

On Project Management needs a Higher Purpose ¹

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

20 January 2021

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Hi David,

You have sown together an interesting and challenging summary of present times. Regardless of whether people agree or disagree you have bravely confronted what is happening and what is a truly complex tapestry of issues. With such divergent matters it is hard to know where to start. But you have just grabbed the bull's horns, front on.

I have to say I align with all you have said. You rightly made a big issue around honesty, not lying, being fair, and decent. These are essential qualities without which there is little value having a society. They are the foundation stones on which we live and interact. If compromised, as they have been in the past four years in the US particularly, society is on a very slippery slide; and it is all down. Corruption, another key issue, like cancer, delivers no good outcome. I am absolutely in agreement with you on all these matters.

The issue you mentioned about projects and project management, fully agree also. As PM's we are naval gazing. The world is not interested in PM per se, it is interested in Projects. Projects are what fuels the world's activities, not PM. PM is our tool to deal with projects. If you were to hold a world summit on Projects, then there would be a huge diversity of interest across the whole of society. If you did the same calling it a world summit on PM, then the only interested people would be a few of us who call ourselves PM's.

Climate change is another huge issue. One would look a little silly these days if they did not recognise our global climate is changing. Regardless of whether we can now turn back the damage done we have a moral responsibility to ourselves and children to do all we possibly can to limit human impact. The reality is we don't know all the aspects and drivers. On that basis alone we should be aiming to be cautious and take the higher ground. If it is proven in a 100 years, we could not have changed anything then there is little lost. If we likely discover it is the opposite way around then we have caused the demise of humanity; what a price to pay for our reckless, selfish behaviour. We need to call it for what we currently know and do all we can to mitigate its adverse impacts.

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I am deeply interested in what we can do as a profession to respond to the issues raised. I would be keen to hear back other responses to your article.

Cheers,

Bill Young

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