"PLUGGED IN"

An Electrical Contracting Memo

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PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND PROCESSES

A process is defined as follows: a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end. For those who served in the military you are familiar with SOP's. A standard operating procedure (SOP) is a set of step-by-step instructions compiled by an organization to help workers carry out complex routine operations.

There is much talk about "Best Practices" in our industry today. Most companies have established many internal processes that are excellent. Employees typically are successful when they have good processes for their responsibilities. The focus of any "Best Practice" must be the desired metric. A metric is defined as follows: a standard for measuring or evaluating something.

Metrics must be quantifiable and measurable. The best processes should lead to the best metrics. If your best practices are not improving your quantifiable result, then you must review and revise your process. Remember, the process is the means to the end and the desired result is what you should be working to accomplish.

Things to remember when establishing processes in project management:

1. Processes are good, but they aren't the only thing you need.
2. Processes are built from what has happened, not necessarily from what is happening now.
3. Processes typically do not provide for the unexpected and unplanned.
4. Processes are the means to the desired result.
5. Continue to modify processes to improve results.
6. Processes should focus on efficiency, not one's preferences.

Remember, as a project manager, your success is determined by your results, not your processes.