BEST PRACTICES

A Collection of Best Practices for:

Information Technology

Includes Detailed Best Practices for:

- Application Development
- Application Management
- Business Intelligence (BI)
- IT Management and Administration
- IT Procurement
- IT Security
- Network Administration
- Systems Analysis & Architecture
- User Support & Services

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Information Technology Best Practices

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Application Development

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The Application Development Group defines application architecture and develops programs and systems to meet business needs/requirements that are defined by the systems analysis team (through interviews with end users and stakeholders). They use research and user testing to fine tune applications to meet specific, detailed use cases. This function is also responsible for the ongoing support (for both end users and application infrastructure) of company systems. Support tasks include bug fixes, patches, minimal enhancements (typically 2 weeks or less) and code refactoring.

Application Development

Information Technology Best Practices

Best Practice 1-A

Document Project Requirements Before Developing Applications to Improve Alignment and Reduce Cycle Times

Gather, document and agree upon project requirements before application development begins. While some requirements may change throughout the life cycle of the project, it is important for the Application Development team and other stakeholders to prepare detailed project documentation regarding what needs to be built before any significant design or development time is devoted to the project.

Typical Practice (the Status Quo): Begin development on new applications as soon as management gives the green light. Modify the application when necessary to reduce project time requirements as much as possible.

Benefits of this Best Practice: It is important to gather quality, detailed requirements (both functional and non-functional) before application development begins because they have a major impact on the application architecture, design, functionality and performance standards. Decreasing the number of possible unforeseen requirement changes reduces the amount of time and work spent on the project and prevents scope creep and potential lost time due to misaligned priorities, etc.

Related KPIs: Cycle Time: Application Development, Percentage of Application Development Time Devoted to Testing, Unit Cost: Application Project

Best Practice 1-B

Use an SCM System to Track Project-Related Documents and Provide Version Controls

Use a source-control management (SCM) system to document and manage all versions of the system or application being built. Ensure that all project-related documents, not just the source code, are being managed by the SCM system.

Typical Practice (the Status Quo): Maintain a local file of all project documentation and any related assets. Ensure that only the current version of all project-related documents are managed.

Benefits of this Best Practice: Using a source-control management system to keep track of project-related documents (use cases, architecture and design documents, test scripts and plans, etc.) allows the team to view past versions should it be needed. Accurate documentation may be used as a way to fix major errors found in the current version or even as a way to document the changes each version has gone through.

Related KPIs: Total Volume: Application Projects, Cycle Time: Application Development, Unit Cost: Application Project

Application Management

Information Technology

Application Development

Application Management

Application Management refers to the ongoing support (for users and

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