

CASE STUDY: IMPROVING PROJECT MANAGEMENT, COMMUNICATION, AND COLLABORATION THROUGH CONSULTING AND TRAINING



SITUATION

The Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA) is an independent federal agency supporting the District of Columbia's offender management, known by some communities as the probation and parole system. The agency's goal is to be recognized for positively impacting public safety. To do so, it needed to ensure the effective use of its resources. However, there was no single way for the agency director to determine how the projects were performing, how they were being managed, or the cost associated with them.

"Each department managed reporting differently," said Fletcher Hearn, Director of Technology Solutions of Edwards Performance Solutions (Edwards). "There was no standardized way to approach projects."

The lack of transparency meant many projects never came to fruition, and the lack of completion was not readily understood. Furthermore, the unfinished projects continued to demand more time and money.

"There was no place where the director could see or understand what was happening with these high-priority projects, where the money was going, and why time kept expanding," said Fletcher. "This was especially frustrating because the director was trying to manage the budgets, which kept seeing cuts."

CSOSA reached out to Edwards, needing a standardized, organized, highly visible project management approach that would allow the agency to easily track progress and resources, evaluate performance, and make adjustments accordingly.

SOLUTION

After partnering with CSOSA, Edwards first assessed the agency's needs. "We charted a road map for the agency to build a project management infrastructure, getting them to the point where they could share comparable information," said Fletcher.

Edwards developed a solution that included providing project management training to more than 100 individuals. The training highlighted actionable, repeatable processes associated with a timeline of organizational objectives tailored specifically for CSOSA by incorporating the agency's technology, programs, and processes.



Edwards Performance Solutions is a premier consulting firm in a niche market where enterprise project management, technology, and training come together. The level of refinement in Edwards' capabilities is not just limited to the tasks listed in the contract—it manifests itself in the manner in which they conduct the weekly status meetings and the summary action items they capture, which leaves nothing to chance. I would hire Edwards in the future without hesitation.

Director of Quality Improvement,
Court Services and Offender
Supervision Agency (CSOSA)

SOLUTION | CONTINUED

“Edwards showed incredible flexibility while incorporating the agency’s suggestions in the development of the various artifacts and project management office wireframes,” said CSOSA’s Director of Quality Improvement. “Training courses were tailored to various audiences and conducted by exceptional instructors, who were able to deliver the materials in captivating ways. It was striking how the firm was able to assign a highly qualified team of professionals to satisfy the terms of the contract.”

Edwards supplemented the training with a collection of templates for basic project management approaches. The project charter template provided an opportunity for stakeholders to agree on objectives, desired results, timeline, and resources, as well as garner support for a project. Using project charters was key to the agency’s standardization of the project management process.

CSOSA engaged Edwards to structure and facilitate senior level team meetings to accomplish a significant reorganization effort. Other CSOSA projects and individuals valued one-on-one coaching, training, and group workshops.

“We became respected as trusted advisors,” said Mary Holland, Edwards Program Manager.

CSOSA was impressed with the high-quality training, as well as the skill and expertise of Edwards’ subject matter experts.

“All work products and consultation services had consistently been at the highest quality level and delivered on time,” said CSOSA’s Director of Quality Improvement. “Edwards’ ability to engage various stakeholders in a respectful manner and convey information at the client’s level also engendered confidence and respect.”

The improvement in CSOSA’s project management process led to improvements in communication and collaboration within the agency.

RESULTS



IMPROVED PROJECT MANAGEMENT PROCESSES. Edwards demonstrated to CSOSA how to think systematically about project aspects as a whole, ensuring all elements, resources, and stakeholders are considered.



HEIGHTENED COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION. Each department noticed a more structured way of managing projects, enhanced the communication and collaboration between departments.



CUSTOMIZED TRAINING AND CONSULTING. Edwards developed tailored training to meet CSOSA’s needs, adding agency-specific processes using the required technology and programs.



EXPERIENCED SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS. “Each member is at the apex of his or her specialty,” said CSOSA’s Director of Quality Improvement. “The range and depth of Edwards’ expertise offer any organization the confidence that its needs will be met adequately.”