In Demand: Using Formalized Project Management to Manage Emerging Technology

Elizabeth German  Assistant Professor  |  Service Design Librarian  | PMP  | egerman@tamu.edu

Abstract
A good idea is always a good idea until it isn't. Significant resources can be expended when experimenting with new technologies. This poster depicts a formal project management workflow that creates room for innovation while providing paths forward for adoption or discontinuation.

The Project Management Team
The Project Management Team at Texas A&M University Libraries is charged with creating a sustainable project management program, maintaining documentation templates, providing training and support for individuals acting as project managers, and maintaining the Libraries' project portfolio.

Idea Document

Identify
Describe the general idea or rationale for the idea.

Define
Detail the scope of your project, what will include and not include.

Expand
Add details about what you know or assume about the project (budget, risks, constraints, timelines, importance, etc.).

Authorize and Stakeholders
List who needs to approve the project, who you expect to work on the project, and who might be impacted by the project.

Key Takeaways

1. Low Barriers
   Have a low barriers to entry into your workflow.

2. Right Size Your Project
   Add only value added processes to manage your project.

3. Plan for Uncertainty
   Know how you'll handle changes in scope, timelines, budgets, and resources.

4. Design Exit Points
   Make it easy to end projects when they no longer match strategic priorities.

The Workflow

The Project Journey

- Is this a project?
- Is it temporary?
- Is it unique?
- Can we find resources?
- Is it desirable?
- Is this useful?
- Is this desirable?
- Can we find resources?
- Is it desirable?
- Is this useful?

Reality Check: Should this idea move forward?

- No
- Yes

Demand Workflow

- Conduct pre-work: proof of concept, usability, meetings
- Reality Check: Should this idea move forward?

- Yes
- No

Add to project portfolio

- Stop work
- Add to backlog

Project Management Styles

- Informal PM
- Agile
- Predictive

Potential Outcomes

- Move to Operations
- Implementation Project
- Sunset Deliverable
- Stop all work

UX

Focus Groups  |  Personas  |  Log Analysis  |  User Stories  |  A/B Testing  |  Usability Testing  |  Heuristic Review  |  Unmoderated UX Studies

Low Fidelity Prototypes  |  Card Sorting  |  Customer Journey Map  |  High Fidelity Prototypes

Design Exit Points

Make it easy to end projects when they no longer match strategic priorities.

Mental Models

A. Design Thinking
   - Understand
     • Empathize
     • Define
   - Explore
     • Ideate
     • Prototype
   - Materialize
     • Test
     • Implement

B. Portfolio Management
   - Pipeline
   - Risk
   - Strategy
   - Resources

C. PMBOK
   - Chaos
   - Predictive
   - Simple
   - Agile
   - Low Inherent Risk
   - Low Uncertainty
   - High Project Flexibility