

## ***Tips for Adopting Project Standards***

A *Project Standard* is a documented set of guidelines to follow for undertaking projects. The two most popular Worldwide Standards are PMI® and Prince2®. They provide generic guidelines for all types of projects, regardless of the industry. These two Standards use different terminology and have different Project Life Cycles, so we suggest choosing only one standard to follow for your projects.

To help you choose which standard to follow, we suggest the following. As the PMI® Standard was written initially with the American target market in mind, we suggest using this Standard if you are an American-based culture. Whereas Prince2® was written initially with the UK market in mind, so if you're an English-based culture, use Prince2®.

Once you've made this decision, here are some tips on how to implement the relevant Standard for your projects:

1. ***Start with Terminology:*** The single largest challenge you have ahead of you when implementing Standards for your organization is adopting the terminology used by that Standard. Review the terminology used and decide on the terms you wish to adopt. Then publish an agreed Glossary of Terms within your organization and train project teams in the use of that terminology to ensure that it's adopted for your projects.
2. ***Implement the Life Cycle:*** Every project Standard includes a Project Life Cycle. This is a series of steps that need to be followed to deliver projects from start to finish. Again, publish the Life Cycle within your organization and ensure that all new projects align their project plans with the life cycle you have chosen. Don't enforce a new Life Cycle upon existing projects, as it will cause confusion, reduce motivation and cause delays. But for new projects, it will have the opposite effect, by providing structure and giving teams a solid delivery path when they start out.
3. ***Follow the Guidelines:*** Within each project Standard, there will be a set of guidelines and common principles that are recommended to boost your chance of success. Read these guidelines and decide on the ones you want to follow. Then communicate these to your teams and provide on-going training to ensure that the guidelines are ingrained in the culture of your organization.
4. ***Be Selective:*** Never adopt a Standard in its entirety, unless you believe it's a 100% fit. Instead, you're best to select those parts which you believe can be integrated into your company culture, with the least disruption to your project activities.
5. ***Ensure Alignment:*** Having successfully implemented the Standard in your organization, you now need to ensure that it's rigorously followed. Review projects on a continual basis to ensure that the terminology, life cycle and guidelines are followed consistently so that the project team has the maximum chance of success.