

Kapil Rajvanshi, 24/7 Customer, Guatemala City, Guatemala

Local Flavor

A lot of people talk big about globalization. Kapil Rajvanshi is living it. Since joining 24/7 Customer in 2004, he moved from the United States to India, where he helped expand the company's call centers. Then, last May, he headed to Guatemala to supervise the firm's Latin American project managers.

With all that border crossing, Mr. Rajvanshi relies on a flexible but uniform project management methodology.

"We have to keep our focus on consistency or problems will arise," says Mr. Rajvanshi, vice president of Latin America for 24/7 Customer, which has 8,000 employees across Asia and Latin America.

How would you describe 24/7 Customer's approach to project management?

We have a global project management office (PMO) as well as local PMO representatives in each geographic region. The global PMO defines the project management methodology used for every project across all regions, but it's up to the local PMOs to implement that methodology.

The challenges for implementation are very different for each geography. For example, if we're implementing a project in the Philippines, the big concerns will be about capacity. If the project is in Latin America, the challenges will be around the resource pool.

We need to have the flexibility to implement

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project management accordingly, but from our solution-delivery perspective, the project management process must be the same everywhere. We don't want clients experiencing one project management style in Guatemala and another in the Philippines.

How do you maintain consistency while also giving local PMOs flexibility?

We have templates for every aspect of the project delivery process, which we use in every region. And we have a standard method for delivery across the business units that includes a breakdown of who is responsible for all decision-making.

Any variations must be signed off on by the head of the PMO. Even if a change is small and not a critical path item, it must be authorized.

The local PMOs can adjust their methodology to meet unique challenges, but we don't lose control of the process or the consistency that the global PMO has established.

What are some of the ways you'd like to improve the company's project management?

At every project milestone we have a review session where we look at what we've accomplished and what could be improved, then feed that information back into our planning process.



For example, we recently needed to hire 100 people to launch a project in Guatemala. We established a lead time of four weeks based on hiring for previous projects. But we discovered that, based on the skill sets in the marketplace, four weeks wasn't enough time. We fed that information back into our planning process so that for future projects we can more accurately forecast those lead times.

What makes your PMO work around the world?

Project managers in every region across the company have to be aligned to create a consistent project management process. It's the global PMO's responsibility to create that alignment and to ensure the local PMOs are staying on track by giving them the guidance they need and holding them accountable. *PM*