

Best Practice

Resource Allocation Processes for CA PPM



Abstract

When implementing Resource Management for CA PPM, the organizational structure, staffing model, and types of investments are key aspects to consider to define a solution that provides meaningful, accurate and actionable information. This information is needed to drive effective utilization of limited human and physical resources. This paper provides organizations with guidance to on developing a strong resource allocation process looks and when to consider using requisitions.

Concepts

The following concepts are discussed in this paper:

Concept	Definition
Resource Roles	The categorization of resources by primary job or function.
Resource Types	Classification of resources for the allocation of forecasted effort and cost.
Resource Skills	The defined areas of expertise, experience, level of competency, and interest.
The Role of the Resource Manager	Functions and responsibilities of a manager responsible for work allocation and assignment.
The Role of the Project Manager	Functions and responsibilities of a work plan manager, related to the request, acquisition and oversight of the resources required to deliver an investment.
Resource Requisition & Fulfillment	The process of identifying appropriate resources to a forecasted need based on availability, role, skill proficiency and interest.

Common Approaches

To begin resource management using CA PPM, organization should:

1. Define primary roles
2. Define resource types
3. Define parent and child skills
4. Define resource requisition and fulfillment business processes

Primary Roles

Each named resource should be associated with a single defined primary role that is carried into each investment to which he or she is allocated. Primary roles should be:

- **Recognizable**
This helps groups collaborate and share information with other internal departments, business units and external labor providers. Examples: project manager, developer, business analyst
- **Stable**
Limiting revisions due to cultural and/or organizational changes improves the ability to perform analysis over time.
- **Meaningful**
Used for capacity planning and resource management, primary role definitions should represent the bulk of a resource's actual work

Resource Types

By adding non-labor resource types, organizations can provide more detailed costs to improve forecasting investment costs.

- **Material:** Used to define and capture the cost of fungible items. Examples: paper, supplies
- **Equipment:** Used to define and capture the acquisition cost of hardware (examples: servers, telecommunication equipment) or shared infrastructure (examples: test labs, 3-D printers)
- **Expense:** Used to capture non-labor costs not associated to a specific item. Examples: time and materials, subscriptions.

Resource Skills

- **Guidelines:**
 - Resources will have multiple skills.

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- Resource Skill Profiles should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.
- For effective use, organizations should group skills by category by defining a 'parent skill'. Technical skills could serve as a group. Alternatively, groups could be defined by specific development languages, applications, vendor products, or infrastructure components. Examples: SQL, ADP, CA7, UNIX.
Non-technical groups might be defined by experience or area of expertise such as operational business unit expertise, application knowledge, industry and company knowledge related to business processes. Examples: benefits, claims, general ledger, admissions.

The Role of the Resource Manager

The resource manager's role is focused on the effective utilization of available resources. Equally important is his or her role in the development of existing resources to meet future demand as technology and the business changes. The solution should provide the information necessary to answer questions such as:

- What are my team members current assignments? How are team members performing against the estimated allocation?
- What is my team's current and future availability?
- What is my team's utilization?
- What roles are team members filling? What roles could they fill?
- What is the future demand for my team, by technical skill, area of expertise or experience?
- What skills do team members possess? What skills will they need in the future?

The Role of the Project Manager

The project manager's primary focus is on the effective delivery of investments (on-time and on-budget) to meet the defined goals and objectives of the organization. Utilizing the right resources at the right time is critical to successful deliver of investments.

The resource management solution should provide information necessary to answer questions such as:

- Have I obtained all the committed resources I need for the successful completion of my project?
- Who controls the resources/roles I require?
- When will key resources be available for my project?
- Where else are my resources assigned? Are there potential risks or dependencies I should be monitor?

Resource Requisition and Fulfillment

There are multiple approaches to defining and implementing a resource requisition and fulfillment business processes. The selection of an approach depends on the size of the organization, its structure and investment staffing models. Some examples are noted below.

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Silo Model

Resources are organized within a fixed reporting structure, supporting a defined group or function.

A limited number of managers control the work assignments for a manageable number of resources.

The process to define the in-take of new investments, estimation, assignment and execution occur within this group, with little or no engagement of outside resources.

A simple request and fulfillment process performed in a collaborative way between the resource manager and project manager(s) best suits this model.

Cross Functional Model

Resources are organized by function and/or service provided, and may cross technologies, applications and lines of business.

Resources often perform both development and on-going support and maintenance, adding complexity to the balancing of resource supply and demand.

The process to define the in-take of new investments occurs outside the groups responsible for execution and delivery.

A defined business process for the communication of pending new investments is needed to ensure timely and pro-active future scheduling of resources.

A more formal resource requisition and fulfillment process may be required to support effective collaboration of resource needs across multiple groups.

Mixed Use Model

To reduce the risk to active and new development investments by the demand for resources supporting on-going support and maintenance, a mixed use resource model may exist.

In this model, specific resources are defined for on-going support and maintenance activities, and a separate pool of resources is defined to support new development activities.

Development vs. Support resource pools are managed separately.

The support resource pool tends to be more static in nature, as the work is more predictable over a 1-3 year period.

The development pool tends to be more volatile, expanding and contracting to meet the forecasted needs of the organization as defined in their strategic plan.

While a simplistic resource requisition and fulfillment model can work well in this scenario, and the development pool is well defined, The augmentation of this pool by external resources add a level of complexity to the resource requisition model to support the collaboration with outside resource suppliers.

Pros & Cons

Collaborative resource requisition and fulfillment process without automated workflow:

Pros:

- Flexible and readily adaptable to organizational changes; requires the least effort to forecast and manage resource supply vs. demand.
- Just-in-time review of current workload, and adjustment of resources to meet shifting investment priority and changes to deliver schedules.

Cons:

- Does not enforce compliance or adoption of the process for requisition of resource, and fulfillment of those requests.
- May not provide a single point of capture for resource requisitions.
- Resource matching based on skills, availability, or other criteria is subjective.
- Provides systematic approach to resource requisitions and fulfillment

Depending on the current state of the client's resource management process, organizations should avoid overly complex or large numbers of roles since this can hinder strategic resource planning.

Organizations should plan to review and update resource data, skills and skills mapping on a regular basis. If not maintained, resource information will become out-of-date and provide little value for staffing investments, investing in skills or assessing overall utilization by skill.

The level of formality defined in any organization's resource requisition and fulfillment process should be determined based on the organization's maturity level and its needs. An effective process can be as simple as a scheduled meeting to review current and new request, or as complex as formal, systematic work-flows for capturing, managing and closing requests.

Summary Recommendations

Start with a meaningful number of primary roles, and limited and meaningful set of skills.

Validate or revise your resource management process as needed; consider automating processes only after they have been proven to be accurate and reasonable level of adoption has achieved by the organization.

For organizations with a low level of maturity for resource requisition and fulfillment processes, it is advisable to start with a collaborative process that is data driven, but does not include the implementation of a systematic requisition process.

Once the collaborative process is in place and critical deficiencies have been addressed, the organization can pursue incremental improvements to the formal requisition process with systematic workflows which can improve efficiencies and add significant value to the organization. Additionally, as organizations pursue improvements to resource allocation processes and their CA PPM configuration, they should continually confirm answers to questions such as these:

- Who are your resource 'requesters'?
- Who is responsible for fulfillment of resource request?
- What is your organizational structure?
- What is your staffing model?
- What resources require tracking? (IT, business, others?)

Authored By CA Services