

# The New Normal for Project Kick-offs

## WHITE PAPER



**MindStream Analytics**  
sales@mindstreamanalytics.com



TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Introduction ..... 2**

**MindStream’s Compass Methodology .....3**

**Compass Project Management .....5**

**Remote Session Tips and Tricks .....6**

**Conclusion .....7**

## Introduction

Is it time to consider kicking off your Corporate Performance Management (CPM) project *remotely*?

MindStream Analytics has been helping clients realize the value of CPM for many years, often while our team manages the project offsite. We have built our methodology from the ground up to leverage web-based tools for remote meetings and collaboration while utilizing cloud-based technologies to drive tremendous value for our clients. We can do this successfully without a team of consultants traveling each week to your physical location.

Earlier this year, MindStream kicked off a remote OneStream XF implementation while fully adhering to social distancing guidelines. Our consultants never set foot onsite at our client's location. With so many of us being acquainted with online collaboration tools, we can now interact successfully by hearing and seeing each other as we leverage document sharing and whiteboarding capabilities to visualize and communicate ideas and concepts. Our client, a real estate investment trust (REIT) with \$1.2B in revenue and approximately \$15B in real estate investments had this to say...

"We were planning to kick-off our Financial Consolidation CPM project with our implementation partner, MindStream Analytics, in March when the national social distancing guidelines were issued. With our internal project team working remotely and the MindStream consulting team unable to travel we were concerned that our critical project may be delayed. Fortunately, MindStream was able to work with our team to quickly adjust our project requirements and design sessions to be handled completely remotely.

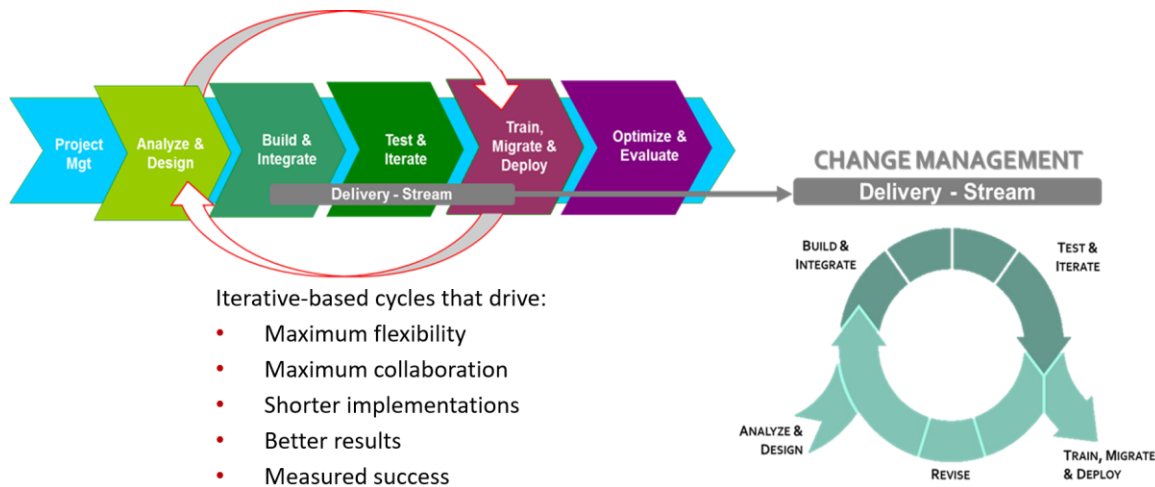
MindStream was able to adjust the sessions for this needed virtual format by leveraging their remote implementation methodology. This methodology included shortening the sessions to assure better focus as well as improved team engagement while providing frequent feedback and communication throughout these initial phases.

MindStream's approach allowed us to complete the application design on time to begin our build phase as planned. This will allow us to complete our project on our original timeline while working completely remotely"

*SVP, Financial Reporting*

With MindStream's COMPASS Methodology, we can ensure that we complete every critical step of the implementation while also protecting ourselves, our clients, and our communities.

## MindStream's Compass Methodology



## Knowledge Sharing

A key foundation for our Compass methodology is two-way knowledge sharing which is vital to any successful project. Our understanding of a client's business process and a client's understanding of new technologies, solutions, and implementation best practices is key.



When working remotely it can be a challenge to ensure this vital aspect of the implementation is addressed. MindStream's approach tackles this challenge by:

- Leveraging virtual whiteboards and cloud-based document sharing early and often to make sure requirements and concepts are more easily shared and understood
- Holding shorter more frequent requirements and design meetings to allow the entire team to review and digest documents and discussions
- Providing earlier and more frequent application design "show-and-tells" to the client team to ensure they understand how key design decisions are addressed and appropriately understood
- Capitalizing on regular "stand-up meetings" to gauge team engagement and understanding
- Analyze and Design

The Analyze and Design phase creates the roadmap for guiding the development and deployment of the solution. We leverage requirements questionnaires and design guides to support collaboration and completeness of vision.

We engage with all the key stakeholders online to document and finalize:

- Executive Strategy and Goals
- Functional and Process Requirements
- Implementation and Resource Plan
- Project Scope, Budget, and Timeline
- Risks and Mitigation Strategies
- Measures of Success

Requirements are gathered and the application model and dimensions are designed to facilitate short-term as well as long-term requirements and the Design Document is created for client approval and distributed, reviewed, and approved remotely.

## Build and Integrate

- The application is configured according to the approved Design Document
  - Create dimensions and hierarchies
  - Develop standard calculations for drivers, formulas, and KPIs
  - Configure business rules and develop data controls
  - Implement workflows to simplify the input process for end-users
  - Develop a package of standard reports and dashboards
  - Set up the integration process and automation for data sources
- The application is configured, with frequent online checkpoints, to be flexible and adaptable, so that you continue to realize value, even as your business needs change

## Test and Iterate

- Iterative reviews and testing completed remotely ensure the quality of the delivered solution
- Defining scope for quick wins allows time for multiple iterations and feedback
- Engaging end-users and stakeholders remotely in the process builds internal support and acceptance to ease the upcoming go-live transition
- Best practice Agile techniques are used to maintain project governance while ensuring responsiveness to any changing business requirements
- Emphasis on user acceptance testing of application functions, as well as new policies and work practices, ensures a smooth roll-out of the new solution

## Train, Migrate and Deploy

- Our consultants add maximum value by training, coaching, and mentoring your staff to master the new solution
- Empowerment steps include:
  - Continuous knowledge transfer with administrators and end-users
  - Customized system documentation
  - Transition plan for business users to take ownership of data quality
  - Go Live support
  - Post-implementation support
- Security and compliance procedures are established for Development and Production environments



## Optimize and Evaluate

- Creation of a Project Success Report to confirm and validate the achievement of success criteria and process improvements
- Review current administrative and operational processes, lessons learned, and identify areas for improvement
- Update of initial Roadmap to reflect project accomplishments and any revised goals or requirements for future phases
- Focus on establishing an ongoing process of continuous improvement

## Compass Project Management

Project Management is never more critical than when you have a remote team. Frequent project communication is critical when we are not seeing each other frequently once the application configuration begins.



To avoid small items falling through the cracks, our project managers consider the following:

- Providing broader and more frequent access to status reporting and issue logs to ensure fully communicating to a remote team
- Regular stand-up meetings (short frequent meetings of less than 15 minutes) held online to surface issues or bottlenecks before issues grow
- Configuration checkpoints scheduled to review key development milestones more frequently than a typical onsite project.

MindStream's COMPASS methodology drives iterative-based cycles for shorter and more flexible implementations. We have modified the traditional phased project plan into an "iterative" build cycle that incorporates key components of the Agile SCRUM methodology. This methodology enables shorter timelines and is very flexible and scalable to all sizes and types of CPM implementations.

## Remote Session Tips and Tricks

1. Remote sessions require you to consider your audience's attention span and environment. Consideration should be given to shorter sessions and more frequent breaks to maintain peak engagement.
2. Whenever possible avoid yes or no questions to encourage attendee engagement.
3. Don't go overboard with the bells and whistles, but don't be afraid to leverage remote collaboration tools like screen sharing, whiteboarding, and remote control. Allow attendees to share their screen to share concepts and ideas.
4. Showing is better than telling! Remember without all the typical visual cues you may not know you have lost your audience so keep them engaged by showing examples in addition to explaining concepts.
5. Although many of us working from home may have young kids, pets, uncut hair, and unexpected interruptions there is value in utilizing video whenever possible. We have found these realities of our current daily lives have little impact on the meeting's success as video helps us focus.

## Conclusion

MindStream Analytics is a leading enterprise performance management advisory firm dedicated to helping clients enable better decision-making. With over a decade of experience in the analytics space, MindStream helps organizations with software selection, implementation, training, hosting, and application managed services that fit their specific business needs.



MindStream has a strong offering within the Oracle Hyperion and OneStream Software on-premise and Cloud EPM space, as well as alliance partnerships with other major technology vendors. Our practice has grown from a dedicated team of professionals who have pooled resources to create a powerful network of people who all share our collective company purpose and values. We believe that the power of technology combined with best practices will give customers the ability to make fact-based decisions to help grow their business.

For more information about MindStream Analytics, please visit our website at [www.mindstreamanalytics.com](http://www.mindstreamanalytics.com) or call us at 1-800-497-0151.