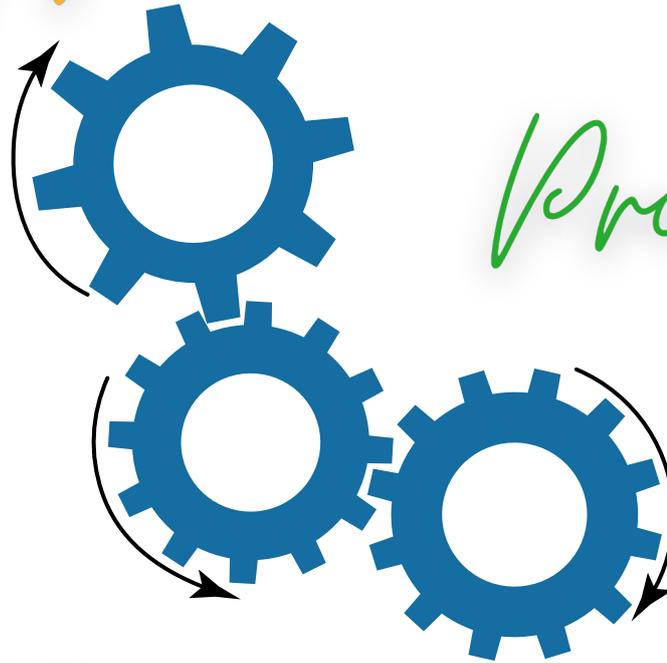


# TOO MANY PROJECTS HEALTHCHECK

*Strategy*



*Process*

*Culture*

**take our 5 minute self-assessment  
check to see how to get the right  
number of projects**

Are you doing the right projects?



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choice

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# Strategy



## A

## B

## C

**How many projects are currently in-flight?**

We have a report for that

Give me a couple of hours and I'll let you know

No clue – probably a lot

**What proportion of your current backlog is ad-hoc?**

Very little – only emergency projects

Enough to have disrupted our plans significantly

Projects just come in from everywhere... so all of them!

**Do you have a clear, stable strategy with which to define your project goals?**

Yes, it's core to what we do / do not do & clearly cascaded to everyone

Yes, but it's not that clear how it relates to projects, and changes quite often

Does a PowerPoint deck count? I think I have an email somewhere...

**Are strategic goals clearly measurable when assessing project value?**

Yes, they give a clear framework for assessing project value

We have KPIs but I'm not clear about how they link back to project selection

We rely on ad-hoc business cases, and tend to use ROI as the main metric

**Does your C-Suite get involved in the detail of project selection?**

They sponsor the process, & review the outcome but don't get into the detail

Generally not, but when the pressure is on they get involved more

Yes – they're very hands on when it comes to projects in their areas of interest

**What proportion of projects are fully resourced?**

All - due to a robust approval process. No funding no work

Most, except the last-minute ones, and the odd legacy commitment

We just do our best & hope we can get more funding at budget re-forecast time

**How flexible is project funding?**

Funding is moved quickly to support priorities

Budgeting is a bit painful but always happens

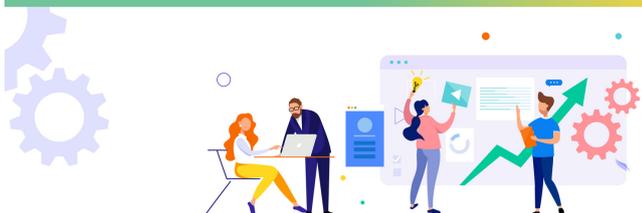
Not very, unless you find a director with spare budget and get him on-side

**MOSTLY A? - YOU'RE DOING WELL- KEEP GOING**

**MOSTLY B? - THIS IS NORMAL - REQUIRES SOME WORK**

**MOSTLY C? - MUST FIX URGENTLY - CHANGE STARTS HERE**

Are you doing the right projects?



Project  
Prioritization  
Software

AHP  
Software

Portfolio  
Optimization  
Software



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# Culture



## A

## B

## C

**What is the level of staff turnover in the team?**

We benchmark attrition & are confident we out-perform our peer group

About average – some can't cope and move on, while others do well

Retention is a problem – we end up relying on contractors to plug holes

**Are published deadlines consistently met?**

Yes, with the odd unexpected blocker

Where it really matters if we put the hours in, but often we push back

We've given up on deadlines as we never hit them

**What do stakeholders think of the IT team?**

Great colleagues doing a great job for us

Can be frustrating but we know we're lucky to have them in the business

What do they all actually do all day?

**What does the IT team think of its stakeholders?**

Great colleagues doing a great job for us

A bit more organisation would be good – poor briefs often waste time

Do these guys have any clue what they actually want?

**Do you have robust data forecasting benefits & resources for projects?**

Yes, it's key for our planning, with analytical support making our models work

Data yes, robust not always. Sometimes we have to make a guess

We have a Spreadsheet, but nobody really believes it

**Does the IT team spend too much time in meetings / writing progress updates?**

No, time spent collaborating with colleagues is key

Yes - especially the mid-level managers who must deliver updates

Yes - even junior engineers seem to spend all day in meetings

**Are front line staff able to implement all the new initiatives they are given?**

Yes, we are careful not to overload them, so they focus on our customers

They always find a way to get the job done, although sometimes it's a stretch

Compliance is always a challenge - it's frustrating as a lot of value is lost

**MOSTLY A? - YOU'RE DOING WELL- KEEP GOING**

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# Process



## A

## B

## C

**How well organized is your project portfolio?**

Clear sub-portfolios & documentation for all projects

We have all our projects in one system, but data is patchy for some

Every manager has their own backlog – it's a bit of a mess

**What does Prioritization look like in your organization?**

Exactly like the process plan documentation

Lots of meetings – a bit slow but valuable

The invisible man?

**Is there transparency to show what each team is working on?**

Every team publishes its backlog & regularly updates stakeholders

It's up to team managers to communicate to stakeholders & build trust

No – stakeholders have to chase people & often end up escalating

**What is the process for kicking-off a new project?**

Once we have capacity we look at the most urgent / high value & then go

When new priorities are added to the list teams figure out how to fit it in

When a Director needs something they push the team to prioritize it

**Do you regularly review in-flight projects?**

Yes – if a project is off course we need to either intervene or stop it

Every project has regular catch ups, but there's not always much structure

It's down to the teams to flag if there's an issue on an exception basis

**Do you complete Benefits Realization reviews?**

Yes – feedback is key for continuous improvement so is always worthwhile

We should, but often it's what gets bumped when we're under pressure

No, we're too busy to spend time looking in the rear-view mirror!

**Do you have fit-for-purpose planning software?**

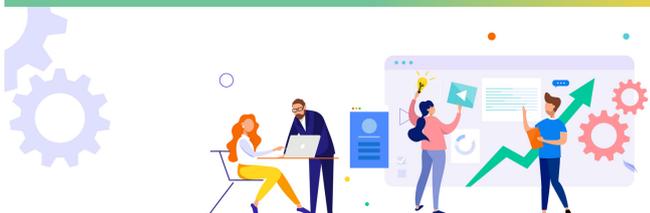
Specialist software for Prioritization, PPM & Governance. So yes

We have a PPM solution, but not sure it's used all that well

Does Excel count?

**MOSTLY A? - YOU'RE DOING WELL- KEEP GOING**  
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# TOO MANY PROJECTS HEALTHCHECK

visit our website to learn more about our software or schedule a free consultation

## No visibility

Many PMO leaders struggle with tracking how many projects they have and what resources they are likely to need. This makes it impossible to balance demand and capacity.

TransparentChoice lets you move the whole project intake and portfolio management process online. It lets you see the status of projects as they progress through the pipeline.

You can track how much resource would be used for different portfolio scenarios and, where you have too many projects, clear prioritization lets you be transparent about which projects should be dropped.



## Poor strategic alignment

If you can't clearly identify which projects add the most value, you don't know which ones you should NOT do.

Online collaboration tools help business leaders define "strategic value" or "business impact". Our decision-science-based approach helps build alignment between stakeholders.

The output is a set of weighted criteria that represent strategic direction and that can be used to score projects making it easy to identify those projects that add value and those that don't.

Learn more: [How to measure strategic alignment](#)

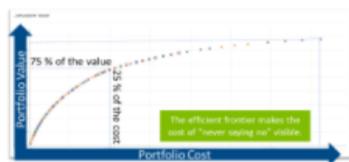


## Not saying "no"

A culture of never saying "no" sounds like a nice, "can do" kind of thing, but actually it's toxic. This culture leads to an overstretched delivery team.

TransparentChoice helps you clearly rank projects based on value-for-money and create an "Efficient Frontier" chart. This chart helps the leadership team determine where the cut-off should be.

Saying "no" to projects is no longer a political or counter-cultural act. Rather, it's a conscious decision by the leadership team to deliver great value-for-money and eliminate waste.



## Pet projects

Pet projects that enjoy strong support from a powerful sponsor don't add much value. Pet projects can even destroy value by sucking resources from more important projects.

With TransparentChoice, project sponsors build the scoring model using decision-science-based methods that encourage buy-in and commitment. This helps remove the emotional aspect of decision-making and allows project sponsors to both identify and kill pet projects.



## Weak estimates

People tend to be overoptimistic when estimating the level of effort required to deliver a projects. Hey, we're only human! Unfortunately, this leads us to believe we can do more projects than we actually can.

TransparentChoice helps structure your project scoring and estimation process to make it collaborative. Its process of "checks and balances" helps improve the quality and consistency of your data letting you manage your project pipeline more accurately.



## Zombie projects

Your environment is dynamic. A project that was important 6 months ago may no longer be top priority, yet in most organizations, these projects stagger on as zombies.

TransparentChoice lets you identify zombies as part of your regular project governance meetings. Regularly updating project status and business priorities ensures that your portfolio is dynamic, changing as the needs of the business change.

Online data-collection surveys allow rapid updates to projects and clear reporting shows how projects' priority levels change when the business needs change.



Are you doing the right projects?



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