

What will we do?

How will we do it?

How well did we do?

A Higher Order View of Project Management

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Project managers have been fixated on the PMBOK. The number of PMPs and the strong popularity of training programs that are focused on passing the

certification exam is testimony to that. But PMBOK is only a small but necessary part of this story.

Open your mind to the following possibility. Projects are unique and the best fit models for managing them should also be unique. That should open your mind to the flexibility and creativity that is prerequisite to effective project management. In the complex project landscape, the most effective project management approaches will be ones that have been designed to accommodate:

- *the characteristics of the project*
- *the organizational environment*
- *the external market situation*

All three of these are dynamic. When any one of them changes the project management approach might also change. The objective will always be to maintain the alignment of the project management approach to the project in order to achieve maximum business value and minimization of the risk of project failure. In other words, projects are unique and so should the best fit model for managing them also be unique. That is suggestive of a higher order view of projects and project management that has not been developed by the project management thought leaders. That is, not until the business model introduced here came to be.

The immediate reaction is what does all of “Hybrid Project Management” mean to the organization? It has strategic implications and should be renamed “Strategic Business Project Management.” This article launches that topic.

UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITIONS

The Hybrid Project Management (HPM) Framework is a unique process that designs and adapts a PMLC model based on the project characteristic, the organizational culture and environment and the dynamic conditions of the marketplace. The unique elements of the HPM Framework include:

Co-manager model

Customized brainstorming process

The Set-Up Phase

Bundled Change Management Process

Vetted tools, templates, and processes to adapt the chosen PMLC model

The Characteristics of the Project

That higher order view of projects is a four-quadrant landscape of project types as shown below.

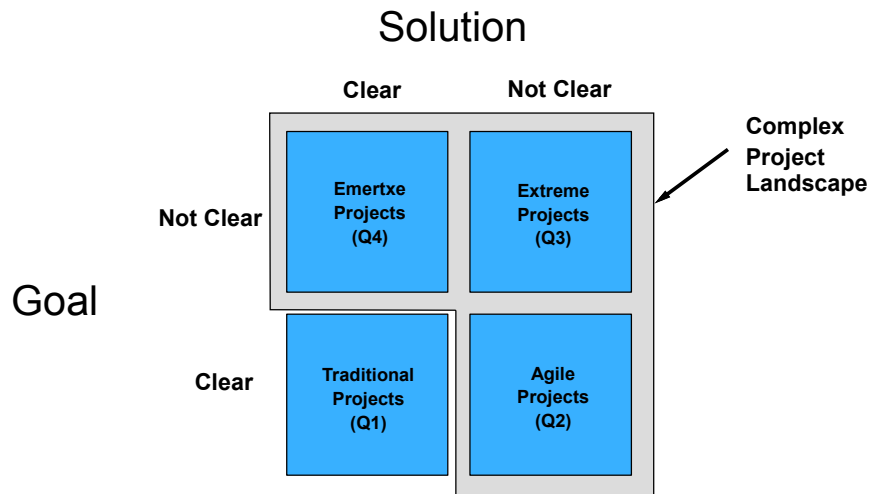


Figure 1: The Complex Project Landscape

These four quadrants define projects that are very different and that require very different management approaches. But know that these approaches will draw heavily on the 5 Process Groups and 10 Knowledge Areas of the PMBOK.

➤ **Traditional Projects**

For these projects both the goal and solution are clearly known and completely defined at the outset. A WBS and project schedule can be developed and used to effectively manage the project. Few changes are expected. Life could not be simpler.

➤ **Agile Projects**

For these projects the goal is clearly known and completely defined but how to achieve it (the solution) may be almost completely known, partially known, or hardly known at all. A WBS can't be generated nor can a project schedule. These projects are managed in iterations where each iteration is designed to learn and discover missing pieces of the solution. Hopefully all the missing pieces can be discovered before the time or budget runs out. These are a higher risk than the Traditional Projects and an acceptable solution may not be found.

➤ **Extreme projects**

For these projects neither the goal nor its solution are clearly known at the outset. R&D projects are usually typical of these projects. These projects are also managed in iterations where each iteration is designed to learn more about the goal and possible solutions. The results usually reduce the scope of the goal and identify possible solution paths for the updated goal. At the end the goal and solution converge.

➤ **Emertxe Projects**

For these projects a solution to some problem exists at the outset but the goal to which they align is not clearly known. The project is done in iterations where each iteration is an attempt to discover or define the goal. The resulting deliverable goal may or may not have business value.

The big question is where does your project fall in these four quadrants?

The Organizational Environment

Management can entertain all sorts of new business opportunities and envision processes and practices that work perfectly. Someone has to pay attention to the ability of the enterprise to deliver on these dreams. In most organizations, human resource capacity, among all other resources, usually happens by accident rather than as the result of a human resource management system that aligns resources to the strategic plan of the organization.

Market opportunities can only be exploited within the capacity of the enterprise to support them. Two of the big questions for senior management is how to spend current enterprise resources for maximum business value, and how to grow those resources to align with future strategic portfolios.

Enterprise capacity is both a constraining factor and an enabling factor. As a constraining factor, what the enterprise should do is limited by what the enterprise can do in the near term, and finally leads to what the enterprise will do. As a counter measure to the constraining factor, the enterprise needs to assure the alignment of not only resource supply, but also resource availability against the business demands for those resources. So enterprise capacity is a dynamic tool that can be adjusted as a deliverable from the planning exercises. Expanding or enhancing resources will reduce the schedule contention between resources, but that is a business decision that arises during the fulfillment of the strategic plan.

As an enabling factor, resource managers collaborate with functional business managers and line of business (LOB) managers to creatively solve resource availability problems and enable the exploitation of new business opportunities. These collaborative efforts result in the commissioning, scope revision, rescheduling, postponement, and termination of projects, programs, and portfolios. This is the reality imposed by the ECPM. We have no choice but to deal with it!

The External Market Situation

The feeding frenzy that has arisen from the relentless advances of technology and the Internet has had several disruptive effects on the business climate. These effects are global, and have unknowingly put many businesses in harm's way. The Internet is the gateway for anyone, anywhere to create and sell their products and services! Business sustainability now depends on how effective a business can erect barriers to entry for new competitors, and how it can "out create and outpace" the competition. Anyone, regardless of their physical location, can be a competitor. Even if you don't sell in the international markets, your competitors can and do, so you are pulled into the global marketplace and may not even be aware of it. Your business decisions must consider actual and potential global impact.

Market opportunities will come and go, and not on a schedule that organizations can predict or even be able to accommodate. Whatever project environment your organization embraces, it must be able to respond immediately. The opportunities can be internal (problem solving and process improvement to maintain or improve market position, for example) and external (new product, service and processes for meeting the needs of an expanded customer base, for example).

The Higher Order View of Project Management

That higher order view of project management is captured in the 3-phase model:

- Ideation Phase - What business situation is being addressed?
 What do you need to do?
 What will you do?

- Set-up Phase - How will you do it?

- Execution Phase - How will you know you did it?
 How well did you do?

Imbedded in the Ideation Phase are such activities as Brainstorming, Business Cases and Requirements Elicitation. Imbedded in the Set-Up Phase is PMBOK and the portfolio of project management life cycle (PMLC) models to which it applies (Traditional, Waterfall, Incremental, Prototyping, Scrum, FDD, PRINCE2, DSDM, etc., etc.). Imbedded in the Execution Phase are 5 processes: Define, Plan, Build, Monitor Control and Close.

The ECPM Framework that drives all of this is shown below in Figure 2.

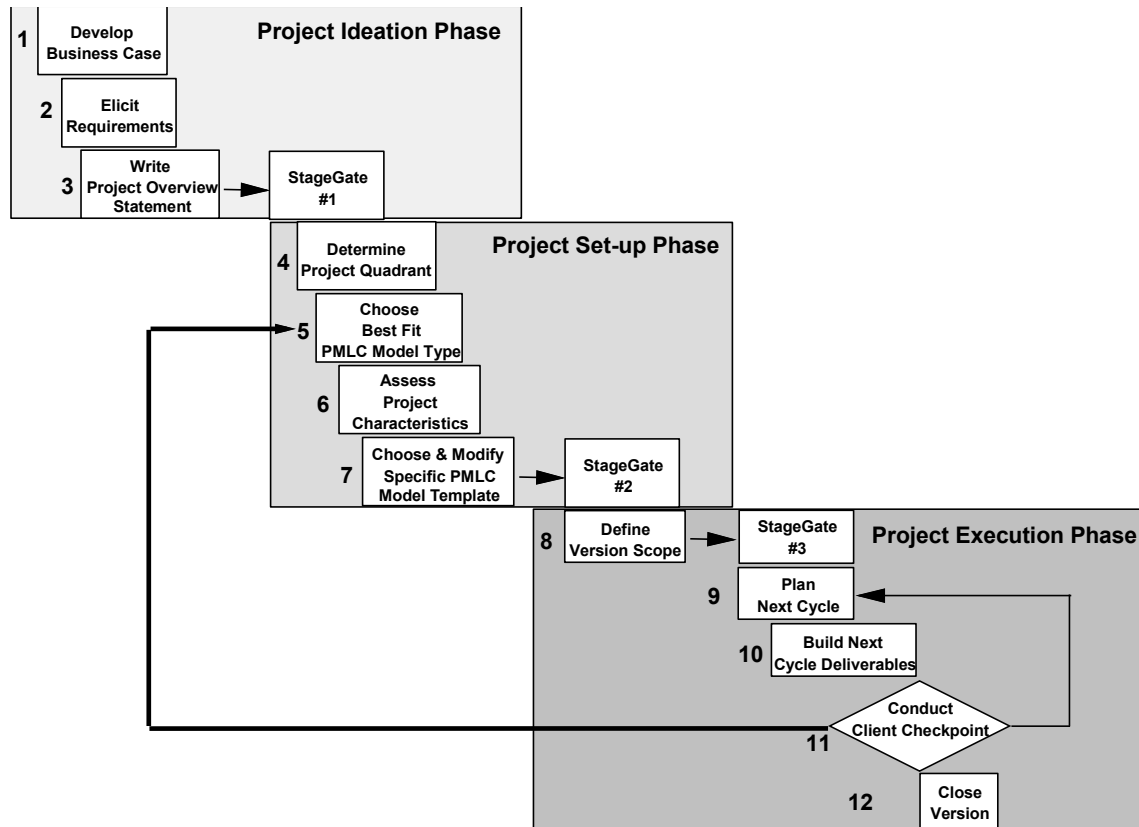


Figure 2: The ECPM Framework

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