



Case Stories: Scheduling Subject Matter Expertise

Standardization of CMS Program/Project Planning results in better planning and greater value. Our streamlined project management process has integrated and simplified processes, allowing for consistent reporting and collaboration – improving value.

Challenge – Re-engineering Current Practices

Edwards Performance Solutions (Edwards) provides expert project management consulting support to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) Federal Division of Innovation and Project Management (DIPM) team. As the Project Management Office (PMO) instituted additional projects and personnel, we recognized the need to improve planning – providing a stable and consistent management approach. Project teams operated under demanding deadlines and intense scrutiny from the highest levels of the Federal government; Edwards needed to develop a concise and organized management plan to provide immediate value and improvement.

Solution – Consistent and Streamlined Risk

Edwards leveraged lessons learned from prior experiences with CMS and other government agencies to execute an initial “soft-sell” approach; implementing project management best practices using our proven project management methodologies. We reviewed all available project documentation and attended all project meetings – aligning with the Federal team. By matching the DIPM Director’s approach and becoming fully embedded with the project teams, we provided a low-impact approach to gathering project information needed to apply best practices and leveraged an organized planning methodology to support the transformation.

Initially, we developed project schedules and timelines. Recognizing formal planning sessions would not provide the best result, we developed specific methods to employ more discrete approaches.



We collected project milestones, as well as activities, durations, dates, dependencies, constraints, and resource assignments. Using this data, we constructed Microsoft Project® schedules aligned with the Innovation Center Model Life Cycle Process Framework template. We used the schedules to guide meaningful discussion on the project status, evaluate next steps, and maintain a baseline for current project schedules and changes in scope.

Benefit – Unified Risk Approach

Edwards provided schedule development and Integrated Master Schedule (IMS) implementation support; augmented these schedules, and built timelines within Microsoft Excel, utilizing a new timeline feature (Timeline View). These timelines transmit key schedule information to project teams in a clear and concise format. This delivers ease in planning issues and a defined understanding of the relationship between important project milestones and the impact on projects to Senior Executives – allowing for better understanding and benefit.

Edwards continues to analyze and integrate all required project and program information necessary to produce weekly project dashboard reports. Initiatives are underway to define common metrics, which Edwards will implement through the DIPM. Edwards has incorporated the required changes to critical budget detail into the Project Dashboard reports. As the CMMI PMO matures and evolves, Edwards continues to integrate complex schedules – ensuring projects remain on time, on budget, and on target.

About Edwards

Edwards Performance Solutions provides tailored business services that result in greater operational performance. By delivering the highest quality services and support based on proven and comprehensive practices, we ensure our customers exceed their goals and drive overall mission success. Since 1997, we have provided innovative performance solutions to commercial businesses, Government agencies, and non-profit organizations through our four core disciplines.

Take Note

- Within our initial year, Edwards' teams integrated 59 individual schedules into four IMSs, including key milestone review reporting
- Edwards has implemented a Project Management Information System (PMIS) platform where project schedules and statuses are updated weekly – providing universal improvement in schedule planning and tracking
- The information integrated in project dashboard reports includes: general project information, project metrics, budgetary information, PMIS links, major accomplishments, critical milestone timelines, custom IMS views, legislative intent, critical issues/decisions, team priorities, and operational issues/risks
- Our technical consultants become fully embedded with the project teams