*PM World* **Journal**
Vol. III, Issue IX – September 2014
www.pmworldjournal.net

*Transitioning to Program Management*
*Program Management Series*
by Russ Martinelli, Jim Waddell, & Tim Rahschulte

# Program Management Series[1]

# Transitioning to Program Management

*Introduction to a new series on program management*

## By **Russ Martinelli**, **Jim Waddell, & Tim Rahschulte**
### Program Management Academy

Organizational transformation such as introducing program management into an organization, or even changing the existing program management function, is a challenging endeavor.  Fortunately, we have seen that a transition to program management can yield significant improvement in a firm's ability to achieve their strategic objectives, competitive position, and financial returns. To realize such improvement requires an awareness, willingness, and commitment to change the organization's culture, overcome internal politics, and establish a new mindset regarding roles, responsibilities, and functions.

In the book titled "*Program Management for Improved Business Results, 2nd Edition*, we introduced the program management continuum as a way to demonstrate the variations in the way program management is used within companies today, and to serve as a model to guide transition to higher levels of program management maturity.  An important element of the continuum is something we refer to as the point of transition. This is a philosophical decision point where the senior leaders of an organization make a purposeful decision to transition their organization from being primarily project-oriented to being program-oriented.
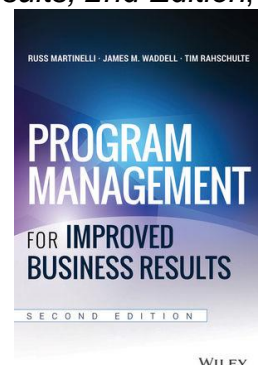
The desire to cross the transition point is the call to action that triggers a number of organizational changes that can affect all levels of management and employees. It changes the rules of engagement, decision-making hierarchies, teams and team structures, and requires competencies different than those prevalent in traditional project-oriented organizations. This series of articles for PM World Journal focuses on the key aspects of organizational transition to program management.

We should point out that the articles are written from a practitioner's point of view. We work in industry, and therefore our experience and perspectives are first-hand and real world.  We welcome your comments, perspectives, challenges and other feedback. The following is a set of abstracts for the four articles presented in this series titled "*Transitioning to Program Management*".

## Part 1 – The Ah-Ha Moment

---

[1] The PMWJ series of articles on program management is authored by Russell Martinelli, Jim Waddell, and Tim Rahschulte, principle advisors at the Program Management Academy in Oregon, USA.  More about the authors and the Program Management Academy can be found at http://www.programmanagement-academy.com/.

*PM World* **Journal**
Vol. III, Issue IX – September 2014
www.pmworldjournal.net

*Transitioning to Program Management*
*Program Management Series*
by Russ Martinelli, Jim Waddell, & Tim Rahschulte

We begin this article series with a brief case study of an organization which has embarked on a program management transition. In this case, program management is not new to the organization. Rather, it is a case where a once strong and effective program management function was left to atrophy due to a period of senior management disinvestment. We use this real-world example, titled "*The Ah-Ha Moment",* to introduce the Program Management Continuum and to underscore the fact that sustainable change has to be driven from the top of the organization. Additionally, we show why it is critical for senior leaders, functional and line managers, program and project managers within an organization to recognize and understand where they are on the program management continuum in order to align expectations and properly set roles and responsibilities as well as empowerment and decision-making boundaries for their various players and positions.

## Part 2 – The Program Management Continuum

As it is practiced today, program management adds the greatest value to an enterprise when it is treated as an extension of the business functions. However, not all organizations utilize their program management discipline in this manner. There are many organizations that are quite successful and operate effectively as project-oriented enterprises and they should continue to do so and look for aspects of program management that are beneficial to the way they operate. For those organizations that are introducing program management into their organization or are increasing their program management maturity, the program management continuum is a helpful model to create organizational alignment and guide the transition. In this second article, *"The Program Management Continuum",* we detail the various stages of the continuum to reveal the varying use of program management, and the variation of roles and responsibilities of program managers.

## Part 3 – Delivering Business Benefits

Our experience has been that program management can serve as an enabler for achieving increased business results if used strategically as part of the business engine of the firm. As a business makes a conscious effort to become more program-oriented, the responsibility and accountability for delivery business results begins to fall more upon the program management discipline. In article three, *"Delivering Business Benefits",* we discuss the key elements of benefits management and discuss why benefits management at the program level is about management of the business goals and achievement of the business results driving the need for the program.

## Part 4 – Transitioning to Program Management

A transition to program management can yield significant improvement in a firm's ability to achieve their strategic goals, competitive position, and financial returns. To realize such improvement requires an awareness, willingness, and commitment to change the organization's culture, overcome internal politics, and establish a new mindset regarding roles, responsibilities, and functions. The final article in this series, *"Transitioning to Program Management",* reveals several key factors that must be managed to increase the probability of transition success, and focuses on the management of these factors relative to the process of change.

**PM World Journal**
Vol. III, Issue IX – September 2014
www.pmworldjournal.net

*Transitioning to Program Management*
*Program Management Series*
by Russ Martinelli, Jim Waddell, & Tim Rahschulte

## About the Authors

# Russ Martinelli

Oregon, USA

**Russ Martinelli** is a senior program manager at Intel Corporation, one of the world's largest semiconductor companies.  Russ has many years of experience leading global product development teams in both the aerospace and computing industries.  Russ is also a founder of the Program Management Academy (www.programmanagement-academy.com), and co-author of *Program Management for Improved Business Results*. Russ can be contacted at russ.martinelli@programmanagement-academy.com.

# Jim Waddell

Oregon, USA

**Jim Waddell**, former PMO director in the high-tech industry, is a founder of the Program Management Academy (www.programmanagement-academy.com) where he consults in program management and mergers & acquisitions. He has held a variety of management positions in the high tech and energy industries, has been a speaker at numerous conferences, and is a co-author of *Program Management for Improved Business Results.*  Jim can be contacted at jim.waddell@programmanagement-academy.com.

# Tim Rahschulte

Oregon, USA

**Tim Rahschulte** is co-author of *Program Management for Improved Business Results* and an executive director at the Program Management Academy. Tim is also responsible for international management and leadership studies at George Fox University in Oregon.  He consults with state governments in the USA on matters of organizational change as a business transition architect.  Contact Tim at tim.rahschulte@programmanagement-academy.com.