

On Project Management needs a Higher Purpose!¹

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

31 January 2021

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Dear David,

Of course, I fully second your call for a deeper responsibility and involvement of the PM profession in this stormy time, which also I believe is of extraordinary importance in the shaping the future of today's complex world. I mean: the whole world, not only the more developed countries!

While I am looking forward for your next issues, I try to give you my thoughts about your first published part:

1. In addition to understand if we have to develop/adapt present approaches (standard, agile, multi-phase, etc.), we have to make aware government bodies (national and international: UNO, OECD, UE, Parliaments, etc.) that a *portfolio/program/project management* governance can effectively help in achieving political objectives. But, as a prerequisite, public opinion and governmental Institutions must be massively alerted on that;
2. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by United Nations are a key tool to get a true progress against the overall disease you so clearly depicted. School is a place to instill them in our new generation. And it is already moving on this track: for instance, my nephew had recently to perform a homework task on SDG11 (*Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable*), proposing some ideas and related projects (of course, I slightly supported him ...);
3. I agree that “P5 Standard for Sustainability in Project Management” published by GPM Global is a very effective guide: I just read the standard manual, and the review is going to be published in our Italian “il Project Manager” Journal;
4. It is likely (as you suspected) that very few leaders of major programs and projects launched in response to the Covid-19 pandemic have the relevant PM certification released by the leading PM professional Associations (both international or national ones), but just recently our Italian Institute of Project Management (ISIPM) has established an alliance with the Italian Association which supports the development

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and implementation of projects financed by the European Union (not an easy task, even before *pandemia!*). ISIPM's purpose is to make easier the effective and full utilization of EU financial aids, for the hoped recovery from COVID. For details, see https://www.forumpa.it/riforma-pa/competenze/nextgeneration-eu-e-programmazione-2021-2027-ecco-il-manifesto-per-il-buon-utilizzo-dei-fondi-europei/?utm_campaign=fpa_nl_29_01_2021&utm_source=fpa_nl_29_01_2021&utm_medium=email&sfdcicid= (in Italian, sorry);

5. Like you, I know what can be accomplished using project and program management approaches, methods, knowledge. At the moment, ISIPM's main issue is the approach to the governance of the Italian share of EU financial aids (more than €222 billion), for the hoped recovery from COVID. I'm personally supporting the initiative to establish a dedicated top-level *Portfolio PMO* function, formed mainly by public servants (who already have the proper competence: I personally know most of them!), supported by distributed PMO in each involved Government office (at central and/or local level).

I wrote about the above items in various Italian web magazines dedicated to Governmental/ICT issues² (I apologize: all in Italian), and some other highly regarded opinion makers are aligned with that. But public opinion and politicians are more focused about “**where**” to spend the money and not on “**how**” to manage the process, in order to really get measurable deliverables and relevant benefits (*output & outcomes*, in our PM slang) ...

More to come, as you already spelled out!

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² <https://www.forumpa.it/riforma-pa/competenze/covid19-perche-il-project-management-puo-aiutare-la-pa-a-gestire-lemergenza/> PM first call (March 2020), https://www.agendadigitale.eu/procurement/recovery-fund-italiano-perche-ce-bisogno-di-un-portfolio-manager/?utm_campaign=ad-procurement_nl_20200803&utm_source=ad-procurement_nl_20200803&utm_medium=email&sfdcicid=0030O00002LYvBnQAL portfolio management approach proposal (July 2020), <https://www.agendadigitale.eu/procurement/recovery-fund-per-cogliere-loccasione-bisogna-digitalizzare-il-procurement-ecco-perche/> PMO and procurement suggested rules (January 2021)