

OPERATING WITH UNKNOWN RISKS

Introduction

Cooper Consulting specializes in assessing systems and implementing custom applications to help solve business problems. We have developed strong partnerships with industry leaders that allow us the freedom to understand our client's unique situation.

All recommendations and implementations are a result of our experienced staff working with our client's interests in mind and without being tied to any one software or approach. With Cooper, *"One thing – IT solutions done right"* is not just a slogan, it encompasses our approach to customer satisfaction with every engagement.

Assessment overview

Cooper has developed a proven methodology for business assessments that tailors specific recommendations to the culture and needs of each client. Each engagement follows industry standards of project management, from project initiation through lessons learned debriefs with senior leadership. The engagement can be modified and adjusted based on the size and scope of the assessment required by clients.

Process

Our experience in business has taught us that the key to finding real solutions for our customers includes understanding the root cause and not necessarily designing solutions for the symptoms. As such, we pride ourselves in our ability to take a holistic approach to addressing our client's challenges.

When recently selected to perform an assessment at a State agency, we were able to deliver a number of meaningful reports and technical documents that assisted leadership to better understand inherent risks and existing gaps. We presented potential solutions to each of these identified risks and gaps in their systems.

Our initial meetings with our clients established vital baselines as well as key stakeholders for the assessment. We have found that one of the largest mistakes made in assessments is using a templated set of questions and performance metrics that do not account for the client's individuality and what has made them successful in their market.

Following initial interviews, we worked to ensure that our assumptions matched what was understood from the client. In many engagements, certain key stakeholders are not engaged in the early stages of the project. We addressed this project risk by establishing and reviewing all assumptions during each phase of the project with the key stakeholders. Constant communication between our team and the client ensured that we remained focused on their needs.

Scope

Assessments often range in size and duration depending upon what our client is looking to accomplish. In a recent risk assessment, we teamed with Oracle to develop a series of tests and tools for an Enterprise Resource Planning system. The process began with two weeks of interviewing multiple departments to understand the culture, processes, and gaps that had developed over years of day-to-

day operations. Using all of this information we were able to create tests and find numerous risks throughout most areas of their systems. Each recommendation provided to the client included the tools/code to be implemented to reduce the impact on design time for our client, ensuring that they were able to implement our suggestions and test on their schedule.

At every step in the process, we worked with department leads to create new processes where valuable and possible, provided multiple approaches for solutions that could be implemented quickly, and presented a road map for an increased security footing into the future. Our experienced team worked diligently to ensure that all stakeholders' needs were met and we were able to finish on time with all deliverables achieved. Keeping with the Cooper way, our clients received the vital information they required and the approaches for viable solutions they needed.