

This guide is one of a series of brief introductions to integration within the construction industry.

There are various practices that promote integrated working and encourage the industry to work collaboratively to the benefit of the project. Advice on these can be found in the following brief guides:

Early Contractor and Supplier Involvement	Guide One
Selecting Your Team By Value	Guide Two
Common Processes & Tools	Guide Three
Performance Measurement	Guide Four
Long Term Relationships	Guide Five
Modern Commercial Arrangements	Guide Six

*ALL guides are available
as a download from:
www.arethereyet.co.uk*

**No
Nonsense!**
guide to...

**COMMON Processes
& Tools**

*How to polish your procedures
for maximum project benefit*



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The 'Strategic Forum for Construction' is the pan industry umbrella body that represents all facets of this varied and diverse industry. Its objective is to unite the industry around important initiatives to improve its performance and conditions. This series of guides has been produced on behalf of the Integration Task Group by Stepnell Ltd. and Visionality Ltd.



WHAT BENEFIT ARE COMMON PROCESSES AND TOOLS?

Construction of any project is a complicated process that requires many different organisations to work together. These organisations may only come together for a single project and may not have worked together before. Add to this the risks that the client and many in the supply chain are asked to bear and it is possible to see why many projects flounder due to poor communication, a misunderstanding of goals or poorly selected controls. A client responsible for the whole or any part of a building project will have a greater chance of success if each member of their team is using the same language, processes and tools. This will aid communication, speed up the transfer of information and reduce the time spent interfacing between systems and protocols.

EXAMPLES OF COMMON TOOLS:

- Risk matrices
- Collaborative programming
- Extranets for unified document control and issue
- Integrated design platforms e.g. BIM (Building Information Modelling)

EXAMPLES OF COMMON PROCESSES:

- Waste elimination e.g. lean workshops
- Progressive project certainty through defined gateways
- Open book, target costing
- Communication, escalation and resolution mechanisms
- Common payment terms through the supply chain

WHAT LEVEL OF COMMON PROCESSES AND TOOLS IS RIGHT?

This depends on the nature of the activities and the extent of organisations involved. In general the better organised the project the quicker information flows between parties. Quick information flow enables everyone to be clear about the needs and their part in delivering them; it allows issues to be identified and resolved with minimal delay and ensures all stakeholders are sufficiently up to date with progress to know when to act and in what manner to the best effect for the project.

Having commonality is a way of simplifying and standardising interactions. Done well, this will eliminate wastes associated with duplication, repetition and confusion, but the client must determine whether the required investment of time and/or money will deliver superior value. All projects however will benefit from some degree of common tools and processes.

BE CAREFUL OF THE FOLLOWING TRAPS:

Gauging the value of common processes is difficult. Investment will always be easier to justify on repeat projects, but the savings in time and effort and the speeding up of communications will play an important part in any successful project.

Having collaboration tools such as an extranet will not on its own make a project collaborative, it is how the tool is used which will make the difference.

Many organisations have their own tools, sometimes it is better to investigate how to work with what is available rather than effect wholesale change, even if some compromises have to be made. Further information may be found in the SFC Integration Toolkit at www.strategicforum.org.uk/toolkit.shtml