A comparison of two editions of the RIBA Plan of Work

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Abstract
The RIBA Plan of Work describes the way a construction process should be organized. Although not officially approved by the RIBA council, a new plan of work was published in 2000 with the intention of replacing the RIBA Plan of Work, so it is useful to analyse both in terms of the organizational structure they impose upon construction projects. Using analytical principles from organizational theory, both plans are analysed by converting them into organizational matrices and assessing their relative complexities, the load on participants, decentralization of responsibility, number of interfaces and the extent to which they provide for co-ordination and control. This demonstrates first, that the analysis of organizational structure is an appropriate approach for undertaking comparisons of such documents; and second, that while both plans of work are of roughly equal complexity, the new one is more demanding on the participants; produces a higher number of interfaces between processes, and provides for more co-ordination than the old one. Neither plan deals with controlling the output of individuals, leaving it as an internal matter for each participating organization.

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