

***Strategy in the context of transparent leadership and sustainable project management*^{1, 2}**

Article 2 of 5

Helgi Thor Ingason and Haukur Ingi Jonasson

We have written a series of four books for the modern business professional who needs to be able to lead and participate in different kinds of projects and understand and practice different contextual, leadership, technical and communication aspects of project, programme and portfolio management. For the readers of PM World Journal, we are introducing our series through a set of short articles, where we explain our ideas and scope.

This second article gives a brief overview of the first book in our series; namely Project: Strategy. This is a straightforward guide to strategic planning within organisations, presenting the reader with a fundamental understanding of strategic management and functioning as a practical handbook.

Strategic planning has the potential to enable every organisation to realise its ideals and actualise its values, whether it be a small start-up business, a large international company, or even an entire society. Yet strategic planning efforts often fail due to an inability to execute the plan or because of poor decisions resulting in mismanagement of resources, for instance betting on the wrong projects. This book explores the perspective of project, portfolio and programme management and it shows how strategy is, in fact, the starting point for many projects. It is therefore imperative for project orientated organisations to understand their position and environment, and to make rational decisions when selecting and defining their projects and programs. Strategic planning is a key tool in such considerations and the book gives real life examples on strategy within different organisations.



¹ This series of articles is by Professors Helgi Thor Ingason and Haukur Ingi Jonasson at Reykjavik University in Iceland. Active researchers and educators in the field of project management for many years, they are the authors of a series of books on project management and related fields, published by Taylor Francis / Routledge in 2018 and 2019. See their author profiles at the end of this article.

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We have written the book to be a practical handbook on strategic planning in organisations of any size, from small start-ups to large corporations and will be of interest to professionals in management and specialist positions within knowledge-based organisations in all sectors. Within such organisations, managers, specialists and in fact all employees are active participants in continuous strategic planning and are expected to contribute to it. Everyone must thus be familiar with the basic aspects of strategic planning and able to apply these skills, either as a leader or participant, and the book facilitates this. The book is also well-suited as a basic textbook in strategic planning at undergraduate and graduate level, and its exploration of open strategic planning on a social level would be of interest to readers in the public sector.

The focus on strategic planning in context with project, portfolio and programme management is not a part of the traditional project management literature, which focuses on the project as such and pays much less attention to the decision-making processes of organisations or how projects are selected. It is however a well-known fact that one of the major reasons for project failure has to do with a lack of strategic alignment between the organisation's strategic objectives and its programmes, portfolios and projects, and this text therefore provides a necessary perspective into these aspects. Another distinctive feature of the book is its practical focus on how to plan and execute a strategic planning exercise in not only small but also large organisations – even on a national scale. For this purpose, modern themes of collaborative work and open strategy are employed.

The lack of ability to execute strategy is an international problem encountered by every type of organisation. As a discipline and as an approach to managing organisations, the benefits of project management are being increasingly recognised worldwide. We hope that a textbook on strategic planning, written from the perspective of project management, is of interest to readers all over the world.

In our first article, we mentioned our long-time collaborator, Halldor Baldursson whose drawings are an important part of our series. The drawing on the following page gives an overview of our series in whole and the readers can see which part of the drawing relates to our book on strategy.



About the Authors



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Helgi Thor Ingason (b. 1965) holds a PhD in process metallurgy from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), MSc in mechanical and industrial engineering from the University of Iceland and a Stanford Advanced Project Management Certification from Stanford University. He is an IPMA Certified Senior Project Manager (B level).

Dr. Ingason is a professor at Reykjavik University. He is co-head (with Dr. Haukur Ingi Jonasson) of the MPM - Master of Project Management - program at the university. The research fields of Dr. Ingason range from quality- and project management to system dynamics and renewable energy, production, transport and utilization, changes in the energy infrastructure and energy carriers of the future.

Dr. Ingason has reported on his research at conferences and in several reviewed conference and journal papers. He is the co-author of 7 books in the Icelandic language on project management, strategic planning, product development and quality management. He is also co-author, with Haukur Ingi Jonasson, of the books *Project Ethics* (2013), *Project: Leadership* (2018), *Project: Strategy* (2018), *Project: Communication* (2019) and *Project: Execution* (2019). To learn more about these books, [visit the Routledge publishing site here](#).

Dr. Ingason was interim CEO of Orkuveita Reykjavíkur (Reykjavik Energy) from 2010 to 2011. A co-founder of Nordica Consulting Group, Dr. Ingason is a management consultant and a recognized speaker. In his spare time he plays piano and accordion with the South River Band (www.southernriverband.com), and Kólga (www.kolga.band), two Icelandic world music ensembles.

More information on Dr. Ingason can be found on www.academia.edu and on www.helgithoringason.com. Information about the MPM program at the University of Reykjavik can be found at <http://en.ru.is/mpm/why-mpm/>. Dr. Ingason can be contacted at helgithor@ru.is.



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He is also a psychoanalyst in private practice and a management consultant at Nordic Consulting Group ehf. As a consultant, his clients have included energy companies, banks, hospitals, the government and other public and private organizations. Dr. Jonasson is also a mountain climber and a member of the Reykjavik Mountaineering Air Ground Search and Rescue Squad.

He is co-author, with Helgi Thor Ingason, of the books *Project Ethics* (2013), *Project: Leadership* (2018), *Project: Strategy* (2018), *Project: Communication* (2019) and *Project: Execution* (2019). To learn more about these books, [visit the Routledge publishing site here](#).

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