

Portfolio Health Checks

Providing Evidence to Manage Portfolios

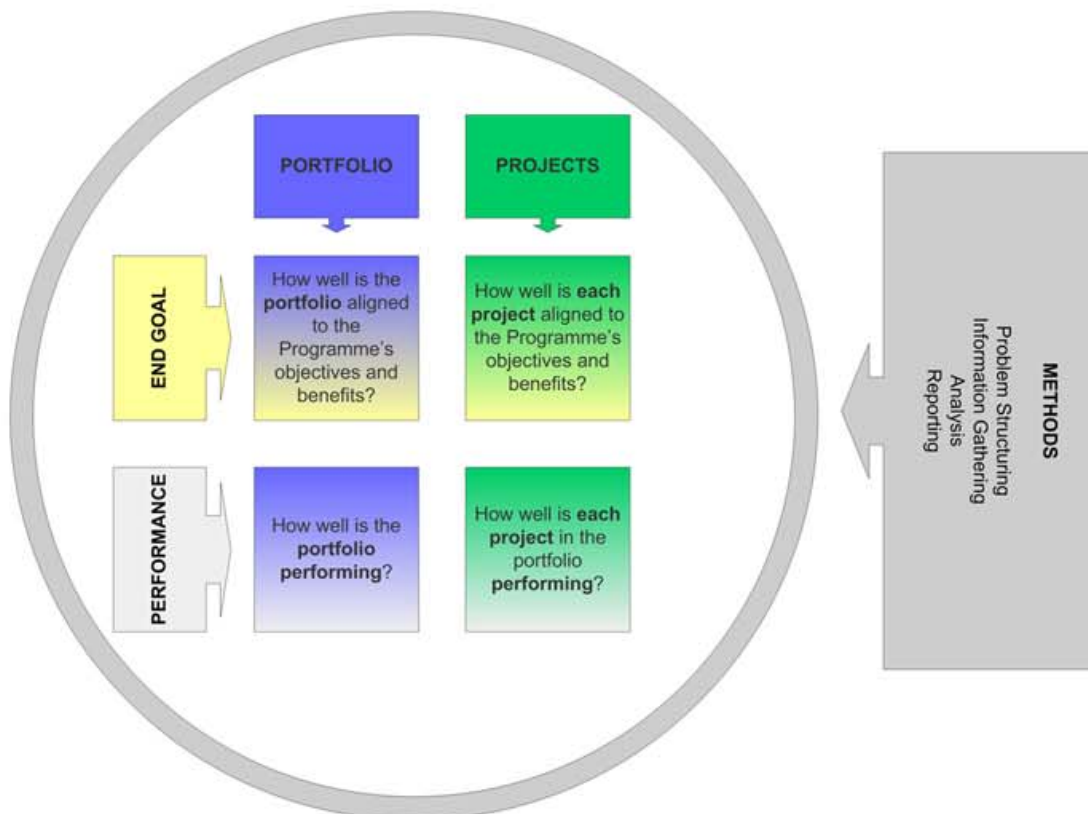
Managing a large programme portfolio inevitably involves balancing the demands of diverse programme objectives against constraints imposed by resources, time and risk. In the real world, this is often made more difficult because:

- * critical portfolio management decisions often have to be made with inadequate information
- * the relationships between outcomes and benefits are usually complex

Polaris has a proven methodology which allows decision makers to make the most of the information they can get hold of. It provides *evidence* to:

- * direct resources towards the highest priority needs
- * ensure that the portfolio remains cost-effective
- * support or review a programme's business case

The methodology has been used by the UK Ministry of Defence to conduct Value For Money assessments of programmes of up to £250M per annum. It has provided the evidence for individual projects to be halted and for portfolios to be re-directed to ensure that they remain aligned with a programme's objectives and business case.



How We Do It

Our methodology allows assessments to be conducted:

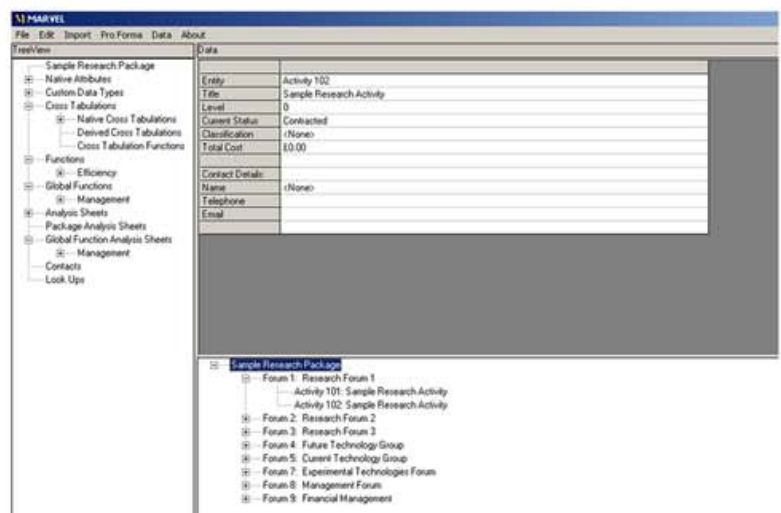
- * quickly
- * on the basis of available data
- * by providing *relevant* answers to *relevant* questions
- * by assessing the performance of the portfolio as a whole *and* of individual projects
- * by working with the people involved in the programme
- * with traceability from data to conclusions (i.e. no black boxes, no magic formulas)

It draws on Polaris' experience in facilitation, information gathering and problem structuring to deliver meaningful results quickly and effectively. If hard data isn't already available through a MIS, then it has to be captured from the people who know. Much of this is bound to be judgmental but we can apply a range of techniques to extract supportable evidence from opinions and subjective assessments.

Tools

Assessing the health of a portfolio relies on effective marshalling of information. Our in-house toolset includes MARVEL, a software application which does this job highly successfully by:

- * allowing rapid problem structuring through live facilitation
- * storing all the relevant data in one place
- * allowing users to conduct a wide range of analyses
- * providing a place to document all data, assumptions and analyses



Use of the MARVEL software allows us to complete assessments quickly and cost-effectively. It also ensures that you get a high quality report which presents the key findings in a form that is relevant and digestible, but also allows you to get at all the supporting evidence.

Contact Us

If you wish to know more, you can contact Steve Robinson, Business Manager, by email at steverobinson@polarisconsulting.co.uk, by telephone on 023 9225 9930, or you can visit us at www.polarisconsulting.co.uk.