



With a Little Help From My Friends

WHEN ORGANIZATIONS SCALE UP THEIR OPERATIONS, THE HARDEST TRANSITION TO MANAGE IS OFTEN THE INCREASED INTERFACES.



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What happens if you find yourself in a situation which is difficult to handle or maybe one you've never encountered before? Many of our clients have experienced this and called us for help. However, one in particular saw a benefit, not just from our project risk knowledge base, but also from our upstream oil and gas project experience.

Our client, a large integrated services and manufacturing company, had designed and had been constructing a complex waste-to-energy (biomass) boiler and emissions control plant as part of a green energy power-generation project. But now they found themselves in uncharted waters.

Although they normally worked directly for the project-owning utility company, their relationship was now with the utility company's main contractor, an engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) company. Their relationship with the EPC had become strained and day-to-day communications had suffered as a consequence. With construction all but complete, they were fast heading into the commissioning phase of their project.

Based on a recommendation, our client's VP of Engineering called us to explain the situation on their project and ask how we might help them deal with the issues. Reiterating we had solved similar issues for our clients on drilling rig and field development projects but never on this type of project our client's VP replied, 'That's one of the main reasons I called you,' he said. 'Your oil and gas project experience of dealing with EPC companies is exactly what I am looking for.'

We offered a number of light interventions but we all soon came to the realisation that boots on the ground were needed to provide leadership and direction to our client's technical team and to rebuild communications with the EPC client.

So what?

The issue for our client wasn't knowing how to build and install their kit, or a lack of technical know-how to get it all working. It was doing all that within an EPC contractual context. The VP understood that this is often the environment in which oil and gas projects are delivered. He valued our knowledge and experience of this over those with a greater track record in renewables energy.

The remedy was for us to provide a service of offsite support and knowhow from our base, coupled with an experienced project manager on the ground. In effect, we gave our client's technical team a peer to help them deal with their present issues and navigate a course for them to successfully deliver their project.

By helping our client deal with the increased complexity around their interfaces, we restored order to their projects and protected their reputation for delivery within the waste-to-energy and biomass arena. The next step is to transfer that capability and bake it into their Project Governance.

We also proved the value, we have always believed was there of cross industry experience between the upstream oil and gas industry into the upstream energy industry generally and in this case specifically, a green energy project.

So successful was this Peer Assist approach that we've since implemented it on other green energy projects. But that's another story.

"Your experience of dealing with EPC companies is exactly what I am looking for"

Within days, we had one of our seasoned project managers onsite. With our in-house team providing remote support, we immediately made a positive impact across all the projects' interfaces.