International Beverage Company

From Project Overload to Project Control

SCORECARD

- A new process approach has been accepted in a "marketer's" environment.

- Integration of the product development process in systems software integrates the process into day-to-day operations.

- Resources are used realistically to avoid project overload.

- Top management has delegated decision making because decisions are guided by agreed-upon criteria.

- Unpromising and off-strategy projects have been terminated or postponed. Project teams understand why and are willing to move on.

When the leaders of an international beverage company wanted to improve product development, they turned to Kepner-Tregoe (KT). Chronic project overload and lacklustre project performance had hampered new product success. KT helped the organization compare best practices with the current product development process, identify gaps in performance, and collaborate on a multifaceted improvement plan for product management.

The new, systematic approach links strategy and product development and provides clear, prioritized criteria for selecting projects. High-level portfolio management and an agreed-upon process guide projects through the product development pipeline. Chronic project overload has been overcome by improving resource use and allocation and by integrating risk management, project management tools, and project monitoring into the process. The company is poised to build on success by capturing and sharing knowledge and evaluating the benefits gained.

The improvements reflect the marketing-oriented organization's people-focus. People working in projects receive project management training and have well-defined project roles and responsibilities. Software that integrates the product development changes into day-to-day operations supports both people and project performance. The initial reaction to the improvements has been enthusiastic and welcoming. There is new confidence that the right projects are in the pipeline and that more projects will succeed.

KT