How To Have a Business Continuity Management System (ISO 22301) using PMI Methodology[1]

Interview with Hakan Kantas

Business Continuity Director
Halkbank AS, Istanbul,
TURKEY

Interviewed by Ipek Sahra Ozguler

International Correspondent, PM World Journal

Istanbul, Turkey

Introduction to the interviewee

Hakan KANTAS, Business Continuity Director, successfully implemented the ISO 22301-Business Continuity Management System Standard using PMI Methodology. He is using the PMI Methodology for continuity of ISO 22301 Certification across the organization. Hakan is responsible for Business Continuity, Disaster Recovery, Crisis Management and Operational Resilience in Halkbank AS. Earlier in Hakan's career, he was director of IT Governance and a Project Management Office Department.

---

[1] How to cite this work: Ozguler, I. S. (2023). How To Have a Business Continuity Management System (ISO 22301) using PMI Methodology, Interview with Hakan Kantas, *PM World Journal,* Vol. XII, Issue II, February.

PM World Journal (ISSN: 2330-4480)
Vol. XII, Issue II – February 2023
https://pmworldjournal.com/

Interview with Hakan Kantas
by Ipek Sahra Ozguler
Interview

Interview

Ipek Sahra Ozguler (Ozguler): Thank you for making time to be with us today. Would you please introduce yourself to our readers?

Hakan Kantas (Kantas): First of all, I would like to thank you and PM World Journal for this interview. Computers have been a part of my life since 1985. In those years, I entered the IT world with Commodore 64 and similar personal computers, and I have completed my 30th work years and I continue to work with the same enthusiasm as the first day. I started my studies at university by writing articles to share my views and comments on IT, and then continued as a professional writer and editor for 10 years in various IT magazines such as Mac World/Turkey, PC World/Turkey and PC Magazine/Turkey.

After working in areas such as Mainframe Developer, Administrator, System Programmer, System Analyst, Solution Architect and Project Manager in one of the largest banks in Turkey for 28 years, I have been working in the fields of IT Governance for the last 15 years. I have been doing in-depth studies on Operational Resilience and Business Continuity in last 6 years. I have participated in various events as speaker and panelist, and I enjoy sharing my experiences with those working in these fields.

Ozguler: Your main focus is Business Continuity. Please tell us more about Business Continuity and its significance during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Kantas: In the last 4-5 years, the Pandemic, wars, the energy crisis, the economic crisis and the diseases we heard for the first time have brought the issue of Continuity to our lives more than ever. So much so that 4 years ago, the term "disasters" within the scope of Continuity could only bring to mind natural events such as earthquakes and floods, but today, unthinkable issues such as Pandemic, War and Energy Crisis took their place among the catastrophic events. Unfortunately, raising awareness about these events, which have now become a part of our lives, depends on giving importance and space to such issues. That's why I would like to thank you once again for raising such an important issue. I don't know how much we are aware of it, but the institutions that bypassed the Pandemic process best, most comfortable and smoothly were the most mature and competent in Business Continuity.

Before the pandemic, there was a scenario called "Epidemic Disease" in our Emergency Plan, but to be honest, we never took it very seriously and carried out a test in this context. However, we always had a plan to act in the face of such a situation, and we were ready for it, even if it was theoretical. Those who were so prepared and did the practical test of it

PM World Journal *(ISSN: 2330-4480)*
Vol. XII, Issue II – February 2023
https://pmworldjournal.com/

Interview with Hakan Kantas
by Ipek Sahra Ozguler
Interview

beyond theory, easily survived the Pandemic as a part of their lives.

Ozguler: Tell us more about Business Continuity in your country?

Kantas: In a financial ecosystem, the fact that any bank is not working for a while carries such a risk that it will have a negative impact not only on itself but also on the entire system. Being aware of this, all financial institutions approach this issue with great sensitivity and take all necessary actions. This means, Business Continuity is a must and critical for every Financial Institute in Turkey.

In addition, the rule-making institutions in our country also approach this issue with great importance and seriousness, and apply regulations that require compliance, especially with regard to business continuity. With the periodic inspection of these regulations, the general maturity and awareness of Business Continuity reaches very high levels. In other words, I can easily state that the awareness in our country is well above the world average, both through the efforts of financial institutions and the guidance of regulations.

Of course, this also means that many projects are produced and serious investments are made in this regard. Thanks to the fact that there are many PMP certified Project Managers in our country and institutions prefer this methodology, the PMBOK Methodology is used in all these projects.

Ozguler: So what exactly is your work, what did you aim for, what did you do, and how and where did your path cross with PMI? Could you give brief information on these issues?

Kantas: The ISO 22301 standard is known as one of the most common methodologies in the world for Business Continuity Management System. It is also a set of requirements that the majority working on this subject knows, applies or aims to address. You may have been working on Continuity Management as a corporate for years and you may think that you are very mature, just like us. We aimed to obtain and implement this standard in order to reinforce this situation, that is, to complete our deficiencies in the field of business continuity and move it to a more mature point, and to share it with our stakeholders. Of course, we needed a guide to carry out the necessary operations for such a large-scale study, and here PMBOK came to our rescue as the guide that saved us. You can carry out small-scale studies with different methods and methodologies, maybe there are alternatives, but PMBOK is the only solution that comes to mind in large-scale studies and projects like this one.

PM World *Journal* (ISSN: 2330-4480)
Vol. XII, Issue II – February 2023
https://pmworldjournal.com/

Interview with Hakan Kantas
by Ipek Sahra Ozguler
Interview

Ozguler: What did you do in the studies you carried out under the guidance of PMBOK? How did you carry out the process and what was the plus of PMBOK?

Kantas: We conducted two different studies here. First, the certificate was taken to the institution for the first time with serious work, and the second was the management of actions such as additional audits, checks, studies and improvements that must be done within the institution in order to continue the certification. The first study, as might be expected, requires a rather large, comprehensive, and exhausting process involving many stakeholders. No matter how mature and prepared you think you are, when it comes to complying with an ISO standard, you realize that you have shortcomings in many areas that you never even noticed. In other words, this situation can naturally expand the size and scope of the project you expect. It is almost impossible to manage such a comprehensive study without a mentor like PMBOK. But fortunately there are many very good PMP certified Project Managers and some of them are able to successfully coordinate large-scale work.

You can also get the certificate on a smaller scale and focused, like a department, but if you are going to get it for the whole institution, as we do, the scope expands significantly. When it takes such a path, almost all departments of the entire institution are involved in the process. Employees with different duties and functions, from Human Resources to the Legal Department, from the Purchasing Department to Operations, have to take part in this work. Of course, managing all these teams and the work they are involved in on time, in accordance with the schedule and plan, was also possible with the Planning step of PMBOK.

Ozguler: So, did you carry out these studies as a Project, what kind of path did you follow for both studies?

Kantas: You can even get ISO 22301 Certificate for any department in your organization. However, if the aim is to obtain ISO 22301 for the entire institution, as we did, a more comprehensive planning should be made and targets should be determined accordingly in order to obtain the certificate. Of course, both studies must be carried out as a project, separately for the admission of ISO 22301 to the institution and for the renewal of the certificate. If there is a Project Management team in the institution, it is best to leave such large and critical works to their management. If you manage large-scale studies with methodological systems such as PMBOK, the success rate is much higher and the result is much more efficient. When I say efficient, I mean that all kinds of needs such as human resources, budget and time are used as planned. It does not

PM World *Journal* *(ISSN: 2330-4480)*
Vol. XII, Issue II – February 2023
https://pmworldjournal.com/

Interview with Hakan Kantas
by Ipek Sahra Ozguler
Interview

come as a surprise to achieve success when you deliver both the certification and renewal works to PMP certified and of course experienced project managers. This is how we did it, and we were able to get both studies within the time we targeted and with the resources we planned.

At the end of the year after the certificate was obtained, the certificate renewal process begins. At this point, it will be a great advantage to give the project you will start to the same project manager and benefit from his knowledge. As a result of such a decision, you can foresee that the renewal process will be completed as smoothly and without any problems as the first project.

Ozguler: For both studies, the Executing Process Group should probably be the one with the most active work. What were the difficulties you experienced at this point and the solutions you produced for them?

Kantas: It certainly is... Because the work and target you will do for both projects should be very clear, specific and supported by the management. Therefore, at this point, the biggest task falls to the Executing stage. Due to its structure and scope, it would be the right decision to complete almost all critical studies in the projects at this stage.

The biggest potential problem that can be experienced in the execution phase, which should be called the longest process, will be the discussions and studies with the stakeholders. Because, in very large institutions, having a large number of teams and units doing very different and independent works, but including all of them in the certification stage requires a very serious operation and integration work. Here you can manage such large-scale projects and studies with very good planning, documentation and follow-up as recommended by the PMBOK. Individual planning, negotiations and coordination with 40-50 departments in the institution can be managed without any problems by doing a correct and sufficient work in the Planning step of PMBOK.

Ozguler: Well, couldn't this study be done by any competent specialist?

Kantas: Theoretically, yes, it can be done, but as I mentioned above, if you want to be successful, especially in such large institutions and projects with many stakeholders, you have to do this methodically. Otherwise, exceeding all kinds of resources, especially the budget, will attract the attention of the management and this may result in a disaster such as project cancellation. However, a project that has been successfully completed on time and with the planned resources as planned is a great success not only for the

PM World Journal (ISSN: 2330-4480)
Vol. XII, Issue II – February 2023
https://pmworldjournal.com/

Interview with Hakan Kantas
by Ipek Sahra Ozguler
Interview

institution but also for all stakeholders involved in the work. Such a result will also ensure that they are honored, their work is completed successfully, and of course they are proud of this situation. Above all, when it is seen that such a result can only be achieved with a methodology such as PMBOK, new candidates will join this caravan as project managers.

Ozguler: Thank you for giving such useful detailed information.

About the Interviewer

Ipek Sahra Ozguler

Istanbul, Turkey

Ipek Sahra Ozguler graduated from the Istanbul University, Turkey with a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Engineering and from Middle East Technical University, Turkey with an MSc degree in Software Management. As a project manager, she has more than 13 years of experience in various areas such as portfolio management, program management, project management, software management, business analysis. She became a certified PMP in 2012 and a certified SCRUM Master in 2014.

She has gained broader insights in a variety of projects across manufacturing, defence, FMCG (Cola Cola), insurance (Euler Hermes), audit (Deloitte), telecommunication, aviation and finance sectors. In addition, she has been working as an international correspondent for the PM World Journal since 2014.

Ipek is the creator and editor of the highly acclaimed book, The Perspective of Women Project Management Professionals, interviews with leading female PM experts and professionals around the world. The book was published in March 2020 and is available here.

PM World Journal *(ISSN: 2330-4480)*
Vol. XII, Issue II – February 2023
https://pmworldjournal.com/

Interview with Hakan Kantas
by Ipek Sahra Ozguler
Interview

Ipek is based in Istanbul,Turkey and can be contacted at ipeksahra@gmail.com .
Her portfolio is published at the http://ipeksahra.strikingly.com/ and
https://pmworldlibrary.net/authors/ipek-sahra-ozguler/.