# BLTC GROUP INC.

## Program Management And Governance
## Centre of Excellence (COE) Approach

BLTC Group INC. attributes its successful management of its numerous projects, including project recovery, to the utilization of a Centre of Excellence (COE) approach as a best practice to implement a Project Governance Structure.

A COE will have personnel, templates and best practices based on experiences that allows the client enterprise to extend and evolve key competencies. This incorporates the process by which individual business units take ownership regarding the execution of programs and individual projects.

In order to excel at program/project management, the client enterprise must develop and nurture governance competencies in business leadership, business analysis, strategic management, change and process management, systems analysis, transition management, risk management, communications, and training.

It is important to note, rather than place emphasize on the use of tools, to instead place a premium on program management leadership as the basis for the COE approach.

The purpose of the competencies within the COE is to provide experienced leadership within each business unit in order to effectively implement and transition from projects and/or programs to operations based on the collective learning of the organization.

The Governance Structure as implemented in a COE approach, is a place where project managers and the project staff are mentored, as to best practices. Team members are empowered to take ownership for the project and understand their responsibilities and accountabilities. It is about daily confirmation of how the project and its deliverables are aligned to the enterprise goals and objectives and ensure value add. Program and project managers are constantly mentored/schooled in the art of managing stakeholder expectations. The aim is to provide stakeholders with program activity transparency. It is designed to increase program operating dynamics and ensure active participation in program/ project decision-making processes.

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This is quite different and far more positive than the traditional control or policing mechanism (to ensure that all policies, procedures and methodologies are followed to the very letter of the program). It supersedes the tick box project or program management approach. It is more than building processes and templates that must be rigidly filled out to the point where thought is replaced by adherence to process.

The COE approach is built upon active communications to ensure that information is widely dispersed in timely and accurate fashion to key stakeholders including clients, vendors, business units, project team members and internal auditors.

To ensure that large multi disciplined, multi organizational projects and business programs are successful, it is important to work across traditional line management to achieve the corporate goals and objectives. In other words, all stakeholders regardless of organizational, business or product reporting lines have to align and agree to common end state outcomes/deliverables for the program.

Portfolio Management is necessary to clarify and articulate the value expectation of the business unit executives which includes achievement of key business drivers such as:

- Boost Business performance
- New market growth opportunities
- Stabilize operations
- Operational/product improvements and enhancements
- Redeploy scarce knowledgeable resources to high value strategic operations
- Business transformation

This businesses leadership and executive facilitation role within the COE is designed to help the business unit executives clearly articulate the business rational to put their project forward for funding. This is a critical first step to ensure that the right projects /programs are initiated that optimize costs and achieve business value with balanced risk.

The COE, through careful analysis facilitates the process to prioritize, assess resource and manage all projects and programs in a manner that aligns and

contributes to the achievement of the client enterprises strategies and objectives in an effective and efficient manner.

In support of portfolio management decision-making process, the role of the COE is to use their knowledge, skills, and experience to review potential projects along the following criteria:

- Nature of the project
- Scope of the project
- Strategic objectives
- Project dependencies and interdependencies
- Systems impacts
- Business impacts
- Operational impacts
- Resource requirements
- Budget requirements
- Timelines
- Benefits
- Identified Risks

The categorization of the criteria under these headings allows client executive management to balance the investment and risks associated with the program as they pertain to the key evaluative categories: 1) The ability to resources the initiative, and 2) The attainment of the strategic goals.

Once a project portfolio, program or individual project has received approval, it is imperative to implement a governance structure that is commensurate with the size and complexity of the program in order to achieve a desire outcome. In terms of all the project management tools and methodologies, it is not a case of one size fits all but rather the degree of methodology. Tools and techniques deployed against an individual project will depend upon the competencies, knowledge, tools, templates and best practices that reside within the COE.

While it is important to understand / apply the latest version of the PMI PMBOK Guide, it is even more important to institute effective and efficient governance at the overall program levels with linkages to the individual project level. The key is to establish clear and specific accountabilities across the program (traditional line management) and establish clear escalation, resolution accountabilities, as well as processes.

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The key to ensure that Governance works in a coordinated fashion is to establish common project management processes across the program and the projects. The key program management governance processes cover:

- Clearly articulated roles and accountabilities for individuals on the project from the Executive Steering Committee to the individual analyst or programmer.  Ensure that the roles and responsibilities include the business representatives.
- Project Control Cycle- Dates and time for key project team review meetings
- Status reporting –Define the template for common status reporting and the roll up to the program level with due dates.
- Issue management – Template for tracking and accountabilities for resolving issues
- Escalation process – defines the time frame and the process to report unresolved issues or problems i.e. 24 hours and all unresolved items escalated to program manager and then to Steering Committee
- Change Control- template escalation and approval of potential changes to scope, requirements, timelines and budgets
- Risk management- Template and review of project / program risks
- Resource Management- how recruitment and staffing will be managed
- Financial Management – how financial will be tracked and approved
- Project Plans – How the task and effort plans are developed tracked and reported
- Deliverables and Sign off Standards- Clear statement as to what constitutes acceptance of deliverables
- Communications Plan – The approach to how the program will communicate with external stakeholders, as well as member of the various projects
- Repository Management – Storing, filing and sharing of program and project documentation /artifacts

One of the key roles of the COE is to empower the project team to make fact based decisions, while at the same time hold team members accountable for their decisions and their respective consequences.  This is accomplished through clearly assigning accountability to resources to ensure ownership of decisions and minimize consensus management.  Empower managers and team leads with decision-making authority (rather than limiting them to preforming analysis) and effectively delegate decision making upwards.

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The focus of the COE is to create an environment that focuses on success as opposed to a fear of failure. The creation of high performance project teams is done project by project. It is a pivotal step is the establishment of project guiding principles and the diligent communications of these expectations to the team and understanding the team's expectations of their leaders.

The COE will over time, based on experience and the constant focus on accumulating best practices and lessons learned from across the client enterprise, develop an ever-evolving tool kit of governance tools such as:

- Definition of Success: What does **Success** look like
- Program Organization Structures
- Roles and Responsibilities Documentation
- Team Lead RACI (s)
- Weekly Steering Committee and Project Status Reports
- Project Guiding Principles
- Issue and Risk Management
- Release Planning and Management
- High Level-Deliverables Timelines
- Project Financial Management ad Tracking
- Project and Deployment Planning
- Change Request Management
- Test Planning
- Expectations Management
- Lessons Learned

The bottom line difference between the COE Governance Model and traditional PMO Governance Model is that the COE Governance Model approach manages by expectations and results instead of solely by process and effort expended.