

TECH DECISIONSTM

FOR INSURANCE

April 2005 Vol. 7, No. 4

A National Underwriter Publication

www.tech-decisions.com

INSURERS PUT NEW PRODUCTS TO THE TEST—IMPLEMENTATION.

TECHEDGE

Company: **PM Solutions**

Product: Project Management Community of Practice Methodology Solution

Web Site: www.pmsolutions.com

PM Solutions, a provider of project management consulting, training, and research, in February released the latest version of its Web-enabled Project Management Community of Practice (PM COP) methodology solution, which aligns with standards contained within the Project Management Institute's *PMBOK® Guide* 3rd Edition. The PM COP gives Global 2000 organizations a source for hundreds of forms, templates, practices, and guidelines that can be used to improve project execution and operational efficiency.

Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey has been using an earlier version of the PM COP solution for approximately two years, according to Ron Hougui, EP MO manager for Horizon. "When we first launched the enterprise project management office, the maturity level of most project managers was low," he says. "[Managers] didn't know what the next steps were and how to proceed. It made it difficult for [the EP MO] to follow or for a sponsor who had multiple project managers working on different projects. [Project sponsors] constantly saw different status reports, different ways of creating schedules, and a different way of creating stakeholder analysis documentation."

What Horizon has done with the tool is create a common set of standards, method-

ologies, and templates. "We provide samples if the [project managers] don't know how to get started," explains Hougui. "[The tool] outlines our project methodology, the project manager's life cycle, and it talks about the different roles and responsibilities. It's sort of like the gateway for project managers."

PM COP supports the active use of repeatable processes across all projects within an organization. Having a standard process in place for managing projects

project is failing until it's too late. If you follow the common methodology, you are able to stay on top of [projects] and identify areas where [managers] may be needing help before the problems really become a major issue."

"Since the initial release of the PM COP in 2002, PM Solutions' methodology experts have spent more than 6,000 hours customizing the methodology for our clients, adding new content based on customer feedback and *PMBOK® Guide* industry advancements, and refining the functionality of our solution to meet the needs of a broad user base," says Karen White, director of consulting services at PM Solutions.

The tool also is customizable, Hougui adds. "We purchased it a couple of years ago and 'Horizon-ized' it," he says. "Although the methodology follows standards, we made some minor modifications to be more in line with our own methodology."

PM Solutions' updated PM COP is easy to use and scalable, according to White. The PM COP aims to bring practical best practices, templates, guidelines, and reference materials directly to the organization's fingertips, she notes. It defines project management roles and responsibilities and features a glossary with the definitions of nearly 400 key project management terms. Its interface requires minimal user training and is adaptable to integrate with a company's intranet or existing project management software. It features full search capabilities, a software development project handbook, and an integrated knowledge center. TD



Project Management Community of Practice has been updated by PM Solutions.

accelerates project start-up time, increases project speed, and makes project results more predictable.

"It keeps managers focusing on what they have to do, what the next steps are, how they go about initiating a project, and how they close a project," states Hougui. "It's hard to keep tabs on things if everybody has a different approach to it. You really don't know the

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