Process Definition

STANDARD TASK LIST

Last Date Revised: 1/1/98   *Version 1.1*

Process Description:

A *Standard Task List (STL)* is a list of consistent work components that may be used on similar projects to yield consistent results. A STL is a unique and important type of work decomposition. It captures information about a "standard" or repetitive type of work encountered by an organization. STLs are a means for an organization to capture the expertise gained from individual projects. This information may then be used as a foundation for future similar projects by any member of that organization.

Process Purpose:

The greatest benefit derived from using STLs is that they reduce the amount of work needed to create a work decomposition (Work Breakdown Structure) for a new project if a STL is available from an earlier, similar effort. If the work is identical in scope, duration and resource assignment, the STL may be used directly as the plan. In most cases, however, STLs provide a beginning point for planning. Unique conditions (such as resource levels and types, deadlines, different technology, etc.) must be considered against the STL. When STL are not available or are not applicable to a project, the work decomposition process is totally unique to the project.

These "generic" plans may also provide metrics for how long a common work activity should take. This information is best when it results from an analysis of project actuals recorded on several earlier projects that used or created the STL.

Using STLs to initiate project planning promotes consistency in...

- The way work is done
- The products that are delivered
- The inspection process used to evaluate finished deliverables
- The training needed to accomplish the work.

STL may be constructed at macro and micro levels. Macro-level STLs often describe the general flow for a complete project. A Project Management Process showing all the major steps in a project life-cycle is an example of a macro-level STL. A formal Product Marketing Process or Software Development Methodology are other examples of macro-level STLs. A micro-level STL applies to a much smaller piece of work. The steps required to write a Project Charter, install a specific type of technology, move a department from one location to another or issue a mass mailing are all examples of a micro-level STL.

Use Criteria:

Standard Task Lists are most commonly used during the planning component of Project Management. They are not typically used to function as a total Project Plan or detailed plan without some modification. STLs should not be confused with the actual work decomposition that must occur for each plan. A STL is intended to aid the planning process, not replace it.

Process Flow:

1.0 CREATE A STL -To create a new Standard Task List, you will...
- Clearly define the common process or resulting products that are the focus of the STL.
- Assemble a small team of people who exhibit expertise in performing this common process or creating the resulting products.
- Ask this team of experts to construct a generic work decomposition that may be applied to many projects that will perform the common work that has been identified.
- Capture all of the information required to document the STL (See STL Definition template). This information includes...

    Title Information...
      Standard Task List Name
      Standard Task List ID
      Standard Task List Description
      Last Updated (Date)
      Version Number
      Page Number
    Detail Information
      Work Component ID
      Work Component Name/Description
      Deliverable Name
      Deliverable Criteria (Suggested or Required)
      Needed Skill Types
      Completion Criteria
        Required Signoffs
        Inspections or certifications
        Checklists
        Test Criteria
        Peer Review Suggested

- Optionally attach a graphic (such as a Work Breakdown Structure, Functional Decomposition or Data Flow Diagram) that describes the Standard Task List.
- Optionally attach a Glossary that defines the Work Components or Deliverables.

2.0 APPLY THE STL - To use a Standard Task List, you will...
- Assemble the team of people (Project Team) who will perform a subset of a project.
- Define the scope of the project that will be addressed, including both the Domain of Study and Domain of Effort.

- Identify any common types of work that must be performed or common deliverables that must be produced.
- Collect any STLs that are relevant to this type of work.
- Extract from the STLs all work components that are relevant to the...
  - Work that must be performed on the current assignment.
  - Deliverables that must be produced on the current assignment.
- Ignore any work components on the STL that are not relevant to the current work assignment.
- Construct a customized plan for the current assignment.

3.0 MODIFY THE STL - Immediately after the plan for a current assignment has been executed or during a post project review, you should...
- Review each STL that was used to see if any new work components should be added to the list.
- Review the detailed information for each work component to determine if new information should be added.
- Review each STL that was used to see if any of the work components are no longer valid and delete them.
- Determine if any new STLs may be created based on current experience.

Glossary:
Domain of Effort - A component of the Project Scope that identifies the work that will and will not be applied against the Domain of Study.
Domain of Study - A component of the Project Scope that identifies the business area or functions that will and will not be evaluated during a project.

Templates and Tools:
A **Standard Task List Definition** template is attached and may be used to capture information about each work component listed.

1/98

STANDARD TASK LIST DEFINITION

STL Name: _____ STL ID: _____

STL Description: _____

Last Updated: _____

Version: _____ Page: _____

ID	Work Component Name	Deliverables Name	Sig./ Req.	Needed Skill Types	Completion Criteria