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Training During SDM Implementation

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Introduction

Drucker (1988) suggests that new organizational structures result from the dynamic integration of corporate planning, systems analysis and design, and system development. This integration is not possible without a comprehensive system development methodology (SDM) that meets the organization's needs. Today, a SDM can only be successful with a training program that prepares systems personnel to use automated tools within the life cycle phases and tasks of a system development methodology.

This relationship between CASE and a SDM make methodology training for CASE users and development staff a key ingredient to a successful CASE implementation. McClure (1992) suggests the following formula for a successful CASE implementation: tools + trained people + methodology.

In today's information systems environment, a SDM comprises an overall strategy for computer-based information system development that includes a flexible framework to indicate the sequence of development along with the techniques used to accomplish each task. Automated tools aid the system development process may also be considered part of the methodology.

Research Methodology

This study addresses the need for training during the implementation of a SDM. The authors surveyed 192 individuals directly involved in the SDM implementation process. The survey respondents were from four major constituencies: functional managers, IS managers, systems personnel, and external consultants.

The respondents were asked to respond to items on six-point Likert scales. The first scale asked the extent the item should contribute to SDM implementation. The second scale asked the extent the item currently contributes to the company's SDM implementation process. The response ranges were from 1-NOT AT ALL to 6-VERY GREAT EXTENT on both scales.

A series of paired t-tests were performed on each item to determine whether the items significantly contributed to the implementation of a SDM. The Paired t-tests were performed to test if there was a significant difference in how an item currently contributed to a SDM implementation and how the respondents felt the item should contribute.

Results and Conclusion

The series of paired t-tests conducted between scales for each item showed a significant difference on every item at the .05 level of significance. The results present an interesting revelation concerning the SDM implementation process in most companies. The implication of these results is that systems personnel know the importance of training during a project such as an SDM implementation but are not currently performing these vital tasks during implementations. Functional managers and IS managers should provide adequate resources and insist on training programs. These programs need to include training on every aspect of the SDM and be customized for all personnel including end users. If the companies do not have the expertise in the organizations then they need to be willing to get the knowledge from external sources. In addition, companies need to take advantage of public seminars that are available.

References

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