Case Study : Implementation of eOffice in Lal Bahadur Shastri Academy of Administration (LBSNAA)

The Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA) in Mussoorie is the apex training institution for the Civil Services in India. The eOffice product developed and rolled out by National Informatics Centre (NIC) has been implemented successfully in LBSNAA. The strategy for the implementation and the various initiatives taken up for Business Process Reengineering (BPR) and Change Management have been presented as a case study. This model can be followed by any department that wishes to implement eOffice.

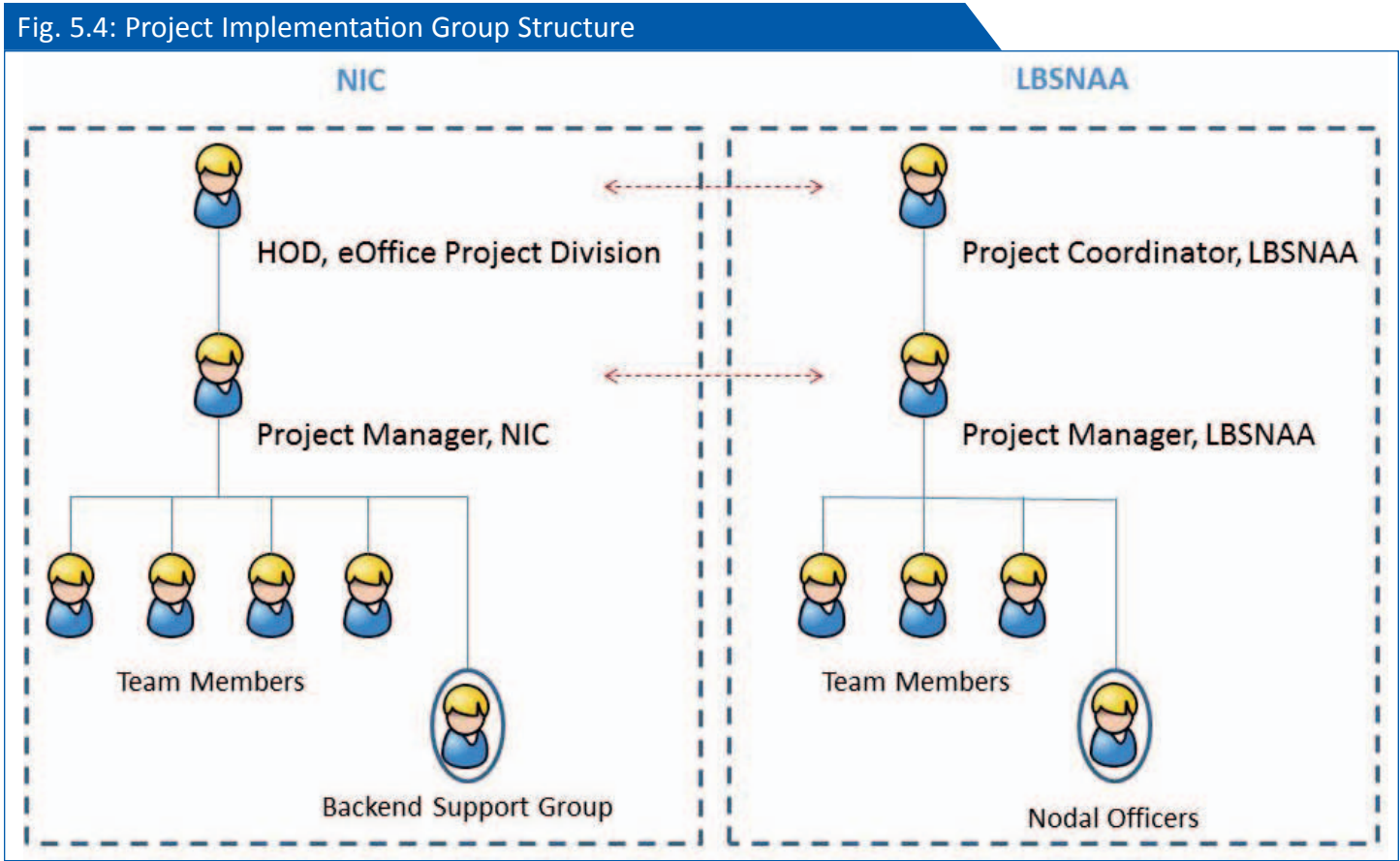The various success parameters learnt from the project are as follows:

1. A Project Implementation Unit should be constituted with members from NIC and the department.

2. The project coordinator from the department should have clear understanding of the organisation, its people and the various processes. He or she should also enjoy the support of the management as well as the workforce.

3. The project coordinator should have excellent problem solving abilities and meaningful decision making powers.

4. The project coordinator should have the vision to identify the short term goals to earn the confidence of the workforce as well as set the path for achieving the long term goals.

5. The team members and the project coordinators should work closely to clearly understand their roles and the objectives of the project.

6. A consultative approach should be adopted by involving the domain experts from various sections and divisions for activities such as process reengineering and change management during the implementation of the project .

7. Capability training and its assessment should be done with great thought given to building a structure content. It should be carefully designed to cater to employees with varied skill sets. The training should be simple yet effective.

8. An environment should be created for the project by promoting the eOffice product through various means such as posters , booklets, FAQs **[Annexure 6B: Sample FAQs on eOffice LBSNAA]** on the product..

9. There must be continuous support for the application to maintain the interest of the users.

10. Bugs, issues and change requests should be resolved in a timely manner.

11. There should be a periodic review mechanism to ensure that there is no slippage in usage.

12. The pre-requisites of the project should be met on time.

13. NIC should be involved in all stages of project implementation.

The implementation of eOffice started with the request from the Director of LBSNAA to the Director General of NIC, followed by a visit of team of officials from LBSNAA to NACWC and the Cabinet Secretariat to look into the working of the eOffice system running since July 2010.

A team from NIC visited the Academy for the first time in November 2010. The departments collaborated to chalk out a strategy to efficiently implement eOffice, planning the various phases and the eOffice modules to be taken up in each one. The main objectives of the visit were to study the various processes and the working style of the Academy, to gather employee data to prepare the eOffice database, and more importantly, to apprise the employees in LBSNAA of the advantages of eOffice. The deliverable from the visit was the roadmap for implementation.

As an initial step towards the implementation of eOffice, a project team with members from NIC and LBSNAA was constituted. The team structure with the defined roles and responsibilities is depicted in the diagram below:

Fig. 5.4: Project Implementation Group Structure

Roles and Responsibilities

Table 5.1: Roles and Responsibilities of NIC and LBSNAA	
NIC	**LBSNAA**
1. Creating awareness for eOffice product.	1. Overall Project Coordination and Monitoring.
2. Preparation of Roadmap for Implementation.	2. Scanning of physical files.
3. Environment Setup	3. Organizing workshop and brainstorming sessions.
4. DSC creation and configuration	4. Working closely with the implementation team to standardize various processes
5. Infrastructure gap analysis	5. Procurement of IT infrastructure
6. Studying the various processes of LBSNAA	6. Business Process Reengineering (BPR) and Change Management
7. Giving recommendations for Business Process Reengineering (BPR)	7. Designing the training
8. Training	
9. Support for users	

Major decisions were taken with respect to the areas and subjects to be covered in the first phase of implementation.

It was initially decided to start eFile in four technical sections (Library, Electronics & Communications, Reprography and Computer Centre). But as the Administration Section formed the nucleus of the Academy, with all file movement extending to this section, it was decided to include the Administration section as a fifth section in Phase I of eFile to ensure end-to-end file movement.

The team from NIC visited various sections to study the working style, the file naming pattern and also the various documents flowing in the sections along with their storage mechanism. They observed the following:

1. The academy was in dire need of a Document Management System. As an academic institution, it generated a huge number of documents annually, with no mechanism for their storage and retrieval.

2. The various rules, guidelines, policies and forms were located in different sections - there was no

central repository to maintain these documents.

3. There was no standard template for the preparation of documents.

4. There was no standard file naming convention used across the Academy. Every section followed its own system.

The Knowledge Management System (KMS) of eOffice creates an online repository of documents with fast search and retrieval and permission based access to various folders and documents. Therefore, all sections were directed to identify documents that could be a part of the Knowledge Management System. Further, categorization of the documents and finalization of their folder structure were required.

A four day workshop was conducted in December 2010 .The main agenda of the workshop was to involve the employees of LBSNAA in the various activities of implementation of eOffice such as the standardization of heads, finalization of documents, metadata and folder structure for KMS and to demonstrate various modules of eOffice to the employees of the academy. The objective was to develop a sense of ownership among the staff and officials of the academy.

The team visited the sections and carried out the infrastructure gap analysis. The Infrastructure Assessment Report was submitted to the Academy to take the necessary steps to meet the gaps.

The major decisions taken during the workshop were:

1. Standardization of all documents to be put in KMS.

2. Creation of a facilitation cell for Group D employees to get their pay slips and other information.

3. To have a Process Re-engineering for DAK handling and storage.

4. Identification of Nodal Officers.

All the activities were driven under the strong leadership of the Project Coordinators from LBSNAA and NIC. The team members as well as the coordinators burnt the midnight oil to make the project a huge success and a role model for future implementations.

The training for the staff was planned and organized like any other training program of the Academy. For the training, an eOffice Knowledge Centre was set up for the employees. It was observed during the visits that skill set of the users varied and there was a need to provide training on the basic computer knowledge before training on eOffice. For the training program, the nodal officers acted as master trainers and provided training along with the implementation team. The month long training covered various modules.

The process for making the system live was taken up in a phased manner. The idea was to take up departments which were dealing with lesser file transaction and highly motivated staff.

The Academy chose the Library to be the first section for the implementation of eFile. The target was to bring all the staff of the Library onto the system in two days. For this, the team along with the Project Coordinator had setup their base in the Library section for two days. After two days, the Library section had moved their 50 physical files onto eFile and had shifted over to eOffice. The transition from manual to electronic system was very smooth. According to the plan drafted by the management, all sections were to be migrated to eOffice in two weeks.

In the meantime, the team simultaneously worked on the BPR for handling DAK and files dealing with Accounts. After many levels of discussion with the stakeholders of the project, the implementation team came out with Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) on DAK handling and dealing Account's files. The Central Registration Unit was setup and made functional.

The system was formally made live on 6th April 2011. All Deputy Directors were given directions to only accept eFiles - no physical paper files were to be moved in the Academy. In addition, all notices and circulars were distributed only through the eOffice portal. The Valedictory function for the "Capacity Building Program on eOffice" was held on 15th April 2011.

The implementation of eOffice is not the end, but a beginning towards achieving the dream of a paperless office. The department is taking several steps to sustain the momentum. The various steps in this direction include a periodic review mechanism to monitor the issues and provide quick resolutions, setting up a facilitation centre for Group D employees and expanding the feature set of the product at regular intervals to provide more benefits to the user.

To increase the visibility of eOffice at the national level, the academy has included eOffice as a module in every training program held at LBSNAA.

This case study is a success story and brings out the best practices and the approach followed at LBSNAA. The department utilized its strengths and resources to their maximum potential to achieve their goals.

Other departments willing to implement eOffice can examine the best practices of LBSNAA and devise their own approach, suited to their environment and needs.

Phase	Activities	Duration
Phase 0 : Base work for Implementation	- Preparation of Roadmap for Implementation - Scanning of Active Physical files of all sections - Data Collection - DSC Creation and Configuration - Installation and Configuration of Servers and Application	May 2010 - Dec 2010
Phase 1: Pre-Implementation Planning	- Study of the working style - Study of File Naming Convention - Finalization of folder structure for KMS - Standardization of File Naming - Infrastructure Gap Analysis - Procurement of Hardware	Dec 2010 - Jan 2011
Phase 2 : Capacity Building	- Setting up of Knowledge Centre - Training Design - Training and Assessment	Jan 2011 - Mar 2011
Phase 3: Transition	- Business Process Re-engineering - Setting up of Central Registry Unit (CRU) - Migration of existing data	Mar 2011 - Apr 2011
Phase 4: Going LIVE	- GO LIVE - Valedictory Function	7th April 2011 15th April 2011

Table 5.2: Project Activities of eOffice in LBSNAA

Fig. 5.5: Activities during the implementation of the Project at LBSNAA