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Introduction to new series on Enterprise Project Governance
The Evolving Nature of Project Management
Series Article

David L. Pells

The Evolving Nature of Project Management

By David Pells
Managing Editor

Introduction to a new series on Enterprise Project Governance[1]
by Paul Dinsmore and Luiz Rocha.

Can an organization ever achieve full maturity in its ability to consistently deliver successful programs and projects? Can an enterprise ever achieve perfection, or near perfection, in the planning and management of all of its projects? These are not theoretical questions? What CEO does not want to maximize profits (or mission success), while reducing risks and maintaining the approval and support of key stakeholders, especially customers, investors and shareholders? What C-level executive does not want her or his programs and projects to be completed successfully, ahead of schedule or under budget, by knowledgeable, experienced and capable project managers? So are real maturity and near-perfection for project-oriented organizations possible? Absolutely not! Not without effective governance.

Over the last two decades, we have seen the project management field grow from a set of applications and methods for managing large individual projects to a wide range of knowledge, skills and technologies for managing multiple projects, programs and portfolios of programs and projects. In his classic 1998 book *Winning in Business with Enterprise Project Management*, Paul Dinsmore captured the important global trend of the 1990s, the organizing and managing of multiple projects within organizations with more consistent enterprise-wide processes, systems and techniques, in order to increase efficiency and profitability.

Enterprise Project Management, or EPM as it came to be known, gave rise to the Project Management Office (PMO), now globally recognized as a best practice for EPM and project-oriented organizations. These led in turn to a much greater focus on the investment and return on investment in professional project management education, training, qualifications, systems development and process improvements. Many organizations failed in their attempts to implement successful EPM and PMOs, but many others succeeded, especially those with strong executive support, customer orientation and global competition.

During the first decade of the Twenty First Century, the role and importance of programs and projects in many organizations, industries and economies increased dramatically. This has led in turn to first the awareness, then the sometimes painful

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[1] *This series will include articles by Paul Dinsmore and Luiz Rocha, authors of the book Enterprise Project Governance, published by AMACOM in the USA in 2012. The articles are extracts and summaries of key topics from their book, providing information and guidance on one of the most important aspects of portfolio, program and project management today – governance. For information about the book, go to http://www.amacombooks.org/book.cfm?isbn=9780814417461.*

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understanding, that the success of many programs and projects can dictate the success or failure of the entire organization. The need to align programs and projects with organizational strategies and missions became obvious; the project portfolio management (PPM) approach was born, and rapidly embraced by industry and project management service and technology suppliers. In the last few years, the subject of organizational project management maturity has risen in visibility and importance, as enterprise-wide efficiency and performance in project-based organizations and industries have clearly been linked to the maturity of people and processes - in the context of international project management standards and best practices.

These trends, of course, have been reflected and supported by project management professional organizations such as AIPM (Australia), APM (UK), IPMA (European, now global), and PMI (based in the USA, but with 650,000 members worldwide) with standards, certifications, courses, publications and services. At the same time, a very robust marketplace for PPM software, consultants and solution providers has also emerged. In fact, we have seen the project management professional field itself grow to embrace program and portfolio management and all of the issues and needs associated with those broader enterprise-wide topics.

But more knowledge, qualifications, processes, skills and experience are not enough. As first the dot.com bubble of the late 1990s, then the corporate failures and associated scandals such as Enron and Societe Generale a few years later dramatically displayed, someone must be looking out for the stakeholders – the shareholders, investors, employees and general public. As corporate governance was overhauled in America and Europe by both governmental and industry regulators, the issue of governance of projects and project-oriented organizations was raised. Who was monitoring ethical behavior, executive and managerial competence, organizational risks, customer feedback, organizational maturity and other important factors that can affect project, program and organizational performance on behalf of the stakeholders?

Professional leaders in the UK recognized the need for the governance of project management early, with several important guides and several books published on the topic. Now with the book *Enterprise Project Governance*, Paul Dinsmore and Luiz Rocha have created a framework for more organizations around the world to both understand the topic and implement critical governance processes and structures. This is an exciting development, in my opinion. Independent oversight and the use of outside program and project management experts have been favorite topics of mine, addressed in several editorial articles in recent years. And I personally favor the board-level governance option.

Outstanding project performance is great. Project management maturity is a wonderful goal. Continuous improvement is important. But wouldn't you also like to have someone checking the facts, looking at enterprise-wide issues, and identifying organizational risks, issues and opportunities – especially in a global economy ?

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During 2013, Paul Dinsmore and Luiz Rocha will present a series of articles in the PMWJ on the topic of "*Enterprise Project Governance: How to Manage Projects and Programs Successfully Across the Organization.*" The authors have thoroughly researched the subject and will present a wide range of important and useful steps that can be taken to improve enterprise performance.

Their first article in the series is contained elsewhere in the PMWJ this month. Please read their introduction to this important topic, then return each month for their next article on another key aspect of "*Enterprise Project Governance*".

David L. Pells
Managing Editor
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Enterprise Project Governance describes proven techniques for dealing with simultaneous initiatives and ensuring that programs and projects align with the priorities, resources, and strategies of the organization - and ultimately create value. Containing examples and case studies, the book provides readers with practical methods for incorporating enterprise project governance into their organization's culture, synchronizing it with corporate governance, and maximizing efficiency and results across departments.
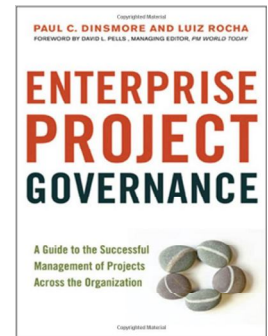
Whether one's view is from the boardroom, the executive suite, the project management office, or the project trenches, this is an important guide for anyone managing multiple projects. For more about the book, go to http://www.amacombooks.org/book.cfm?isbn=9780814417461.

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David L. Pells is Managing Editor of the **PM World Journal**, a global eJournal for program and project management, and Executive Director of the PM World Library. He is also the president and CEO of PM World, the virtual organization behind the journal and library, and of PM World Services, an executive P/PM advisory firm serving several major governmental agencies and programs. David is an internationally recognized leader in the field of professional project management with more than 35 years of experience on a wide variety of programs and projects, including engineering, construction, defense, energy, transit, high technology, and nuclear security, and project sizes ranging from several thousand to ten billion dollars. He has been an active professional leader in the United States since the 1980s, serving on the board of directors of the Project Management Institute (PMI®) twice. David was awarded PMI's Person of the Year award in 1998 and Fellow Award in 1999. He is an Honorary Fellow of the Association for Project Management (APM) in the UK; Project Management Associates (PMA - India); and the Russian Project Management Association SOVNET. From June 2006 until March 2012, he was the managing editor of the globally acclaimed *PM World Today* eJournal. David has published widely, speaks at events worldwide, and can be contacted at editor@pmworldjournal.net.