager should determine if surveys should also be given to Customer Representatives, Consumers, or other stakeholders in order to collect sufficient information for assessing the success of the project in meeting its goals and their needs. The survey must also assess the outcome of the project and the performance of the Project Team and Performing Organization. The Project Manager must stress to all survey participants the importance of their honest feedback as one of the primary mechanisms for assessing the project's performance.

It is very important to solicit feedback from the Project Team. Because they have a different point of view from that of Customers and Consumers, Project Team members provide an "inside look" at the way the project was executed. They are also an important resource for communicating lessons learned and best practices.

The written survey should be distributed, in either electronic or hard copy form, with a specific due date for its completion. The Project Manager should follow up if the survey is not returned on time. If distribution is extensive, it may be helpful to keep a list of to whom and when the survey was sent and returned.

The Project Manager also has the option of conducting a survey in person or over the telephone. An interview survey can often be more effective than a written one. While those responding to a written survey are limited to answering the questions as they are written, an intuitive Project Manager will be able to expand upon the verbal responses of the survey participant, gathering information that might otherwise not be uncovered. In some cases, however, participants may be reluctant to disclose information as honestly in person. The Project Manager may not be the appropriate person to administer the survey interview to some Stakeholder groups.

It is also important to obtain feedback on the performance of the Project Manager! The Project Manager's immediate supervisor, or an individual in a similar capacity, needs to take responsibility for obtaining honest feedback from the Project Sponsor, Customer, and Project Team.

Figure 5-3, New York State Project Post-Implementation Survey, provides an example of a feedback survey. Each project is unique and questions should be tailored to address the specific project and the intended audience.

Figure 5-3 New York State Project Post-Implementation Survey

New York State
Project Post-Implementation Survey

Since every group involved in the project experiences it from a different perspective, survey questions should be tailored to the particular expectations of key groups identified in Project Roles and Responsibilities. These evaluations should apply not only to the execution of the project, but also to satisfaction with the project's product (or service), and with the support the Performing Organization provided to the Project Team.

The following survey is intended as a guideline, and provides sample questions that may be asked as part of soliciting feedback. The Project Manager should review the questions to determine which to include for the selected target audience. The respondents should be encouraged to provide not only a numerical rating (with 1=Not at All, or Poor, 2=Adequate, or Satisfactory, 3=To a great extent, or Excellent), but also their comments as to what worked well, what could have been done better, and recommendations for conducting future projects.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Project Name: ______________________________ Date: ______________________________

Your Name: ______________________________ Your Performing Organization: ______________________

Your Role on the Project: ______________________________ Dates of Your Involvement: ______________________

Questions	**Rating (1-3)**	**Comments** (What worked well? What could have been done better? What recommendations do you have for future projects?)
PRODUCT EFFECTIVENESS		
How well does the product or service of the project meet the stated needs of the Performing Organization?		
How well does the product or service of the project meet your needs?		
When initially implemented, how well did the product or service of the project meet the stated needs of the Performing Organization?		
To what extent were the objectives and goals outlined in the Business Case met?		
What is your overall assessment of the outcome of this project?		

Figure 5-3 (Continued)

New York State
Project Post-Implementation Survey

Questions	Rating (1-3)	Comments (What worked well? What could have been done better? What recommendations do you have for future projects?)
CSSQ MANAGEMENT		
How well did the scope of the project match what was defined in the Project Proposal?		
How satisfied are you with your involvement in the development and/or review of the Project Scope during Project Initiation and Planning?		
Was the Change Control process properly invoked to manage changes to Cost, Scope, Schedule, or Quality?		
Were changes to Cost, Scope, Schedule, or Quality, effectively managed?		
Was the established change budget adequate?		
As project performance validated or challenged estimates, were the estimates effectively revised and the current and future tasks re-scheduled?		
How closely does the initial Project Schedule compare with the actual schedule?		
How did the estimated Project Budget compare with the total actual expenditure?		
How effectively was the Quality Management Plan applied during Project Execution?		
How effective was the quality assurance process?		
How effective were project audits?		
How effective was the utilization of Best Practices from prior projects in the Performing Organization?		
RISK MANAGEMENT		
How well were team members involved in the risk identification and mitigation planning process?		

Figure 5-3 (Continued)

New York State
Project Post-Implementation Survey

Questions	Rating (1-3)	Comments (What worked well? What could have been done better? What recommendations do you have for future projects?)
RISK MANAGEMENT (Continued)		
To what extent was the evolution of risks communicated?		
How accurate were the risk probabilities on the Risk Management Worksheet?		
How effectively was the Risk Management Worksheet updated or reviewed?		
How comprehensive was the Risk Management Worksheet? (i.e. did many events occur that were never identified?)		
COMMUNICATIONS MANAGEMENT		
How effective were the informational materials available to orient team members?		
How satisfied were you with the kick-off meetings you participated in?		
How effectively were the project team meetings conducted?		
How effectively and timely were Progress Reports provided by Team Members to the Project Manager?		
How effectively were stakeholders involved in the project?		
Was communication with stakeholders adequate?		
How well were your expectations met regarding the frequency and content of information conveyed to you by the Project Manager?		
How well was project status communicated throughout your involvement in the project?		
How well were project issues communicated throughout your involvement in the project?		
How well did the Project Manager respond to your questions or comments related to the project?		

Figure 5-3 (Continued)

New York State
Project Post-Implementation Survey

Questions	Rating (1-3)	Comments (What worked well? What could have been done better? What recommendations do you have for future projects?)
COMMUNICATIONS MANAGEMENT (Continued)		
How useful was the format and content of the Project Status Report to you?		
How useful and complete was the project repository?		
ACCEPTANCE MANAGEMENT		
How effective was the acceptance management process?		
How well prepared were you to receive project deliverables?		
How well defined was the acceptance criteria for project deliverables?		
Was sufficient time allocated to review project deliverables?		
How closely did deliverables match what was defined within Project Scope?		
How complete/effective were the materials you were provided in order to make a decision to proceed from one project lifecycle phase to the next? If materials were lacking, please elaborate.		
ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE MANAGEMENT		
How effectively and timely was the organizational change impact identified and planned for?		
How pro-active was the Organizational Change Management Plan?		
Was sufficient advance training conducted/ information provided to enable those affected by the changes to adjust to and accommodate them?		

Figure 5-3 (Continued)

New York State
Project Post-Implementation Survey

Questions	Rating (1-3)	**Comments** (What worked well? What could have been done better? What recommendations do you have for future projects?)
ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE MANAGEMENT (Continued)		
Overall, how effective were the efforts to prepare you and your organization for the impact of the product/service of the project?		
How effective were the techniques used to prepare you and your organization for the impact of the changes brought about by the product or service of the project?		
ISSUES MANAGEMENT		
How effectively were issues managed on the project?		
How effectively were issues resolved before escalation was necessary?		
If issue escalation was required, how effectively were issues resolved?		
How effectively were issues able to be resolved without impacting the Project Schedule or Budget?		
PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION & SUPPORT		
How effective was the documentation that you received with the project product/service?		
How effective was the training you received in preparation for the use of the product/service?		
How useful was the content of the training you received in preparation for the use of the product/service?		
How timely was the training you received in preparation for the use of the product/service?		

Figure 5-3 (Continued)

New York State
Project Post-Implementation Survey

Questions	Rating (1-3)	**Comments** (What worked well? What could have been done better? What recommendations do you have for future projects?)
PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION & SUPPORT (Continued)		
How effective was the support you received during implementation of the product/service?		
PERFORMANCE OF THE PERFORMING ORGANIZATION		
How effectively and consistently was sponsorship for the project conveyed?		
How smooth was the transition of support from the Project Team to the Performing Organization?		
Was there a qualitative difference in the level of support provided by the Project Team during implementation and by the Performing Organization after transition?		
Did the Project Team adequately plan for and prepare the Performing Organization for its ongoing responsibilities for the product or service of the project?		
PERFORMANCE OF THE PROJECT TEAM		
Overall, how effective was the performance of the Project Manager?		
How well did the Project Team understand the expectations of their specific roles and responsibilities?		
How well were your expectations met regarding the extent of your involvement in the project (effort time commitments etc.)?		
How effective was each Project Team member in fulfilling his/her role?		
How effective was team member training?		

Figure 5-3 (Continued)

New York State
Project Post-Implementation Survey

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Question	Response
What were the most significant issues on this project?	
What were the lessons learned on this project?	
What on the project worked well and was effective in the delivery of the product?	
What other questions should we have asked? What other information would you like to provide to us about this project?	

Once survey feedback has been collected, the Project Manager must review, analyze, and summarize the results for presentation at the Project Assessment Meeting.

The following is a suggested list of categories to use when compiling survey information:

- Product Effectiveness
- CSSQ Management
- Risk Management
- Communications Management
- Acceptance Management
- Organizational Change Management
- Issues Management
- Project Implementation and Transition
- Performance of Performing Organization
- Performance of Project Team

Summarized feedback will be used during the Project Assessment Meeting as a starting point for identifying lessons learned and best practices to use in future projects. It will also be included in the Post-Implementation Report created at the end of Project Closeout.

N W E S

A project may come in on time, under budget, and meeting all defined quality standards. Every deliverable may have been 100% error free and perfectly consistent with the Project Scope. BUT, if the Customer is not satisfied with the outcome, the project cannot be considered a success!

5.1.2 Conduct Project Assessment

The goal of this task is for the Project Manager to meet with select members of the Project Team and stakeholder community to present the summarized results of the feedback surveys, discuss all other aspects of the completed project, gain consensus on what was successful and what was not, and derive best practices and lessons learned.

In addition to the Project Team, the Project Manager should consider inviting Project Managers from the Performing Organization with experience on similar projects. Based on experience and prior knowledge, other Project Managers can provide information and insight on the assessment process. It is a good idea for the Project Manager to distribute the summarized survey results to each participant in advance of the Project Assessment Meeting, to allow them to come prepared to address the contents.

In order to provide the best possible products and services to Customers, Performing Organization Management must strive to continuously improve the way New York State projects are managed and products are delivered. During the course of the assessment meeting, participants will consider the summarized feedback results and the experience of the Project Managers in attendance to discuss and assess the performance of the project. Based upon these discussions, the group will identify and agree upon lessons learned. These lessons will not only benefit the current Project Team, they will also help managers and team members of similar projects. The lessons may be positive or negative. Lessons learned must not simply be identified during the meeting. It is also important to document each one and develop an action plan describing when and how they might be implemented within the Performing Organization.

During the course of the project, the Project Manager, Customer, and Project Team members most likely recognized certain procedures that, when exercised, improved the production of a deliverable, streamlined a process, or suggested ways to improve standardized templates. Best practices are documented as part of the Project Assessment Meeting and later shared with other Project Managers so they can be repeated. In some cases, the outstanding "successes" might be translated into new procedures to be followed by future projects.

5.1.3 Prepare Post-Implementation Report

After the Project Assessment Meeting, the Project Manager prepares a Post-Implementation Report. In the report, the Project Manager distills information gleaned from the discussion and organizes it according to the feedback categories described above, adding information on key project metrics. The report documents the effectiveness of the product in meeting the needs of the Customer, the effectiveness of project management and the Project Team, how well the Performing Organization supported the project, lessons learned, best practices to be used in future projects, and the key project metrics that will enable the Performing Organization to compare success measures across projects. It also contains recommendations for improvement to be used by other projects of similar size and scope. (see Figure 5-4, the New York State Project Post-Implementation Report) During Perform Administrative Closeout, the report is archived in the project repository.

The Project Manager must present or distribute the Post-Implementation Report to members of the Performing Organization. In Performing Organizations that undertake many projects, it is most effective to assign an individual or agency unit to take ownership of collecting and organizing the information, teaching the lessons learned, and implementing the best practices throughout the organization.

A central repository, owned and maintained by someone within your Performing Organization, provides a place where lessons learned and best practices can be archived for use by all Project Managers in the organization. Over time, as more and more information is added, it will become part of an invaluable knowledge base that, when leveraged, will translate into tremendous improvements on all New York State projects!

The New York State Office for Technology would appreciate receiving a copy of the Post-Implementation Report for any project guided by this methodology. Lessons learned and best practices from a variety of New York State projects will contribute to the continuous improvement of this *Guidebook.*

Figure 5-4 New York State Project Post-Implementation Report

New York State
Project Post-Implementation Report

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

Project Name: ________________________________ Date: ________________________

Project Sponsor: ______________________________ Project Manager: _______________

Report Prepared By: __________________________

*Enter the **Project Name**.*
*Enter the current **Date**.*
*Enter the name of the assigned **Project Sponsor** and **Project Manager**.*
Enter the name of the individual who prepared the report.

CATEGORIES: Categories of the report correspond to the categories in the Project Post-Implementation Survey.

For each category, the Overall Rating is the average of the ratings provided on completed survey forms for that category (1=Not at All, or Poor, 2=Adequately, or Satisfactory, 3=To a great extent, or Excellent)

A. PROJECT EFFECTIVENESS

Summarize how effectively the product or service met the needs of the Customer, Consumer, and the Performing Organization.

Highlight specific product performance metrics.

Identify and discuss "outliers" – specific Stakeholder groups dissatisfied with the project outcome, or those wildly enthusiastic about it.

Identify and discuss specific issues.

Overall Survey Rating:

Figure 5-4 (Continued)

New York State
Project Post-Implementation Report

B. CSSQ MANAGEMENT

*Summarize effectiveness of **CSSQ Management** throughout the project.*

Highlight significance of approved changes to the original project scope, and how they were managed.

*Compare the baseline versions of the **Project Schedule** and **Budget** to the final versions. Describe discrepancies.*

Summarize deliverables compliance with defined quality standards.

Identify and discuss "outliers" – specific Stakeholder groups dissatisfied with the CSSQ management process, or those wildly enthusiastic about it.

Identify and discuss specific issues.

Overall Survey Rating:

C. RISK MANAGEMENT

*Summarize effectiveness of **Risk Management** throughout the project.*

Highlight significant identified risks that actually occurred, and the effectiveness of the mitigation plan.

Identify and discuss "outliers" – specific Stakeholder groups dissatisfied with the Risk Management process, or those wildly enthusiastic about it.

Identify and discuss specific issues.

Overall Survey Rating:

D. COMMUNICATIONS

*Summarize the effectiveness of the **Communications Plan** developed for the project.*

Highlight significant communication activities that were particularly effective.

Identify and discuss "outliers" – specific Stakeholder groups dissatisfied with the Project Communications process, or those wildly enthusiastic about it.

Identify and discuss specific issues.

Overall Survey Rating:

Figure 5-4 (Continued)

New York State
Project Post-Implementation Report

E. ACCEPTANCE MANAGEMENT

Summarize effectiveness of ***Acceptance Management*** *throughout the project.*

Highlight significant deliverables and the effectiveness of the Acceptance Plan for those deliverables.

Identify and discuss "outliers" – specific Stakeholder groups dissatisfied with the Acceptance Management process, or those wildly enthusiastic about it.

Identify and discuss specific issues.

Overall Survey Rating:

F. ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Summarize effectiveness of ***Organizational Change Management*** *throughout the project.*

Highlight significant Change Management impacts and the effectiveness of the Organizational Change Management activities planned and executed for those impacts

Identify and discuss "outliers" – specific Stakeholder groups dissatisfied with the Organizational Change Management process, or those wildly enthusiastic about it.

Identify and discuss specific issues.

Overall Survey Rating:

G. ISSUES MANAGEMENT

Summarize effectiveness of ***Issues Management*** *throughout the project.*

Highlight significant issues and the effectiveness of the Issues Management process for those issues

Identify and discuss "outliers" – specific Stakeholder groups dissatisfied with the Issues Management process, or those wildly enthusiastic about it.

Were issues resolved before change control was needed?

Overall Survey Rating:

Figure 5-4 (Continued)

New York State
Project Post-Implementation Report

H. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND TRANSITION

*Summarize effectiveness of the **Project Implementation and Transition**.*

Highlight significant milestones of the implementation and transition, and the effectiveness of the activities planned and executed for those milestones.

Identify and discuss "outliers" – specific Stakeholder groups dissatisfied with the Implementation and Transition process, or those wildly enthusiastic about it.

Identify and discuss specific issues.

Overall Survey Rating:

I. PERFORMANCE OF PERFORMING ORGANIZATION

*Summarize effectiveness of the **Performing Organization** within the context of this project.*

Highlight significant responsibilities of the Performing Organization, and the effectiveness of the Performing Organization in accomplishing them.

Identify and discuss "outliers" – specific Stakeholder groups dissatisfied with the performance of the Performing Organization, or those wildly enthusiastic about it.

Identify and discuss specific issues.

Overall Survey Rating:

J. PERFORMANCE OF PROJECT TEAM

*Summarize effectiveness of the **Project Team** within the context of this project.*

Highlight significant responsibilities of the Project Team, and the effectiveness of the Team in accomplishing them.

Identify and discuss "outliers" – specific Stakeholder groups dissatisfied with the performance of the Project Team, or those wildly enthusiastic about it.

Identify and discuss specific issues.

Overall Survey Rating:

Figure 5-4 (Continued)

New York State
Project Post-Implementation Report

K. KEY PROJECT METRICS

COST

Percent difference between the final cost, final approved baseline cost estimate, and the original cost estimate.

Number of approved changes made to the original budget.

Number of "re-baselined" budget estimates performed .

SCHEDULE

Number of milestones in baseline schedule.

Number of baseline milestones delivered on time (according to last baselined schedule).

Difference in elapsed time of original schedule and final actual schedule.

Difference in elapsed time of final baseline and final actual schedule.

SCOPE

Number of baseline deliverables.

Number of deliverables delivered at project completion.

Number of scope changes in the post-planning phases.

QUALITY

Number of defects/quality issues identified after delivery.

Number of success measures identified in the Business Case that were satisfied or achieved at project completion.

5.2 PERFORM ADMINISTRATIVE CLOSEOUT

Purpose

The purpose of **Perform Administrative Closeout** is to perform all administrative tasks required to bring the project to an official close.

Roles

- Project Manager
- Team Leader

Tasks

5.2.1 Update Skills Inventory and Provide Performance Feedback

The tasks executed in support of Perform Administrative Closeout are:

5.2.1 Update Skills Inventory and Provide Performance Feedback

5.2.2 Archive Project Information

During the course of the project, Project Team members most likely enhanced their current skills or obtained new ones. The investment made in improving an individual's skills should not be lost. In order to leverage skills on future projects, and to facilitate and encourage individual growth, the Project Manager should maintain a record of the skills developed and used on the project. If a skills inventory exists within the Performing Organization, the Project Manager or Team Leader must be sure each Project Team member takes the time to update it with any skills newly developed and any new project roles that were assumed. An up-to-date inventory will become invaluable to future Project Managers when attempting to appropriately staff their projects. It can also be used as input for an individual's immediate supervisor when providing performance feedback.

If no skills inventory exists within a Performing Organization, the Project Manager should encourage the Performing Organization to implement one. The inventory can be as simple as a hardcopy list, or as sophisticated as an electronic skills database, depending upon the needs and desires of the organization.

The Project Manager and/or Team Leader must also take the time to document their feedback on the accomplishments and performance of each Project Team member. As the person most aware of the day-to-day activities performed by the Project Team, the Team Leader or Project Manager is the most appropriate person to provide honest and accurate feedback. Feedback documentation should be prepared and reviewed with the individual team members first. Following this performance discussion, the documentation is submitted promptly to each Project Team member's immediate supervisor to be used as input to performance appraisals. The performance feedback mechanisms (appraisal forms, project exit interviews, etc.) specific to the Performing Organization should be used.

5.2.2 Archive Project Information

Throughout the course of the project, the Project Manager maintained a project repository. As the project progressed, the purpose of the repository was to create a central point of reference for all project materials to be used by anyone involved in the project. Once the project comes to an official close, the repository provides an audit trail documenting the history and evolution of the project.

During Project Closeout, the Project Manager should examine the repository to ensure that all relevant project-related material, documents produced, decisions made, issues raised and correspondence exchanged have been captured. In addition, the Post-Implementation Report should be included.

When the project is officially closed, the project repository should include the following materials:

- Project supporting documentation, including the Business Case and Project Proposal
- Project description/definition documents such as the Project Charter and Project Plan
- Any working documents or informal documents defining Cost, Scope, Schedule and Quality of the project
- Project Schedules – retain all copies electronically, but only include the baseline and final schedule in the hard-copy repository
- Project financials

- Project Scope changes and requests log
- Project Status Reports
- Team member progress reports and timesheets
- Issues log and details (open and resolved)
- Project acceptance log by deliverable
- Project Deliverable Approval Forms, with original signatures
- Risk Management Worksheets
- Audit results, if encountered
- Correspondence, including any pivotal or decision-making memos, letters, email, etc.
- Meeting notes
- Final Project Acceptance Form, with original signatures
- Post-Implementation Report

A hard copy repository should be archived in a designated documentation area. It may be made available electronically at the discretion of the Project Sponsor in accordance with organizational records management policies. See Figure 5-5 Project Repository Table of Contents.

◆ **Archived Project Repository** – A collection of all project-related materials, documents produced, decisions made, issues raised and correspondence exchanged, providing the history and evolution of the project.

Figure 5-5 New York State Project Repository Table of Contents

New York State
Project Repository Table of Contents

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

Project Name: ________________________ Date: ____________________________

Project Sponsor: ______________________ Project Manager: __________________

*Enter the **Project Name**.*
*Enter the current **Date**.*
*Enter the name of the assigned **Project Sponsor** and **Project Manager**.*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

*The following is a suggested **Table of Contents** for your project repository. The organization and content of your actual repository may differ, depending on the scope and type of project and your personal preference.*

- Project Proposal
- Business Case
- Project Charter
- Project Scope Statement
- Project Schedule
- Quality Management Plan
- Budget Estimate
- List of Risks/Risk Management Worksheet
- Description of Stakeholder Involvement
- Communications Plan
- Post-Implementation Survey(s)
- Post-Implementation Report
- Change Control Forms
- Signed Approval Forms
- Meeting Notes/Minutes/Correspondence
- Project Status Reports
- Progress Reports
- Project Work Products/Deliverables
- End of Phase Checklists

Project Closeout End-of-Phase Checklist

How To Use

Use this checklist throughout Project Closeout to help ensure that all requirements of the phase are met. As each item is completed, indicate its completion date. Use the Comments column to add information that may be helpful to you as you proceed through the project. If you elect NOT to complete an item on the checklist, indicate the reason and describe how the objectives of that item are otherwise being met.

Figure 5-6

Item Description	Page	Completion Date	Comments	Reason for NOT Completing
Solicit Feedback:	**268**			
Prepare surveys	268			
Distribute or review surveys with appropriate participants	269			
Gather survey results	277			
Review and analyze survey results	277			
Summarize feedback for presentation at Project Assessment Meeting	277			
Conduct Project Assessment:	**278**			
Schedule Project Assessment Meeting	278			
Select and invite appropriate meeting participants	278			
Review and distribute survey summary results	278			
Gather notes and meeting results for inclusion in Post-Implementation Report	278			
Use survey feedback and meeting results to identify lessons learned and best practices	278			

Item Description	Page	Completion Date	Comments	Reason for NOT Completing
Document each lesson learned	278			
Document best practices	278			
Develop action plans to implement lessons learned and best practices	278			
Prepare Post-Implementation Report:	**279**			
Gather summarized survey feedback, notes from Project Assessment Meeting, lessons learned and best practices	279			
Present or distribute report to Performing Organization Management	279			
Send copy of report to OFT	279			
Update Skills Inventory and Provide Performance Feedback:	**285**			
Establish skills inventory system, if one does not exist	285			
Update skills or add skills to inventory system for each Project Team member	285			
Write performance feedback on each Project Team member	286			
Discuss performance feedback with each Team member	286			
Forward feedback to team member's immediate supervisor	286			
Archive Project Information:	**286**			
Gather all project information	286			
Archive information in project repository	286			
Locate hardcopy repository in designated documentation area	287			
CELEBRATE! Your project is complete!				

Measurements of Success

The ultimate measurement of success for Project Closeout will probably never be known. That's because it is impossible to assess now how much future projects will benefit from best practices and lessons learned derived from this project; the only thing certain is that no one will benefit at all if the best practices and lessons learned are not documented and communicated.

Meanwhile, the Project Manager can still assess how successfully the project is proceeding through Closeout by utilizing the measurement criteria outlined below. More than one "No" answer indicates a lesser probability that your experiences will help with the eventual success of other projects.

Figure 5-7

Process	Measurements of Success	Yes	No
Conduct Post-Implementation Review	Was the survey presented in a way to encourage active participation?		
	Were feedback results meaningful?		
	Were best practices and lessons learned appropriately identified and documented in such a way as to facilitate their application to all types of projects?		
	Did people read and provide feedback on the Post-Implementation Report?		
Perform Administrative Closeout	Was all project information readily available and easy to consolidate in the project repository?		
	Were you able to easily provide performance feedback on team members?		
	Did you take the initiative to establish/recommend a skills inventory, if one did not exist within your organization?		

Phase Risks/Ways to Avoid Pitfalls

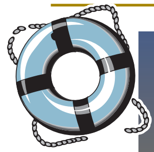
Project Closeout may be perceived as the least important of all of the project phases, but its value to future projects cannot be underestimated. The knowledge gathered, the expertise developed, the lessons learned, the practices perfected – will remain locked temporarily in a few people's heads unless the Post-Implementation Review is conducted promptly, documented thoroughly, and (most importantly) its results are disseminated appropriately throughout the Performing Organization.

What are some of the key elements of Project Closeout that require the most attention? The Post-Implementation Review definitely stands out, and receives the most attention in the following table that identifies processes and tasks which have pitfalls highlighted in this section.

Figure 5-8

Process	Task	Why is it important?
Conduct Post-Implementation Review	Solicit Feedback	Do you have to ask? Yes, if you want answers. Your opinion, no matter how lofty, is not enough.
	Conduct Project Assessment	"Honesty is such a lonely word." But that is what your project – and all future projects – need from you!
	Derive Lessons Learned	"Truthfulness...always seems so hard to give." But you owe it to yourself, and all other Project Managers that will follow in your footsteps. Learn from the bad things and leverage the good.
	Identify Best Practices	Here's your chance to highlight for posterity all the things you and your team did right!

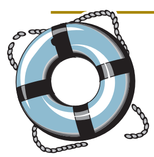
PITFALL #1 – YOU WAITED TOO LONG TO GET FEEDBACK



Your project is a success! Everyone is walking on air! In your joy and celebration, you neglect to solicit immediate feedback from the Project Team and other stakeholders….

Every project has its challenges, and everyone can learn from them. But people tend to forget the challenges they faced during the course of a project when the final outcome is a success. It is very important to solicit feedback as soon as Project Closeout begins so you get immediate, honest, and complete information regarding not only the project successes, but the failures. Then, the celebration can begin!

PITFALL #2 – YOU AREN'T SURE YOU ARE READY TO HEAR WHAT THEY REALLY THINK OF THE PROJECT



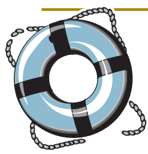
Scenario 1. Your project was a miserable failure. Your team mutinied; your Customers hate you; and you are in big trouble with your boss because the project came in months late and way over budget. You want to put this wretched experience behind you. The last thing you want to do is dredge up all the misery again. Why give everyone yet another opportunity to kick you?

Scenario 2. Your project went OK. You had a pretty good team (with just a few nuts and bolts); you are still on speaking terms with your Customers; and the project was just a bit over, mostly because of someone who insisted on "just one more thing." You can probably even use this project as a resume-builder for future opportunities. So why jeopardize it by giving everybody a chance to bring up all the things that could have been done better? Let sleeping dogs lie!

Scenario 3. You are on top of the world. Your project was a success. The Customers love the product. Your boss nominated you for an award because you delivered the project on time and under budget. So why are you still afraid to find out what everybody thinks about the experience?

As you can see, whatever the outcome, the bias is always to "close the chapter" and move on. And yet, for your personal growth, for the benefit of your organization, and for all the other Project Managers to come, you need to spend the time to review the project. You need to understand what you did right – and what you did wrong. You need to know how your behavior, your approach, and your techniques, really worked – not from your own skewed perspective, but from the objective standpoint of your team, your Customers, and your management; if you think about it, from the only perspective that really matters, at least vis-à-vis your career.

PITFALL #3 – YOU DECIDE TO PLAY FACILITATOR (OR SCRIBE)



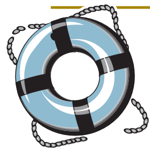
Since you are the one inviting the folks to your Project Assessment Meeting, and it is your project they are reviewing, the temptation is to try to facilitate the meeting yourself.

Bad idea for two reasons. First of all, you probably don't know how to do it right. A few Project Managers do happen to be talented facilitators; a lot more think they are, but in reality don't have a clue as to what's involved in getting meaningful output from a large group of disparate personalities. Remember, if you want a professional job, secure a professional. Many agencies have trained facilitators that are available for such meetings. Alternatively, you may consider hiring an outside consultant if it can be done expediently.

Secondly, even if you are a great facilitator, what do you want to concentrate on during this meeting: analyzing what people say, or worrying about Loud Luther dominating the rest of the group with his diatribes? Remember what they say in the legal profession, "a lawyer representing himself has a fool for a client."

Likewise, it's a bad idea to play scribe, for the same reasons: you probably can't type as fast as people talk, and you should be worrying about the meaning of what people are saying, and not keeping up with Rapid Rita as she's rattling off sixteen reasons why you are such a rotten rascal.

PITFALL #4 – YOU GET LOST IN THE FEEDBACK AND LEARN THE WRONG LESSONS



If you overcome your fears and invite a good cross-section of the Project Team to the Project Assessment Meeting, and get a good facilitator to lead the session, you are going to get a lot of feedback – especially if, in preparation for the meeting, your facilitator asks the participants to list all the things that could have been handled better.

Making sense of all the feedback will be tough. Here are some guidelines:

First, concentrate on what's important. During the meeting, your facilitator should ask the group to prioritize their feedback, both positive and negative. What were the things that impeded the project the most? If there was a problem (corrected or not) with Cost, Scope, Schedule, or Quality – what contributed the most to it? The group should come to consensus on the top three or four or five things that affected the project the most. (How? That's why you get a professional facilitator!)

Second, select items that may be of use to other projects. If your locality had a flood for the first time in fifty years during the crucial phase of your project, and as a result your schedule got thrown off kilter, well, too bad for you – but nobody else really cares.

Third, "genericize" your experience so it can be applicable to multiple projects. If one of your key team members developed a rare tropical disease and as a result you had to scramble to identify and secure another resource who could do the work while the expert recuperated, the lesson learned is not how to treat the rare tropical disease, but how to anticipate and prepare for the risk of a key member of the team being unavailable – for whatever reason.

PITFALL #5 – YOU ARE TOO MODEST

No matter how rotten everyone thinks you are at managing projects, you are guaranteed to have done at least something right (like reading this ***Guidebook***, for example). So along with getting all the negative feedback at the Project Assessment Meeting, you also need to accentuate the positive. That is not difficult if your facilitator, in preparation for the meeting, asks the participants to list all the things that went right with the project.

Again, making sense of the feedback is possible if you follow the same guidelines: prioritize the comments, select those that are applicable to other projects, and make them generic and useful.

Don't be bashful about throwing things in that only you thought of. After all, who knows this project better than you? And be specific. If you came up with a better format for a progress report that suits your organization or your project circumstances to a "T" – include it, both as a template, and as a filled-in example. If you followed an unorthodox issue escalation procedure, but it worked better than the tried-and-true chain-of-command one, by all means, let the other folks have the benefit of your ingenuity and good fortune.

PITFALL #6 – YOU LET IT ALL GO TO WASTE

You complete a magnificent project, one that will be a feather in your cap for years to come. You survey half the world for their feedback. You hold a great Project Assessment Meeting, and come up with a host of brilliant strategies for other Project Managers to emulate, and a multitude of obstacles for them to avoid. You triumphantly record them all into your project repository, and file it away.

Never to be seen again.

That's because your organization does not have a way to disseminate this hard-won knowledge throughout the workplace. There is no central repository of historical project data. There is no agency unit charged with taking ownership to collect, organize and make available information about other projects. There is nobody assigned to actively teach lessons learned, or faithfully implement best practices.

There is no way to share organizational knowledge, other than by personal contact.

But it doesn't have to be that way. You can change that, and you can benefit greatly by doing it. First, start accumulating the knowledge from your own projects and from others you are aware of. Second, publicize what you are doing, and create a track record of successful utilization. Third, present the organizational knowledge repository idea to your management, and encourage them to take action. Someone at a management level needs to assign ownership to the appropriate individuals for implementing best practices and lessons learned throughout the Performing Organization. By then, the organization will have been exposed to the idea, will think it is fabulous, and will think you're fabulous for coming up with it.

And don't forget to share your knowledge with the OFT Project Management Office. Let others learn from your experiences while you benefit by learning from theirs. THEY WANT TO KNOW!!

PITFALL #7 – COMPLETION IS ANTI-CLIMACTIC

Your project ends successfully. People go their separate ways. You feel like the whole experience is now nothing more than a vague memory. Why? Maybe you didn't take the time to appropriately celebrate your success.

Don't be afraid to approach your Project Sponsor to inquire about funds that may exist for hosting a celebration function. The function may be as simple as a cake and coffee meeting, or may be an agency-sponsored party or event. In any case, you want your Project Team to have good memories of their experiences on projects you manage, so they will be excited about having the opportunity to work with you again.

Good luck, and have fun!

Frequently Asked Questions

Why should I write a Post-Implementation Report? Who's going to read it, anyway?

Three reasons: because it's good for you, because it's good for your agency, and because it's good for project management everywhere!

Let's say the project did not go well. Do you want to repeat this sorry experience again, or would you rather avoid the same mistakes the next time? The only chance you have is by learning from experience, and allowing your organization to do the same.

Now let's say the project went OK. Don't you want to do better the next time? Enhance your career, earn the respect of your peers, etc., etc.? Repeating what you did right this time will give you more opportunity the next time to concentrate on things you could do better.

Finally, let's say the project was a great success. Aren't you proud of your accomplishment? Don't you want everybody to know about it, and benefit from it?

For more information, see 5.1.2 Conduct Project Assessment.