Is it Possible to Create the Project Manager's Manifesto?[1]

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Abstract

Project management development has become increasingly advanced, with many methods, tools, certifications, guidelines and recommendations created to enhance its professional edge. There are some professional organisations like PMI, IPMA, Axelos and many agile project management-related institutions, experienced in project management, who deliver the latest and possibly greatest guidelines and recommendations. Agile Manifesto has presented four key values and twelve principles as mandatory rules for software development projects delivering complex and custom-made software products and services. However, project management rules and values largely depend on the people themselves – project managers, project teams and their organisational context. Each project manager (PM) has different knowledge and experience, a different set of competencies and skills, making them professional, and a different set of values driving them to what is most important in the project management profession.

The primary goal of this paper is to respond to the vital question about the possibility of creating the project manager's manifesto and present the individual case study as an example with the guidelines and values representing the most important ones from the perspective of the project manager's professionals. The second goal is to present how the project manager's manifesto can be created from scratch in a given organisational context using elements of the design thinking method.

The elements of the design thinking method were applied to gather example case studies. The example of an individual project manager's manifesto is presented as empirical research results. The research results focus on responding to the key title question and a few related ones: What is important to the PM in their project management profession? What is the direction of work for each PM? What are PM's beliefs, and what areas would they like to change? What are the PM's values that are identified in their profession?

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The results showed it is possible to create the project manager's manifesto from scratch adapted to the specific group of people working together in the project and its organisational context. An example of a case study with applied elements of the design thinking method resulted in an example PM manifesto presenting ten rules and values of the professional project manager. They are related to methods, standards and practices; PM's competencies and experience; the integrity of projects, people, customers, communication and transparency; data-driven decisions; PM's autonomy and project organisation context.

Keywords: *project management development, project manager's values, project manager's manifesto, project manager's profession, project manager's competencies, design thinking.*

JEL code: M15, O15, O32.

Introduction

Professional project management organisations like PMI, IPMA, Axelos, and Agile project management institutions including Scrum.org, Scrum Alliance, and Scaled Agile continuously develop and deliver the latest and greatest guidelines and recommendations for project management professionals. Nowadays, the complexity of products and services and, even more, systems and solutions delivered to customers as project results require continuous learning, continuous development and knowledge sharing from modern and professional Program and Project Management professionals (Marnewick C. & Marnewick A., 2021; Khelifi, 2023; Locatelli et al., 2023; Saladis, 2023). Each project manager (PM), together with their knowledge, experience, set of competencies, skills, behaviours and own values, creates a society of the project manager's profession (Kulkarni, 2021; Panasiewicz, 2021; Ribeiro et al., 2021). There are many conditions, for example, project domain, national and company culture, company domicile, country of origin and many others, that result in the split of this society into smaller groups of professional PMs with their standard way of working, shared values, attitudes and behaviours (Kisielnicki, 2016; Chmielewiec, 2018; Kulis, 2020; Gheni et al., 2021).

The research results, conclusions and recommendations presented in this paper may be valuable for academics interested in research studies of new directions in the project management field and for organisations seeking project management leaders who best fit their needs, requirements and expectations in a dynamic and continuously changing environment. The Modern Project Manager role and its competencies are up-to-date topics discussed from different perspectives. The business perspective, more practical, is looking for quickly adopting servant leaders with both well-developed soft skills and technical backgrounds (Jarocka, 2021; Khelifi, 2023). Academic environment research is more focused on what is the actual set of project manager competencies (Rzempała & Sienkiewicz, 2018; Kulkarni, 2021; Ribeiro et al., 2021; Pells, 2023) as well as on the analysis of critical factors influencing it, with agility on the top (Paterek & Kozarkiewicz, 2020; Gheni et al., 2021; Wyrozebski; 2021).

The primary goal of the empirical research in this paper is to respond to the research question about creating the project manager's manifesto with the recommendations and values representing the most important ones from the perspective of the project manager's professionals in a given

organisational environment. The empirical research results add to the top of the literature review on the project manager profession, PM competencies and critical factors influencing it. The research results presented the example manifesto consisting of ten rules and values of the professional project manager related to standards, practices, competencies, and experience, the integrity of projects, people, customers, communication and transparency, data-driven decisions, autonomy and importance of the project organisation context. This paper is not aimed at a systematic literature review of the other manifestos. It aims to expose this research study gap to allow other researchers to collaborate to find the answer to a critical research question with different research methods applied.

Besides the literature review, the elements of the design thinking method were applied to create a case study in the form of participating observation. It allowed the creation of an example of an individual project manager's manifesto. The main limitation is the uniqueness of this case study and the relatively high effort to repeat the same for a couple more groups of PMs. The second limitation relates to the conditions it was executed, for example, common technical domain, national culture and single country of origin. However, the research presented herein enables multiple future research study directions. It can be repeating the same or similar method as a multiple case study analysis, quantifying the measurement to validate created example manifestos on larger PM groups or applying other research methods to compare or complement the results.

The structure of the paper is as follows: the first part discusses research results, and the second part contains conclusions, proposals and recommendations. The first main chapter is divided into subchapters: a review of the literature on the PM profession, the methodological approach, the empirical research results and the final subchapter discussing the research results.

Research results and discussion

The profession of project manager

A Manifesto document understood as "*a written statement of the beliefs, aims, and policies of an organisation*" (Cambridge Dictionary, 2023), is probably not best-suited wording for academic research purposes as beliefs and aims do not follow the data behind them and are not replicable. Policies, recommendations, and standards are much better statements to understand by professional project managers and organisations to follow and measure their compliance, and the same is better for going under research studies. However, there is one exception, recognised by both practitioners as well as researchers related to the agile project management approach – "Manifesto for Agile Software Development" (Beck et al., 2001; Darrin & Devereux, 2017; Krehbiel et al., 2017). Agile Manifesto is the precise declaration of four values and twelve principles that must be followed while working in an agile project management approach, independently of the applied methodology. Another usage of the manifesto in management is more related to recommendations and guidelines that managers may follow in a dynamically changing environment while not conforming to existing and well-known theories (Ghoshal et al., 1999). Manifesto can also be an example of a practical whitepaper containing precise key principles for decision management "*as a powerful approach, increasingly used to adopt artificial intelligence (AI) technologies like business rules, machine learning and predictive analytics*" (Taylor, 2019,

p. 1). "*The projectification of society and the need to tackle grand challenges*" seems the main reason we may need a manifesto and joint effort to adapt it continuously (Locatelli et al., 2023, p. 1).

Nowadays, modern project management, together with the key role of the project manager, is still under continuous development with many new methods, processes, tools, certifications, guidelines and recommendations (Trocki, 2013; Amoah & Marimon, 2021; Cabała & Wawak, 2022). The PM role links various perspectives and requires many competencies, making it a more advanced and desirable management profession (Muller & Turner, 2010; Kulkarni, 2021; Ribeiro et al., 2021). The evolution of project management is now going to be more focused on the project team, team collaboration, team motivation and people working together with their all complex relationships (Chmielewiec, 2018; Paterek & Kozarkiewicz, 2020; Yousif et al., 2022; Pells, 2023). Rapidly changing business, social, cultural, political and economic factors, as well as new technologies, in particular, related to artificial intelligence tools, will require PMs who fast adapt and learn in a given environment context (Saadé et al., 2015; Gheni et al., 2021; Jarocka, 2021; Marnewick C. & Marnewick A., 2021; Locatelli et al., 2023).

Professional project management organisations such as PMI, IPMA, Axelos and Agile project management institutions support the profession of project managers with well-recognised standards: PMBOK, IPMA, PRINCE2 or Scrum Guide (Griffiths, 2015; IPMA, 2015; Axelos, 2017; Schwaber & Sutherland, 2020; PMI, 2021). Those standards contain a set of guidelines and recommendations for critical areas of project management, for example, integration, scope, schedule, cost, quality, resources, communication, risk procurement or stakeholder management (PMI, 2021). Each of those standards describes a set of recommendations, policies, competencies, practices and guidelines that can be recognised as a manifesto for the professional project manager.

While standards and certifications are closer to precise policies and statements, the agile methods are more focused on people and their collaboration as a team with perceived values, beliefs and aim towards delivering outcomes (Beck et al., 2001; Nauman et al., 2022; Khelifi, 2023). A project manager in an agile environment is a servant leader who supports the team in removing impediments, motivating the team once facing complex and unpredictable issues and facilitating the agile process adoption to enhance project success (Paterek & Kozarkiewicz, 2020; Nauman et al., 2022; Pells, 2023). Team values that foster team collaboration towards delivering outcomes are mainly: courage, focus, commitment, respect and openness (Schwaber & Sutherland, 2020), however, proactivity, visibility, communication, simplicity, feedback, quality and technical competency (craftsmanship) should be supported by agile team leaders as well (Paterek, 2019; Saladis, 2023). Team values that are closer to the people's relationship and create a good atmosphere are equally important: humour, honesty, empathy, creativity, fun, energy and passion (Paterek, 2019; Gheni et al., 2021).

V. Dulewicz & M. Higgs (2003) presented 15 leadership competencies falling into three styles of leadership:

- Intellectual: critical analysis & judgement, vision and imagination, strategic perspective.

- Managerial: engaging communication, managing resources, empowering, developing, and achieving.
- Emotional: self-awareness, resilience, motivation, sensitivity, influence, intuitiveness, conscientiousness.

Several competencies and professional experience characterise successful project managers (Muller & Turner, 2010; IPMA, 2015; Liikamaa, 2015; Kulkarni, 2021; Eftekhari et al., 2022). L.B. de Rezende & P. Blackwell (2019) identified eleven dimensions of project manager competencies: influencing, communication, emotional, contextual, management, cognitive skills, professionalism, knowledge and experience, project management knowledge, and personal skills and attributes. There exists the analysis of project manager's competencies from different points of view: team perspective (Sampietro, 2015; Gheni et al., 2021), missing competencies (Rzempała & Sienkiewicz, 2018; Wachowiak & Gregorczyk, 2018) or new technologies and environmental changes (Gheni et al., 2021; Marnewick C. & Marnewick A., 2021; Ribeiro et al., 2021; Saladis, 2023).

The PM certification world is forcing project managers and organisations to select the best project management methodology that fits their needs. However, each project has its environmental context and specifics, as well as the detailed requirements provided by customers (Trocki, 2013; Strojny & Szmigiel, 2015; Cabała & Wawak, 2022). Traditional project management is well suited for clear and well-defined requirements, while the agile approach helps customers to define their requirements throughout the project timeline (Wirkus & Zejer, 2017; Paterek & Kozarkiewicz, 2020). Modern PM profession is going more and more into projects delivering complex products and systems that require somewhat hybrid methods with tools, processes and practices selected based on the project context and organisational needs (Griffiths, 2015; Brandl et al., 2021; Gheni et al., 2021; Jarocka, 2021; Locatelli et al., 2023). Knowledge work projects require a continuous adaptation approach to be highly effective in a specific situation, mainly because no one fits all the same way in a fast, dynamic and complex project environment (Griffiths, 2015; Strojny & Szmigiel, 2015).

One of the actual PM challenges results from customer vision not simply translating to a set of requirements at the project initiation. However, it comes through the project lifecycle and its timeline, thus bringing lots of complexity to the solution that the project aims to deliver (Paterek & Kozarkiewicz, 2020; Gheni et al., 2021; Wyrozębski; 2021; Locatelli et al., 2023). The critical PM competency of complex knowledge work projects is communication, which is not new here, but rather yet more challenging. Communication must be done clearly and frequently to assure transparency and build trustworthy relationships, focusing more on collaborating than negotiating with customers to reach common goals (Griffiths, 2015; Paterek, 2019; Nauman et al., 2022). Agile Manifesto covers this challenge with two of four values: Customer collaboration over contract negotiation and Responding to change over following a plan (Beck et al., 2001). In consequence, the project manager's activities and responsibilities cannot be defined and fixed once a time as they need to respond to changes and uncertainty to act like a product owner who follows the aim of the project to respond to customer needs (Griffiths, 2015; Gandomani et al., 2020, Shastri et al., 2021).

Complex project challenges impact PM's decisions as they relate to human emotions, including emotional intelligence, which is significantly related to project performance and success (Zhu et al., 2021). Experienced PMs must be aware of their emotions and other stakeholders and consider taking management decisions based on shared goals and mutual vision (Zhu et al., 2021). One of the solutions to cope with the above challenge is to make the data-driven approach together with digital skills a solid basis for project management decisions and actions, as it allows measuring and proving its correctness with the SMART rule (Ghani et al., 2021; Marnewick C. & Marnewick A., 2021; Ribeiro et al., 2021). The data-driven approach also brings much more transparency to delivering business value as it is clearly understood and measurable, reducing the risk of ambiguity for different stakeholders (Griffiths, 2015; Gheni et al., 2021; Saladis, 2023).

Likewise, in the agile project team, the project manager needs autonomy while taking decisions and responsibilities within the given structure in the project organisation and the specific context of the environment. A shared leadership environment has an impact on team performance, like in the agile approach where the team gets full responsibility to deliver outcomes and customer value, however with being removed all obstacles and being provided with necessary PM organisational support at the same time (Ekrot et al., 2018; Hofman et al., 2023). Like a team being able to select the best tools and practices to manage their scope of work, the PM should have the autonomy to make decisions about processes and practices to support the team and organisation with the delivery of project outcomes (Brandl et al., 2021; Nauman et al., 2022; Locatelli et al., 2023). This is the project management paradigm shift, whereas agile management roles are more servant than directive (Griffiths, 2015; Wyrozębski, 2021; Nauman et al., 2022).

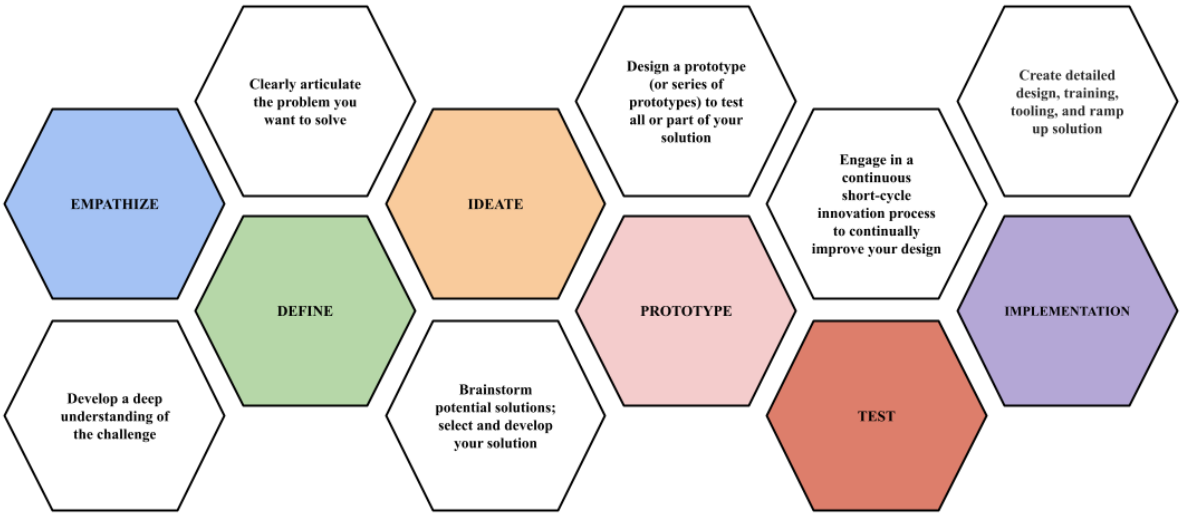
Nowadays, project management is significantly affected by its organisational context, both internal and external. New trends in project management, for example, process approach applied to project domain, agile and hybrid methods, artificial intelligence and new digital tools supporting PMs, have appeared as part of the Industry 4.0 revolution (Spałek, 2020; Marnewick C. & Marnewick A., 2021; Ribeiro et al., 2021). Increasing demand for complex solutions and systems forced to initiate more and more knowledge work projects managed with an agile or hybrid approach and even more challenged whole project organisation to be transformed to support that kind of projects (Griffiths, 2015; Paterek & Kozarkiewicz, 2020; Pawlak, 2021; Wyrozębski; 2021). Modern project management is not taking only one form, as projectification is available almost everywhere (Jałocha, 2019). However, it is constantly and rapidly adopting project management knowledge and other interdisciplinary domain knowledge to deliver customer value in introducing innovative changes (Brandl et al., 2021; Locatelli et al., 2023). To cope with the rising challenges in knowledge work projects, digital intelligence is a mandatory skill required from modern PM roles and from an organisational digital intelligence perspective (Marnewick C. & Marnewick A., 2021).

Methodology approach

Design Thinking is "*an intentional process (belief) of creating a positive change, transforming challenges and problems into opportunities for designing solutions. It is a collaborative process of appreciating multiple perspectives with a compelling NEED for developing solutions. It is all about willingness to experiment and try new things*" (Sharma, 2022, p. 4-5). "*Design Thinking is*

identified as an exciting new paradigm for dealing with problems in many professions" (Dorst, 2011, p. 521).

In its origin, the Design Thinking (DT) process is composed of the following steps: empathise, define, ideate, prototype and test that can be repeated iteratively, aimed to deliver the solution for a problem or challenge innovatively, from a fresh perspective (Linke, 2017; Wolniak, 2017). Different authors have proposed additional stages to break down some steps into the details, such as: defining, researching, ideating, prototyping, selection, implementation and learning (Wolniak, 2017). The implementation step seems to be vital as it is indeed a validation of the selected and tested solution in a natural deployment environment, and it may complete the whole process as proposed in Fig. 1. The DT process has evolved over decades and its origin in 1957 at Stanford University (Auernhammer & Roth, 2021). The details of DT process are not the aim of this article, as a lot of literature depicts it with a professional and systematic approach (Plattner et al., 2018).



Source: made by the authors,
based on: R. Linke (2017) and the Center for Innovation in Teaching & Learning (2023)

Fig. 1. **Design Thinking Process**

The key advantage of the design thinking process is its practical application, which focuses on fostering collaboration in a team working on innovative solutions (Plattner et al., 2018). Practitioners value the DT method for its straightforward, step-by-step process assuring fluency of thinking, flexible approach that remove impediments from the road of working team, creating a supportive culture of psychological safety and freedom that allow the team to design solution for complex problems (Auernhammer & Roth, 2021).

The DT method has several practical applications, such as:

- entrepreneurship projects (Chou, 2018; Carella et al., 2023; Veflen & Gonera, 2023),
- academic learning method leading to better student outcomes (Gołębiowska et al., 2022; Dragičević et al., 2023; Yoon, 2023),

- transforming large, complex, multidisciplinary research projects to the impact (Veflen & Gonera, 2023),
- facilitating speed, efficiency and frequency of organisational learning in VUCA environments (Cousins, 2018),
- fostering the development of needed capabilities in new digitalised landscapes (Dragičević et al., 2023).

The case study described in this paper exemplifies the Project Manager's Manifesto as a solution delivered by applying the modified design thinking method. Initially, the open workshop event came from the series of regular meetings called "Project Manager's Breakfast" – a local meet-up and project manager's community of practice (Jarocka, 2020). This open workshop happened on 12 December 2019. It aimed to constitute a working team by inviting any experienced project management practitioner with a couple of years of experience or any experienced project manager's enthusiast who would like to participate voluntarily (Jarocka, 2020). A group of a total of 13 members finally created a working team. One of the authors of this paper has also been a member of this working team – therefore creating participating observation as part of the research methodology presented herein (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). The second author of this paper has finally summarised all findings within the final solution – the latest and released version of the Project Manager's Manifesto (Jarocka, 2020).

The following description of applied methodology comes from a significantly modified design thinking process due to the time boundaries of voluntary working team members (Tab. 1). Two moderators were assigned to this workshop to facilitate the flow of the whole meeting.

Tab. 1 **Detailed methodology steps to create Project Manager's Manifesto**

I.	**INTRODUCTION**
1.	Welcome of the participants
2.	Introducing yourself and the groups: *Project Manager's Breakfast* and *PM Masters*
3.	Explanation of the meeting's purpose:
	a. What is a Manifesto?
	b. Why do we create it?
	c. Where will it be published?
II.	**ROUND THE TABLE**
1.	Each participant introduces:
	a. Name
	b. PM experience:
	i. What projects have you led?
	ii. What projects have you participated in as a team member?
	c. What do you find most fascinating about project management?
III.	**DESIGN THINKING**
1.	What is Design Thinking?
2.	How we will work, iterations.
3.	Contract (2 min., sticky notes):
	a. Vegas (what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas)
	b. We keep track of time
	c. Phones on silent
	d. We address each other by name
	e. Good atmosphere

f. Other, according to sticky notes.

IV. FIRST QUESTION

1. **What do you find important in project management?**
    a. Motivational speech. We will refer to values, looking for what is important in project management and what we want to identify with as representatives of this profession.
2. Idea generation (5 min., sticky notes)
3. Sticking the notes, discussing
4. What's missing generating extra ideas (2 min., sticky notes)
5. Sticking remaining new notes, discussing, grouping
6. Prioritisation:
    a. Each participant has three sticky notes to mark their top 3 points
    b. We count the number of sticky notes at each point
    c. We choose 'x' ideas with the highest number of points (It can be 3, 5, or 10, depending on how many points we want in the manifesto)
7. We divide into groups by counting down as many groups as there are ideas:
    a. Each group is assigned 1 area to develop

V. SECOND QUESTION

1. **What would you like to change regarding PM work in this area?**
2. Idea generation (3 min., sticky notes)
3. Sticking the notes, discussing in groups, grouping ideas
4. What's missing? generating extra ideas (2 min., sticky notes)

VI. THIRD QUESTION

1. **What points would you add to the manifesto, then?**
    a. Short, concise, easy to remember
    b. Explanation of the form, e.g. postulates
2. Idea generation (3 min., sticky notes)
3. Sticking the notes, discussing in groups
4. Choosing the best ideas for each group

VII. MANIFESTO PROTOTYPE

1. Each group discusses their area:
    a. What would you like to change in the context of the PM's work in this area?
    b. What points related to this would you propose to add to the manifesto?
2. Creating a Prototype (5 min.):
    a. On a flip chart titled "Project Manager Manifesto," we paste proposals for points from each group
    b. We discuss and refine the form
3. Perspective:
    a. Participants sit down and look at the manifesto from a distance
    b. Participants write on cards what they want to change (2 min.)
4. Improving the prototype - iteration 1 (5 min.):
    a. Everyone discusses and tries to convince others of their changes
    b. We add, remove, and change points
    c. After the time is up, everyone sits down and throws away the cards into the common bucket – the ones that they managed to introduce
5. Next Iterations - repeating the perspective and improving the iterations:
    a. 'X' times until everyone is satisfied
    b. If there is little time left, we will determine that, for example, this is the last iteration (last chance) to make changes to the manifesto

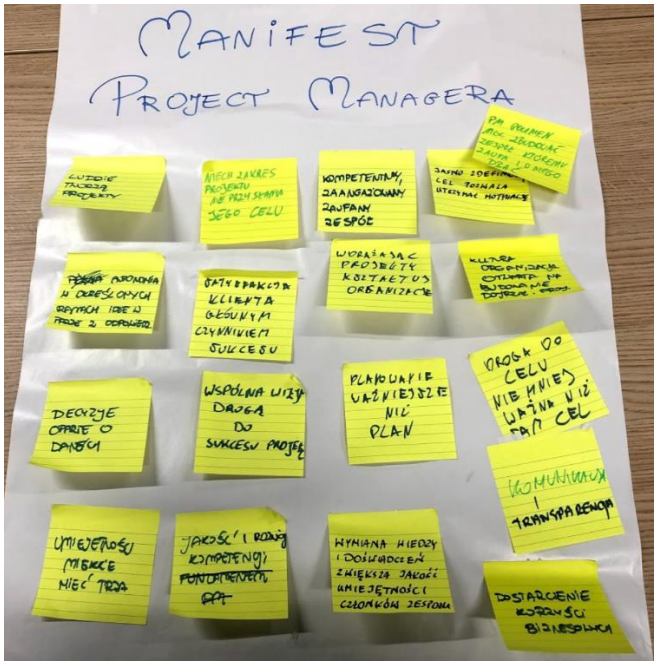
VIII. FINAL MANIFESTO

1. We did it - Thank you for working out the points and the workshop
2. Next steps:
    a. Signing the Manifest in person/online (to be decided later)
    b. Publishing it

	c. Encouraging the promotion of the manifesto
IX.	**CLOSING**
1.	Closing the session
2.	Encouragement to participate in future meet-ups / workshops / engage in discussions in the *PMasters* group
3.	Thank you, and see you soon

Source: made by the authors

The final Project Manager's Manifesto created with the above methodology was 18 points written on sticky notes, as in Fig. 2.



Source: made by the authors, K. Jarocka (2020)

Fig. 2. **The final Project Manager's Manifesto**

The next step involved condensing the 18 points originally derived from sticky notes (Fig. 2) into the concise form of the final ten rules, which are now part of the released Project Manager's Manifesto (Fig. 3). These rules are available in both web page and PDF formats.

Empirical research results

The original version of the Project Manager's Manifesto has been finally published on K. Jarocka (PMasters) web page: https://kjarocka.pl/zarzadzanie-projektami/podpisz-manifest-project-managera/ on 27 February 2020 in Polish language version, as presented in Fig. 3.

Source: made by the authors, K. Jarocka (2020)

Fig. 3. **The Project Manager's Manifesto**

The Project Manager's Manifesto (English translation of Fig. 3):

1. *We uphold good standards and practices in project management.*
2. *We believe that people create projects – we care about them and their relationships with them.*
3. *We prioritise competencies and experience over certifications.*
4. *Agile vs waterfall – we transcend methodological divisions.*

5. *The project goal takes precedence over the project scope – we remember the goal's integrity with the project.*
6. *We care about the client – we believe their satisfaction is also a lever for our business.*
7. *Communication and transparency are key values on which we base our relationships.*
8. *We prioritise facts and hard data over emotions and personal preferences.*
9. *The autonomy of the project manager is crucial to us, regardless of their position in the organisational structure.*
10. *We consider the project's environment – we understand that the project influences the organisation, just as the organisation impacts the project.*

Together with the above Project Manager's Manifesto, below short interpretation for each point was published on the same web page (Jarocka, 2020):

We uphold good standards and practices in project management.

We firmly uphold the principles of quality, emphasising a process and systematic approach, and place great value on well-established knowledge. We aim to ensure that specified competencies and skills substantiate the project manager's profession. This enables project manager representatives to uphold the highest standards and implement best practices daily. Consequently, we prioritise the substantive value and professional experience we showcase, consistently aligning them with the art and essence of the project management profession.

We believe that people create projects – we care about them and their relationships with them.

In the project, the human element holds significant importance, encompassing both the client and the project team members. We prioritise fostering synergy and shared values and establishing enduring relationships, all built upon a solid foundation. The partnership serves as the driving force behind these relationships.

We prioritise competencies and experience over certifications.

We believe that certification serves as a seal and confirmation of skills rather than a means to acquire them. Possessing a certificate often aligns differently than actual competencies, which is why we consider experience and skills to speak for themselves. We do not require paper evidence to support this notion.

Agile vs waterfall – we transcend methodological divisions.

We acknowledge that the process has a profound impact on the outcome of a project; therefore, we tailor it to the specific characteristics and needs of each project rather than vice versa. We comprehend the consequences associated with each path chosen. We remain open-minded and receptive to solutions beyond our existing knowledge, embracing anything that enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of our professional project manager role.

The project goal takes precedence over the project scope – we remember the goal's integrity with the project.

Our actions aim to deliver a solution rather than strictly following to achieve a predetermined scope. We prioritise understanding the client's needs and gaining knowledge of their business while remaining open to changes during the project to maximise benefits. The project's goal sets the direction for our actions.

We care about the client – we believe their satisfaction is also a lever for our business.

Customer loyalty serves as one of the indicators of our success. Therefore, we place significant emphasis on building and maintaining client relationships but primarily on attentive listening and understanding their needs, enabling us to meet them proactively. In every situation, we approach from a position of partnership.

Communication and transparency are key values on which we base our relationships.

We believe in establishing long-term relationships based on transparency and integrity. We cultivate a culture of partnership and openness. Recognising the significance of regular communication and effective dialogue, we actively invite clients to engage in discussions, addressing even the most challenging topics head-on.

We prioritise facts and hard data over emotions and personal preferences.

When making decisions, we prioritise what can be proven and measured - this guides us in delivering value for the business. We do not succumb to emotions, which can be prevalent in projects - neither our own nor those of individuals in our surroundings. We rely on solid data and employ a rhetoric of facts, enabling us to keep the project on the right track.

The autonomy of the project manager is crucial to us, regardless of their position in the organisational structure.

We say 'no' to top-down pressures and attempt to influence the project manager's decisions while entrusting him with the responsibility. The project manager can take responsibility only for their own decisions or those with which they agree. Autonomy and decision-making authority are crucial for the project manager role.

We consider the project's environment – we understand that the project influences the organisation, just as the organisation impacts the project.

We remember that a project operates within an environment and its context - both internal and external - and both of these contexts exert a tremendous influence on the project. We consider the project's position within the organisation and view it holistically. We are aware of the mutual interactions between the project and the organisation, and thus, at the appropriate moment, we initiate the change management process.

An illustrative case study was presented, which applied elements of the design thinking method. This study resulted in creating a Project Manager's Manifesto, presenting ten rules and values defining the professional project manager. These rules and values pertain to methods, standards, and practices; the competencies and experience of project managers; the integrity of projects; people and customer relationships; communication and transparency; data-driven decision-making; the autonomy of project managers; and the organisational context of projects. The manifesto addresses the following key questions: What aspects are important to project managers in their profession? What is the intended direction of work for each project manager? What beliefs do project managers hold, and in which areas would they like to enact change? What values do project managers identify within their profession?

The case study and research findings addressed the central question by exemplifying a Project Manager's Manifesto. However, repeating the same case study, even with an identical methodological process, would yield similar but different points. The outcomes will depend on the specific skills, experience, and project domains of the participants involved. Nevertheless, the results above demonstrate the possibility of creating a project manager's manifesto from scratch, tailored to the specific group of individuals collaborating on a given project or time-constrained initiative, while also considering the organisational context. Furthermore, the existing knowledge foundation in project management is encompassed and synthesised within the shared experiences detailed in the manifesto rules.

Each project organisation with its unique operational profile, operates within a distinct environmental context. Consequently, it is influenced by various contingency factors (Nita, 2013, p. 195). The contingency theory posits that there is no universally applicable set of project management methods; instead, the existing methods are affected by numerous contingency factors and contextual variables. Thus, they only apply to specific and unique situations and conditions (Otley, 1980). The contingency theory can be employed in empirical research on effective leadership, effective incentive systems, adaptive organisational structure, adaptive management methods, project management, and strategic management accounting (Simon, 2007). The results obtained from this study demonstrate that the Project Manager's Manifesto, presented herein, represents just one of the possible solutions for a specific group of individuals operating in a particular project environment, aligning with the principles of contingency theory. Therefore, the key outcome and benefit of this research case study lie in the methodological approach of design thinking, as expounded upon in the previous chapter, which was utilised to create the example mentioned above response.

Results discussion

The project management policies, recommendations, guidelines and standards are much more widespread among professional project managers and project management organisations (Griffiths, 2015; IPMA, 2015; Axelos, 2017; Schwaber & Sutherland, 2020; PMI, 2021) as well as within the vast number of existing and continuously arising PM research studies (Khelifi, 2023; Locatelli et al., 2023; Pells; 2023; Saladis, 2023). Manifesto document is not extensively used in scientific research. However, there exist a few exceptions with the one that many project managers and research scientists are very familiar in the agile project management approach – "Manifesto

for Agile Software Development" (Beck et al., 2001; Darrin & Devereux, 2017; Krehbiel et al., 2017). Manifesto in the management world is more related to recommendations, guidelines, declared values and mainly soft skills that project managers may follow in a dynamically changing project management environment while not opposing well-known PM theories (Ghoshal et al., 1999; Locatelli et al., 2023). Projectification is a more and more common approach to realising business initiatives across different domains (Jałocha, 2019). "*The projectification of society and the need to tackle grand challenges*" is a good reason we may need to continuously work on the manifesto and collaborate to continuously adapt it (Locatelli et al., 2023, p. 1).

Design Thinking is a collaborative team process for developing a solution to a given problem statement in multidisciplinary domains while taking into account multiple team member perspectives, experimenting and trying new things from scratch based on the experience of participating team members (Dorst, 2011; Plattner et al., 2018; Auernhammer & Roth, 2021; Sharma, 2022). The exciting applications of the design thinking method in research studies were presented in the area of: entrepreneurship projects (Chou, 2018; Carella et al., 2023), academic learning (Gołębiowska et al., 2022; Dragičević et al., 2023; Yoon, 2023), organisational learning (Cousins, 2018), digital world challenges (Dragičević et al., 2023) and multidisciplinary research projects (Veflen & Gonera, 2023).

The case study presented herein as research is an authors' example of combining the design thinking method to provide one of the possible solutions to answer the key title research question about the project managers' manifesto, understood as a kind of commonly declared values and attitudes to fulfil best the PM role in a new, fast technologically changing environment, especially undergoing artificial intelligence challenges.

As presented in conducted research study, it is viable to create the project manager's manifesto from scratch by using elements of the design thinking method that is adapted to the specific needs of people working together in a similar project organisational context as in constraints of the contingency theory (Otley, 1980; Simon, 2007; Nita, 2013). The example manifesto document presents ten rules and values the professional project manager declares. Those ten points, however, are not entirely new and are well covered by many research studies, recommendations and papers as in: methods, standards and practices (IPMA, 2015; Axelos, 2017; Schwaber & Sutherland, 2020; PMI, 2021), PM's competences and experience (Dulewicz & Higgs, 2003; Muller & Turner, 2010; Liikamaa, 2015; Rzempała & Sienkiewicz, 2018; de Rezende & Blackwell, 2019), the integrity of project's, people, customers (Griffiths, 2015; Strojny & Szmigiel, 2015; Locatelli et al., 2023), communication and transparency (Griffiths, 2015; Wyrozębski; 2021; Nauman et al., 2022), data-driven decisions (Gheni et al., 2021; Marnewick C. & Marnewick A., 2021; Ribeiro et al., 2021), PM's autonomy and project organisation context (Ekrot et al., 2018; Paterek & Kozarkiewicz, 2020; Nauman et al., 2022; Hofman et al., 2023).

As this is only a single case study, it is impossible to generalise this research study results with the example project managers' manifesto presented herein. However, the research study aimed to present the method to create it by any collaborating team in their project environment context and the same gives the response about the possibility to create it. Presented research study results may be continued by interested researchers by using a different method to create a manifesto, gathering

multiple case studies, validating it quantitatively into the broader project society of PMs, and replicating the same method within the number of teams or communities of practice groups. In the end, even the simple key research question about the possibility of creating a project managers' manifesto may be interesting for other researchers to study from different perspectives.

As presented by research results, the most important is the example answer for the key title research question and the presented method with design thinking elements that allow this answer. The second important is the example project managers' manifesto, which is proven by existing and well-known project management theories, standards and research studies. It means the research results have twofold meaning and value; for research science, it identifies a few research gaps to conduct further research studies; for the practice, it gives a simple method to create the set of rules that will align PMs collaborating in a similar environment, that they will also be advocating as it is created by their own.

Conclusions, proposals, recommendations

The overall aim of this research study was to answer the research question about the possibility of creating a project manager's manifesto as a set of significant values, guidelines and attitudes for vast, changing and challenging PM roles in the context of different environmental settings as well as under global projectification across many areas of our life. There is at least one method, as presented in this case study, based on elements of the design thinking approach, very well known in practice, especially in an agile environment.

The following key conclusions are the main research findings:

1. Nowadays, there is a rich project management knowledge database and a set of proven PM theories. However, there still is a gap related to dynamic changes in the PM role. This is mainly due to many constraints and factors related to the PM environment, such as advanced technology and digitalisation, the complexity of delivered solutions, projectification, artificial intelligence and many others requiring continuous adaptation.

2. As no one fits all, there is a need for a simple method to apply and replicate by a given project manager's collaboration team to create a set of values, attitude guidelines and recommendations, called herein a manifesto.

3. It is more important that the project manager's collaboration team creates this manifesto from scratch than it may be already covered and described by the existing project management knowledge database. The more important is it is "signed" by the team who created it, so treated as their own. The PM manifesto in this context is similar to the Definition of Done applied by agile teams.

The key proposals and recommendations are as follows:

1. Independently from a given PM experience, maturity of the project organisation, and applied PM method, it is worth conducting a similar case study as a result may always be slightly different, depending on the specific project environment and its settings.

2. It is also worth repeating it in some time to address dynamic changes in the PM environment and the need for continuous adaption, learning and continuous development.

3. The project management practices and recommendations selected by PM for a given project environment may allow for creating processes more effective in project execution than strictly following the applied PM method. In particular, most PM methods are defined by recommendations or conceptual frameworks rather than a strict set of rules to follow.

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