<Agency>

TechStat Guide

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# How to Use this Guide

This guide is written to support TechStat implementation at <<Insert Agency Name>>. The guidance was created based on the implementation of TechStat at the Office of Management and Budget; however, it contains very specific guidance on process, procedures and responsibilities at <<Insert Agency Name>>. This guide does not describe processes or actions to be taken at other agencies or at the Office of Management and Budget. Please contact <<Insert agency TechStat Management contact information>> should you have any questions related to this document.

###### <<<Please Note: Agency officials are expected to tailor this guide and related toolkit materials as needed in order to successfully apply the TechStat tool and concepts within their agency’s existing organizational structure. The guide template acknowledges the potential for agency adaptation by referring to roles like the TechStat Team, CIO, and Investment Review Board (IRB) generically; these terms will require further definition by each agency. In many cases, the best implementation of TechStat will be as a type of meeting conducted by and for the IRB, in close collaboration with the CIO, with the assistance of a TechStat Team as outlined in this template. Because the TechStat model represents a change from “business as usual,” its success depends on demonstrated leadership from agency officials at all levels. E-Gov analysts and the TechStat Toolkit (available at <http://www.cio.gov/TechStat>) will empower agencies to rapidly operationalize this accountability tool. >>>

# What is TechStat?

## The Challenge

**What is TechStat?**

* Face-to-face, evidence-based accountability reviews of IT programs
* Results in concrete actions to address weaknesses
* Reduce wasteful spending by turning around troubled programs and terminating failed programs sooner
* Forum for identifying lessons learned to better manage Federal IT investments

The Federal government invests approximately $80 billion per year in information technology (IT). Yet far too often, these investments fail to deliver on their plans without adequate intervention or warning, resulting in billions of wasted taxpayer dollars. We must change the way Washington works when it comes to IT.

## The Solution

On June 30, 2009, the Federal Chief Information Officer (CIO) launched the IT Dashboard, which allows the American people to monitor IT investments across the Federal government. If a program is over budget or behind schedule, the IT Dashboard tells you that, and by how much. The IT Dashboard also provides contact information for the person responsible, the agency CIO, and allows the public to provide feedback.

However, it is not enough to simply shine a light on IT programs and hope results follow. As the President said in his inaugural speech “those of us who manage the public's dollars will be held to account, to spend wisely, reform bad habits, and do our business in the light of day, because only then can we restore the vital trust between a people and their government.” Following the President’s lead, on January 13, 2010 the Federal CIO held the first TechStat Accountability Session (or more simply, TechStat). A TechStat is a face-to-face, evidence-based review of an IT program, undertaken with agency leadership, powered by the IT Dashboard. In each TechStat session, the team works together to carefully examine program data, with a focus on problem solving that will lead to concrete action to improve overall performance.

However, in some cases, a TechStat may reveal that the best course of action for an investment is to temporarily be halted or even terminated. Finding these potentially failing programs sooner promotes greater accountability, saves taxpayer money, and can free resources to work on efforts that are yielding better results.

## Moving Ahead

Given the size and complexity of the multi-billion dollar Federal IT Portfolio, we must relentlessly focus on the health of IT investments across the entire government. As the IT Dashboard continues to provide unprecedented insight into Federal IT investment performance, TechStat sessions allow us to take action and turn around troubled programs. As the IT Dashboard provides transparency, TechStats enable accountability by allowing Federal managers to confront challenges together, make bold adjustments, and make program success a reality. The outcomes of the sessions have not only led to improved governance, processes and results at agencies, but the lessons learned have created increased collaboration and sharing of best practice across government. The IT Dashboard and TechStat are critical to ensuring that the Federal government makes good on its promise to deliver better value and results for the American people.

In December of 2010, the Federal CIO launched a [25 Point Implementation Plan to Reform Federal Information Technology Management](http://cio.gov/documents/25-Point-Implementation-Plan-to-Reform-Federal%20IT.pdf). Central to that plan was streamlining governance and improving accountability:

“Investment Review Boards (IRBs) were created to control and evaluate the results of all major IT investments. In practice, these review boards have frequently failed to adequately manage the IT program portfolio by establishing successful projects or taking corrective action…. These IRBs will be restructured according to the “TechStat” model…. By March 2011, OMB will work with Agency CIOs and other agency leaders to stand up the “TechStat” model at the departmental level.... Agency CIOs will take on responsibility for the “TechStat” governance process within their agencies as of March 2011… Agencies will turnaround or terminate at least one-third of poorly performing projects in their portfolio within the next 18 months… Once cemented at the agency level, the “TechStat” model will be deployed at the bureau-level to ensure the effective management of large programs. Within 18 months, Agency CIOs, in collaboration with other leaders, will be responsible for deploying the tools and training necessary to ensure rollout has been completed.”[[1]](#footnote-1)

The Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996 gives agencies clear authority and responsibility to make measurable improvements in the management, performance, and strategic application of information technology to improve mission performance and service delivery to the public. In doing so, the agency Chief Information Officer shall monitor the performance of information technology programs of the agency, evaluate the performance of those programs on the basis of the applicable performance measurements, and advise the head of the agency regarding whether to continue, modify, or terminate a program or project.

1. Agencies shall embrace the TechStat model within their existing capital planning and investment control (CPIC) procedures, and embed TechStat accountability within their existing governance structures.
	1. Investment Review Boards (IRBs), ultimately responsible for information resource oversight, acting for or with the Agency Head shall champion implementation of agency TechStat sessions.
	2. The Integrated Program/Project Team (IPT)s[[2]](#footnote-2) shall be held accountable for performance. IPTs shall be measured on their progress towards milestones, cost, capabilities and any other pre-defined performance measures for the initiative.
	3. Agency performance-based management systems that feed into the IT Dashboard shall serve as the foundation for these sessions. The success of TechStat is based on the availability and quality of the data by which programs are being evaluated and the degree to which outcomes of sessions are executed. Agencies shall put in place quality improvement and assurance plans for investment performance information.
2. Agencies shall publish TechStat results in an internal collaborative tool for primary stakeholders. Results to be published shall include the status of action items, investment disposition decisions, and best practices and success stories identified.
3. Agencies shall include in the Evaluate Phase of their CPIC processes the lessons learned and best practices identified during TechStat sessions.
4. Agencies shall institute training programs for senior leadership and project managers on the TechStat process, investment performance information quality control, and the agency’s performance management system.

# TechStat Implementation

## Organizational Change Management

A TechStat Accountability Session, or TechStat, is designed to be a 60 minute in-depth review of an investment[[3]](#footnote-3) and supporting program management documentation. Though the review is comprehensive, the meeting is surgically focused on the issues impeding product delivery and arriving to specific concrete action items to turnaround the investment. This type of investment review meeting is generally quite different than how an agency’s Investment Review Boards (IRB) typically conducts its meetings. Consequently, the team responsible for implementing TechStat at the agency (referred to as TechStat Team[[4]](#footnote-4) throughout this document) will need to spend considerable time conducting internal organizational readiness sessions to train IRB executives, business program leads, and investment/project managers on the TechStat model. Existing governance models will need to be adjusted to successfully rollout the TechStat model at the agency.

The overwhelming objective of the sessions is to hold officials accountable for program success. The TechStat review goals include a realistic assessment of the investment’s performance and health, and identification of corrective actions as necessary. To achieve these goals, the TechStat Team and program teams must work collaboratively. Transparency is essential to ensure that root causes can be explored and resolved. The dialogue sets the foundation for continued open conversations between the project team and agency leadership to facilitate support, engagement, and quick issue resolution.

The TechStat process fulfils <<<Agency’s>>> Office of the Chief Information Officer’s (OCIO)’s oversight responsibility, enabling leadership to provide actionable assistance and guidance to investments, facilitating their success. Generic training materials (the “TechStat Toolkit”) for adaptation and use by agency executives and program leaders can be found at <http://www.cio.gov/TechStat>. Of particular importance when implementing the TechStat model at the agency level are the following resources found in the TechStat Toolkit: this TechStat Guide (B), a One Page Summary (C), Questions List (D), and Agency Training Deck (E).

## Governance

The IRB will serve as the primary governing body to enforce the decisions resulting from a TechStat Accountability session. It is important that the IRB include both technical and business representatives that have the authority to (re)direct resources that support a given investment. TechStat sessions are designed to conclude with tangible actions and decisions about outcomes, rather than follow-up and recommendations for another governing body. Thus appropriate membership and attendance to the IRB TechStat sessions is paramount.

### Investment Review Board Charter

*<<<Generic language to supplement existing IRB charters follows; this should be amended depending upon agency needs>>>*

#### Responsibilities and Goals

* Support the agency’s management and realization of IT requirements.
* Objectively assess investment performance and compliance to standards and controls.
* Identify appropriate corrective actions that address issues of poor performance or non-compliance.
* Foster an environment where decisions can be made that support <Agency’s> mission and strategic vision and program management best practices.
* Ensure decisions are consistent with the agency and CIO strategic plans, policies and guidelines and federal guidelines and policies.

#### Concept of Operations

* Supported by the TechStat Team for administrative assistance, analytical findings, and documenting and maintaining Board records.
* Chaired or Co-Chaired by the Chief Information Officer in the case of TechStat reviews.

#### Membership (not an all-inclusive list)

* Deputy Secretary (or designee)
* Chief Information Officer
* Chief Financial Officer
* Chief Procurement Officer

#### Meetings

* The meeting schedule is determined by the Chair in coordination with the CIO and TechStat Team. The TechStat Team is responsible for coordinating and prioritizing the schedule of investment reviews based on need for intervention.
* The Chair may invite additional subject matter experts (SMEs) and stakeholders in an advisory or supporting capacity.

### Roles and Responsibilities

Standard invitations to a TechStat Review include the TechStat Team, Investment Manager, Business Owner and IRB members. It is expected that TechStat reviews will be open to Federal employees only. The majority of the preparation for a TechStat review will be performed by the TechStat Team and CIO, with support from Investment Managers and Business Owners. Their roles and responsibilities are described below:

Table 1: TechStat Roles and Responsibilities

| Responsibility | TechStat (CPIC) Team | CIO | Investment / Project Manager | Business Owner | IRB Chair | IRB Membership |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Identify investments for TechStat | Primary | X |  |  |  | X |
| Lead the documentation review, perform critical analysis, and provide briefing materials to the IRB prior to the meeting | Primary |  |  |  |  |  |
| Support documentation review | Primary | X |  |  |  | X |
| Track and monitor action items resulting from TechStats | Primary |  |  |  |  |  |
| Brief leadership (CIO, etc.) prior to the meeting | Primary |  | X | X |  |  |
| Provide full and complete documentation to support a given review |  |  | Primary | X |  |  |
| Coordinate staffing necessary to support a review |  | Primary |  |  |  |  |
| Execute Action Plan resulting from TechStat Reviews |  |  | Primary | X |  |  |
| Present findings to IRB | Primary |  | X |  |  |  |
| Coordinate and facilitate TechStat meeting | Primary |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lead TechStat meeting and ask probing questions |  | Primary |  |  | X |  |
| Provide expert advice and objective recommendations that assist the IRB in decision-making | X | X |  |  |  |  |
| Ensure decisions are consistent with the Agency and IT strategic plans, policies and guidelines |  | X |  |  | X |  |
| Notify Investment of TechStat | Primary |  |  |  |  |  |
| Document decisions and action plan resulting from TechStat | Primary |  |  |  |  |  |
| Attend TechStat and contribute to group decisions | X | X | X | X | X | X |

## Evaluation

The TechStat Team is responsible for not only managing the logistics of TechStats, including facilitating IRB decisions, but they are also responsible for conducting the independent reviews of the targeted investments. One analyst from the TechStat team should be assigned to lead the review of a given investment. The team is responsible for:

###### Five Steps for TechStat 1. Discovery 2. Analysis 3. Preparation 4. TechStat Facilitation 5. Follow-up

###### Discovery

* Actively monitoring investments for variance to identify TechStat candidates

###### Analysis

* Prioritizing targeted investments for reviews based on need for intervention
* Requesting and reviewing investment documentation
* Engaging appropriate subject matter experts to evaluate issues and determine root cause

###### Preparation

* Informing managers that their investment has been selected for a review
* Ensuring all analysis is thoroughly vetted, assumptions are validated, and facts are checked

###### TechStat Session Facilitation

* Distilling the review results to focus on key issues impeding product delivery in an executive-level briefing for the IRB

###### Follow-up on Action Plans and Distributing Lessons Learned

### Discovery

The TechStat Team will seek to identify programs for TechStat Accountability Review Sessions. Sources to review should include (but are not limited to):

#### Data Sources

* Agency Performance Management System
* Federal IT Dashboard (CIO rating, cost and schedule rating)
* Exhibit 300 analysis (current & past)
* Rebaseline reviews and other project documentation
* GAO, IG reports, Congressional testimony
* News media
* Human intelligence

The TechStat Team should develop an ongoing list of potential TechStat candidates based on the above information and review gathered analysis with the CIO to determine if a TechStat is necessary.

#### Evaluation Criteria

Each agency will have its own criteria for escalating investments eligible for TechStat reviews. The criteria should be driven by the Federal CIO’s objective to turnaround one-third of underperforming projects in their portfolio. Typical evaluation criteria fit into the following categories:

* Cost (technical risk, opportunity cost, cost variance)
* Schedule (dependencies, schedule variance)
* Significance (organizational impact, customer satisfaction, usage)

*<<<This section should outline agency-specific methodology, be quantitative and specific where possible, and include the responsible parties and cadence for information/data delivery and review. >>>*

Investments are best fit for a TechStat if they have significant underlying issues and the need for management intervention is clear and immediate.

### Analysis

#### Types of TechStat Reviews

Once an investment has been identified for a TechStat review, the assigned TechStat team analyst should work to examine the investment to the fullest extent. Every TechStat analysis will require the following basic outputs, as well as additional outputs as requested by the CIO:

* TechStat thesis (concise statement that describes why this investment is in need of intervention), developed by analyzing investment documentation requested
* Questions and information requests to project managers regarding the investment being reviewed
* Briefing deck for the IRB that highlights key issues needing resolution

A TechStat Review can take on one of the typical forms in Table 2 based on the Investment Lifecycle phase.

Table 2: Type of TechStat Review by Investment Lifecycle

|  | Initial Baseline Review | Control Review | Rebaseline Request Review |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Applicable Investment Lifecycle | PlanningDevelopment | DevelopmentMixed Lifecycle | DevelopmentMixed Lifecycle |
| Goal | To verify the technical content of the Performance Measurement Baseline, assess the estimates related to resource requirements and schedule and identify potential risks | To provide a systematic assessment of the investment’s current state and understand the risks and requirements that have arisen since the initiation of the investment | To redefine the Performance Measurement Baseline of a given investment because of a significant change in project goals or the baseline is no longer useful as a management tool |

Note: There may be special cases where none of the three formats above are appropriate for the review. In those cases, please consult with the CPIC Policy Lead, the CIO and responsible parties to determine the appropriate presentation and documentation requirements for review.

#### Documentation Request

Table 3 provides a list of the types of supporting documentation that could be requested of the investment for review. It is important to note that not all of the documents listed below would be applicable to every type of investment. An agency may wish to create a more granular representation of this list below based on type of investment being reviewed (e.g. process improvement vs. technology upgrade).

Table 3: Recommended Documentation Requests by Investment Lifecycle Phase

|  | Initial Baseline Review | Control Review | Rebaseline Request Review |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Applicable Investment Lifecycle | PlanningDevelopment | DevelopmentMixed Lifecycle | DevelopmentMixed Lifecycle |
| Supporting Documentation\*(submitted 2-4 weeks prior to the review date) | * Project Charter (or similar document that describes the mission/need statement and/or performance gap)
* Modernization Roadmap
* Project Schedule and Cost Estimate
* Integrated Baseline Review Results Packet
* Risk Management Plan
* Security Plan
* Acquisition Plan
* Segment Architecture
* Results of other Internal or Independent Reviews or Audits
* Alternatives Analysis
 | * Project Charter or Project Management Plan
* Most Recent Agency-level Program Control Review
* Project Schedule and Cost Estimate
* Risk Management Plan and Risk Register
* Operational Analysis
* Post Implementation Review
* Acquisition Plan
* Segment Architecture
* Conceptual, Systems, Technology, and/or Data Architecture or Performance Referance Model (PRM), Business Reference Model (BRM), Data Reference Model (DRM), Service Reference Model (SRM), or Technical Reference Model (TRM)
* Test Results
* Security Plan of Action and Milestones (POA&M)
* Results of other Internal or Independent Reviews or Audits
* Alternatives Analysis
* Performance Management Plan (goals, metrics, and actual results)
 | * Project Charter or Project Management Plan
* Integrated Baseline Review Results Packet
* Project Schedule and Cost Estimate
* Risk Management Plan and Risk Register
* Operational Analysis
* Post Implementation Review
* Alternatives Analysis
* Acquisition Plan
* Segment Architecture
* Conceptual, Systems, Technology, and/or Data Architecture or PRM, BRM, DRM, SRM, or TRM
* Test Results
* Security POA&M
* Results of other Internal or Independent Reviews or Audits
* Performance Management Plan (goals, metrics, and actual results)
 |

#### Key Areas for Analysis

##### Refer to the TechStat Questions List (D) for a broad list of questions to enable effective analysis.

* *Business Impact (Mission Nexus):* This includes business importance, mission, priority and strategic alignment, primary users and stakeholder engagement, executive sponsorship, governance, and oversight.
* *Operation and Execution:* This includes issue and risk management, project team capability, vendor management, cost and schedule variance, usage, availability and leveling of resources.
* *Technical Implementation:* This includes architectural alignment (how well is the investment’s architecture aligned with the enterprise and enterprise targets), architecture maturity[[5]](#footnote-5), technology supportability, security and privacy compliance, technical performance, cross-cutting capabilities and reuse possibilities.

The TechStat Team should never assume that they are in full receipt of all information to inform a TechStat after the initial documentation request. Prior to a TechStat, the TechStat team should ask the investment / project team to review the analysis and briefing deck and provide feedback and additional information to better inform the assessment presented in the final briefing deck. Similarly, TechStat Team analysts should always seek the advice and counsel of subject matter experts who can speak to policy areas, business requirements, or highly specialized technical areas to ensure the highest quality review, and to ensure facts do not come into question at the time of the TechStat. Please note that a TechStat review is primarily a focused, high-priority review and other more comprehensive reviews such as Independent Verifications and Validations (IV&Vs), Operational Analysis, Root-Cause Analysis, etc., which reveal much more detail about an investment, may be requested as an action item coming out of the TechStat.

The analytical work is essential to the success of a TechStat. Analysis should be rigorous and not simply based on superficial review of readily available materials. Since the TechStat meeting is intended to lead to conclusive decisions on remediating action plans, there is no time accounted for in the meeting to debate the merits of the analysis.

### Preparation

As the analysis nears completion, the TechStat Team should begin to develop an executive-level briefing deck that speaks to the results of the analysis. At a minimum, the briefing deck slides should present the following topics:

* *TechStat Thesis:* concise statement that describes why this investment is in need of intervention.
* *Program Overview:* clear articulation of the objectives of the investment from a business perspective.
* *Project Plan:* expected deliverables over the next one year.
* *Issue Analysis:* accurately identify most significant issues and root causes.
* *Governance:* who is accountable for delivering the product (should include the Integrated Program/Project Team members), and what oversight bodies exist to mitigate risks and oversee successful product/service delivery.

 includes a list of recommended presentation topics that can be tailored to agency-specific needs. When compiling the briefing deck, the TechStat Team analyst must keep in mind the time constraints and purpose of the meeting. The briefing should be limited to no more than fifteen minutes, as the majority of the session should be spent on issue resolution. Thus, the briefing should be focused on communicating only the most pressing issues that require executive level intervention. Other issues identified during the analysis that can be handled by the investment or project team should be addressed outside of the TechStat.

The TechStat Team analyst should work with the investment or project team to formulate the briefing deck. The analyst should ensure that the investment’s key issues are well communicated and the investment or project team should ensure that no inaccuracies are presented.

Table 4: Recommended Investment Presentation Topics by Lifecycle Phase

|  | Initial Baseline Review | Control Review | Rebaseline Request Review |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Applicable Investment Lifecycle  | PlanningDevelopment | DevelopmentMixed Lifecycle | DevelopmentMixed Lifecycle |
| Executive Level Presentation(drafted 1 week prior to the review date) | * Program Overview / Background
* Measurable Goals and Objectives
* Project Schedule and Cost Estimate
* Risk Management Plan and Initial Risk Register
* Alternatives Analysis
* Description of Internal Approval and Overall Governance Framework
* Dependencies
* Target Architecture
* Acquisition Plan
* Project Manager Qualifications
* Project Manager’s Appraisal of status, reliability of estimates and requirements for success
 | * Program Overview / Background
* Measurable Goals and Objectives with Actual Results
* Project Schedule and Cost Estimate
* Historical Variance
* Plans to Prevent Future Variance
* Risk Management Plan and Top risks and mitigation strategies
* Alternatives Analysis
* Description of Internal Approval and Overall Governance Framework
* Dependencies
* Target Architecture Alignment
* Security Metrics
* Acquisition Plan
* Vendor Performance
* Project Team Capability
* Organizational Change Management
* Technical Challenges
* Development, testing, and deployment plans overview
* Security and privacy approach
* Project Manager’s Appraisal of status, reliability of estimates and requirements for success
 | * Program Overview / Background
* Measurable Goals and Objectives with Actual Results (Original And Proposed)
* Rationale for Change
* Project Schedule and Cost Estimate (Original and proposed)
* Historical Variance
* Previous Corrective Action Plans
* Plans to Prevent Future Rebaselining
* Risk Management Plan and Top risks and mitigation strategies
* Updated Alternatives Analysis
* Description of Internal Approval and Overall Governance Framework
* Dependencies
* Target Architecture Alignment
* Security compliance
* Acquisition Plan
* Vendor Performance
* Project Team Capability
* Project Manager’s Appraisal of status, reliability of estimates and requirements for success
 |

### Facilitating a TechStat

To ensure the TechStat achieves its objectives, the TechStat Team lead analyst should prepare appropriately for the session. It is essential that the CIO is fully briefed prior to the meeting so that he or she can confirm that the thesis is solid, and the supporting analysis is relevant and verifiable. Similarly, the TechStat analyst should ensure that invited subject matter experts were actively engaged in the analysis and thus can be actively engaged during the session if questioned about root causes and potential solutions.

While the CIO and IRB Chair will lead the session, the analyst should be an active facilitator, presenting and clarifying important facts, asking probing questions of participants, and engaging subject matter experts for support. Use the Agenda (J) at <http://www.cio.gov/TechStat> as a reference. Additionally, the analyst must take accurate notes reflecting decisions and outcomes so that they can be recounted following the meeting in a formal follow-up memo. Meeting minutes may also be used to facilitate this, see Meeting Minutes (M).

Action items should have clear owners and deadlines and focus on outcomes instead of planning, as much as possible. Examples of successful (redacted) action items include:

* Decouple investment: halt development on <module name> and move forward with <module name>. *Deadline: Month Day, Year*
* Use an incremental delivery approach to deliver customer-facing functionality every six months. *Deadline: Every Six Months beginning Month Day, Year*
* Deliver milestone X. *Deadline: Month Day, Year*
* Deploy X pilots to handle electronic end-to-end claims processing. *Deadline: Month Day, Year*
* Retire legacy system and migrate data to new system. *Deadline: Month Day, Year*
* Reduce data centers from X to X. *Deadline: Month Day, Year*
* Implement cloud-based email for 100% of users. *Deadline: Month Day, Year*
* Move from X% usage to X% usage. *Deadline: Month Day, Year*
* Reduce lifecycle costs by $XM

### Follow-Up and Managing Outcomes

#### Potential High-Level Outcomes

As an output from the TechStat review, the IRB will determine if the IT investment should: continue as planned, continue with modifications, or halt continued investment, specifically:

1. Continue as planned with minor recovery and corrective action plans;
2. Continue with modifications such as:
	1. Rescope and rebaseline,
	2. Reassess make/buy approach,
	3. Reassign project team and/or vendor,
	4. Implement extensive corrective action plans,
	5. Thorough root cause analysis of performance issues;
3. Halt Investment and:
	1. Determine if the investment is still necessary,
	2. Recharter - Agency performs a deeper analysis of the program,
	3. Stabilize the application to a point of non-impact to users and business operations.

#### Managing Action Items

Action items and recovery plans will be actively managed and monitored by the TechStat Team. The TechStat Team gathers the action items and follow-up information that was generated in the session and creates a follow-up Memorandum to the investment detailing action steps, deadlines, and responsibilities using the template located on <http://www.cio.giov/TechStat>.

The Investment Manager should review the content prior to review by the CIO and IRB Co-Chair. Once the memo has been vetted by the Investment Manager, the action items should be finalized in a memo on agency letterhead and distributed to the Investment Manager and Business Owner.

In many cases a follow-up meeting may be required, and this should immediately be added to the TechStat Team’s planning calendar.

The TechStat Team will track all action items in a consolidated database. At the beginning of each week they will send the Investment Managers a reminder of all action items due that week. At the close of the week, the support team will email the Investment Manager requesting a status on the action items and alert the CIO where action items are at risk of being late or unachievable in a reasonable timeframe.

Action Items can be given one of the following status indicators:

1. In progress
2. Complete
3. Deferred
4. Past Due
5. No Longer Applicable
6. \*Not started

Remind the investment manager of the action item and ask when he/she expects to have the item and complete and question him/her enough to understand why there is a delay in completing the action item. After the conversation, send an update to the action item list according to the following rules:

1. Investment has completed the action item and provided sufficient documentation to support the claim
* Mark the action item **complete**
1. Investment still agrees with the action item but needs more time to complete
* Mark the action item as **past due**
1. Investment has been overcome with higher order priorities (e.g. natural disaster; impending administration policy)
* Mark the action item as **deferred or no longer applicable** depending on the nature of events
1. Investment requests in writing before the due date to extend the due date for valid reasons (e.g. the CFO is not available to meet until the following month) and all parties agree that a new date does not impact the intentions of the memo.
* **Change the due date**
1. Investment has submitted a draft of the documentation that is under review
* Keep the action item as **in progress**
1. Investment submitted documentation that does not meet the intention of the action item.
	1. Immediately inform the responder that the documentation is insufficient and obtain agreement on a date when the action will be completed.
* Keep the action item as **in progress,** do not change the due date
	1. If they miss the new date, immediately escalate to the CIO. Obtain a written agreement on a new date.
* Mark the action item as **past due,** do not change the due date
	1. If next date is missed immediately escalate to the CIO. Understand the outcomes of that meeting and act appropriately.
		+ If the outcome is a new memorandum of understanding, resulting in a reworked action plan, **defer** all outstanding action items; add **new action items** to the existing TechStat session that result from a new memo from the IRB co-chairs or agency CIO to the Investment Manager and Business owner. Use the template for the revised memo held in the TechStat repository.

#### Lessons Learned

Agencies shall include in the Evaluate Phase of their CPIC processes the lessons learned and best practices identified during TechStat sessions at both an investment and portfolio level at a minimum.

##### Investment Level

Each investment reviewed in a TechStat Accountability Session should at a minimum be tracked into one of the following outcomes: Proceed with minimal intervention, accelerated delivery, budget reduction, or termination. Many investments reviewed may fall into one or many of these buckets. An agency should determine which is more descriptive of the outcome rather than double counting results. All agencies should be working towards the goal of turning around 1/3rd of underperforming projects in their portfolio. Overall budget reductions should also be tracked as another measure of success of TechStat reviews.

Each investment reviewed will also make improvements to its execution strategy that should be written up as best practice case studies that can be shared with the team for future iterations and with other investments and programs to reduce the possibility of repeated errors, delays and cost overruns. The TechStat team should take care to work with the Investment managers and Business to document these lessons learned and best practices.

##### Portfolio Level

Systemic review of outcomes can lead to guiding principles, and improvements in quality assurance that will drive portfolio level goals and improved performance. The TechStat team sits in the best position to look across these reviews to drive improvement.

From an evaluation perspective, the TechStat team should be able to continue to evaluate the data quality of what highlights an investment for being in need of a TechStat intervention and recommend changes to performance management tools and reporting processes so that executives are alerted to the most accurate and timely performance data. By reviewing outcomes the TechStat team should be able to determine which investments are not planned well, and should be revisited before significant investments are made. Evaluation of the action items may also lead the agency to create guiding principles for future investments (e.g. no investment shall have a lifecycle longer than 10 years, and customer-facing deliverable iterations longer than 18 months)

Agencies shall institute continuous training programs for project managers on the TechStat process, investment performance information quality control, and the agency’s performance management system.

# Appendix

## TechStat Process Flow

Each TechStat should follow a similar evolution beginning with discovery of the investments that require intervention and ending with relentless oversight of the action plan to ensure the investment is turned-around, halted or terminated. Figure 1 below depicts the typical process flow and is followed by more specific inputs, activities, outputs and timelines for each of the steps.

Figure 1: TechStat Process Flow



| STEP 1.1 | DISCOVERY: Identify Investment for Review |
| --- | --- |
| Input | IT Dashboard, Investment Scoring, Cost, Schedule and Performance DataExternal sources – GAO, OIG, News, Human Intelligence |
| TechStat Toolkit  | TechStat Guide (B), Questions List (D)  |
| Activities | * TechStat Team members conduct regular meetings to prioritize reviews
* CIO reviews input documentation to determine prioritization of investments for review; IRB may contribute to prioritization
 |
| Output | TechStat Review List Document (including justification for review) |
| Duration | Meetings are conducted regularly |

| STEP 1.2 | DISCOVERY: Notify Investment Manager and Business Owner |
| --- | --- |
| Input | TechStat Review List Document |
| TechStat Toolkit  | Questions List (D), Notifications (I), One Page Summary (C), Agency Training Deck (E)  |
| Activities | TechStat Team provides notification to the investment manager and business owner that the investment has been selected for a TechStat* Notification should include what a TechStat is and why the investment has been chosen for a review
* Notification is provided through email with the date and time of the TechStat Meeting (to be no more than 1 month away from notifications) and the deadline for submitting relevant documentation and artifacts (to be no more than 1 week away from notification)
 |
| Output | Official Notification (email or memorandum) and list of relevant documentation and artifacts |
| Duration | 1 business day |

| STEP 2.1 | ANALYSIS: Collect Investment Documentation  |
| --- | --- |
| Input | Official Notification (email or memorandum) with Checklist of appropriate documentation, GAO Reports, OIG Reports, News, Human Intelligence |
| TechStat Toolkit  | TechStat Guide (B)  |
| Activities | * Investment Manager reviews list of relevant documentation and artifacts, confirms currency of documentation to TechStat Team, and submits artifacts to TechStat Team
 |
| Output | Submission of current investment artifacts |
| Duration | 5 business days |

| STEP 2.2 | ANALYSIS: Engage Subject Matter Experts |
| --- | --- |
| Input | Relevant documentation and artifacts (both internal and external) |
| TechStat Toolkit  | TechStat Guide (B)  |
| Activities | * TechStat Team compiles questions, concerns, issues and documentation that require subject matter expertise for review
* TechStat team engages subject matter experts in analysis and process their input
 |
| Output | Subject matter expert review |
| Duration | 4 business days |

| STEP 2.3 | ANALYSIS: Formulate Thesis, Validate Facts and Synthesize Analysis  |
| --- | --- |
| Input | Relevant documentation and artifacts |
| TechStat Toolkit  | Briefing Deck (F), Questions List (D), Corrective Action Plan (H)  |
| Activities | * TechStat Team engages Investment Manager to answer any follow-up questions and resolve any disputes of data, facts and assumptions
* TechStat Team categorizes issues and root causes to determine those that rise to the level of needing executive intervention
* Corrective action plan should be used to organize ideas about next steps; the degree to which this is completed prior to the session is investment dependent
* TechStat Team develops thesis that concisely describes the reason why the investment was chosen for a TechStat
 |
| Output | Pre-Meeting Findings Compilation |
| Duration | 5-10 business days |

| STEP 3.1 | PREPARATION: Invite Relevant Attendees  |
| --- | --- |
| Input | Pre-Meeting Findings |
| TechStat Toolkit  | Notifications (I)  |
| Activities | * TechStat Team ensures IRB meeting is scheduled and a sufficient number of the members (or their designees) will be present for voting.
* TechStat Team ensures Investment Manager, Program Manager / Business Owner, and Executive Sponsor will be in attendance.
* TechStat Team ensures subject matter experts are available to attend the session should the IRB have questions during the session that require their input (may include acquisition, legal, human resources, enterprise architecture, etc.).
* As a general rule, contractors are not present at TechStat sessions to ensure open communication can be had about vendor performance and any decisions that may impact the acquisition strategy. TechStat Team should obtain prior approval from the CIO should the Investment request to have contract staff at the meeting.
 |
| Output | * Meeting Invitations
* Guest List / Sign-In Sheet
 |
| Duration | 2 days |

| STEP 3.2 | PREPARATION: Prepare Executive Briefing  |
| --- | --- |
| Input | * Relevant Investment Documentation
* Pre-Meeting Findings
 |
| TechStat Toolkit  | Corrective Action Plan (H – optional), (Briefing Deck (F) or Follow Up Briefing Deck (G)  |
| Activities | TechStat Team should prepare slides that are heavy on data and clearly explain why the investment was selected for the TechStat. Slides should have an easily communicated thesis statement describing the interest of the review. |
| Output | Draft Executive Briefing |
| Duration | 1-3 business days |

| STEP 3.3 | PREPARATION: Complete Administrative and Logistics Support |
| --- | --- |
| Input | Guest List |
| TechStat Toolkit  | Notifications (I), Agenda (J – optional), Sign In Sheet (K), Meeting Logistics (L), Meeting Minutes (M)  |
| Activities | * Confirm room and audio-visual reservations.
* Prepare name cards and determine seating arrangement.
* Make copies of the briefing material and ensure electronic version is available. for projection.
 |
| Output | Sign In Sheet |
| Duration | 1-3 business days |

| STEP 3.4 | PREPARATION: Pre-Brief CIO |
| --- | --- |
| Input | Draft Executive Briefing |
| TechStat Toolkit  | Briefing Deck (F) or Follow Up Briefing Deck (G)  |
| Activities | * TechStat Team schedules pre-brief with CIO to outline the thesis and major issues of the investment to be presented to the IRB (pre-brief should occur at least 3 business days prior to the IRB).
* CIO provides feedback to improve the briefing and may request additional analysis to supplement the brief.
* TechStat Team coordinates response to CIO feedback and adjusts brief as required.
 |
| Output | Final Investment Review Board Briefing |
| Duration | 1 business day |

| STEP 4 | TECHSTAT FACILITATION |
| --- | --- |
| Input | Final Investment Review Board Briefing |
| TechStat Toolkit  | Notifications (I), Agenda (J – optional), Sign In Sheet (K), Meeting Logistics (L), Meeting Minutes (M)  |
| Activities | * TechStat Team, with Investment Manager, brief IRB on findings.
* TechStat Team facilitates the meeting ensuring that the 1 hour meeting timeframe is managed, probing questions are asked, and conversation drives towards action items:
	+ 2 minutes: Introductions
	+ 10-15 minutes: Briefing of findings
	+ 30-35 minutes: IRB discussion of potential corrective actions
	+ 5-15 minutes: Decisions on corrective action items, owners and reasonable deadlines
* TechStat Team recounts and records action items including action owner and deadlines.
 |
| Output | * Sign-In Sheet
* Meeting Minutes
* Action Items
 |
| Duration | 1 business day  |

| STEP 5.1 | FOLLOW-UP: Distribute Memo of Record |
| --- | --- |
| Input | * Action Items
* Draft Follow Up Memo
 |
| TechStat Toolkit  | Follow Up Memo (N)  |
| Activities | * TechStat Team drafts memo of record and distributes draft to CIO, IRB Co-Chair and Investment Manager.
* TechStat Team finalizes memo and distributes to Investment Manager, Business Owner and all others identified as necessary to copy on the distribution.
* TechStat Team finalizes meeting minutes and maintains with additional records of the IRB.
 |
| Output | * Final Follow Up Memo
* Meeting Minutes
 |
| Duration | 2 business days |

| STEP 5.2 | FOLLOW-UP: Enter and Track Action Items to Conclusion in TechStat Repository |
| --- | --- |
| Input | Follow Up Memo |
| TechStat Toolkit  | TechStat Guide (B), Corrective Action Plan (H), Follow Up Briefing Deck (O)  |
| Activities | * TechStat Team enters action items, action owners and deadlines into repository for transparent monitoring.
* TechStat Team follows-up with Investment Manager to ensure action items are completed, reviews documentation as evidence that intent of corrective action item was achieved and resulted in improved performance.
* TechStat Team serves as conduit between Investment Manager and CIO to resolve issues where an action item may need to be revised, deadline extended, or eliminated because it is no longer applicable.
 |
| Output | Updated Repository |
| Duration | 2 hours – end of action plan |

| STEP 5.3 | FOLLOW-UP: Incorporate Lessons Learned in Enterprise |
| --- | --- |
| Input | Investment Action Plans, Responses, and Outcomes |
| TechStat Toolkit  | TechStat Guide (B), Corrective Action Plan (H), Outcomes Briefing Deck (O)  |
| Activities | Meticulous tracking of follow up action items through completion. |
| Output | Detailed lessons learned shared within agency; high-level best practices shared with CIOC; outcomes shared with OMB. |
| Duration | Continuous |

 provides a time phased depiction of the steps described above.



Figure 2: Notional TechStat Process Timeline

1. 25 Point Implementation Plan to Reform Federal IT. December 2010. Page 28-29. <http://cio.gov/documents/25-Point-Implementation-Plan-to-Reform-Federal%20IT.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The definition, roles and responsibilities of Integrated Project Teams are described in [OMB Circular A-11 Part 7 Supplemental Guidance to the Exhibit 300: Capital Programming Guide](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/a11_current_year/part7.pdf). The roles and responsibilities are also being revisited as part of the [25 Point Implementation Plan to Reform Federal IT](http://www.cio.gov/documents/25-Point-Implementation-Plan-to-Reform-Federal%20IT.pdf). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. OMB TechStat Accountability sessions were conducted on Major IT Investments. It is expected that agency TechStats will and can be done at more granular levels including programs, projects, and non-major investments. Though this guide often uses the term investment, in this case specifically, the term is meant to account for any of the levels previously described. <<<*Alternatively, an agency can alter the guide to ensure the level of clarification necessary for the agency is made throughout the document.>>>* [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Please see Section: for more information on the roles and responsibilities of the TechStat Team. *<<<Agencies are expected to tailor the roles and responsibilities to agency-specific needs.>>>* [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Organizational Transformation. A Framework for Assessing and Improving Enterprise Architecture Management (Version 2.0). August 2010. GAO-10-846G. <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d03584g.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)