A How-To Guide on Transitioning IT Projects to Support

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Conflict of Interest

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Have no real or apparent conflicts of interest to report.
Agenda

• Learning Objectives
• Overview of Problem & Challenges
• How-To Guide for Creating a Transition Plan
• Risks & Challenges for Transitioning a Project
• Research on Transition Planning
• Recommendations and Lesson Learned
Learning Objectives

• Identify potential support-related issues in one’s own organization

• Describe effective methods for planning the transition of a project to support at every stage of its lifecycle

• Create a transition plan in one’s own project management office

• Describe to stakeholders the appropriate resources to contact when support is necessary

• Explain the advantages of having a clearly-defined transition plan for an organization
An Introduction of How Benefits Were Realized for the Value of Health IT

- Satisfaction
- Electronic Information/Data
- Savings

http://www.himss.org/ValueSuite
Audience Poll

What is your current project-to-support transition process?

a) No plans; it’s a mess
b) Basic plans; poor adoption
c) Good plans; fair adoption
d) Great plans; used all the time
Here’s the Problem
An overview of potential failure points
Overview of Problem

Steps to a Disastrous Support Model
1. Decide to implement a complex and lengthy healthcare IT project
2. Assign the Project Manager as the primary point of contact
3. Allow the vendor to do most of the work to alleviate hospital IT staff
4. Assign other tasks to the best individuals in the department
5. Implement the project and celebrate
6. Close the project and assign the project manager to other work
7. Oh, yeah – tell customers to call the support desk for help

Is there anything inherently wrong with this process?
Let’s Break it Down – Challenges

Decide to implement a complex and lengthy healthcare IT project

Potential Post-Live Issues

• The new product adds complexity instead of consolidating systems
• Support staff do not increase with the number of systems to support
• Lengthy or phased implementations can wear out team members
Let’s Break it Down – Challenges

Assign the Project Manager as the primary point of contact

Potential Post-Live Issues

• PM cannot continue to be the POC after the system is live
• PM has built up a level of trust and responsiveness that may be lost
• Individual attention may be replaced with generic help desk support
Let’s Break it Down – Challenges

Allow the vendor to do most work to alleviate hospital IT staff

Potential Post-Live Issues
• On-site support staff may not be familiar enough with system
• Relying on the vendor could involve delays (off-hours, off-site, etc.)
• Future customizations could require additional funding
Let’s Break it Down – Challenges

Assign other tasks to the best individuals in the department

Potential Post-Live Issues

• The A-team will be assigned to other work after the project is done
• The best individuals may possess information in a silo
• Information may be lost/unavailable when staff is on PTO or leaves
Let’s Break it Down – Challenges

Implement the project and assign the project manager to other work

Potential Post-Live Issues

- Adequate handoff to support staff may not have occurred
- Unresolved issues and risks may not be assigned properly
- PM may get tied up with old projects and outstanding issues
Let’s Break it Down – Challenges

Tell customers to call the support desk for help

Potential Post-Live Issues

• Skills and training for the support desk may not be adequate
• Knowledge bases and reference sites may not be available/updated
• A workflow of responsible parties may not be clear or defined
Audience Poll

What is your setup with a support center?

a) No formal center
b) Informal support
c) Ad-hoc support by IT
d) Formal w/ knowledge base
Here’s the Solution
An guide to transition projects to support
Create a Transition Plan!

Advantages of a Transition Plan

• Points of contact and roles/Responsibilities are defined early
• Training needs for support staff are planned, funded, and available
• Communications and expectations are clear
• Silos of information are decreased
• Response times for troubleshooting and resolution are decreased
• Less time supporting means more time to improve IT infrastructure

Ultimately: Increased IT staff and customer satisfaction!
How to Create a Transition Plan

STEP 1 – Ensure Support Infrastructure is In-Place

• Develop a single point of contact (Support Center)
  – Phone support
  – Email support
  – Web support, e.g. chat, instant message

• Develop a knowledge center
  – Electronic knowledge base
  – Operations/maintenance documentation, e.g. file share
  – Consistent and documented troubleshooting workflow
How to Create a Transition Plan

STEP 2 – Ensure Staffing is Adequate and Structured

• Review staffing is in alignment with number of systems and users
  – Training for staff as systems come and go
  – Metrics for calls answered, missed, disconnected

• Develop handoff processes between tiers (Tier I, Tier II, etc.)
  – Workflow by system
  – Who’s who list for roles and responsibilities (Hint: not the PM)
How to Create a Transition Plan

STEP 3 – Develop a Standard for Project Transition Activities

• Identify transition steps in every phase of a project
• Determine who is responsible for approving the plan
• Select required documents to be created during the project
• Develop a checklist of activities for the Project Manager
• Implement the plan across all projects
Transition Planning at Every Project Phase

Project Initiating

• Distribute Project Charter
• Coordinate Meetings with Customer & Set Expectations
• Identify Product Owner
Transition Planning at Every Project Phase

Project Planning
- Add transition activities and deliverables to project plan
- Review deliverables list and determine requirements
- Conduct skill gap analysis to determine training needs
- Create a matrix of required roles, resources and skills

- System Lead (Owner)
- Process Owner
- Super User(s)
- Application Admin
- Database Admin
- Server/System Admin
- Web Admin
- Network Admin
- Product Development
- Clinical Analyst
- User Support
- Testing Lead
- Training Lead
- Help Desk Lead
Transition Planning at Every Project Phase

Project Executing

• Assign staff to roles and responsibilities matrix
• Schedule training classes or other knowledge transfer needs
• Obtain appropriate security and access for each role
• Establish support expectations (SLAs, MOUs, SOPs, etc.)
• Create necessary support documentation
Transition Planning at Every Project Phase

Project Closing

• Identify change management requirements
• Notify business owner of production support procedures
• Close project and transfer ownership from the project manager
# Document, Document, Document!

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Type</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>User Guides</td>
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<tr>
<td>“How to Handle Trouble Calls” Document</td>
<td>Tier I Support</td>
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<td>Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)</td>
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<td>Service Level Agreement (SLA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)</td>
<td>Everyone</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Summary / Reference Document</td>
<td>Everyone</td>
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Example: Project Summary Page

**Project Notes for IT Support**

On Thursday, March 3, 2016, the “Very Important IT Initiative” project went live. The primary goal of the project was to (1) Develop flowsheet modifications, (2) Create medical device interfaces, and (3) Create a clinical summary tab (CST). This document provides a summary of the changes that were completed.

**Part 1: Flowsheet Modifications – Overview**
The following flowsheets are (or will be) used by staff in the GHH unit after 3/3. The functionality of these flowsheets is identical to that of any other flowsheet in the EHR.

- **Existing Flowsheets**
  - Chemo/Biotherapy Administration
  - Restraints: Med-Surg & ICU
  - Critical Care Nursing Assessment
- **New Flowsheets**
  - CC Assessment
  - CC Invasive Ventilation
- **Modified Flowsheets**
  - Intake & Output Flowsheet

**Part 2: Device Interface – Overview**
The project includes an interface from various clinical devices, which sends information to the flowsheet at the Nurse’s request. The workflow is as follows:

- Data Captured 1x per minute
- DataCaptor Holding Space
- Nurse Double-clicks time column
- Data added to Electronic Flowsheet
- Nurse Validates/Saves Patient Data
- Data added to CRIS medical record
- CDV

*NOTE: Interfaced data does NOT auto-populate the patient record.*

The following devices are included in the interface:

- **18 Vital Sign Monitors** (located in the ICU/IMC area)
- **6 Ventilators** (roaming; can only be interfaced from ICU/IMC area)
- **6 Cardiac Output Devices** (roaming; can only be interfaced from ICU/IMC area)
Example: How to Handle Trouble Calls

1. Call from GHH Unit
   - Support Center: Inquire if Troubleshooting Guide was reviewed
     - Interface issue?*
       - Yes: Support Center: Contact On-Call DBA
         - Device 1
         - What is the impacted device?*
           - Yes: Database Admin: Troubleshooting
             - Issue Resolved
           - No: Data Center Staff: Software Reboot
             - Issue Resolved?
               - Yes: Issue Resolved
               - No: Database Admin: Troubleshooting
                 - Issue Resolved
               - Data Center Staff: Contact On-Call DBA
                 - Issue Resolved
     - No: Support Center: Contact Analyst, or other appropriate team
       - Issue Resolved

* If issue is interface-related, please document:
  1. Impacted Bed(s)
  2. Impacted Device(s)
  3. Steps taken so far
Project Manager Checklist (Part 1/2)

- All issues have been closed or assigned
- All risks have been mitigated or closed
- All central knowledge repositories have been updated
- All roles have been assigned to individuals
- All staff have adequate training to complete their roles
- Support structure has buy-in from customer and IT leads
Project Manager Checklist (Part 2/2)

- Support teams are informed of project completion
- Security documentation is completed or planned
- Architecture documentation is completed or planned
- Configuration and change management processes are defined
- Change control boards are chartered, if needed
- Appropriate documentation has been created and archived
- Celebrate, because you are the best project manager!
Risks and Challenges

Examples of failure and issues
People

• Reluctant staff
• Lack of buy-in
• Available support staff
• Project manager provides support
Process

• Poor planning
• Communication
• Training
• Documentation
• Knowledge base
Research on Transition Planning
Software Transition

• A starting point for another version
• A defined issue management process
• A defined enhancement request process
• A defined configuration and release management plan
Documentation

• Administration plan
• User guides
  – Use system
  – Report issues
  – Access support
• Inventory of assets, systems
• Enterprise Architecture documentation
• Configuration Management plan
  – Configurable items
  – Release management
Audience Poll

What is your experience with Enterprise Architecture (EA)?

a) What are EA documents?
b) Limited EA documents
c) Some EA documents-main systems
d) Full EA documents-all systems
Articles

Inheriting a project? Five steps to a smooth transition
By Tatiana Drapkin on March 27, 2013
http://www.projecttimes.com/articles/inheriting-a-project-five-steps-to-a-smooth-transition.html

Project Transition to Operations
Andrew Makar on September 14, 2008 in Project Management Processes
http://www.tacticalprojectmanagement.com/project-transition-to-operations/

How to transition from a project to ongoing support
By Tom Mochal, February 13, 2002
http://www.techrepublic.com/article/how-to-transition-from-a-project-to-ongoing-support/
Recommendations
Lessons Learned
Access to Information

• List of all applications/systems w/POC
• Architecture diagrams
• Support guides
• User guides
• Admin guides
• Common issues with resolutions
• Tier 2 support staff
Ownership

• For issues
• For the application or module
• For support
  – Application
  – Technical
• For the escalation process
• For future project requests
Quality Control

• Continuous learning as systems change with updates
  – Users
  – Support staff
  – Knowledge base
• Customer experience
  – With application
  – With support
• Call center metrics
  – Calls answered
  – First call resolution
PMO Methodology

- Include transition planning early in process
- Include plan templates
- Have sponsor(s) sign off on plan
- Make a part of every project
- Execute transition plan during end of execution & complete during closure
Roles

- Have clearly defined roles for project
- Have clearly defined roles for post-project support
- Communicate, communicate, communicate
An Introduction of How Benefits Were Realized for the Value of Health IT

Satisfaction

Electronic Information/Data

Savings

http://www.himss.org/ValueSuite
Questions

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