

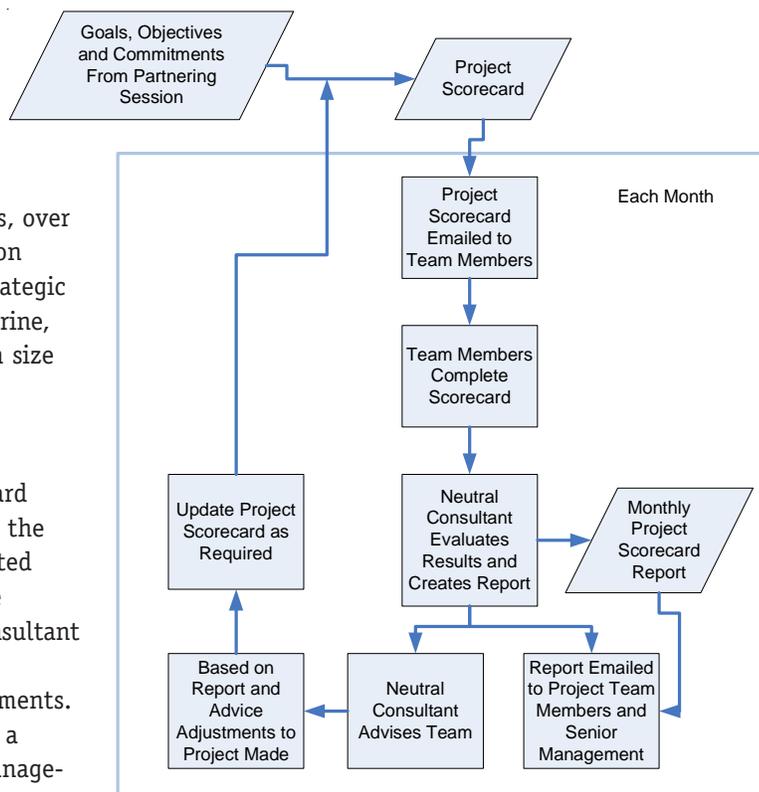
What Gets Measured Improves

Sue Dyer

A recent study done by the International Partnering Institute found that teams that measure their progress, make adjustments, and hold one another accountable to live up to their commitments *tend to improve over time.*

The study was based on the analysis of 13 different projects, over a two-year period, that implemented a monthly Construction Scorecard™. An array of projects was represented, from strategic planning/culture change, building, bridge/highway, to marine, rail, seismic and environmental projects. Projects ranged in size from \$100,000 to \$142 million. A total of 113 monthly scorecards were analyzed.

Each month project team members were emailed a Scorecard based on the goals, objectives and commitments made by the team at a kick-off project partnering session. The completed scorecards (scores and comments) were sent to an off-site neutral consultant who assured anonymity. The neutral consultant evaluated the results and advised and helped hold the team accountable for the achievement of their goals and commitments. The scores and comments for each item were compiled into a report that was emailed to all team members and senior management for their review.



THE FINDINGS

- Items in the scorecard are rated on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being excellent and 1 being poor. The study revealed the following findings:

- Scores improved for 12 of the 13 projects over the life of the project. Only one project, which is still underway, went down (from 3.99 to 3.80) after moving from a monthly to a quarterly scorecard.

- Overall project scores improved by as much as 1.13 points (28%) over the life of the project (3.04 to 4.17). The average improvement was approximately 1/2 a point (+0.54 = 14%).

- Five of the 13 projects were having significant problems when the Construction Scorecard™ was implemented. Four of these 5 projects improved so significantly that they received recognition or industry awards (improvements were +1.13, +1.08, +0.36, and +0.40 points).

- Individual items/issues measured increased as much as 1.7 points (from 2.7 to 4.3) over the life of the project.

- There was a “halo” effect from the partnering session (a facilitated team building and problem solving effort) resulting in scores consistently going up following the session. Some scores significantly improved, as the issues that were creating drag were resolved during the session.

- Projects tend to gain momentum and if that momentum is blocked the project’s results are diminished. Two of 13 projects could not significantly overcome their problems and improvements were not sustained. Even for these two projects, scores improved over the life of the project (+0.40, +0.26).

	Poor						Excellent
	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
A	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
B							
C	1	2	3	4	5		
D							

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PATTERNS EMERGE

Over time patterns between the scores given by the project team members and the project outcomes emerged; project results became fairly predictable based on the team's scores.

These patterns have been so consistent that they offer insight into the anticipated final outcome for a project team and its leaders and to the level of effort that will be needed to resolve underlying issues and to regain project momentum (if necessary) so that the project comes in on-time and on-budget.

Project Scores	Project Results
4.5 and above	Came in ahead of schedule and under budget
4.0 to 4.5	Came in ahead of schedule or ahead of budget
3.5 to 4.0	Came in on-time and on-budget
3.0 to 3.5	Came in behind schedule or over budget There is something causing drag on the project that is not getting resolved
2.0 to 2.9	Came in behind schedule and over budget They have fundamental problems that need immediate action
1.0 to 1.9	Came in significantly late and over budget These projects crashed and burned and you could see it along the way They needed remedial action to turn them around

LESSONS LEARNED

Some teams were more adept than others at using the Construction Scorecard™ to manage their project's results. Here are some lessons learned that helped projects improve their results.

Teams that met to review the Scorecard Report monthly made more significant improvement.

Adjusting the Scorecard as project issues change assures that you are measuring those things most important for the project's success.

Executive leaders who meet together on a regular basis to discuss the Scorecard results helped to assure that the team had the resources needed to succeed and helped overcome barriers that were outside the control of the team leaders.

Project owners saw patterns by watching Scorecards on several projects, thus identifying internal issues that were preventing project success.

Projects that score 4.5 and above can reduce the frequency of their Scorecard to bi-monthly without damaging their results. Projects that reduced frequency from monthly to quarterly without having 4.5 or higher scores went down in points or never made much improvement over the life of the project.

Having a neutral outside consultant collect the data and distribute the results creates a "safe" environment for project members to tell the truth and allows teams to deal with core issues.

The best results were seen when project and senior management required team members to participate in the Scorecard Program.

CONCLUSION

It appears that by using a monthly Construction Scorecard™ for your projects you significantly improve your chances for a successful project. This includes:

1. Developing commitments and holding the team accountable for their commitments.
2. Administering a monthly Scorecard by a neutral consultant over the life of the project.
3. Having the neutral consultant hold the team accountable and offer advice as needed.
4. Making course corrections and resolving issues that cause drag.

Sue Dyer is the founder and president of the International Partnering Institute, a non-profit educational organization that offers certifications in professional partnering facilitation and partnering competencies. Sue is also president of OrgMetrics, a consulting firm specializing in partnering facilitation and non-adversarial approaches to resolving disputes. To find out more, please contact Sue at suedyer@orgmet.com or 925 449-8300. You can visit us on the web at www.partneringinstitute.com and www.orgmet.com



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