



## WWF: A Systematic Approach to Project Management

To help it deliver its wide range of local and global projects **WWF-UK** needed a comprehensive, *flexible* planning tool that that would fit with their existing project and programme management system. Find out how **=mc** worked with **WWF-UK** to design and deliver training to both meet that need *and* give staff a common understanding, language and approach to project management.

### Background

**WWF-UK**'s ambitious mission to address global threats to people and nature means it's working on a large number of projects at any one time. These range from worldwide campaigns such as Earth Hour 2010 and combating illegal logging, to commissioning a pioneering environmental musical for schools – *One Sun, One World* – premiered at the Albert Hall in 2009. To help standardise the approach to project working across the organisation, **WWF-UK** had already developed a bespoke set of project management 'Network Standards'. But over time it became apparent that there was a need for an approach that would make it easier for staff to work together on a diverse range of programmes – and that's where **=mc** got involved.

### Challenge

The **WWF-UK** Network Standards project cycle identified 5 key steps: Define, Design, Implement, Analyse and Adapt and Share. Although the 'Network Standards' existed as a useful, high-level framework, the Learning & Development team at **WWF-UK** realised that they needed something different. There were a number of challenges: the Network Standards weren't being used consistently and staff had varying levels of knowledge in terms of project management – consequently outcomes were mixed. The team wanted to ensure that **WWF-UK** achieved the best possible results from the precious resources invested in its projects. They needed a flexible project management approach that anyone within **WWF-UK** could quickly pick up, understand and apply – whatever the project. They also needed consistency of language and practice to enable more effective cross-divisional working.

### What we did

After a number of interviews and discussions **=mc**'s Learning & Development consultants worked with **WWF-UK** to design a tailored programme that would both fit with the existing Network Standards and project management cycle, *and* offer a more flexible and systematic approach. After a successful pilot, we then delivered a series of training programmes between 2002 and 2010.

We based the training programme around the use of the *Systematic Approach* – a flexible decision model developed by Ralf Coverdale. **=mc** has adapted this model for project management, and it has now been widely adopted across the not-for-profit sector. The **=mc** version offers a number of advantages. Most importantly it clarifies a project's logic and scope to ensure that it meets the identified need. The tool also ensures key roles are identified, success is measurable and activities are planned and sequenced. The **=mc** adaptation of the *Systematic Approach* is simple without being simplistic, and it fits in neatly with the use of specific project planning tools. This means the same framework can be applied to both large and small projects, and different tools can be incorporated depending on the needs of a particular project.

As part of the training we also introduced staff at **WWF-UK** to a whole range of project management tools that they could incorporate into the *Systematic Approach*, such as Work Breakdown Structures, Mind Mapping and Stakeholder Mapping.

The training programmes were practical and pragmatic, using ‘real-life’ examples of **WWF-UK** projects to turn the theory into reality and help staff apply it to their own work.

We ensured that the language and principles of the *Systematic Approach* worked within **WWF-UK**'s existing Network Standards framework so that staff could easily understand the key steps and processes for any project.

## Result

**WWF-UK** now has a user-friendly project management framework that is fully aligned in terms of process and language, with its own project management cycle. There is a high level of buy-in across the organisation and staff and managers are seeing how it can be used for a range of projects.

We continue to provide this training alongside other learning programmes for this essential organisation.

**“With =mc we have successfully introduced more consistent approaches to project management across WWF-UK, increasing our capacity to deliver projects that achieve clearly defined objectives, and ensuring smoother working relationships across the organisation.”**

**Ajay Barai, Head of Strategic Planning and Performance, WWF-UK**

## About WWF-UK

**WWF-UK** is the UK arm of the WWF Network, the world's leading environmental organisation founded in 1961 and now active in over 100 countries. Their 300-strong staff work with governments, businesses and communities both here in the UK and around the world so that people and nature thrive within their fair share of the planet's natural resources. Find out more about WWF-UK at [www.wwf.org.uk](http://www.wwf.org.uk).

### Further help

**=mc** has a team of unrivalled learning and development consultants able to assist with a variety of developmental needs. Between us we share experience in small and large charity work, international development, arts and culture, disability and the environment. **=mc** consultants have worked with many of the UK's major charities on their people development. We're proud to have helped **Concern Worldwide, SightSavers, UNICEF, WaterAid, the British Council** and the **British Red Cross**.

To find out how we could help you develop your people, call us on **+44 (0) 20 7978 1516** or visit [www.managementcentre.co.uk/learning&development](http://www.managementcentre.co.uk/learning&development).

**We hope you found this download useful and enjoyable.**

If you want to access more downloads, visit [www.managementcentre.co.uk/knowledgebase](http://www.managementcentre.co.uk/knowledgebase) where you can search for a range of management and fundraising tools, ideas and case studies.

#### **About =mc**

**The Management Centre (=mc)** is an international consultancy working to transform the effectiveness of ethically led organisations worldwide. We provide help through management consultancy, fundraising, and training.

To find out more about us, please visit our website at [www.managementcentre.co.uk](http://www.managementcentre.co.uk).