



Project Management Offices (PMOs) growing in Maturity and Influence.

After a decade of struggling for resources, authority and recognition, the project management office (PMO) appears to have finally earned the [respect](#) it deserves.

A benchmark study by PM Solutions, "State of the PMO 2010," indicates that PMOs have entered a remarkable breakout phase in terms of maturity and influence. More than half of these organizations now report to the highest levels of management; and, even more gratifying, their value to the organization is unquestioned.

Yet, if you are a PMO leader, now is not the time to rest on your laurels. Forrester Research suggests that it's time to move forward, stating, "The next-generation PMO must create a flexible framework that fosters the investment process, [must] manage multiple types of work, adopt lean techniques, and provide tools and support that adapt well to increasingly agile environments."

The mature, strategic project management offices in the PM Solutions study report identified their top three priorities:

1. Improve resource planning and forecasting processes

Having inadequate project management skills is the top resource management challenge cited in the study. Some PMOs report using contracted resources to help them handle this and other resource management issues.

2. Implement/enhance core project/program management processes

While the majority of PMOs work on high-value strategic tasks, the wise PMO leader never forgets that the PMO's value is rooted in an excellent project management practice as evidenced by the fact that companies with a project management methodology in place are far better at turning around failing projects.

3. Implement/enhance reporting, analytics, dashboard tools

Since information is the lifeblood of portfolio management, getting the right data, subjecting it to wise analysis, and presenting it to executives in a way that speaks to their concerns is paramount for PMOs who wish to cement their strategic role.

The Future

"We expect to see continued growth in the strategic value of the project management office, especially as portfolio management gains more traction in the enterprise. Of course, these objectives will not be achieved overnight. It will take consistent, targeted training; continual process improvement; and sustained, demonstrated success to establish a mature PMO that reliably affects a company's bottom line and other important measures of organizational health." J. Kent Crawford, PMP, CEO of PM Solutions"