

## **Concurrent 19**

### ***Project Management And Cultural Change: A Case Study***

*Ralph Kiel*

#### **Abstract:**

Over the years the management of projects at the University of Western Australia Library has generally been poor. With some exceptions, projects were badly scoped, had no clear direction, would proceed in fits and starts, and some would not be completed at all. On occasions a project would get to a stage where implementation was due and there would be no resources available. On completion loose ends would be left and the transfer of the project to operational stage would be unplanned and ad hoc. Reporting was also poor so managers often had little idea of the status of a project.

In 2005 a project management method – PRINCE2 – was implemented across the library, staff were trained, and its use was mandated.

The outcome was a revelation. Business cases were written, and complex and simple projects were scoped, planned and implemented. Projects were staffed from various parts of the library, many worked together for the first time and unexpected cultural change was evident.

This cultural change did not come in isolation. A library programme - Transforming the Organisation was about to start and there was a lot of buzz in the library about terms such as: breaking down the silos, building trust, encouraging flexibility and developing leadership at all levels. So when PRINCE2 came along the cultural benefits for the organisation became immediately evident.

The staff attitudes to and understanding of the introduction of PRINCE2 project management method were measured by the use of a survey. Analysis was conducted from data from the Library Operational plan projects and from project documents.

Senior staff involved in projects benefited mostly from the introduction of PRINCE2. These staff believed that because of the introduction of PRINCE2 Library projects were better managed, that they had learned new skills and knowledge, there was improvement in how Library staff worked together, and there were positive changes in the operations and organisation of the Library.