

# PROJECT MANAGEMENT – WHY IS IT SO MISUNDERSTOOD

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**ADM**  
Project Consultants

# Andrew D Millington : Project Management Consultant



30+ years project and programme capability enhancement and delivery experience across many sectors and industries

Defence; IT; Technology, Government; Consulting; Engineering; Construction; Education; Aerospace; Transformation

- Author, contributor of:
    - 50 Projects for a better Future
    - Pre-Mortem – a new approach to risk
    - How to fix projects without tools
    - Leadership vs Management
    - Snowball effect
  - Judge for:
    - APM Annual Awards
    - Project Controls Expo
    - Education and Research Awards
  - Trainer formal qualifications from fundamentals to CHPP
  - Be the Business mentor
- 
- Post Graduate Certificate in Leading Complex Projects, Programmes and portfolios (Distinction)
  - Management Development Programme (Distinction)
  - ChPP (Chartered Project Professional) RPP (Registered Project Professional)
  - FAPM, FIOLM
  - ECITB Accredited Trainer

**APM**  
**Project Consultants**

# CAN WE TALK ABOUT A FEW PROFESSIONS FIRST?

Footballer – person who plays football as a profession

Electrician – person who installs, checks, and repairs electrical wires and electrical equipment

Plumber – person someone who repairs or connects water pipes for kitchens, bathrooms etc

Procurement manager – person responsible for sourcing and purchasing quality equipment, goods and services at the best prices for their company

Engineer – person who applies scientific and mathematical principles to design, develop, and build solutions to complex problems

Accountant – person whose job is to keep, inspect and analyse financial accounts

Teacher – person who teaches, especially in a school

# LET'S TALK ABOUT PROJECT MANAGEMENT – WHAT IS A PROJECT

- Project is a unique, transient endeavour, undertaken to achieve planned objectives, which could be defined in terms of outputs, outcomes or benefits.

## Or for a bit of fun:

- Project is a story waiting to be written, a puzzle waiting to be solved, a dream waiting to be realised, a song waiting to be sung
- Project is a journey with purpose, a path with milestones, a challenge with rewards, a quest worth completing
- Project is a temporary endeavour undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result, which will inevitably be late, over budget, and bear little resemblance to the original vision. It will involve countless meetings, endless emails, many issues and at least one crisis. Upon completion (or abandonment), it will be immediately replaced by another, equally chaotic project
- The primary purpose of a project is to provide employment for project professionals and give everyone else something to moan or complain about, or shout about

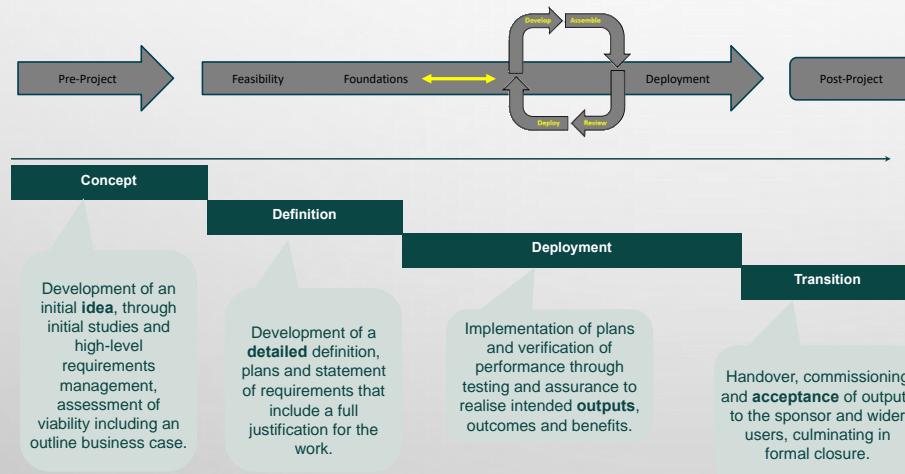
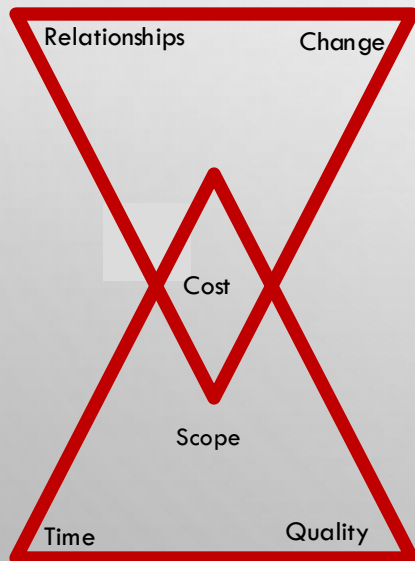
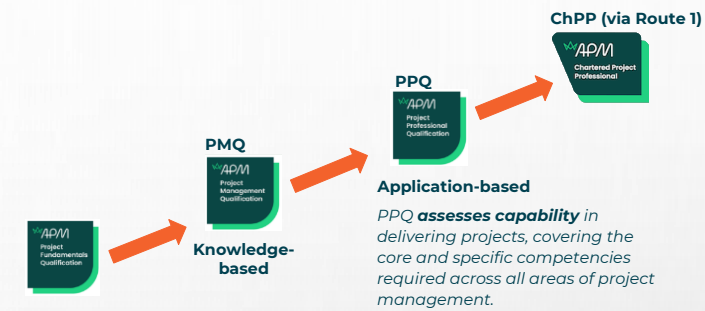
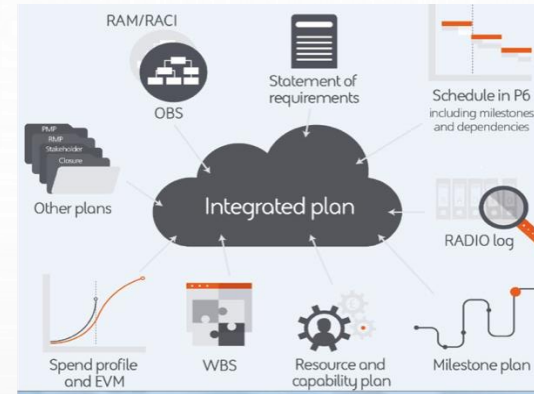
# LET'S TALK ABOUT PROJECT MANAGEMENT

- Project management – application of processes, methods, skills, knowledge and experience to achieve specific project objectives according to the project acceptance criteria within agreed parameters. Project management has deliverables that are constrained to a finite timescale & budget
- A key factor that distinguishes project management from just 'management' is that it has this final deliverable and a finite timespan, unlike management which is an ongoing process
- Because of this a project professional needs a wide range of skills; leadership and technical skills, people management and be competent in managing the six aspects of a project, i.e. scope, schedule, finance, risk, quality and resources

## Or for a bit of fun:















- Project management is chaos or the art of juggling chainsaws while riding a unicycle on a tightrope, blindfolded, during a named storm. It involves expertly navigating a minefield of conflicting priorities, unrealistic deadlines, and constantly shifting requirements, whilst maintaining a serene smile and assuring everyone that everything is "ok, on track and within budget."
- A project professional needs caffeine, sticky notes, a whiteboard, their own pen, and the ability to smile and feign optimism in the face of impending doom. Success is measured not by the flawless execution of the plan (which is a myth), but by how well you can explain why it all went sideways, who's to blame and what to do next.

2,560 × 1,815



Project Management	Project Life cycles	Governance arrangements	Sustainability	Business case
Procurement	Reviews	Assurance	Transition management	Benefits management
Stakeholder engagement and communication management	Conflict resolution	Leadership	Team management	Diversity and inclusion
Ethics, compliance and professionalism	Requirements management	Solutions development	Quality management	Integrated planning
Schedule management	Resource management	Budgeting and cost control	Risk and issue management	Change control

# PROJECT MANAGEMENT IN PICTURES - THE PROJECT CANVAS

<b>PURPOSE</b> Why should the project be started (challenges / problems)? Why is the project meaningful and important? ... and why? How will the project change the future?	<b>Foundation</b>	<b>People</b>		<b>Creation</b>		
<b>BUDGET</b> How much money do you need? Think of costs for the ... TEAM (internal and external staff) ... RESOURCES (tools, materials, facilities)	<b>Purpose</b>  <b>Why are we doing the project?</b>	<b>Sponsorship</b>  <b>Who is accountable for the project?</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>  <b>Who will benefit from and be affected by the project?</b>	<b>Deliverables</b>  <b>What will the project produce, build, or deliver?</b>	<b>Plan</b>  <b>How and when will the work be carried out?</b>	
	<b>Resources</b>  <b>Who will manage the project, and which skills are needed to deliver the project?</b>	<b>Change</b>  <b>How are we going to engage stakeholders and manage the risks?</b>			<b>CUSTOMER</b>  Who pays for the project? (sponsor) Who has the final decision to start and stop the project? (owner) Who is impacted by the project result? (recipient) In case of multiple customers: Are there (potential) conflicts?	
<b>RESOURCES</b> What work / meeting facilities are required? Which tools (incl. software) and materials do you need? Is it necessary (or desired) to involve external parties?	<b>Investment</b>  <b>How much will the project cost?</b>			<b>Benefits</b>  <b>What benefits and impact will the project generate, and how will we know the project is successful?</b>		
<b>TIME</b> What are the starting dates, i.e. when is the project started? What are the end dates, i.e. when is the project due?						

# SO RELATIVELY STRAIGHT FORWARD REALLY?

- Project is a unique, transient endeavour, undertaken to achieve planned objectives, which could be defined in terms of outputs, outcomes or benefits
- &
- Project management is the application of processes, methods, skills, knowledge and experience to achieve specific project objectives according to the project acceptance criteria within agreed parameters
- &
- Project manager is responsible for day-to-day management of the project and must be competent in managing the six aspects of a project, i.e. scope, schedule, finance, risk, quality and resources as well as leadership
- &
- This will work for any sector or industry

# ROUTE TO SUCCESS OR THE ROAD TO NOWHERE



“I DON'T THINK YOU NEED TO HAVE A KNOWLEDGE OF ANYTHING TO ACTUALLY BE GOOD AT YOUR JOB. I THINK IT IS ALL ABOUT CONVINCING PEOPLE THAT YOU DO KNOW WHAT YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT, EVEN IF YOU DON'T”

(Elle Stevenson, The Apprentice, 2015)

# PROJECT MANAGEMENT TAKEN FROM DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

## Rita the Recruiter



### Principal Recruitment Consultant

Deals exclusively with Business Transformation and change

“Project management is different in each sector and industry.” The PMs have different skills and knowledge and what they deliver is different. They cannot move between sectors because their skills are non transferrable.”

“As I tell everyone be aware of this, project managers skills are dependent upon the industry”. “A PM from one industry could not work in another, it would be disastrous.”

## Lora the Explorer



### Senior Recruiter

Deals exclusively with clients needing more experienced personnel

“Looking for someone to turn round several failing projects for a client. Things are going wrong right now, and they need help.”

“You must have exact skills and experience that matches the job spec, if your experience doesn't match the job description completely, I cannot put you forward.”

## The Goldfish



### Specialist Client sourcing

Sources for senior project roles

“My client is looking for someone with detailed specialist knowledge and experience on their new products.”

“They are looking for strategic skills in project management.” “That's right tactical project management skills, someone able to deliver, a major player and key to the organization”. “They know the candidate they want, must be technical, capable and able.”

“Do you have detailed specialist knowledge and experience on their new products?”

# Project Management taken from Different perspectives

## Wide Mouthed Frog



**Project Manager**

“Once you are in a job its unlikely that you will get found out, always speak slowly and clearly and make it sound like you are in control”.

“Convince the senior people by always talking the most in front of them and be ready to agree with anything they say.”

“Project management is easy its all about just staying one step ahead and never asking for help.”

## Ledger Len



**Experienced P3M Professional**

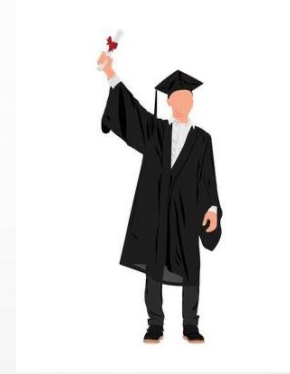
Delivers complicated projects in a fast moving, “red ocean” highly regulated and legislated industry.

“Its very different to other industries.” “You can only run projects in this industry if you have run one before.”

“Otherwise, you wouldn’t know where you were up, what questions to ask or know anything about the project.”

“How do you get the first one, well with great difficulty.”

## The Graduate



**Graduate Degree qualified – 2nd placement of 3**

Just joined an embedded PMO on a major project

“My friends are saying its not a real job and you don’t need any knowledge or skills to do it.”

“I dunno, maybe they are right, it’s all about setting up processes and the PMs seem to do all the work, or taking data from different tools and turning it into information.”

“My last role was all about designing things, this one focusses on delivery, and communicating and reporting using graphs, arrows and traffic lights.”

“I get it, but I’m not sure this is for me.”

# SO WHY IS PROJECT MANAGEMENT SO DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND

## Science

**Structured Methodologies** - relies on established methodologies, i.e. frameworks, tools, and techniques.

**Quantitative Analysis** - budget tracking, schedule management, and risk assessment, rely on data and metrics. Tools like Gantt charts, earned value management, and statistical analysis are used to measure and track progress.

**Systematic Processes** - use of systematic processes to ensure consistency and predictability, detailed project plans, clear communication channels, issue management and change control

**Data-Driven Decision-Making** – involves collecting, configuring and analysing project data to identify trends and patterns and then making evidence-based decisions.

## Art

**Leadership & Managing people** - Motivating and inspiring team members, stakeholders, and clients, requires strong interpersonal skills, communication, and leadership

**Adaptability and Flexibility** - Projects are often dynamic unpredictable, being flexible and adapting to changing circumstances, making decisions in uncertain environments

**Stakeholder Management** - Understanding and managing expectations of diverse stakeholders requires finesse, and emotional intelligence to handle and resolve conflict stress and maintain composure

**Coaching & Mentoring** - Developing team members for future projects and improved capability

The science of project management focuses on the application of structured processes, quantitative analysis, and data-driven decision-making to achieve project objectives. It provides a framework for managing projects in a systematic and controlled manner

The art of project management is about applying human skills and intuition to complement the science of project management. It's about recognizing that projects are not just about tasks and deadlines; they're also about people and relationships

# SO WHY IS THERE SUCH A MISUNDERSTANDING



Project Management is both subjective and objective



Delivering change

4 criteria:

Scope, quality, schedule, and budget

Most important indicators of how well a project performs



Deliver 100% scope, within budget,  
on schedule, meeting 100% of quality  
requirements (objective measures)

Project can be considered a failure because of subjective measures:

- Key Stakeholder Expectations not met
- Vendor Interactions poor
- Project Team Experience, limited Lfe and capability improvement
- Outcomes and benefits never realised
- Product not taken up or needed



Deliver <100% scope, over budget,  
late and not meeting quality  
requirements (objective measures)

Project can be considered a success because of subjective measures:

- Outcomes and benefits were exceeded
- Exceeded stakeholder expectations
- Project team learnt a great deal and created a wealth of LFE
- Setup capability across organisation
- Delivered significant change
- Build a new enduring product or legacy

# Thoughts...



- BOK
- Standards
- Processes
- Tools
- Competencies
- LFE



- Chartered profession
- University courses
- Professional development
- Conferences
- Special Interest Groups
- Profession is developing



- Profession spans multiple sectors and industries
- Major change cannot happen without project management



- 2.32M people employed on projects in the UK
- Increasing exponentially



Yet, it seems that the role of the project professional is misunderstood:

- Requesting industry/sector experience
  - Knowledge of products or legislation/regulation
  - Tacit and explicit knowledge or experience
- instead of
- Experience, knowledge and leadership skills in the successful delivery of complex projects.



## But why. Well....

Fastest rate of change, legislation, technology, knowledge etc.

- Internet, mobiles, digitization, cyber, social networking,
- AI, E-commerce, Cloud, Autonomous vehicles, GPS
- How we shop, what we eat, way we live, listen to music, watch tv, work together and communicate
- Roles and professions created these incredible changes didn't exist 30 years ago
- Project management is new and has/is a key factor in delivery of these changes
- Major roles of tomorrow don't exist today (space tourism guide, genetic counsellor, AI ethicist)
- People are using yesterday methods and understanding for new and future roles
  - Looking for that phrase, that certainty, that clear understanding of the what
  - Needing to define exact skills, specific experience or tacit knowledge to make it instantly recognisable
  - Not looking for capability - qualifications, knowledge, leadership, experience or success
  - Pareto effect (80/20) - focus on the vital attributes that have the most significant impact
  - Tools like ATS force the opposite of Pareto

# SO

1. IS IT CLEAR WHAT PROJECT MANAGEMENT IS ALL ABOUT
  2. CAN A PROJECT PROFESSIONAL MOVE TO A NEW OR DIFFERENT PROJECT?
  3. CAN A PROJECT PROFESSIONAL MOVE TO A DIFFERENT SECTOR OR INDUSTRY?
  4. CAN A PROJECT PROFESSIONAL SUCCESSFULLY DELIVER A PROJECT WITHOUT EXPERTISE OR TACIT KNOWLEDGE OF THE PRODUCT, OUTPUT, SECTOR OR INDUSTRY?
- OF COURSE, PROJECTS ARE UNIQUE, PROJECT MANAGEMENT IS APPLICATION OF PROCESSES, METHODS, SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE, PROJECT MANAGER LEADS (DEVELOPS) TEAM TO DELIVER THE O/P'S IN LINE

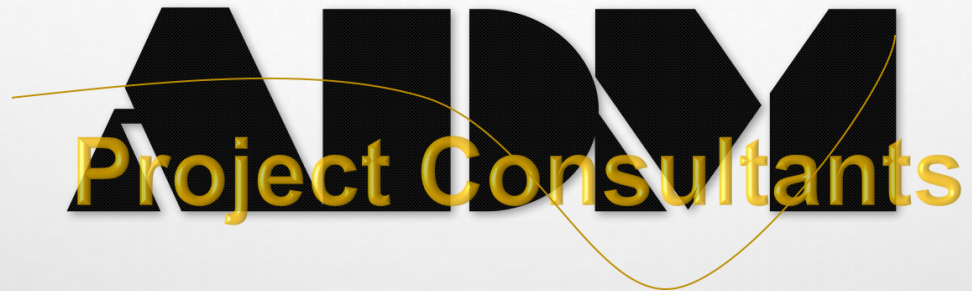
Our profession is **Multilinguistic** – the ability to successfully work across multiple sectors, businesses or industries using skills, processes, experience and knowledge

## SO HOW DO WE RESOLVE THIS MISUNDERSTANDING ?

- KEEP LEARNING - CONTINUE YOUR PERSONAL P3M DEVELOPMENT JOURNEY TO CHARTERSHIP
- SIMPLIFY AND DEMYSTIFY
- DEMONSTRATE VALUE AND CELEBRATE SUCCESS
- SUPPORT THE PROMOTION OF EDUCATION AND AWARENESS
- COMMUNICATE OUR PURPOSE AND VALUE TO OTHER PROFESSIONS AND YOUR STAKEHOLDERS
- CREATE A CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
- HELP DEVELOP AND GROW OUR PROFESSION
- KEEP MOVING BETWEEN SECTORS, TAKE THOSE CHALLENGES, STRETCH YOURSELVES

**If we do any of these then our profession will grow, be understood, our value appreciated... and most of all we and our projects will succeed.**

# ANY QUESTIONS?



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