

Assessing Your Organization's Project Management Balance With Respect to Staff, Process, and Technology

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Background

Researchers have observed that successful organizations exhibit a balance among staff, process, and technology. This observation included organizations that use project management to achieve their strategic goals and tactical objectives.

As a result of these findings, Dr. Wysocki decided to conduct his own research and development project. His objective was to develop an assessment instrument that would measure the project management balance in an organization, with respect to the priority (and attention) it gives to staff, process, and technology, and to conduct a study to validate its effectiveness. The end result of this project was the creation of the SPT Model, an assessment instrument that can be used to describe the current state and desired state of an organization, and suggest strategies for achieving the desired state. This SPT Model is graphically represented in Figure 1 below.

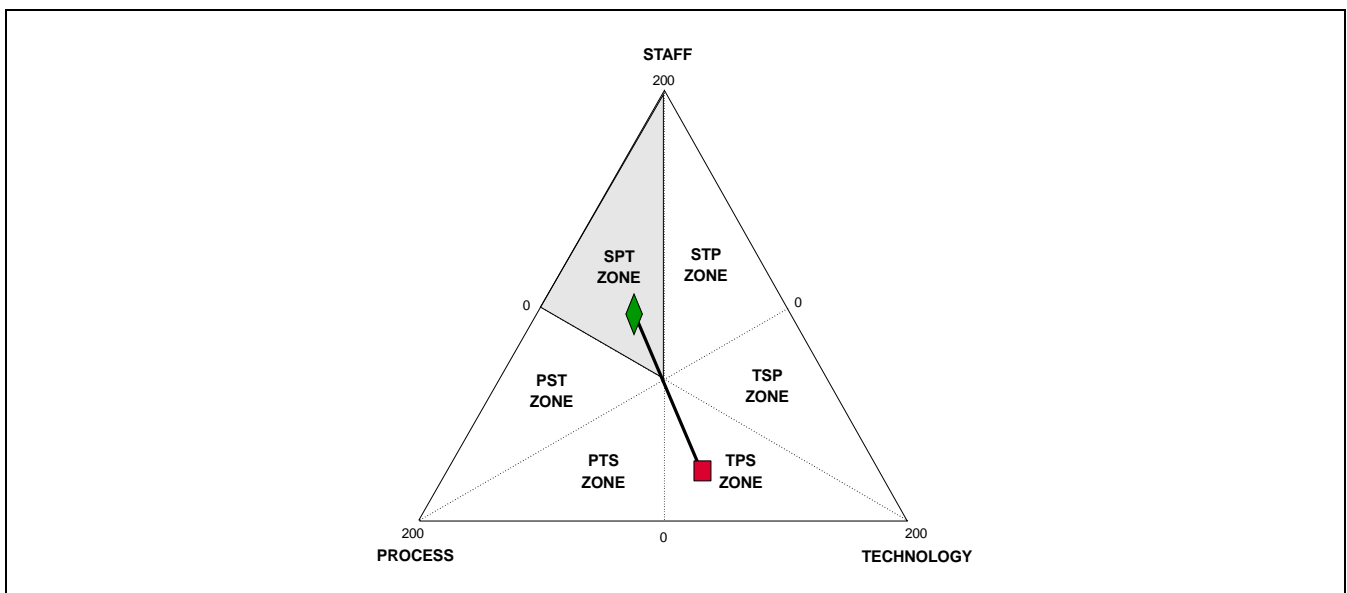


Figure 1: Organizational Balance as Measured by the SPT

Interpretation

The triangle in Figure 1 represents the three dimensions that determine project management balance, which are Staff, Process and Technology. For the purposes of this assessment tool, Staff (S) refers to the project team; Process (P) could refer to any business process but in this application it refers to the project management tools, templates and process that have been selected for the project; and Technology (T) refers to the hardware and software that support the chosen project management process.

The triangle is divided into six non-overlapping zones. Each zone is named with a combination of the letters S, P, and T. The ordering of the letters in the name is determined by the distance from each vertex (Staff, Process, Technology), with the closest vertex listed first.

The assessment data is summarized along these three dimensions and represented in the form of a straight line with a (red) square at one end representing the current state, and a (green) diamond at the other representing the desired state. The distance of the end points of the line to the vertices of the triangle give us a comparative measure of the priority of the given dimension to the organization. The closer the end point is to the vertex the higher the priority of the variable associated with that vertex.

In this example, the location of the square tells us that the organization currently places a high degree of importance on technology, less on process, and least on staff. In other words, the technology infrastructure has been dictated. That infrastructure determines the project management process to be used and the project team is chosen to be compatible with the established technology and process infrastructure.

The location of the diamond tells us that the desired project management culture is to have relatively equal importance placed on process and technology (process has a slightly higher priority than technology), and the highest priority given to staff. Therefore, the staff for the project team is chosen first and they will determine the best project management strategy to be used for the project to which they are assigned. The project team will also choose from among all available technologies, those that best support their choice of project management strategy.

The length of the line between the square and triangle is directly proportional to the degree of organizational change that will be needed for the organization to reach its desired project management culture. As part of our research, we expect to develop strategies that will help the organization move from its current state to its desired state.

Benefits of the Assessment

The primary benefits of a balanced project management culture to the organization are:

- Increase business value by improving project management practices
- Create an effective project management environment
- Empower staff to develop and align with project management processes
- Support project management with the appropriate technology

Use of the SPT Assessment Tool:

If you are interested in obtaining this robust assessment instrument in Excel format, under the following terms and conditions, you may contact the author as follows. By accepting the SPT Assessment Tool, you understand:

- a. Copyright ownership is retained by the author, Robert K. Wysocki. You will be granted permission to use the SPT tool for an unlimited number of uses, except as noted below.
- b. The SPT is a helpful assessment tool however it does not include a guarantee and does not offer implied support. The publisher and author do not assume responsibility for the consequences of its use.
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- d. **You do not have permission to sell the SPT to any individual or business enterprise.**
- a. The author welcomes the opportunity to provide consulting services or to partner with you for training engagements using the SPT Assessment Tool.

You may contact the author Robert Wysocki at rkw@eiicorp.com if you are interested in receiving the following. In your email, please include a statement that you understand and accept these terms and conditions:

- a. The current beta version of the SPT assessment tool in Excel format
- b. A copy of Figure 1 in TIFF format
- c. Assistance (for an agreed fee) in any presentations of the SPT

Robert Wysocki would also appreciate any feedback you can offer regarding your use of the SPT Tool.