

Commercial awareness for technical people

Overview

The aim of this course is to expose the commercial context within which technical work is carried out. It is to allow technical staff to understand how they fit into a larger picture, why they may be asked to undertake tasks that may not appear to be technical and the impact their interactions have within the commercial context.

The scope of the programme includes:

- Stakeholders and their various needs
- The need for sales
- Estimating
- Change control and risk
- The value of intellectual property

The course emphasises the collaborative nature of delivery and the need to offer value to customers.

Learning objectives

The principal training objectives for this programme are to help participants:

- Understand why technical roles are broader than we might assume
- Appreciate the importance of, and the need to support, sales
- Value the idea of 'Good Enough'
- Recognise what can affect profitability
- Realise the future needs protecting

Who should attend?

This programme is designed for anyone in a technical role or who has come from a technical background and would like a commercial perspective to aid their work.

Course format

A practical one-day course involving exercises, case studies, formal presentations and tutor-facilitated discussions.

The expert trainer

Steve is a highly experienced and qualified consultant. He started as a computer programmer, working for a subsidiary of Nat West bank, before taking on a role in pre-sales consultancy and client training both in the UK and internationally. He became involved in Project Management in the 1980s while working for a services company. Two spells as a company director saw Steve take on responsibilities for sales and marketing. A return to full time project management included a series of increasingly complex projects and led to programme and portfolio management roles. He has worked with both on-shore and off-shore teams to deliver change on behalf of his clients. He has been a full-time trainer since January 2008.

Steve has worked for a broad range of clients including Nationwide Building Society, The Post Office, the Department for Work and Pensions, the Environment Agency, Hoover, Corus, British Airways and bmi British Midland as well as a number of banks, local authorities and housing associations.

A highly experienced, popular and professional trainer, Steve's courses are always much appreciated by the participants, as the following feedback shows:

'Steve is an amazing trainer who brings humour and clarity to even the most complex concepts. It was a pleasure training with you Steve and thank you for a great week! I would highly recommend Steve as a training provider to anyone needing Project Management or Prince 2 training. Worth every penny!'

– *Samantha Mignano, Beyond Metrix Ltd*

'Steve was brought in to focus on a specific software compliance project that had a very definite timeframe. Not only was the project completed on time, to budget and to all stakeholders' satisfaction but Steve also managed to build and execute a training programme for the incumbent project management team. I cannot speak highly enough of Steve's professionalism, expertise, communication or ability to get things done.'

– *Mathew Stratton, Director & General Manager – Neurological Products Division, Renishaw*

'Steve is a highly experienced, knowledgeable, and excellent project management practitioner/trainer. I am pleased to have been a participant on his PRINCE2 Practitioner training course and to have gained from Steve's intensive knowledge transfer and personable training style. I would certainly recommend Steve to other senior business professionals who want to learn more about achieving excellence in project management.'

– *Kuldip Reyatt, Strategic Visioning Partners*

'Steve provides a superb quality of training, with exceptional knowledge of his subject. This is best measured by results, from having no prior knowledge, I passed the PRINCE2 Practitioner exam with 90/100!! Thanks Steve!'

– *Neil Barnes, Development Communications and Project Coordination*

Course outline

1 Introduction (Course sponsor)

- Why this programme has been developed
- Review of participants' needs and objectives

2 That's not my job!

- How we see our own role in work
- How other people see our role
- Stakeholders: who are they and why do they matter?
- The organisational backdrop
- What is my role really?

3 Sales and marketing

- Where does the money come from?
- Where do we find customers?
- The sales process
- One-off sales versus repeat business
- Customer/supplier relationships
- What something costs versus what the customer will pay
- The value chain

4 Estimating

- Purpose of estimates
- The problem with precision
- Five estimating techniques

5 Change control

- Can you just do this for me?
- When being helpful leads to bankruptcy
- How to deal with change requests

6 Risk management

- Risk in projects
- Risk in operations
- Categories of risk

7 The value of intellectual property

- Issues with sharing information
- Commercial in confidence
- Non-disclosure agreements

8 Course review and action planning (Course sponsor present)

- Identify actions to be implemented individually
- What actions should be implemented to improve working with non-technical people?
- Conclusion