What is a process owner?

A process owner is an individual recognised as being the prime source of knowledge or expertise in a process. The process owner is likely to have designated operational responsibility for the process, and may have managerial or supervisory responsibilities for some or all of those carrying out the process steps. The process owner is responsible for ensuring that the process is delivered both efficiently and effectively and in a way that meets the needs of all users.

The process owner will have authority to manage and effect changes, as agreed by the sponsor, ensuring that such changes are implemented in an agreed, timely manner and are sustained moving forward.

Capabilities of an effective process owner

- Has detailed knowledge and understanding of the process and its operations.
- Can identify those outside the team who have an interest or influence on the project.
- Can establish efficient and effective performance.
- Adopts controls and reporting systems to ensure that efficient and effective performance is achieved and maintained.
- Can identify trends in performance and plan a required response.

Hints and tips

- Invest time in building trust and confidence with the process sponsor, the facilitator and the process players.
- Ensure that your knowledge and experience is communicated and available to the wider team.
- Ensure that process players have the skills and resources required to support and deliver the process.
- Ensure that the process continues to operate to acceptable levels whilst change is planned and implemented.
- Ensure that process documentation and procedures are updated as changes are implemented.
- Send communications and/or updates in a meaningful, timely and sustained way.
- Manage the impact of conflicting demands of ‘business as usual’ and project milestones.
- Use your expert knowledge to challenge assumptions or recommendations of the project team.
- Provide expert advice when unexpected outcomes or development arising from project changes occur.
- Make sure that agreed changes become embedded and sustained.