

Culture Eats Strategy: Impact on Disruptive Change Programs¹

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Summary

The above title was borrowed from Peter Drucker, but perfectly fits the project management environment. The purpose of this paper is to show the influence of culture on the evolution of an organization's project management skills. The authors were awakened to the importance of the theme "culture" in their maturity research conducted in Brazil since 2005. The Prado-PMMM maturity model contains 5 levels. The vast majority of Brazilian organizations are at the initial levels of maturity (1 and 2). In this text, initially the authors analyze the difficulties to reach level 3 ("Standardized") and also to go to level 4 ("Managed"). Then, analyzing in depth the difficulties to move to these two levels, it was discovered that the "organizational culture" aspect is present. This text addresses, in an introductory level, some concepts of culture and a case that shows how culture can impact the evolution of management. It also addresses critical aspects to be observed in project management to minimize such effects.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the last 12 years we have worked with the Maturity Research in Project Management (www.maturityresearch.com) and as consultants of FALCONI - Result Consultants (www.falconi.com), which enabled us to follow hundreds of Brazilian organizations. The Prado-PMMM model measures the maturity of a department of an organization on a scale of 1 to 5, with levels 4 and 5 being the so-called "threshold of excellence". So it's only natural that organizations want to reach this level. According to KERZNER (2006), an organization spends 7 years to reach the plateau of excellence (Figure 1).



Figure 1: According to Kerzner, 7 years have been spent to reach the level of excellence (levels 4 and 5)

One thing that stands out in the eyes of those who analyze the results of the research over the last 12 years is that only a small group of organizations has managed to reach this level. For example, in the 2014 survey, when 435 organizations participated, only 12.7% of them were at

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the level of excellence (Figure 2), as shown on www.maturityresearch.com. We still have a group of organizations that have not yet reached the level of excellence, but, by the pace of evolution, everything leads one to believe that they will succeed. Between 2010 and 2016 our attention was focused on these organizations, as they became a benchmark. We interviewed several of them.

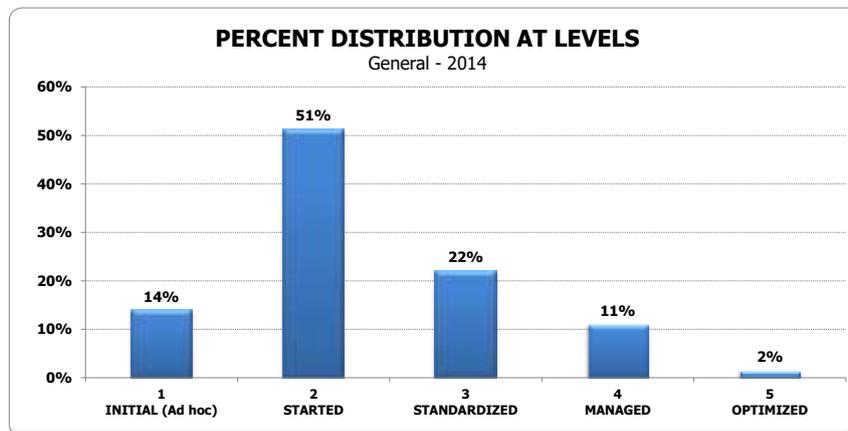


Figure 2: In the 2014 survey, only 12.7% of the organizations were at the level of excellence (levels 4 and 5).

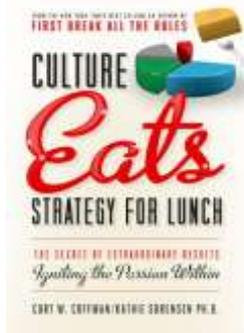
From 2014 our attention has turned also to those organizations that do not evolve. This group is somewhat heterogeneous. Here we have organizations that, for various reasons, know that they will not reach the level of excellence and accept it peacefully. There are even cases of regression at maturity. However, we note that some organizations would love to evolve and unfortunately can not. Many park in level 2 or, if they can reach level 3, they do not leave. For them, the obstacles to this walk are much more difficult than expected. Then a question arises naturally: what is the cause of this? Why a strong and sustained effort by high administration cannot overcome the difficulties and leads many organizations to accept, unwillingly, to live with a situation of poor performance?

An analysis of this question initially points out that the reasons vary greatly depending on the type of organization (private, governmental or third sector), the category of projects (construction, T.I., etc.) and the moment the organization is living. A conclusion that always seemed right to us is that something was missing. Parallel with the benchmark organizations, we believed that the effort should have been greater (including greater discipline, better tools), leadership should have been more proactive, senior management support should have been better, etc.

It was only when we started interacting with professionals from other disciplines in our consulting firm that we discovered that the above conclusion is superficial. We realize that the same problem exists in many areas of almost every organization. Or rather, it is not just with project management that this happens, but also with the management of routine operations. We have identified a common cause. And what is the name given to this common cause? Organizational culture.

2. ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND MANAGEMENT

The treatment of the culture aspect has gained importance and is seen as much needed to solve problems related to management. It is very famous and respected the phrase of Peter Drucker, "culture eats strategy at breakfast", which served as inspiration for many works, including for the title of the book shown in the figure on the left (COFFMAN, 2013) Barry



Phegan (PHEGAN, 1996), says: "the culture of an organization is often the cause of complicated problems related to people, such as motivation, morality, absenteeism, turn-over, insults and actions in justice." Much has been done and there are consulting firms focused solely on this specialization. For the case of project management, what we have seen is that, in general, those involved with this subject in organizations seem to be unaware of the depth and extent of the theme. Despite the importance of the "culture" aspect, little has been done to better address the issue, besides the traditional tools available in manuals such as the PMI PMBOK.

However, it should be noted that, in recent years, the behavioral (or socio-emotional) approach has appeared, albeit sporadically, in project management events and in graduate studies. That is, there is a curiosity. Half way!

So we think it's a good time for one more touch on the subject. Note also that the term culture is quite broad and other uses of parallel meaning are well known: popular culture, culture in philosophy and culture in anthropology.

3. LESSONS LEARNED WITH THE MATURITY RESEARCH

Before we move on to the subject of "culture," let us briefly summarize what maturity surveys have taught us. This research has been conducted since 2005 through the website www.maturityresearch.com and has been led by Darci Prado and Russell Archibald and has the support of dozens of volunteers. It is based on the Prado-PMMM maturity model and further details of the model can be seen in the book PRADO (2014). To evaluate the maturity, this model follows all the processes with which the projects have some involvement, not only the finalists as well as the support ones. For example, in the case of projects originating from strategic planning, the model evaluates how efficient each process is, as shown in Figure 3.

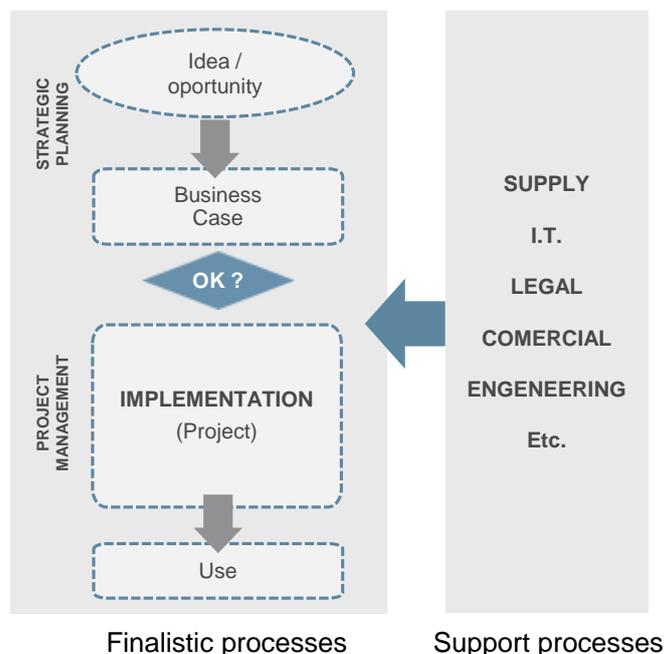


Figure 3: Finalistic and support processes for projects from Strategic Planning.

In addition, the model was conceived with the following assumptions:

- Reflect the use of Good Management Practices.
- Relate the organization's maturity to its ability to execute projects successfully.
- Have simplicity (only 40 questions).

The model contemplates five levels, as created by Carnegie-Mellon University:

1. Ad-hoc (little known)
2. Known (initiated)
3. Standardized
4. Managed
5. Optimized

The questions assess seven dimensions of maturity:

1. Competence in Project Management
2. Contextual Competence (in the organization's business)
3. Behavioral (or socio-emotional) competence
4. Use of Methodology (processes)
5. Computerization (hardware)
6. Use of appropriate Organizational Structure
7. Strategic Alignment

The maturity survey showed that in the more mature organization we have:

- Greater success level (see Figure 4)
- Less delay
- Less overhead
- Greater percentage of the scope executed
- Greater acceptance of the matter by senior management.

Just for the first item above (success) we show the corresponding chart in Figure 4. The other graphs can be seen at www.maturityresearch.com.

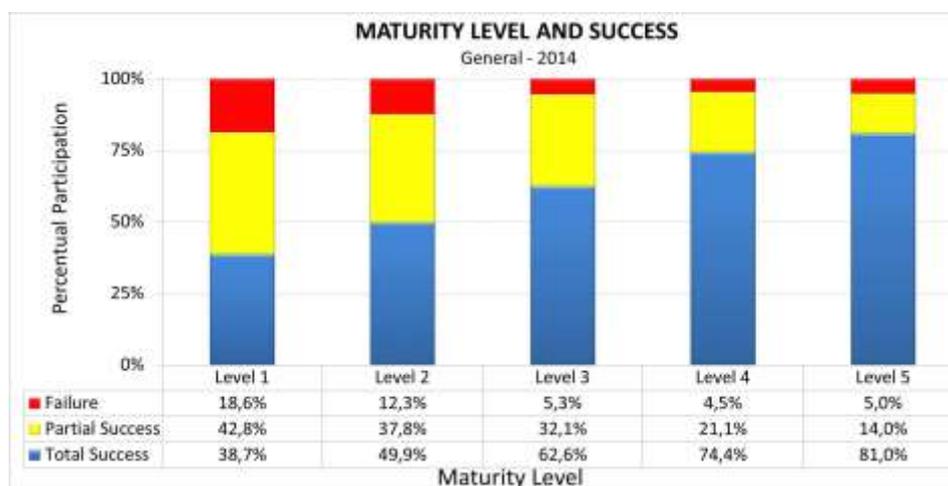


Figure 4: The higher the maturity, the higher the success level (www.maturityresearch.com).

Given this, it is very natural for organizations to want to achieve the evolution of maturity in their project management capabilities.

4. RECIPE FOR THE EVOLUTION OF MATURITY

In general, the recipe for evolution contains some aspects that must be obeyed. The initial focus is to reach level 3 and a project management platform should be implemented, according to Figure 5:

- Mapping of the finalistic processes (see Figure 3 and related discussion above) and implementation of an adequate methodology;
- Identification of all the areas involved and their processes (see Figure 3);
- Establishment of the appropriate organizational structure, involving PMOs, Project Managers, Committee, and Sponsor;
- Implementation of appropriate tools (computerization);
- Training in subjects involving project, program and portfolio management;
- Training in subjects involving behavioral competence;
- Training in matters involving technical aspects of the organization;
- Ensuring that there is strategic alignment for all portfolio projects.

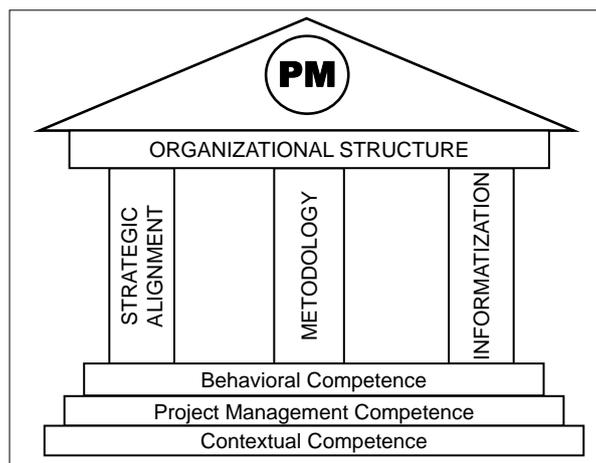


Figure 5: The Project Management Platform.

For everything to happen well, it is necessary from the start to contemplate:

- Support and involvement of High Administration
- Use of "good people"
- Leadership

In addition, for the day-to-day planning and execution of projects we expect:

- Discipline
- Persistence
- Transparency
- Engagement

Finally, to ensure that the evolution finally reaches the plateau of excellence, it is necessary to adopt a strategy and to establish and execute successive growth plans. Therefore, we are not talking about a single step, but several, each corresponding to a step to a higher level of maturity, according to Figure 6. The first steps are short (six months), but the last steps can last up to 3 years.

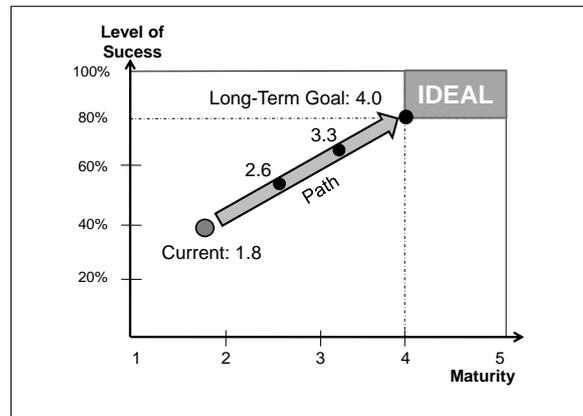


Figure 6: Evolution occurs in stages (figurative example).

Let's focus on what should be done to evolve to level 3 and from there to level 4.

Evolving to the Level 3

Level 3 implies the implementation of an appropriate PM platform, according to Figure 5. In addition, it must be in a convincing way and being used by the main stakeholders for at least one year.

Evolving to the Level 4

Level 4 implies that "things work". In order to do so, the causes of the anomalies must be eliminated or mitigated. In addition, it must be operating convincingly and being used by the key stakeholders for at least 2 years.

Difficulties

In the work described above, it should not be forgotten that difficulties and resistances may arise. They are part of the process and must be understood as natural as in any process of change. The implementation and practice of PM in an organization is often also a process of implementing new management practices. It's a slow effort, and then the results do not show up overnight.

5. CAUSES OF DIFFICULTIES FOR EVOLUTION

As we pointed out at the beginning of this text, moving to levels 3 and 4 has been more difficult than imagined. Between 2005 and 2014, few organizations were able to overcome the difficulties.

When analyzing the causes of the difficulties for the evolution, it is noticed initially that several of them point to weaknesses occurred in the implementation:

- In the organizational structure
- In processes
- In the tools
- In skills (management, technical and contextual)
- In governance

This always happens, it is not an anomaly. Continuous improvement is part of the process, precisely to correct the anomalies. Among the various arguments that explain the difficulties we have is the fact that project management is usually matrixed and thus depends on the attitudes of leaders from other areas. Usually the areas of an organization have their own ways of acting and relating to other areas. Often they do not like being supervised by other areas. All these causes originate from the project environment and can be corrected by attitude leadership and by the very evolution of the subject. Therefore, they are manageable causes, simply monitoring the anomalies, diagnosis and action plan.

However, for many organizations eager to evolve this tactic does not work. It happens that the resistances last and evolution is always a very distant destination. As we show below, a deeper analysis showed that there is another common cause: **the existence of permeated masked resistance in the organization.**

6. RESISTANCE TO CHANGE: DEEPER THAN EXPECTED

Implementing project management is an act of culture change in managerial practices. The resistance to change always exists but it does not present itself in an open, but rather a subtle way. In some organizations these resistances are being eliminated by the attitudes of the leaderships and by the good results of the completed projects. As shown in the previous item, in other organizations this does not occur. Interviewing professionals directly involved with projects (e.g. PMO professionals) it is possible to map the most common resistances:

Difficulties to consolidate processes:

- Project Plan: it is seen as being "very bureaucratic";
- Project control with baseline: it is seen as a "strait jacket";

Difficulties in consolidating governance:

- The follow-up meetings are seen as "very bureaucratic";

Difficulties to interact in areas that participate in the matrix project:

- Difficulty working as a team. The areas are "untouchable".

These resistances usually occur in all organizations that implement project management, but end up being eliminated. What differs is that for some organizations they persist. Although they wish to evolve, they all contribute in some way to stagnation. In these organizations we can see project managers themselves accepting a low performance situation simply because they somehow cope with the climate of procrastination and impunity. Complicity with this climate can be seen even with top management, in the paternalistic way friends are treated even when a situation demands an energetic stance. Ram Charan (CHARAN, 1996) showed in a 1999 survey that "less than 10% of formulated strategies are implemented effectively. In most cases of failure - we estimate 70% - the problem was not really a bad strategy: it was a poor implementation". among the causes he cites: "inadequate choice of leaders and not withdrawal from a leader even when everything points in this direction".

All of this implies difficulties in assembling good planning and difficulties to control the project. The consequences are obvious:

- Delays in projects;
- Overflow of costs;
- Delivery of a product that does not fully meet the expectation;
- General dissatisfaction.

As a consequence of this set of dysfunctions, we have a stagnation in the evolution of maturity.

What is the reason? Why do some companies manage to overcome this and others fail? Would it simply be weak leadership in the process of implementing project management?

Or is there something else behind all this?

The good news is yes, there is something more behind it all.

As we said earlier, the rapprochement with "human" area professionals in our consulting firm has allowed us to better understand these scenarios and raise the suspicion that eventually what is occurring is a clash between new practices and the **true culture** of organizations in question.

7. ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND IMPACT ON PROJECT MANAGEMENT

What does "true culture of an organization" mean?

We can conceptualize organizational culture, in an introductory and rather simplified way, as the way of being and acting of an organization. A widely used definition is:

The culture of an organization - or any group of people - is a set of values, beliefs and behaviors, and this set is a reflection of group leaders. (BARRETT, 2014)

The culture aspect is very important for organizations. As we said before, Peter Drucker believed that culture can strongly impact the attainment of an organization's strategies and summed up its understanding with an anthological phrase: "culture eats strategy at breakfast." The culture of a large organization (macro-culture) may have versions as micro-cultures in its various areas, with slight differences between them due to the performance of its leaders.

Edgar Schein's Model

Psychologist Edgar Henry Schein, born in 1928, is one of the great scholars of the subject. His work is consolidated in several books, articles and lectures. Among his books, special mention should be made of "Organizational Culture and Leadership" (SCHEIN, 2014), where he launches the presuppositions of an approach that has become classic.

For Schein, the culture of an organization is not something easily perceived in its entirety, similar to an iceberg. He identified three layers as constituents of the culture (Figure 7):

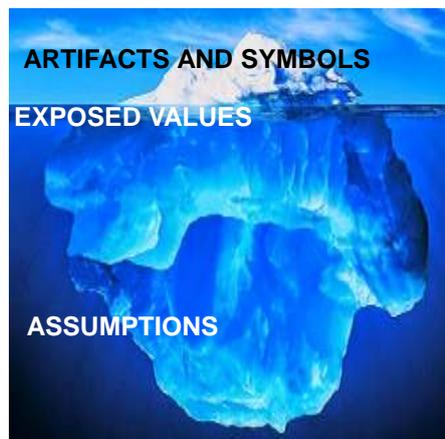


Figure 7: The three layers of Schein's organizational culture model.

According to Schein, the "artifacts" layer refers to "any tangible, obvious or verbally identifiable element in an organization. Architecture, furniture, dress code, office jokes, all exemplifies organizational artifacts. Artifacts are the elements visible in a culture and can be recognized by outsiders who are not part of the organization".

The "beliefs and values spoused" layer refers to the "stated values of the organization and rules of behavior. This is often expressed in official philosophies and public declarations of identity. Sometimes, it can be a projection into the future that members expect to become. Examples would be the professionalism of the employees, or a mantra of the "first family." The problem may arise if the values adopted by leaders are not aligned with the deeper assumptions of culture".

The "basic assumptions" layer (or tacit assumptions) refers to "deeply rooted, assumed, often unconscious, behaviors that constitute the essence of culture. These assumptions are typically so well integrated into the dynamics of the office that they are hard to recognize from within." **Here we have the true culture of an organization.**

For Schein, changing a culture is a complex and time-consuming task. However, a problem may arise when, in our fast-paced world, the organization is faced with an urgent need to reposition itself in the market, but the existing culture becomes a hindrance. As it is impossible to wait for the change of culture, if possible, a more agile and efficient, approach is to deliver the new challenges to a new group that has no links with the old culture. In both cases, change management is critical.

Case: A powerful and traditional food-producing company

Consider a fictitious case that was assembled to illustrate Schein's concepts. It is based on our experience with some real cases, but the case does not mirror a single situation; it is a montage of several. In addition, the treatment of the case has been simplified to make it more suitable for the purposes of this article.

The case is about a food company that was created a long time ago and that has grown significantly, taking the lead in an uncompetitive market. He had a strong leadership culture, paternalistic and with the existence of "pots" attached to the various boards. Its product list was quite limited (a single product accounted for almost all of the revenue) compared to the situation on the external markets. The general motivation for innovation was low because the

market was not demanding. Routine work was administered with energy, as it was done in the early days by the founders.

Times have changed. With globalization, the company began to bother with the entry of foreign products into the national market, threatening its position. On the other hand, opportunities were observed in foreign markets for products that the company does not produce but could produce. Unfortunately, they found themselves uncompetitive. The only way out was to fight and, to be successful in this endeavor, should be agile and have an innovative focus on products as well as on services, processes and business. Strategic planning was carried out and strategies were deployed in an ambitious portfolio of programs and projects. A new set of values was created, consisting of the following list:

- Innovation
- Meritocracy
- Focus on results
- Customer Focus
- Owner attitude
- Team work
- Focus on quality

A strong internal disclosure of the new values was made, with emphasis on innovation.

After three years it was observed that the expected success in the conquest of new markets abroad was not being achieved. Even in the domestic market, few innovative products were successfully launched.

An initial evaluation concluded that the projects linked to the strategies were not being executed with the desired agility and not bringing the expected results. A following evaluation showed that innovative projects often involved various areas of the organization and everything indicated that the gears were not synchronized properly.

Then, following the guidance of an HR consultant, it was set out to analyze the organizational culture. Surprise! The following unwanted items were found to be on the list of "basic assumptions":

- Paternalism / Personal Loyalty
- Risk aversion
- Viewer stance
- Non-acceptance of interference from other areas
- Fear of exposing yourself out of his/hers area
- Uninterest in the new
- Need to control

This was the true organizational culture existing and practiced by employees. It was always encouraged by the leadership and non-adherence to these beliefs and behaviors was not well regarded and could put ones career at risk. People not only behaved in this way but also tacitly charged this behavior between them. This was the scenario that created comfort among people and was the result of the autocratic administration that had ruled since the founders' time. The introduction of new values has generated confusion, discomfort and insecurity at the unconscious level of people.

A cross between the two lists identified the following discrepancies (Figure 8), which were interrelated. For them the analysis of the causes of the problems listed above gains a new dimension, as we describe.

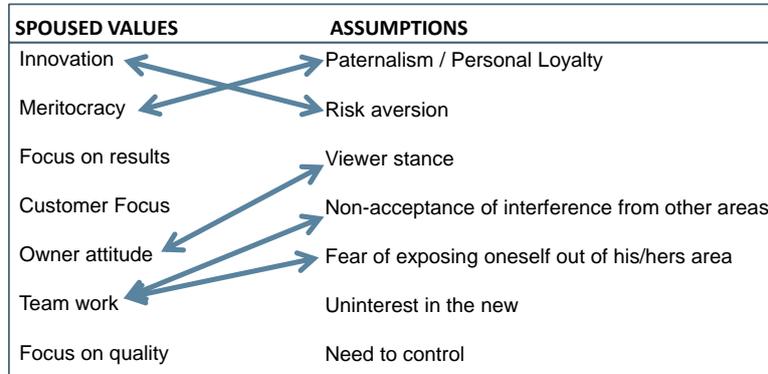


Figure 8: Discrepancies

Spoused Value	Assumption
Innovation	Risk aversion

Explanation: The difficulties in creating an innovative spirit in the organization ran into risk aversion. Traditionally, its professionals lived in a non-challenging environment (a single product allowed the organization to grow tremendously). Also where there was no greater responsibility for the fear of error and punishment, coming from an environment of autocratic leadership. As a consequence, the creative spirit had enormous limitations to emerge with vigor.

Spoused Value	Assumption
Meritocracy	Paternalism / Personal Loyalty

Explanation: "In a meritocratic environment the best performances are awarded" (CHAVES, 2017). Then, it was hoped that with the awards, a greater interest would arise in taking on greater challenges. However, this initiative did not bring the expected results. Among the causes it was highlighted the difficulty of professionals to spend side-by-side with professionals who were outstanding because they have extraordinary performance, and also because of the observation that not all of the winners did perform in an extraordinary way, but they did have a strong personal connection with the heads.

Spoused Value	Assumption
Owner attitude	Spectator stance

Explanation: to be innovative and to break barriers it is necessary for a professional to defend his ideas with fervor, as if he owns them. At times, it is necessary to act with determination outside the boundaries of his/hers area. This came up against a traditional behavior of the organization in not honoring such initiatives, which made everyone have a viewer position. So many good initiatives died from starvation.

Spoused Value	Assumption
Team work	Non-acceptance of interference from other areas Fear of exposure outside his/hers area

Explanation: An innovative project (product, service, process, and business) often requires the involvement of many areas within an organization. Teamwork requires dedication and commitment, to be agile and of quality. It is also necessary to be humble to accept the opinion of others and have the courage to expose yourself in other areas. This did not match with the traditional attitudes of not accepting interference from other areas and with the difficulty to expose themselves outside their area.

The discrepancies analyzed above allowed us to better understand the difficulties encountered in executing the projects and obtaining the results of the strategies.

Case: impact on project management and strategies

All of the above discrepancies had a strong impact on project management efficiency and, therefore, on project results. Let us consider only the following basic assumptions

Non-acceptance of interference from other areas
Fear of exposure outside his/hers area

Projects often involve many areas with many interdisciplinary meetings. They also need a proactive action by a PMO, which ends up monitoring the performance of the various areas involved. So the two basic assumptions listed above had the following impacts on projects:

- Resistance to detailed planning
- Resistance to setting deadlines for tasks
- Resistance to establishment of "baseline"
- Resistance to follow-up meetings
- Resistance to the establishment of corrective actions in case of anomalies
- Resistance to changes (resistance to "new")

As previously commented, we can now say with more propriety that all of this implies difficulties in setting up good planning and difficulties in order to have a good control of the progress of the project. The consequences are obvious:

- Delays in projects;
- Overflow of costs;
- Delivery of a product that does not fully meet expectations;
- General dissatisfaction.

Therefore, the difficulties observed in the planning and execution of the projects come from the "basic assumptions" and have impacted the success of the projects, particularly the innovators. That is, the success of the projects was being impacted by the organizational culture. In addition, analyzing the scenario described above with respect to its maturity, we can say that it certainly would not reach maturity level 3 at all. The maintenance of this scenario for a long period would characterize stagnation in the evolution of maturity.

Organizational culture led to a stagnation in the evolution of maturity.

We know that problems with projects imply problems in achieving the objectives of the strategies. Therefore:

In conclusion: the culture was eating the strategies.

How to map and evaluate organizational culture: Richard Barrett's model

A model widely used, mainly by consultancies, to map and evaluate the organizational culture is that of Barret (2014). The evaluation using this model allows to place positive aspects and potentially limiting aspects in a special figure consisting of seven parts, separated into two sets (lower and upper), and in the middle we have the "transformation" circle (Figure 9). Each part has a specific set of values that can be positive (trust, creativity, passion, honesty, integrity, clarity, etc.) or potentially limiting (power, blame, greed, status, being liked, etc.). The ideal is to have no limiting aspects anywhere. Companies in their early years usually have their positive aspects spread out in the lower set of the figure. Over time there is a natural tendency to also possess positive aspects of the upper set of the figure, mainly as a function of the collections of society. They are more altruistic aspects, oriented to the evolution of the human being and to serve to the society

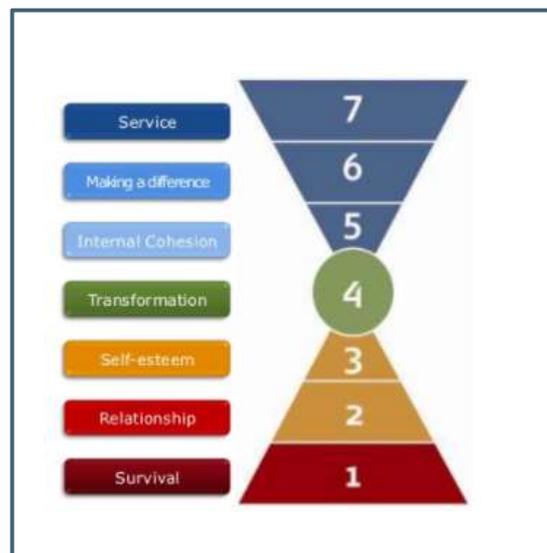


Figure 9: Barrett's model.

The data are obtained through a research with the professionals of the organization in question, in which they are asked to point out positive aspects and potentially limiting aspects that they observe in the organization. The tabulation of the results allows to show:

- If the company has a predominant presence of positive aspects at the bottom or top of Figure 8.
- The quantification of an indicator created by the author with the name of **entropy**. It is related to the potentially limiting factors and represents the percentage of citations of these factors among the total of citations in the research performed. It is a measure of the amount of energy in an organization that is consumed in non-productive jobs and is also a measure of friction, frustration repressed within an organization. Up to 10% is considered normal and, above this value, transforming actions may be necessary.

Reinforcing the Desired Culture: the model of Patrick Lencioni

A well respected model for the evolution of culture is that of LENCIONI (2012). According to him, organizations have two paths to success: smart and healthy:

Smart	Healthy
Strategic	Minimum of politics
Marketing	Minimum of confusion
Finance	High Morale
Technology	High productivity
-	Low turn-over

According to him, any organization that really wants to maximize its success must be both smart and healthy. He believes that organizational health will surpass all other disciplines in business as the greatest opportunity for improvement and competitive advantage. To Lencioni, “organizational health is about making a company function effectively by building a cohesive leadership team, establishing real clarity among those leaders, communicating that clarity to everyone within the organization and putting in place just enough structure to reinforce that clarity going forward”.

Patrick Lencioni's Model of moving in the healthy direction allows improving behavioral aspects of leaders through engagement and cohesion. In order to achieve a group of leaders with these characteristics a long work must be done. This work is carried out in four stages and must be conducted by qualified professionals (preferably external consulting:

1. Build a Cohesive Leadership Team
2. Create Clarity
3. Overcommunicate Clarity
4. Reinforce Clarity



Figure 10: The evolution in Lencioni model.

The progress of work allows the five steps of evolution to occur (Figure 10):

- a) Building Trust in Teams: people who trust each other are also open to exposing their difficulties, weaknesses and fears.

- b) Conflict Domain: a team of people who trust each other are more effective at attending meetings where conflicts are natural, and the debates lead to new ideas and problem solving.
- c) Commitment: the ability to proactively engage in conflict allows members to engage with commitments.
- d) Accepting Responsibilities: team members become willing to take on responsibilities and remind one another when actions are counterproductive to the team.
- e) Focus on results: team goals replace individual or departmental goals.

8. WHAT THE PROFESSIONALS OF PM CAN DO TO MINIMIZE THE EFFECTS OF "HIDDEN" CULTURE

By consolidating what has been seen so far, the ideal is to eliminate the harmful culture of an organization. In the new scenario, the planning and execution of projects (and strategies) would occur without the mishaps resulting from the extinct negative culture. But, as we have said countless times in this article, changing the culture of an organization is no easy task. Culture does not change from day to night. Overcoming the challenges shown above is an arduous and long walk and needs the help of competent professionals. The leadership of this initiative is not for amateurs.

When an organization wishes to effect transformations but does not yet have maturity in project management, the effects of negative aspects of the culture are more likely to occur. Adding this to the lack of experience we have that at this stage, success indicators are generally low, as shown in Figure 4 for levels 1 and 2 maturity.

So for times like this, and until a structured process of change in culture begins, an intermediate approach is possible. An effective way to gain understanding and support of people by avoiding or reducing potential resistance is to use **Change Management** before and during all phases of the project. Change Management aims to facilitate the process of introducing the changes that will come from the products of a project. The focus is to assess the impact on people and existing operations. For Neuza Chaves (CHAVES, 2017), "whenever possible the first step of this management should be to identify the characteristics of the organizational culture, analyze them, understand their relationship with the decision makers, the influencers and prepare strategies to deal with them. Projects are most successful when managers focus on the explicit and tacit side of culture and use the points of engagement with mastery to minimize points of antagonism." For Edson Carli (CARLI, 2015), change management is critical to projects that have a strong impact on an organization's operations.

As for the PMBOK® Guide (PMI, 2014), it does not address the issue to the depth required, but we believe that the following Knowledge Areas add value to Change Management and help us address the evil effects of culture:

- Management of stakeholders
- Communication management (Communication Plan and Dissemination Plan)

It is important to point out that to minimize the effects of culture, working with the above areas requires a deeper look than we usually do when our actions are focused on individuals rather than on the community. It is appropriate that actions reach the group of people involved whose attitudes may be harmful to the culture in force.

It is also important to remember that the following approaches are always necessary for more efficient project management:

- Benefits management;
- Knowledge management (mainly in project-oriented organizations).

Like Change Management, these are topics that are not yet part of PMBOK®, but are often practiced within organizations.

Professor Falconi: Enthusiasm comes with results

To conclude, it is very opportune to mention the renowned Professor Falconi, founder of consulting firm *FALCONI - Results Consultants*: "enthusiasm comes with results". That is, it is very important to always obtain results, particularly for the projects that are critical and of greater visibility. And especially in the first moments of implementing project management in an organization. It is paradoxical, because this is exactly the biggest challenge of the first moments in which the projects usually insist on not walking as planned and the resistances surface. But the reminder is very appropriate if we remember that it is also common, in the early stages, that key stakeholders (PMO and Project Managers) devote more time on creating process, tool and governance documentation than to giving the right focus to the results of the projects. Projects become adrift and this scenario is conducive to the emergence of resistances, some of them arising from negative aspects of culture. It is a very common phenomenon and it is one of those responsible for PMOs closure. According to an APM survey, 50% of the PMOs close in up to 3 years in the USA.

So Professor Falconi's suggestion is well suited to the leadership involved in implementing project management or with the advancement of the theme. We believe that the following steps are in line with Professor Falconi's suggestion:

- Identify truly critical projects, those that will bring a strong return or that are in the interest of top management. Preferably, they should be few (maximum three).
- Be sure that the goals of each project are challenging and will really bring benefits to the organization.
- Choose "good people" for each project, people who have engagement, commitment, knowledge and experience.

For each project:

- Ensure that the most robust planning is done;
- Systematically follow the progress of project execution;
- Identify the changes and areas impacted by the project results. Draw a plan to get partners and minimize resistance;
- Make a partnership with senior management that allows for constant exchanges of opinion;
- Help your sponsor help you. Tell him about your perceptions about the organization, its culture, and how to overcome difficulties. If he is a senior professional, he may have good suggestions;
- Follow the indicators directly linked to the benefits that will be provided by the project.

When the good results start appearing, disclose. Use all available channels to show that project management brings results. Then you will see new looks for management, discover goodwill arising from opposition corners, and understand the depth of the statement "enthusiasm comes with results." From then on there will not be so many stones along the way.

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