



Lakes Automotive Case Study Solution

I imagine myself as a Project Manager at Lakes Automotive, tasked with the challenging yet exciting responsibility of merging two effective project management methodologies following our acquisition of Pelex Automotive Products (PAP). Given that both companies have excellent track records and loyal customers, it's crucial to combine our approaches thoughtfully and effectively.

Here's my plan to tackle this situation:

Combining Methodologies

1. **Assessment and Comparison:**

First, I would conduct a thorough assessment of both methodologies. This involves comparing our nine-phase lifecycle with PAP's five-phase approach. I'd look for overlapping areas, unique strengths, and any gaps that might exist. Engaging with key stakeholders from both companies is essential to understand their priorities and preferences. Their insights will help in identifying what works best from each methodology.

2. Designing a Hybrid Methodology:

Based on this assessment, I would work on designing a hybrid methodology that incorporates the best practices from both approaches. The goal is to create a streamlined process that's easy to understand and implement. Simplifying the phases where possible without losing the robustness of the methodologies is key.

3. Pilot Testing:

To ensure the new methodology's effectiveness, I'd select a few pilot projects. This would allow us to test the hybrid approach in real-world scenarios and gather practical feedback. Adjustments can be made based on this feedback before rolling out the new methodology across the entire organization.

Changing Work Habits

1. Change Management Plan:

Communication is crucial. I would clearly articulate the reasons for the change, highlighting the benefits and improvements the new methodology brings. Providing comprehensive training programs is essential to help employees adapt. These would include workshops, Q&A sessions, and a support helpdesk to assist them through the transition.

2. Involvement and Empowerment:

Involving employees in the transition process is important. By engaging them in the development of the new methodology, I can reduce resistance and foster a sense of ownership. Recognizing and rewarding those who successfully adapt and contribute positively will further encourage acceptance and enthusiasm.

Customer Influence

1. Customer Input:

Understanding our customers' perspectives is vital. I would actively seek their feedback to understand what they value most about the existing methodologies. Forming a customer advisory board could provide ongoing insights and suggestions, ensuring that the new methodology meets their needs and expectations.

2. Balancing Customer Needs:

It's important to prioritize customer satisfaction. I would ensure that the new methodology maintains or enhances the aspects that customers value.

Transparent communication about the changes, explaining the rationale and benefits, will help in gaining their support.

Addressing Customer Concerns

1. Existing Methodologies:

For customers who prefer the existing methodologies, offering some flexibility is crucial. I would consider a phased transition or maintaining certain elements of the old methodologies where possible. Allowing customization to cater to specific customer preferences or project requirements can also help in easing the transition.

2. Unhappiness with New Methodology:

Establishing a robust feedback mechanism is key to quickly identify and address any concerns customers have with the new methodology. I would commit to continuous improvement by regularly reviewing and refining the approach based on customer and employee feedback.

Combining methodologies from Lakes Automotive and PAP is a strategic process that involves careful assessment, thoughtful design, and rigorous testing. Changing work habits requires clear communication, comprehensive training, and active employee involvement. Balancing customer needs with the new methodology's integrity ensures that both companies and their customers benefit from the changes. Flexibility and continuous improvement are crucial to addressing any dissatisfaction and ensuring the new approach's success.

By approaching the integration with a structured and inclusive strategy, I am confident that we can create a unified project management methodology that leverages the strengths of both Lakes Automotive and PAP, leading to continued success and satisfaction for our employees and customers.