



*PMSA Special Interest Group*

## **Brief for project managers creating a self reflective Success Story Shared (SSS)**

The idea for Success Stories Shared came out of workgroup discussions around how best to share the experiences we have all gained from running projects. It was clear in our discussions that while post implementation reviews have their place but we also wanted a process to be able to 'air and share' our personal learnings from projects - more of a blog approach than a formal report.

SSS is not a post implementation review – our aim is to prompt discussion, debate and learning between project managers and across the community.

Structured reflection is one of the ways we can learn from our own experiences and we very much hope you will enjoy and gain value from this process.

We suggest you approach this in three steps:

### **Step 1: Reflect**

Read the prompt questions but don't attempt to write down anything straight away. Think about project challenges you have been involved in – maybe take a couple of days to reflect on your different project experiences. Then pick one you think you would like to share. Get it clear in your mind – reflect what you took away and how this has reinforced or changed the approach you take in managing projects.

### **Step 2: Capture your reflections**

Use the prompt questions to help capture your thinking, but if you would prefer to just write it down as a story that's fine too. Remember to capture not only what you did but also those important why questions – why was it important, why did it work and of course what you took away from the experience. Don't worry too much about phrasing and language at this stage – just capture your thinking.

### **Step 3: Review and communicate**

Now review – sometimes it's good to leave it for a day or two before you review your text. Reread what you wrote. Try to put yourself into the shoes of another project manager reading this. Would they understand it? Is it clear why the actions were taken and what prompted them? Have you communicated the lesson learned? Is it interesting?

What we have in our heads is often far more exciting than what we manage to capture on the page. Don't worry – this is not about writing skills. Ask yourself – what is the one key message I want people to take away from this – does your story convey that?



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### **Prompts to help your thinking**

- Consider a project you were involved with that could be viewed as complex. Consider a project where a critical action or decision made the difference between success and failure on the project.
- What was the challenge faced? Or what made it complex?
- In what way would failure at this point have impacted negatively on the outcome of the project?
- What decisions were made? What actions were taken?
- How did these impact upon the project?
- Why did they work? (what worked well)
- What is the key learning point?
- How do you use the insights from this in the way you manage projects today?

### **Write up**

When writing this up, don't forget to give us some context – this should be kept short and focused:

- Start off by introducing yourself, your project and the industry (no company names need to be mentioned).

***As a guide – you should be aiming for 200-400 words (less than a page).***

***Enjoy your reflections! We look forward to reading them and sharing them with the community.***