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OPAP3® Report

Organizational Practice Assessment

Project and Portfolio

Prepared for <Organization> by CVR/IT Consulting LLC

July, 201x

- **This document contains small portions of a report that followed an assessment of Project Management and Project Portfolio Management practice.**

- **Only Fundamental Best Practices were considered.**

- **The actual report ran 58 pages.**

http://www.cvr-it.com/OPA_P3.html

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CVR/IT Consulting LLC

CVR/IT Consulting LLC provides guidance and support in the effective use of Project, Program and Portfolio Management Technologies. The company, founded in May, 2002, is owned and operated by Dr. Gary J. Evans, PMP. CVR/IT Consulting LLC provides professional consultation in all matters related to Project Management, such as:

- Implementation of governance structures and processes essential to effective Portfolio Management
- Organizational practice assessments in Project, Program and Portfolio Management
- Establishment of a PMO that finds its own success solely in the success of its customers
- Delivery of a flexible, customized PM Methodology and tools
- Training (or re-training) of the PM workforce
- Implementation of Organizational Change to make it all work
- Continuing assessment of projects and people to measure the benefit

Dr. Evans has held senior positions in several organizations including Saber Consulting (Director), Rational Software (Program Mgr), and Common (VP IT). He has delivered successful projects in commercial, R&D, public sector and not-for-profit environments, including IT department and PMO startup, business process reengineering, design and development of software applications, PM maturity assessments and improvement implementations. Throughout his career Dr. Evans has focused on the implementation of effective project management, business analysis, and business process; the design and development of information systems to support that process; and management of change to ensure successful delivery of new systems. Dr. Evans is a noted trainer and public speaker, and author of advanced project management courseware (available under license to qualified organizations), an Organizational PM Practice Assessment Tool, and a project management Template Library that is currently used all over the globe

If there are any questions about the assessment described in this report, Dr. Evans can be reached at:

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Table of Contents

This is the actual Table of Contents of an OPAP3® report. This organization
focused only on Project Management and Project Portfolio Management.

Executive Summary

In the world of projects, a Best Practice (BP) is "any process, condition or structure that, when used effectively, consistently promotes project, program or portfolio success." BPs are not hard and fast rules. Rather they provide the guidance that there is a better way of doing certain things that has proven to be beneficial. BPs tell us what should be done, but it is up to each institution to determine its own best way of doing it. It is generally understood that:

- The more BPs we employ in our work, the more likely we are to succeed
- Every time we fail to use a BP, we leave an opening for risk that can lead to failure

There are hundreds of Project Management (PM), Program Management (PgM) and Project Portfolio Management (PfM) BPs. No organization can hope to adopt all of them at once, so they are divided into three groups: Fundamental, Progressive and Advanced. The assessment just completed focused only on Fundamental BPs, i.e. those BPs that create a foundation for solid project, program and portfolio performance. It should be the goal of any organization to use at least these BPs reliably and well.

This Organizational Practice Assessment is effectively a snapshot in time where the PM and PfM standards and practices of <ORGANIZATION> have been measured, recorded and analyzed. The assessment is designed to examine the utilization of Fundamental BPs that support success in an organization's projects and programs. The <ORGANIZATION> PMO commissioned this assessment as part of a new program to improve Project and Project Portfolio Management practice within the organization. The purpose of the assessment is twofold:

- Acquire information in support of the ongoing improvement program
- Establish a baseline that can be used in future assessments to measure progress in adoption of BPs.

Assessment sessions took place in May 201x and involved 16 participants. This is what we found.

Project Management

This assessment revealed that <ORGANIZATION> is reliably using about one half of the BPs examined in this study. (We say a BP is "used" when it has a Utilization Score of 70% or greater.) The remaining BPs receive some usage, but in many cases it is very low (i.e. 25% have Utilization Scores of less than 50%).

The rate of PM BP usage was about the same in all project roles: management, project sponsor, stakeholder, project manager and team. While a 50% utilization rate is less than ideal, it can be mitigated to some extent if Core PM BPs (i.e. BPs generally considered vital to any project) are used well. Unfortunately, only 15 of 29 Core BPs (52%) were found to be used with any regularity. On the basis of this assessment one may conclude that there is there is substantial room for improvement in <ORGANIZATION> PM practice.

Portfolio Management

In this assessment, of 43 PfM Best Practices only 19% were found to have regular use. In the detailed analysis, no PfM BPs were found to have use in the following categories: Governance, Strategy, Portfolio Development, Risk Management and Time Management.

Since it is clearly true that <ORGANIZATION> engages in PfM work it must be the case that <ORGANIZATION> has developed a set of PfM processes that differ from what is currently considered standard. The <ORGANIZATION> PMO could consider including in its improvement program an examination of current actually used PfM processes. During this review they could

identify, document and retain those practices that have proven effective for <ORGANIZATION>, while also looking for opportunities to include industry standard PfM BPs where that would enhance overall PfM performance.

Conclusion

Given the number of projects that < ORGANIZATION > has underway and the nature of the _____ industry, PM and PfM can be regarded as core competencies for <ORGANIZATION>. While some strength may be found in each area, there would be much to gain from building on that strength and incorporating BPs that can improve project and portfolio performance. The BPs and associated material provided through the OPAP3® assessment can serve as a framework to use during such an improvement program.

I. Description of the assessment

This Organizational Practice Assessment examines the level of current Project and Project Portfolio Management practice in <ORGANIZATION>. It is effectively a snapshot in time where the following questions are answered:

- Are Project and Project Portfolio Managers using the identified fundamental Best Practices (BP) in their fields of work?
- In which BPs does the organization have the greatest strength? Which BPs present the greatest opportunity for improvement?

The purpose of the assessment is twofold:

- Determine current rate of BP utilization in PM and PfM
- Acquire basic information needed to develop improvement programs in Project and Project Portfolio Management
- Establish a baseline that can be used in future assessments to measure progress in adoption of BPs

One may consider certain BPs to be fundamental to Project and Project Portfolio Management practice, while others would be used by more experience practitioners. In OPAP3®, BPs are rated by maturity of practice where a BP may be considered as Fundamental, Progressive or Advanced. *This <ORGANIZATION> assessment focused solely on utilization of Fundamental BPs.*

Anyone reading this report should keep the following points in mind:
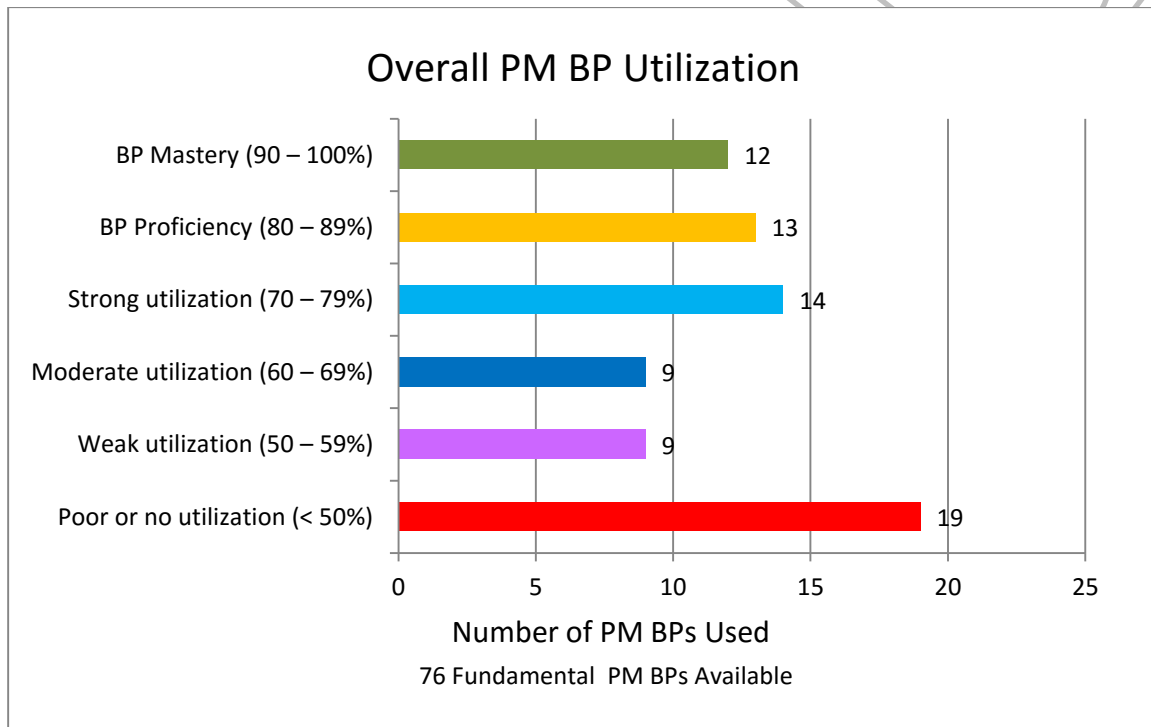
- OPAP3® is a facilitated self-assessment, which means the results presented in this report will only be as useful as the answers provided by participants were accurate. Every effort has been made to encourage accurate answers, including keeping participant data confidential. If there are any doubts about the accuracy of participant answers, a follow-up audit based on objective criteria (i.e. Key Practice Indicators) should be considered.
- This is an assessment of organizational practice, which means the work of many roles in each domain is assessed. For example, the assessment included BPs related to the following PM roles: Managers, Project Sponsor, Project Manager, Project Team and Stakeholders. For this reason it is not appropriate to think that the results of this assessment only show "how the Project Managers are doing". Data are presented that show BP utilization overall, as well as for each role in each domain.

A complete description of the methodology used in this assessment is available in Appendix C. Correct interpretation of the charts and tables in this report depends on understanding how the data were analyzed.

II. Project Management Assessment Details

A. Utilization of PM BPs

Project Managers reported that overall, 51% of PM BPs (39 of 76) are used on a regular basis (i.e. on average by at least 70% of Project participants). However, use of a BP is not an all or nothing event. Some BPs are used with great consistency by participants, while others appear to receive little attention. This can be seen in the following graph.

Overall PM BP Utilization

Utilization Level	Number of PM BPs Used
BP Mastery (90 – 100%)	12
BP Proficiency (80 – 89%)	13
Strong utilization (70 – 79%)	14
Moderate utilization (60 – 69%)	9
Weak utilization (50 – 59%)	9
Poor or no utilization (< 50%)	19

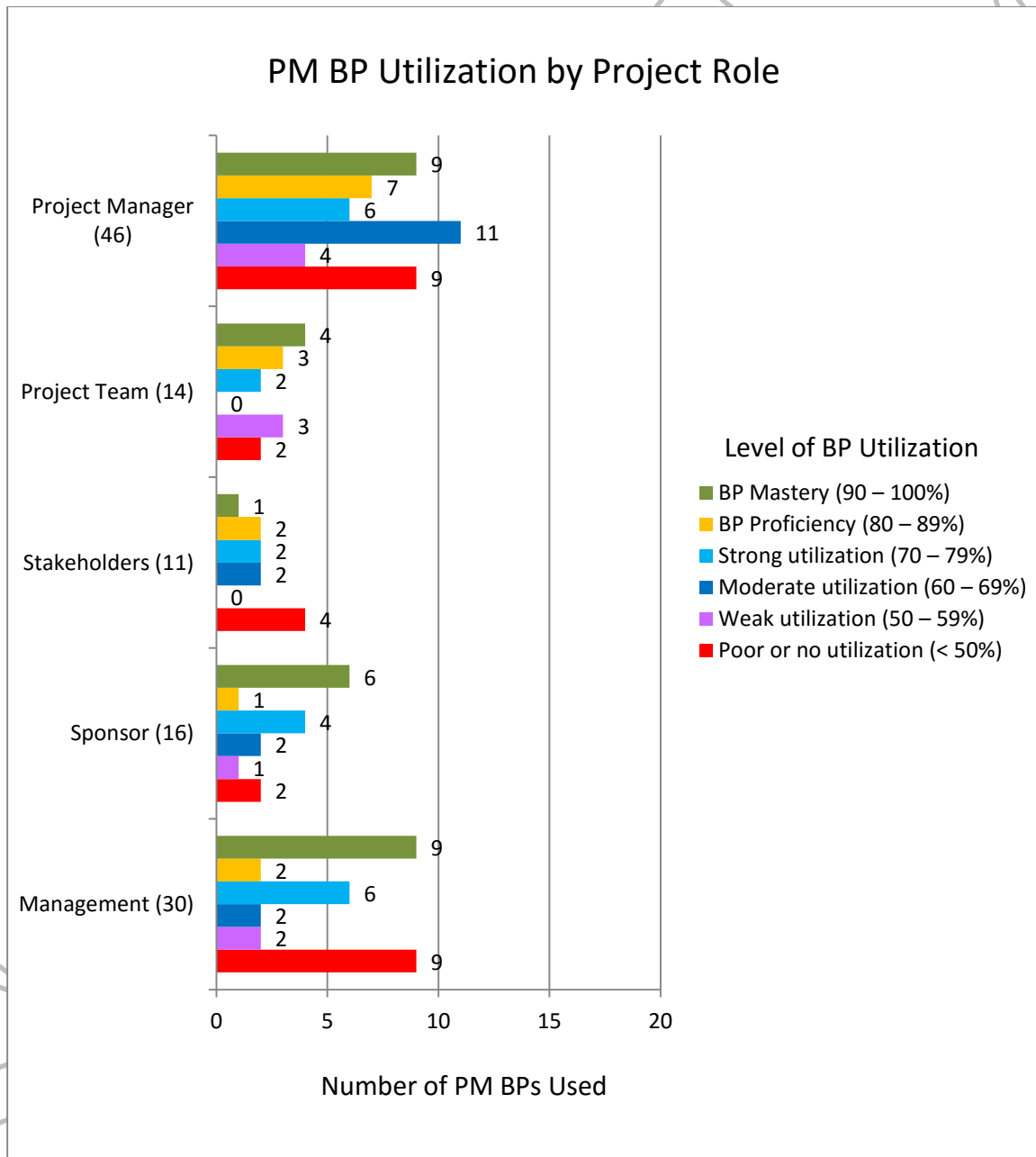**Number of PM BPs Used**

76 Fundamental PM BPs Available

In this graph, defined levels of BP utilization are listed on the left, and the number of BPs that fall in each utilization level is shown to the right of the horizontal bar. For example, BP Mastery is the highest level of utilization, with assessment scores of 90% or better, and 12 PM BPs are used at that level. Utilization levels are color coded. It is convenient to interpret this graph (and all utilization graphs that follow) based on the following color scheme:

- Green and Gold indicate excellent BP utilization
- Light or dark Blue indicate some BP utilization
- Violet or Red indicate weak or poor BP utilization

12 of the 76 available PM BPs received utilization scores at the level of BP Mastery, which means that virtually all project participants use those BPs almost all of the time. Thirteen additional BPs are used at the level of BP Proficiency, which indicates somewhat less (but still very good) usage. Most organizations would use BP Proficiency (80 – 89%) as their target level of usage.

Fourteen other BPs receive strong utilization (70% or better), and then usage falls off. Note that 19 PM BPs were reported to have little or no use. For a list of all BPs sorted by level of BP utilization, see Table A-1 in Appendix A.

By examining BP utilization along various project attributes, such as role and knowledge area, we can see that utilization is stronger in some areas than in others. This information may be used to guide an improvement program.

PM BP Utilization by Project Role

Project Manager (46)
- BP Mastery: 9
- BP Proficiency: 7
- Strong utilization: 6
- Moderate utilization: 11
- Weak utilization: 4
- Poor or no utilization: 9

Project Team (14)
- BP Mastery: 4
- BP Proficiency: 3
- Strong utilization: 2
- Moderate utilization: 0
- Weak utilization: 3
- Poor or no utilization: 2

Stakeholders (11)
- BP Mastery: 1
- BP Proficiency: 2
- Strong utilization: 2
- Moderate utilization: 2
- Weak utilization: 0
- Poor or no utilization: 4

Sponsor (16)
- BP Mastery: 6
- BP Proficiency: 1
- Strong utilization: 4
- Moderate utilization: 2
- Weak utilization: 1
- Poor or no utilization: 2

Management (30)
- BP Mastery: 9
- BP Proficiency: 2
- Strong utilization: 6
- Moderate utilization: 2
- Weak utilization: 2
- Poor or no utilization: 9

Level of BP Utilization
- BP Mastery (90 – 100%)
- BP Proficiency (80 – 89%)
- Strong utilization (70 – 79%)
- Moderate utilization (60 – 69%)
- Weak utilization (50 – 59%)
- Poor or no utilization (< 50%)

x-axis: Number of PM BPs Used (0, 5, 10, 15, 20)

In this figure, the number of BPs available to each project role is indicated in parentheses next to the role name. The number of BPs that fall at each level of utilization is displayed to the right of the horizontal bar. Levels of BP utilization are color coded. When the number of BPs is zero, no color is shown.

This figure above indicates that every project role has both areas of strength and of weakness. For example, while most Project Managers make use of 16 (out of 46) BPs that directly pertain to their role (BP Mastery and Proficiency), there are 13 that receive little usage (Weak and Poor). The same is true for managers, where 11 BPs (out of 30) receive regular use, and 11 are largely neglected. Any improvement effort will necessarily involve work with all project roles.

For a list of Utilization Scores for all BPs related to the Project Manager role see Table A-4 in Appendix A.

For a list of Utilization Scores for all BPs related to the Manager and Sponsor roles in PM see Table A-5 in Appendix A.

In the full report, additional graphs present results by:

- Knowledge Area
- Project Phase
- Project Factor (Environment; Core BP; Estimation)

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Several options are available that are not shown in this sample, including:

- Assessment in three domains
  - Project Management
  - Program Management
  - Portfolio Management
- Assessment of three levels of Best Practice
  - Fundamental
  - Progressive
  - Advanced
- Assessment of practice standardization, where three questions are answered for each Best Practice:
  - Has the organization standardized the practice?
  - Are practitioners using the practice?
  - Are practitioners following the standard?
- Inclusion of Challenge data
  - Participants indicate which Best Practices (BPs) are a special source of difficulty
  - Follow-up confidential discussions ascertain root cause of the problems
- Follow-up audit to confirm validity of results
- Use of Key Performance Indicators as a guide to improvement of organizational PM practice
- Audit of individual projects for utilization of BPs
- Demographics that provide useful background information about the participants
- Assignment of an overall Maturity Level for those organizations that require one.

Appendix A: Project Management Best Practice Tables

Table A-1: PM Best Practices sorted by Utilization Score

This table presents the description and Utilization score for each one of the 76 PM BPs in the assessment. This table may be used to answer the following questions:

- Which PM BPs are we using most reliably? Least?
- What is our level of Utilization for each PM BP?

BP#	Best Practice	BP Description	Utilization Score
BP Mastery: 90 – 100%			
200	A core set of Project Management tools and techniques are available for use in all projects.	All Project Teams have formal Project Management tools and techniques at their disposal (e.g. scheduling tool, RTM, project templates). They customize tools and techniques to fit the needs of specific projects.	100.0%
950	High level scope is documented in the Project Charter	Authors of project charters routinely include a high level description of scope, deliverables and business requirements. All significant scope is included so that progressive elaboration will reveal more detail, but not more scope. Business requirements are sufficient to drive development of functional and technical requirements.	100.0%
870	A Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) is used as the basis of project planning	Project Managers routinely develop a WBS to define the scope of their projects. They start with a standard WBS or one from a prior project, and then follow the 100% Rule (i.e. the WBS must contain 100% of project scope). They routinely use a WBS as the basis for further project planning.	93.8%
220	Management requires that a qualified Project Manager be assigned to every project.	The role of Project Manager has been clearly defined. Management at all levels clearly supports it. Sponsors understand what the role involves. Every project has a qualified Project Manager assigned.	93.8%

In the full report, all 76 PM BPs are presented along with the Utilization Score for each one. BPs are sorted by Utilization Score, and separated by Level of Utilization (BP Mastery, Proficiency, Strong Utilization, Moderate Utilization, Weak Utilization). In the table above, four BPs are used at the level of BP Mastery.

Table A-2: List of Estimation BPs with Utilization Score

All of the BPs in this table deal with the development and use of project estimates. This table may be used to answer the following questions:

- Which BPs related to project estimates do we use most reliably? Least?
- On which BPs should we focus to improve our development and use of project estimates?

Section content not shown

Table A-3: List of Core PM BPs with Utilization Score

All of the BPs in this table are central to the planning, execution and control of projects. This table may be used to answer the following questions:

- Which Core PM BPs are we using most reliably? Least?
- Which Core PM BPs should we focus on in order to have an immediate impact on the performance of our projects?

Section content not shown

Table A-4: List of Project Manager role BPs with Utilization Score

All of the BPs in this table are directly related to the role of Project Manager. This table can be used to answer the following questions:

- Which BPs related to the role of Project Manager are our Project Managers using most reliably? Least?
- On which BPs should we focus in order to have an immediate impact on the performance of our Project Managers?

Section content not shown

Table A-5: List of Management and Project Sponsor PM BPs with Utilization Score

All of the BPs in this table are directly related to the PM work of managers in general, and of Project Sponsors in particular. Text in italics is added to explain management involvement. Note: Sponsor BPs are indicated with an x. This table can be used to answer the following questions:

- Which BPs related to the PM role of Manager are our Managers using most reliably? Least?
  - Question also applies to Project Sponsors
- On which BPs should we focus in order to have an immediate impact on the PM performance of our Managers?
  - Question also applies to Project Sponsors

Section content not shown

Appendix B: Project Portfolio Management Best Practice Tables

Table B-1: PfM Best Practices sorted by Utilization Score

This table presents the Utilization scores for every PfM BP in the assessment. This table may be used to answer the question:

- Which PfM BPs are we using?

Section content not shown

Table B-2: PfM Best Practices sorted by Utilization Score and with Portfolio Roles (PR) indicated as follows:

- PR1: PfM Practice Manager
- PR2: PfM Stakeholder
- PR3: Portfolio Manager
- PR4: Manager
- PR5: Governance Body

This table can be used to answer the following questions for each of the roles listed above.

- Which BPs related to <Portfolio Role> are members of the <Portfolio Role> using?
    - Example: Which BPs related to the role of PfM Practice Manager are our PfM Practice Managers using?

- On which BPs should we focus in order to have an immediate impact on the performance of <Portfolio Role>?
    - Example: On which BPs should we focus in order to have an immediate impact on the performance of our PfM Practice Managers?

Section content not shown

Table B-3: PfM Best Practices sorted by Utilization Score and with Portfolio Process Groups (PG) indicated as follows:

- PG1: PfM Process Definition and Maintenance
- PG2: Portfolio Definition and Maintenance
- PG3: Pipeline Development
- PG4: Pipeline Monitoring and Control

This table can be used to answer the following questions for each of the Portfolio Process Groups listed above:

- Which BPs related to <Portfolio Process Group> are we using?
    - Example: Which BPs related to PfM Process Definition and Maintenance are we using?

- On which BPs should we focus in order to have an immediate impact on <Portfolio Process Group>?
    - Example: On which BPs should we focus in order to have an immediate impact on PfM Process Definition and Maintenance?

Section content not shown

Appendix C: Description of the assessment

A. Brief description of OPAP3®

OPAP3® stands for "Organizational Practice Assessment – Project, Program, and Portfolio". It is a facilitated self- assessment tool based on Best Practices (BPs) in the domains of Project and Project Portfolio Management. OPAP3® measures the practice maturity of Project, Program and Portfolio Managers and their stakeholders and teams, and provides insights into current strengths and weaknesses in the conduct of projects and programs. Management can use OPAP3® results to develop effective Project and Project Portfolio Management Practice Improvement Programs. OPAP3® can also be used to objectively measure improvements in Project and Project Portfolio Management practice over time.

Note: although the description of OPAP3® presented here includes references to Program Management, the <ORGANIZATION> assessment focused only on Project and Project Portfolio Management.

One may consider certain BPs to be fundamental to Project and Project Portfolio Management practice, while others would be used by more experience practitioners. In OPAP3®, BPs are rated by maturity of practice where a BP may be rated as Fundamental, Progressive or Advanced. ***<ORGANIZATION> assessment focused solely on standardization and utilization of Fundamental BPs.*** The number of Fundamental BPs in each domain is shown in the following table:

Number of Fundamental Best Practices by Domain

76	Project Management
43	Project Portfolio Management

B. Data collection

This section contains a description of how data collection was carried out, who was involved, location, etc.

C. Data analysis

This section contains a description of how data analysis was carried out.

Appendix D: Glossary

1. General Terminology

Section content not shown

2. Project Management (PM)

Section content not shown

3. Project Portfolio Management (PfM)

Section content not shown

**For more information on OPAP3® organizational maturity
assessments, see:**

http://www.cvr-it.com/OPA_P3.html