P3M3 Services

Leva

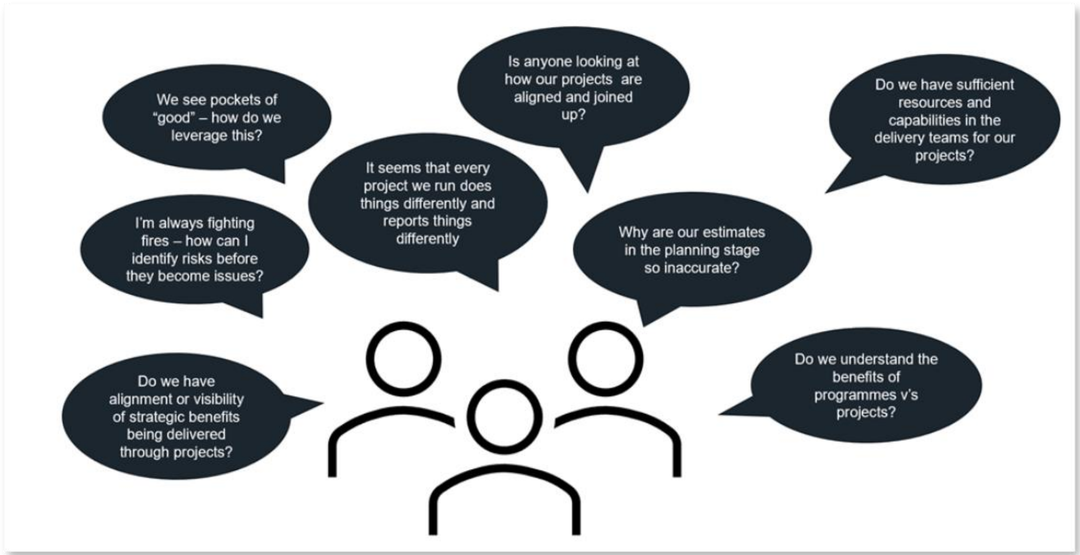
Context

As the pace of change accelerates, organisations continually strive to identify and leverage best project management practices within their organisation to improve delivery more broadly across their organisation.

General awareness of what makes organisations perform well is of growing importance due to limited resources (both capital and human), and the expectations on organisations to deliver more for less within constrained timeframes.

We have observed that clients often identify areas within their organisation that provide repeatable project delivery to acceptable standards, while other areas struggle to provide any form of repeatable consistency, coupled with little or no portfolio management. This often results in reactive issue management, which detracts from controlled risk identification and mitigation practices. Lack of visibility across the programme becomes an issue resulting in missed opportunities that could have been identified and delivered when scoping the project, programme, or portfolio.

Senior managers have been asking questions around the issues they observe with current project and programme delivery, such as those outlined below.



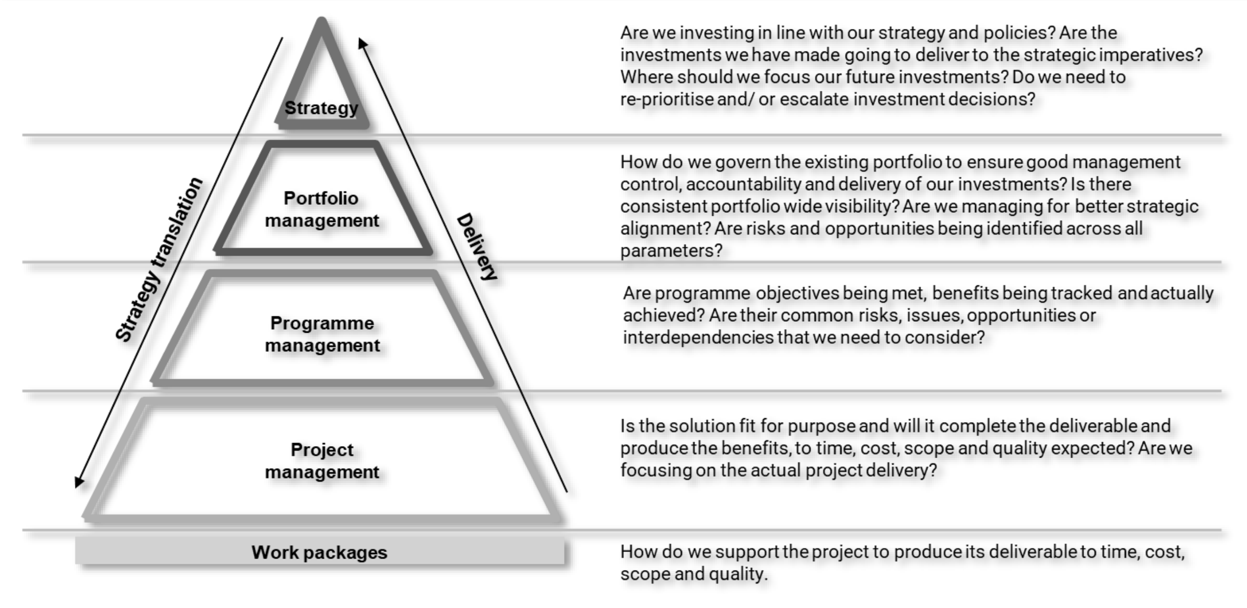
These kinds of probing questions point towards an awareness that programme and project delivery activities are variable and potentially inconsistent.

A key question might be, "where in our organisation are those areas of good project delivery?" It can be hard for leaders to quantify this and for this information to be presented in a logical and articulate way that both senior managers and operational teams can easily relate to.

Applying the right tool – what problem are we looking to solve?

Stepping back and looking at a higher level, organisations typically follow a stepped process of defining strategic polices or objectives, incepting programmes and projects to deliver these objectives, and making decisions when these will be delivered within the wider group of investments the organisation is undertaking.

Senior leaders might be asking questions around all areas of the investment cycle, from strategy to individual project delivery. In our experience, the kinds of answers being sought can be demonstrated below:



The interconnection between each level within the triangle is a key element for the organisation to understand and put into practice – no one element stands alone.

But what management tools might be applied to answer some of these questions and what does P3M3 offer an organisation?

Introduction to the P3M3 models

P3M3 affords organisations the ability to focus in on the specific areas of concern, be it at portfolio, programme or project level. It has an assessment model that address each of these levels, hence the P3M3 (Portfolio, Programme and Project Management = P3 and 3 x Maturity Models = M3).

P3M3 is flexible, in that the organisation can focus on areas where it believes it will derive the most value. A common focus for organisations is that they identify inconsistencies in one or more areas, and the assessment scoping step helps these organisations determine their particular needs. For example, if an organisation identifies project and programme delivery as the target areas, then in this case just the project and programme models would be applied for the assessment.

P3M3 is unique in that it considers the whole system and not just the processes servicing the system. It analyses the balance between the process, the competencies of the people who operate it, the tools that are deployed to support it, and the management information used to manage delivery and improvements.

Importantly P3M3 is not built around a particular body of knowledge or discipline but has been specifically designed to be independent, regardless of whether an organisation is committed to an approach such as PMBOK® or PRINCE2®, or an international professional body such as the Project Management Institute PMI.

P3M3 is being applied globally from the Middle East, China, Australia, Europe, New Zealand, Africa, and South America.

Bringing unity to the discovery of the problem.

Our experience has taught us that typically organisations invest in areas of the greatest importance to them, so organisational investment and resources are directed towards high value programmes and projects. Systems, processes, and decision making in these areas usually follows some kind of formalised framework, but performance might still be inconsistent. The rest of the organisation is left to define and develop its own delivery pathway, which often doesn't reflect the quality nor consistency of the high value, high profile projects.

We find that seniors within the high value project delivery area are asking the same question as the rest of the organisation – how do we get better?

A happy consequence of carrying out a P3M3 assessment is that the organisational audience has an opportunity to be beyond one specific area of project delivery. We often recommend that all organisational areas that participate in project / programme / portfolio delivery should be included in the assessment process.

Why?

It involves the coming together of all delivery entities within an organisation, that shares best practice evidence, experiences and finding common ground on areas for improvement, and the organisation gains greatly from incepting the breaking down of silos and barriers to recycling and reuse of best practices.

Benefits of using P3M3

Our clients have identified that they are embarking on a journey to improve capability to deliver to strategic objectives, and gain greater visibility of delivery activities across the whole organisation that improves consistency, reduces costs, and increases project success rates.

A key benefit of using P3M3 is that it provides a set of independent benchmarks, and the approach benefits the organisation by providing a common, integrated vision for improvement. This integrated approach leads to decreased costs and improvements in on-time delivery, productivity, quality, and customer satisfaction.

Our clients have observed the following benefits from using P3M3:

- Helping them to decide what maturity level they need to achieve to meet their business needs.
- Creating a reliable P3M (portfolio, programme, and project management) capability baseline, from which improvements in P3M capability performance can be objectively measured.
- Helping to identify and focus investment on those aspects of P3M that will yield the best improvements.
- Acknowledging the achievements of the current delivery teams.
- Providing a catalyst for raising awareness and the desire to improve delivery across their organisation.

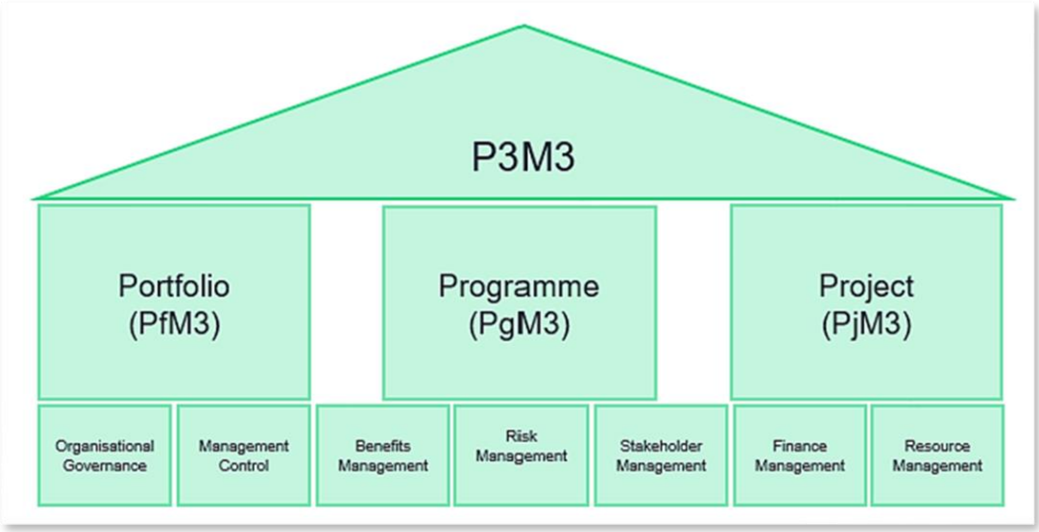
- Gaining greater understanding of where their organisation sits in relation to others in similar sectors.
- Enabling the first steps towards providing plans for continual progression.
- Providing an objective assessment of their organisational strengths and weaknesses.
- Providing validation of their maturity.

P3M3 also provides diagnostics that help organisations to understand the constraining factors that are inhibiting better performance. It does this by looking at:

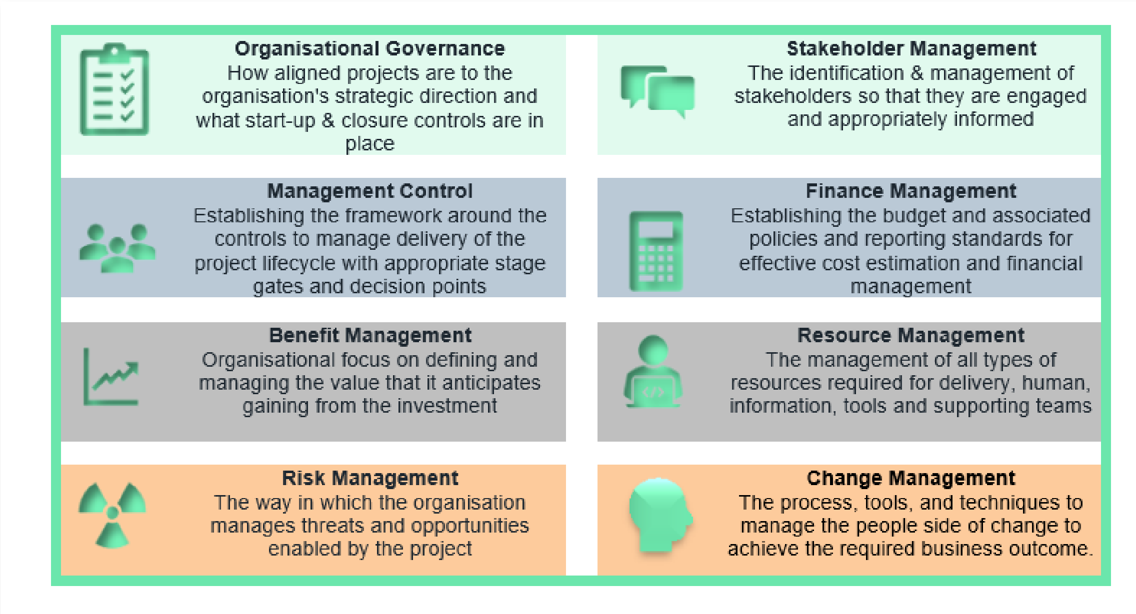
- Processes and procedures for their existence and suitability
- Organisational structures, competencies, and the development of strategy
- Tools that are already in place and how effectively they are being used
- Information that is being used to manage performance.

Applying the P3M3 models and assessment process

P3M3 comprises three models, Portfolio, Programme and Project. Each model has the same seven common perspectives which form the basis of structuring the assessment approach.



The seven P3M3 perspectives – (we recommend clients consider Change Management an important component to delivering maturity), are displayed in the table below, together with a brief description of the perspectives.



Whilst P3M3 has seven perspectives, we suggest adding Change Management. In our experience the lack of change management maturity in organisations greatly impedes the ability of the organisation to implement the changes needed to raise maturity. There are a number of change management methodologies and practices available, and we are agnostic to methodology. The important factor is understanding the ability of the organisation to implement these practices and this forms an essential benchmark to monitor and nurture raising maturity.

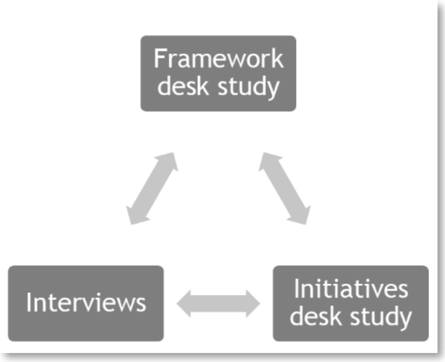
When scoping the P3M3 assessment, we work with an organisation to select which of the perspectives are a particular issue (e.g., risk management). However, to gain a better understanding of the organisation's overall effectiveness in a particular model, it is better to assess all the perspectives. An organisation may also choose to do this for any one of the three models.

Each of the perspectives are assessed against a group of lenses called **threads**, these dive deeper to explore the maturity that exists within the organisation. At the assessment scoping phase, we identify which of the threads will be applied, and asset management and commercial arrangements are usually flexibly applied or removed.

Threads	
Behaviours	Infrastructure and tool
Model integration	Process
Standards	Techniques
Information and knowledge management	Planning
Assurance	Commercial management - commissioner

The scoping process identifies the model/s, which perspectives will receive special focus, and if any of the threads are to be excluded.

An assessment follows a stepped process to reduce the call on client resources, involving the right people at the right stage of the assessment process. We commence with scoping the assessment parameters, followed by a desktop study of any existing delivery framework that is being applied by or within the organisation. We also request the details of target projects or initiatives, to assist with understanding the phase of delivery these are at, which in turn helps to identify what systems, processes, and decision-making framework the delivery teams have applied to reach that phase. We request evidence of the use of the framework as well as artefacts and decision registers that record the project's progress.



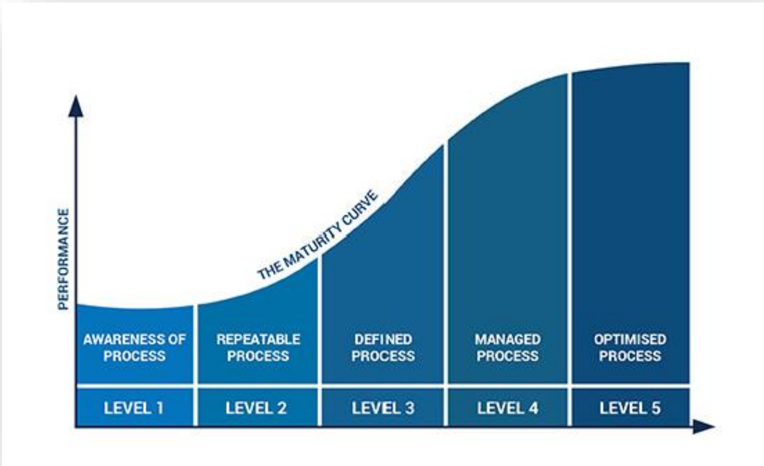
Interviews follow on from the desktop study, and again we seek evidence around consistency and take the opportunity to hear directly from the delivery teams of any barriers, issues or constraints around delivery that they face.

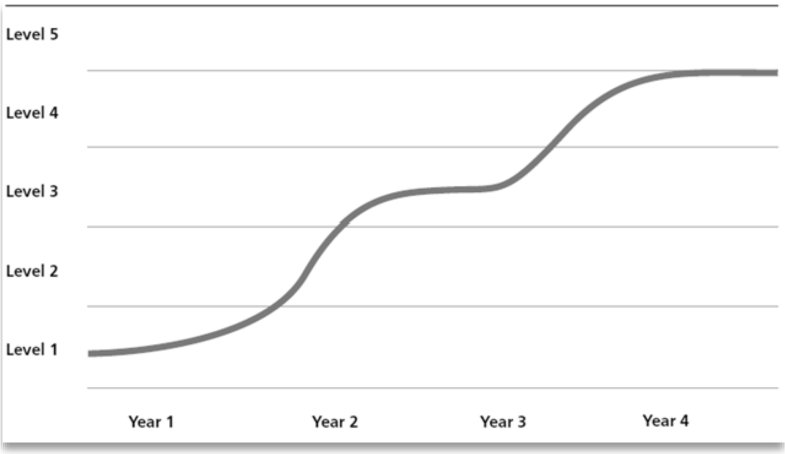
An open and transparent feedback loop is maintained during the assessment process – a no surprises approach helps puts minds at rest and builds confidence that participants can disclose their observations freely. We have noticed that the P3M3 assessment process helps build unity across an organisation's delivery team as they share their findings and participate in providing valuable qualitative evidence around how delivery within the organisation is really happening.

Assessing maturity

P3M3 is described by a five-level maturity framework, and the assessment process derives an assessment score for each perspective, indicated by a maturity level graded from 1-5. During a P3M3 assessment a rating will be given against each of the perspectives, producing an overall level grade. This helps show where the organisation is most effective and may highlight areas of weakness that could be of concern and require prioritised attention.

Each level is defined by a descriptor that helps articulate what the level means to an organisation – with Level 1 being the lowest level and Level 5 the highest. The journey for an organisation begins at Level 1 from having an awareness of the need for process and sporadic use of process, through to Level 5, where an organisation is actively working towards optimising all components of the seven perspectives, including change management.



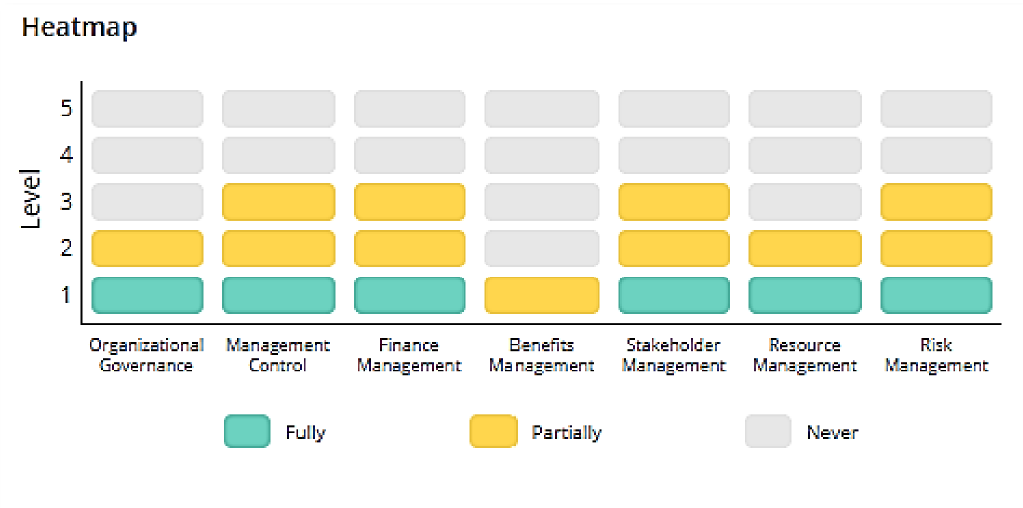


Raising maturity takes time – hence we describe the process of assessment, identification of improvement areas, and the development of initiatives to raise maturity as a **journey**. Our experience tells us that it generally takes between 12 and 18 months to move up a maturity level and establish the organisation's capability at that new level.

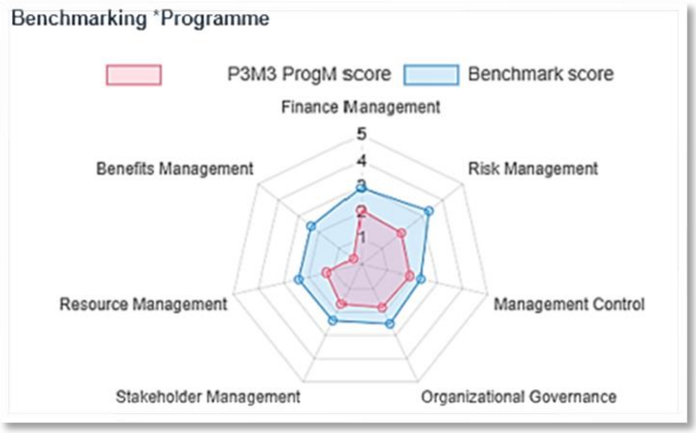
We find that most organisations target reaching level 3 for most perspectives but may seek higher levels for specific areas such as Finance Management. For example, New Zealand Treasury holds an expectation that New Zealand Government departments will seek to achieve Level 3.5 for Finance Management when assessing if government funding is to be granted.

Reporting

A full P3M3 assessment provides an organisation with a comprehensive deep dive into their delivery activities. The combination of perspectives and threads enables us to express the findings in a variety of meaningful ways. Each thread is assessed as being 'never', 'partially' or 'fully' observed. An organisation must achieve 'fully' for each thread within a perspective to change levels, whilst a heatmap reflects where an organisation is developing 'partial' practices, which is a great indicator of rising maturity.



The heatmap is helps identify the size of the gap to the desired level of maturity and in which areas the organisation is almost tipping into the next level up, helping identify focus areas for quick gains.



Benchmarking the results from assessments completed by other global Axelos Consulting Partners (ACP's) allows organisations to better understand how they are tracking against competitors or similar organisations across their sector. The benchmarking is undertaken confidentially so no one organisation can identify others in the results. The benchmarking can be provided for each of the three models.

The assessment report provides dashboard type indicators such as the heatmap and benchmarking as well as a quick reference card that combines actual decimal scores and the variance to the benchmark.

Decimal scores

Rank	Perspective	Score	Benchmark
1	Finance Management	2.10	↓ -0.9
2	Risk Management	1.95	↓ -1.4
3	Management Control	1.90	↓ -0.4
4	Organizational Governance	1.80	↓ -0.7
5	Stakeholder Management	1.65	↓ -0.7
6	Resource Management	1.30	↓ -1.1
7	Benefits Management	0.35	↓ -2.0

Our assessment reports are presented against each of the perspectives with a summary of observed strengths that the organisation has demonstrated through the assessment process and our observed findings, which typically explores our observations and high-level recommendations. The reports are comprehensive and hold a volume of information that can form the basis of an improvement plan.

The post assessment activity typically involves the organisation determining which maturity level it is seeking for each of the perspectives, and this requires a gap analysis to be undertaken – current state to future state.

We find that organisations that define these gaps into initiatives that assess and identify the tasks needed to achieve the initiative, including a high-level resource effort estimate, are best placed to convert the P3M3 findings into an achievable and time driven roadmap to raise maturity.

In addition to the P3M3 assessment, we are also well placed to work alongside our clients to carry out the gap analysis and draft the initiatives needed to achieve the client's objective goals. Our team has considerable experience in developing common sense and achievable roadmaps that actively involve the clients on that journey, and we support our clients to achieve their goals.

Leva - Your accredited P3M3 assessor

Leva is an accredited Axelos Consulting Partner (ACP), which means we have access to the full suite of Axelos P3M3 assessment tools, better enabling our clients to utilise the global benchmarking carried out by Axelos.

Our team is highly experienced in the areas of PMO establishment and programme / project delivery, project framework design and project process improvement. We work to design pragmatic delivery methodologies calling on the best of recognised best practice such as PMBOK and Prince2 – tailored to our clients' needs.

We have a long experience of working alongside senior managers in various organisations where the delivery of portfolios, programmes and projects form a key component of their organisation's activities.

No two clients have the same requirements so we tailor all assessments to meet clients' specific requirements. Our clients don't conclude the P3M3 assessment process with a level scoring. We work alongside them to convert the report findings into a meaningful journey of raising maturity in their organisations at a pace they can manage and take ownership for, with our support.

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