

# Project Management Consultancy & Training Case Study



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## Overview

### Customer

McBride

### Products and Services

Project Management Training

Project Management  
Consultancy

### Organisation Size

Large 1,000 - 9,999 employees

### Country

United Kingdom

### Industry

FMCG

### Microsoft Partner

**Wellingtone**  
PPM Intelligence

### Specialist Competency

**Microsoft Partner**  
Gold Project and Portfolio Management

### Contact

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## Adding Value to McBride Through an Agile Partnership

Founded McBride, Europe's leading provider of private label household and personal care products, identified the need to introduce project management skills to enhance organisational performance. But the process wasn't all plain sailing. In the context of a complex restructure a flexible, responsive approach was needed. That's exactly what Wellingtone delivered according to Ian Jenner, McBride's Group Head of Learning and Development.

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**Ian Jenner - Group Head of Learning & Development, McBride**

## The Background: Recognising the Case for Project Management Maturity

When Ian Jenner was approached by an established member of McBride's UK team to explore the company's need for greater project management capacity he was keen to find a solution that would meet business needs. "I heard that loud and clear. I have a Group role and also deal with some of the issues that other teams were grappling with. We have numerous new projects starting every week, but a lack of embedded project management experience was generating the risk of conflicting demands, workflow bottlenecks and process creep. We felt we needed to address these issues to achieve our goal of being responsive to customers, quick in decision making and faultless in execution."

But the situation wasn't just UK based. "I recognised it as a business wide issue" says Ian. "At that time the company was organised into 4 geographical divisions – each of which contained a further 5 or 6 internal functions. Each division was very much independently led by its own leadership team. That made the issue of standardisation about much more than process. It was about achieving buy-in from every stakeholder across our divisions."

## The Selection Criteria: An Adaptable Partner with the Right No-Nonsense Approach

"We needed a partner who could assist us in defining a fit-for-purpose project management methodology, training Project Sponsors and Project Leaders, and leveraging a consistent approach to enable informed portfolio management decision making" Ian explains. "When we began looking at possible partners we formed a team of 10 volunteers to drive the selection process. We wrote a brief between ourselves and that team. It was important that they had ownership of the brief to ensure that it was genuinely relevant to our working practices and goals. We put the brief to 6 different providers. We had one strict criterion; we didn't want to see sales people, just the person we were actually going to work with. After meeting various representatives our team was unanimous in shortlisting Wellingtone. The Wellingtone consultant walked into the room with a real can-do attitude. We were impressed that they weren't looking to fob us off with pre-packaged materials. Instead they took a flexible and imaginative approach to exploring methodologies that would fit our people and our business."



## The Challenge: Adapting Project Management Capacity to a Changing Business Model

As Wellingtone began to work on developing the right methodologies and materials, things were changing at McBride. "The process with Wellingtone got caught up with a functional transformation structure" Ian recalls. "That meant that instead of working through individual management teams we were moving towards a group structure that would operate across our geographical locations. If we had kept our programme with Wellingtone at a UK level it would no longer have been relevant because the UK division no longer existed! So naturally the consultant found himself involved in our negotiations. All of a sudden he had to woo the all the Executives, the M.D.s, the C.O.O.s and the F.D.s to convince them of the value of the project and establish how their views, needs and goals would be incorporated. He didn't ever tire; he just steadfastly continued to address all of the various political minefields we had to walk through. Despite the process taking more than 15 months he exhibited the patience of a saint and acted as a genuine partner to our business and our strategic processes."

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**Ian Jenner - Group Head of Learning & Development, McBride**

## The Crucial Issue: Robust Methodology Able to Flex to Different Requirements

"Wellingtone proceeded to develop a tool kit for us" Ian explains. "We're not like other businesses. We're private label so we need to be flexible, value for money and robust. They remained totally professional and delivered what we were looking for even though the process was full of twists and turns. In the end we purchased two sponsorship programmes from Wellingtone in a preferred supplier agreement. We also retained their services to deliver project management training sessions. More recently they have been helping us to cascade those training models so that our in-house team can also train. The initial response was split into two camps. Our Project Managers saw the whole thing as manna from heaven. They were really struggling and reported that the training was everything they were looking for. Our Project Sponsors were slightly more reserved about the rigor of the methodology. Initially they saw it as unnecessary bureaucracy. Wellingtone handled their concerns expertly. They took the time to embrace their questions, listen carefully to any objections, and work with those people to hypothesise alternatives that would allay their concerns. In that way they didn't perceive that they were being dictated to, they felt they were being invited to explore the issues together."

## The Outcome: Positive Results in the Early Stages

"There has been a lot of upfront investment, but early feedback and results are starting to show the benefits of what has been a long and complex process" Ian says. "Currently our structure consists of Team Members, Project Managers, Project Sponsors and Executive Management. We have two types of projects; lite and standard. Our Group Information Systems have an established approach, so we're going through the process of finding ways to accommodate that within our project management framework. Throughout the process I have found Wellingtone to be imaginative and responsive in their approach to dealing with these specific challenges."

## The Feedback: What Participants Had to Say

"McBride is still very much in the rollout stages of the programme – however early qualitative feedback from participants has been encouraging. "We have been surveying the Project Managers and Project Sponsors involved in the process" says Ian. "It's important to us to understand how our strategy is impacting across our business."

So far feedback has been very encouraging. Overall, the training methodologies have been very well received, as has the quality and professionalism of Vince's training approach. Our people have commented on the impact of the training on standardised thinking across their groups and across the business as a whole. Crucially, Wellingtone have promised and delivered a collaborative, co-creating partnership that can scale and flex to our requirements during a significant period of continued strategic transformation.

Our Project Management framework is a key feature of our Strategy into Action process for 2013/14. I anticipate that we have co-created an approach that supports our Mission, Vision and Principles". Thank you Wellingtone.

To Learn more about McBride, visit <http://www.mcbride.co.uk/>