

Intramezzo Interim leads group-wide transformation process for Marshall Aerospace

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Marshall Aerospace is one of Europe's leading privately-owned aerospace companies. When a key part of the business, Major Projects, experienced problems which led to substantial reductions in profit levels, seasoned transformation manager and Intramezzo interim Danny Burke quickly identified improvements in governance and processes which would save the company many millions of pounds. His far-reaching review led to his brief being broadened into an integrated Transformation Strategy for all parts of the business which Danny achieved by engaging all stakeholders from across the whole organisation.

Now celebrating 80 years in the aerospace industry, Marshall Aerospace (MA) operates in a technically demanding and competitive market place. From its base in Cambridge it provides bespoke innovative design and installation solutions to both military and civil customers. Maintenance services are also provided to National air forces across Western Europe and South Africa, as well as the RAF.

Major Projects is a significant part of the MA Business, with just three of the many projects undertaken in 2008 having a combined value of circa £60m.

The MA Board recognised that weaknesses existed in many aspects of process and governance around the delivery of these innovative, complex, design and install projects. These resulted in extended delivery times, overspend on resources, reduction in profit levels, unhappy customers and an increasing amount of senior management time to bring projects back on track.

Against this background, in January 2008 the MA Board tasked Intramezzo, a leading provider of executive talent, to deliver a senior interim who could conduct an in-depth review of how major projects were managed. Associated areas that the review was to address included the supporting governance structure, the project management organisation and other contributing factors from across the company. This complexity of remit required someone with broad ranging skills who could build a strategy to address both strategic business issues and operational problems.

Danny Burke was the Intramezzo candidate, selected for his proven track record in delivering solutions in complex technical environments within the nuclear, utilities and pharmaceutical industries and defence research. Initially, Danny worked closely with Engineering and Production Directors to scope the review and define deliverables and objectives. A governance structure was quickly established, consisting of a Steering Group (Board Directors) and Core Team (Departmental Senior Managers) in order to get input and buy-in to subsequent findings and recommendations.

Working with Directors and Senior Managers, Danny carried out an in-depth review of all aspects of major projects and within two weeks produced his first recommendations for implementation. This was followed shortly by the delivery of an in-depth report identifying four areas for Major Project improvements. The benefits of their implementation were clear to see, if major projects were collectively brought in one month early, the company would save £1.4m per annum. Danny's report went further than this, highlighting significant problems beyond the parameters of Major Projects. As a result, at an away day with the CEO and Board the initial remit was broadened into an integrated Transformation

Strategy covering:

- Performance, Culture and Behaviour
- Accountability – metrics and KPIs



- Project Management, Governance and Bids
- Skills and Training
- Resource Planning and Management
- Major Projects end to end process

As Keith Hussey, Head of HR and key member of the Steering Group says, "What started as a review of how we manage projects and get much better at large, complex projects evolved to touch all parts of the business and set us on the journey along the road of transformation that includes culture, behaviour, training, employee engagement, organisational design and many other subjects that are interdependent and all link back into project management."

Each of the six workstreams is championed by a Director, led by a Senior Manager and has a detailed plan which integrates into an overall MA Transformation Plan with progress against objectives and timescales reviewed at monthly MA Board meetings. Cross departmental working groups are involved and already many improvements across all workstreams have been introduced. Danny's engagement of the broader workforce was recognised as a critical ingredient in delivering successful outcomes. From the early days of the Transformation Strategy the MA Board, Management and staff have been enthusiastic and committed to the successful delivery of the strategy. This achievement was summed up by Martin Broadhurst, CEO of Marshall Aerospace "Danny very quickly established himself as a key member of the Management Team which was key to getting early buy-in to change".

Having driven the change agenda across the organisation and clearly established the transformation, Danny's brief was completed in April 2009. By this time there was a robust governance process which included an internal senior appointment of Head of Transformation.

The improvements already implemented and those planned going into 2010, will significantly improve the way in which Major Projects are being delivered. Some of the changes showed significant financial benefit from an early stage and customers are reacting positively to the changes.

Keith Hussey continues, "Danny's sage advice, vast amount of experience and 'can do' attitude have helped us to lay some very strong foundations on which we will continue to build our expertise right across all areas of our business. It has been a tough 12 months trying to change 80 years of doing it 'our way' but Danny's tenacity and determination to drive change through our business has set us up well for the future – it is now up to us! He will be missed – a true professional interim!"