

STATE OF THE ART OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT: 2003

Russell D. Archibald

PART 4

PROJECT MANAGEMENT IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

This discussion has attempted to present an understanding of what is happening on the various frontiers of PM around the world, and to give the reader readily accessible references (via the Internet wherever possible) to further detail on each topic. It is certain that there are pertinent topics that have not been covered, either in the interest of brevity or the lack of awareness by the author, who will greatly appreciate having these omissions brought to his attention. E-Mail: russell_archibald@yahoo.com

The discussion of each of these major topics hopefully conveys a reasonable picture of where we stand today in relation to each of these dimensions of PM. Here are a few conclusions and cautious predictions about where the discipline of PM will be in the year 2008.

Characteristics of Project Management

The described basic characteristics of PM have not changed appreciably in the past 10 years and are not expected to change much within the foreseeable future.

Major Project Management Trends

Three major PM trends are observed that will continue:

Linking strategic and project management through project portfolio management practices.

Broadening the application of PM to include the total project life cycle, from concept through to full realization of project benefits.

Continued discovery of new application areas for the PM discipline.

Organization Capabilities and Maturity in PM

Rather than continue to be developed as a separate specialty within organizational management disciplines, the principles and practices of PM will gradually merge with other areas of management and be an important part of every manager's responsibilities, much like financial management is today: Chief Financial Officers/CFOs set the financial policies and practices of an organization, but every manager has and uses a reasonable amount of financial management skills and expertise. There are numerous financial specialists, including licensed CPA's or their equivalents, who work throughout large organizations within the established policies and procedures. Within the next five years, project-driven and project dependent organizations will similarly have Chief PM Officers/CPMOs who will set the PM policies and practices of the organization, and every manager will hold and apply a reasonable amount of PM skills and expertise. PM specialists, many "certified" but none "licensed," will similarly support the PM policies and procedures throughout these organizations.

PM Maturity Models

There will be at least three major models competing in the global marketplace: PMI's OPM3, Japan's P2M, and outgrowths from the UK's OGC PRINCE2 approach. Adaptations of these, as well as new models, will emerge within specific areas of application. Translations of the basic models and their area-specific adaptations into the eight or ten major languages will also appear.

Certification of Individuals

Certification of individuals in PM will be:

- Much more heavily based on proven capabilities
- Almost entirely focused on specific areas of application and/or specific categories of projects
- Awarded at several levels: Program manager, project manager, and several project specialist categories (cost, estimating, scheduling, risk, and others)
- Demonstrated knowledge of and capabilities in PM, but not necessarily PM certification, will be a prerequisite for advancement to almost all senior management positions by within all project driven organizations, and within many project dependent organizations as well.
- Governmental licensing of PM practitioners will not exist by 2008.

“While I believe that PM should be embraced and used by all executives and organizations, it will also be a ‘career path’ for many individuals and certainly in very projectized industries such as construction, energy, petrochemicals, aerospace, defense and other engineering-based endeavors. Membership in PM professional societies will be a requirement for those actively involved in PM, but also useful as sources of education and information for the much broader set of professionals and executives who must understand PM but who may not be managing projects themselves. In addition, PM should also be recognized as a great training and proving ground for future CEOs because of the broad range of functional and stakeholder issues that a PM on any large or mission-critical project must cover” (Pells 2003).

- Project portfolio management will be in widespread use
- A global project classification system based on the characteristics of project results will be accepted by the major PM associations and used by most practitioners
- The characteristics of projects and programs within specific project categories of the classification system will be the subject of intensified research.
- PM certification programs will be offered in consonance with this project classification system.

Project Life Cycle Models

- A catalog of project life cycle models related to the project classification system will be available for adaptation and use by practitioners to fit their project categories and

environments

- Most projects will be managed on a total life cycle basis
- The post project phase of “realization of project benefits” will become increasingly recognized as a proper part of the total project life cycle.

Areas of Application of PM

- Within the next five years formalized PM will be in use in essentially all areas of human endeavor.
- PM Planning and Control Systems and Tools: PM software and the information it produces will be fully integrated with all corporate information systems
- PM software will be further specialized to fit the project classification system and the catalog of project life cycle models
- Web enabled PM software will be used by all but the smallest enterprises
- Wireless handheld, notebook, and desk top computers will be used by most project teams for planning and control purposes, accessing the complex PM applications that will reside on centralized servers
- The PM software industry will enter its mature phase and we will witness the classic consolidation of a mature technology or industry.

Project Teams

- Virtual project teams will meet regularly via video conferencing on most projects.
- The majority of project managers will understand the importance of, and be proficient in, team building and team leadership.

The ‘Profession’ of PM

- Many people within the PM community will still be referring to the ‘profession’ of PM, however there will not be any U. S. state or Canadian province that has an official licensing statute for PM practitioners, program or project managers, educators, consultants, trainers, or software vendors.
- PM disciplines and practices will be widely known and used by managers at many levels in essentially all industries and human agencies in the developed world.

Variations in the Status and Applicability of PM Around the World

While some relatively minor differences will remain in the status of PM between different geographic regions and countries in the developed world, more significant differences will continue to exist between developed and newly developed countries on one hand and less developed countries on the other. For example, in Sub-Saharan African countries, excluding of course South Africa, “implementation of modern PM...is directly tied to projects financed

or implemented for organizations from fully developed economies [such as The World Bank or multi-national corporations]. This might lead to some questions (in the future) related to how much the spread of modern PM is also tied to economic and political freedoms within society – where individuals are free and motivated to seek out best practices in other organizations, societies or locations” (Pells 2003).

“This paper has argued that project management concepts are not universally valid because (1) they are based on certain assumptions about what governs human behaviour (e.g. economic rationality) and (2) these assumptions are not valid in some cultures (e.g. values at work and in social settings differing across cultures)” (Muriithi and Crawford 2003).

By 2008 PM is not expected to have permeated the economies of a number of African and perhaps other developing countries to a major extent.

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David Curling ,P.Eng., Certificated Project Manager ,p.t.s.c.,CD, is a Fellow in PMI and APM, and a registered professional engineer in Canada. He is the creator and webmaster for the Project Management Forum (www.pmforum.org), one of the most widely read web sites devoted to the advancement of a global project management discipline and PM Knowledge web semantics development.

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