

How to Get Usability into the Project Plan

Create the path of least resistance. Embed up front.

1. This is a usability problem. Use your skills! Learn about the business context (process, actors, constraints, etc.).
2. Make usability easier to have in a sales proposal/project scope/project plan than not.
3. Work on the true beginning of the process. By the time you get to project planning, the scope of services has long been set.
4. Become a key selling point of the firm's services. "The Acme Co. approach is centered on the user..." Be a wow/cool part of sales presentations.
5. Make a lot of noise! Be sure sales knows you exist—cold call *them*. Get coverage in the post-project communications. Conduct awareness level training (two hour session) and invite everyone in the firm.
6. Embed usability in every step of the process. Sales collateral should highlight usability services. Firm qualifications ("case studies") should include usability results. Put yourself on the sale phone lists. Train the legal contract reviewers to ask "what about usability?" Insert a usability work stream in corporate methods/processes. Add usability tasks to the standard project plan template. (In each of these tasks, get the appropriate "guru" to help with this.)

The business process (typical professional service firm)

