

Lessons Learned from the PMMM Research Series¹

Maturity Evolution: Benchmark Organizations in Project Management²

By Darci Prado, PhD

With the participation of Carolina Boros and Renata Vissoto (Central Bank of Brazil),
João Victor Nóbrega and Allan Bruno da Silva Andrade (Moura Batteries)
and Tulio Duarte Faria (Reta Engineering)

ABSTRACT

This is the sixth article of the series *Lessons Learned from Maturity Research*, and it is a continuation of the previous article [7] in which we showed that only a few organizations reach the maturity level of excellence (levels 4 and 5). In the present article, we will analyze the characteristics of organizations that have reached the level of excellence (benchmark or high-performance organizations). We also present three case studies of Brazilian benchmark organizations. We remind the reader that, for a proper understanding of this text, it is very important that the reader is already familiar with the articles published in previous issues of this journal [3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8].

Lessons Learned from Maturity Research

- Article 1 – Contextualization
- Article 2 – Peculiarities of the “Performance versus Maturity” relationship
- Article 3 – Heterogeneity Matters
- Article 4 – Maturity Evolution: A Challenging Journey
- Article 5 – Maturity Evolution: Only a Few Get There

¹ The Project Management Maturity series of articles by Prof Darci Prado is based on his extensive research on this topic in Brazil and other countries. Darci is the developer of the Prado Project Management Maturity Model which has been successfully implemented by many organizations in Brazil. More about this model and related research can be found at <https://maturityresearch.com/en/home-en/>

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1 – THE SIZE OF THE GROUP OF ORGANIZATIONS THAT REACHED THE LEVEL OF EXCELLENCE

Initially, it is important to note that this article describes the characteristics of organizations with one or more departments that have reached level of excellence in project management. This does not mean that such organizations have achieved excellence in all aspects of their management, nor that all departments that manage projects in these organizations have achieved excellence. In fact, in most cases, only a single department achieved this level.

In our last article [7], we stated that it is reasonable to estimate that, in Brazil, the total number of organizations that have reached the level of excellence is between 240 and 600, across the private, government, and third sectors. In this estimation, we are only including organizations with project portfolios that require efficient project management to ensure they deliver the desired results. This estimation does not include organizations that, despite having project portfolios, do not require project management to achieve results. Their project portfolios are generally short-lived and/or have very small teams and/or are very low in complexity. Examples of such scenarios include but are not limited to small architecture/engineering firms, software houses, start-ups, and consulting firms.

The estimated number of organizations that reached the level of excellence in Brazil (between 240 and 600) is quite significant and deserves an analysis of their characteristics.

2– THE LONG AND CHALLENGING JOURNEY TOWARDS EVOLUTION

In my work as the maturity research coordinator and consultant of a private organization, I was able to closely follow the evolution of some organizations that have become benchmarks. A common denominator at the beginning of their journeys toward excellence is the perception of critical deficiencies in their businesses, particularly in relation to competitive threats and/or market opportunities and/or new customer demands. Furthermore, all of them were strongly aware of the importance of developing project management skills for business evolution. Another common characteristic in these organizations' journeys is the existence of a competent team strongly supported by senior management, as well as the continuous support of engaged leadership outside the PMO (project evolution sponsor).

The journey toward evolution is not easy, as we described in more detail in the fourth article of this series [6]. It typically takes between 5 and 8 years to reach the level of excellence, depending on the starting point. The journey is usually divided into cycles (or stages) and each cycle is structured and managed as a project (Figure 1).

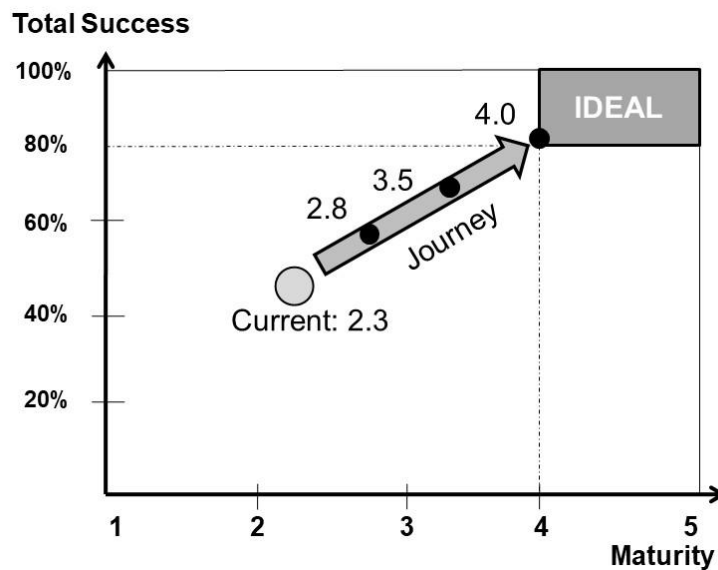


Figure 1: The right journey: evolution in cycles (illustrative only) [2].

Although difficult, the journey also has its rewards, with the growing perception of improvement in various indicators, such as visibility, predictability, and results in each cycle. This fosters a belief that the path being taken is correct. Therefore, although reaching the level of excellence is certainly a moment to celebrate, so should be the success of each cycle with the advancement in the maturity journey.

3– DIMENSIONS OF MATURITY OF BENCHMARK ORGANIZATIONS

The maturity survey questionnaire addresses what we call "maturity dimensions." There are seven:

- Project, Program, and Portfolio Management Competency
- Behavioral Competency
- Technical and Contextual Competency (i.e., in the organization's business)
- Processes (methodology)
- Tools (IT, software)
- Strategic Alignment
- Organizational Structure

The meaning of each of these competencies was discussed in the first article in this series [3]. When a user of our website completes the questionnaire, an assessment is made of the corresponding department's adherence to each of the dimensions. Then, at the end of a period (usually annual), the data provided by all users is tabulated and totaled. Reports are then produced and published on our website. For the 2021 survey (181 participants), the

average adherence to the maturity dimensions by benchmark organizations is shown in Figure 2.

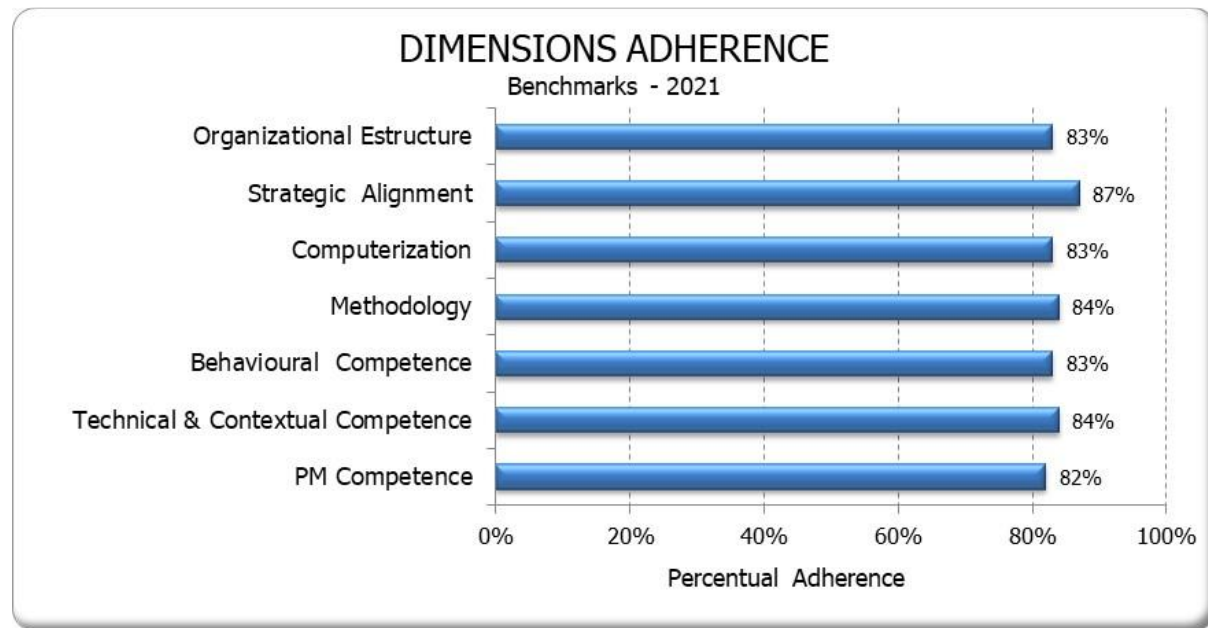


Figure 2 – Adherence to maturity dimensions in 2021 [1].

To achieve the values shown in Figure 2, some practices are necessary, as shown in the following table:

Maturity Dimension	Characteristics of the organization
PM Competence	Benchmark organizations (levels 4 and 5) have professionals with strong knowledge and practical experience in Project Management.
Technical and Contextual Competence	Benchmark organizations (levels 4 and 5) have professionals with strong knowledge and practical experience in the context of the organization where they work.
Behavioral Competence	Benchmark organizations (levels 4 and 5) have professionals with strong knowledge and practical experience of behavioral aspects (leadership, organization, conflicts, etc.)
Methodology (Processes)	Benchmark organizations (levels 4 and 5) have adequate and highly standardized methodology and processes, which have evolved (continuous improvement) and are frequently used by the main stakeholders.

Computation (Tools)	Benchmark organizations (levels 4 and 5) have efficient and appropriate computational tools, which serve both the operational and strategic levels and are frequently used by the main stakeholders
Strategic Alignment	In benchmark organizations (levels 4 and 5), projects have a strong connection with organizational strategies. During their life cycles, projects are monitored to maintain strategic alignment and/or respond to market changes. There are standard and computational procedures for all processes.
Organizational Structure	Benchmark organizations (levels 4 and 5) have the appropriate and necessary organizational structure. It may or may not include aspects such as Project Manager, PMO, Committees and Sponsor. A super important aspect is that there is project governance, routinely practiced at both the operational and strategic levels and strongly contributing to the success of the projects.

4– PERFORMANCE LEVEL AND SUCCESS

Below, we present the performance data for benchmark organizations for 2021 and 2024.

The 2024 survey data shows that high-performing benchmark organizations (levels 4 and 5) have a 40% higher Overall Success Rate compared to low-performing organizations (levels 1 and 2). Additionally, high-performing organizations have a Failure Rate of less than half of the low-performing organizations. Failure is linked to not achieving goals and to not implementing strategies (and their associated benefits) and, worse, failure is also linked to financial and human waste applied to projects that did not produce the expected results.

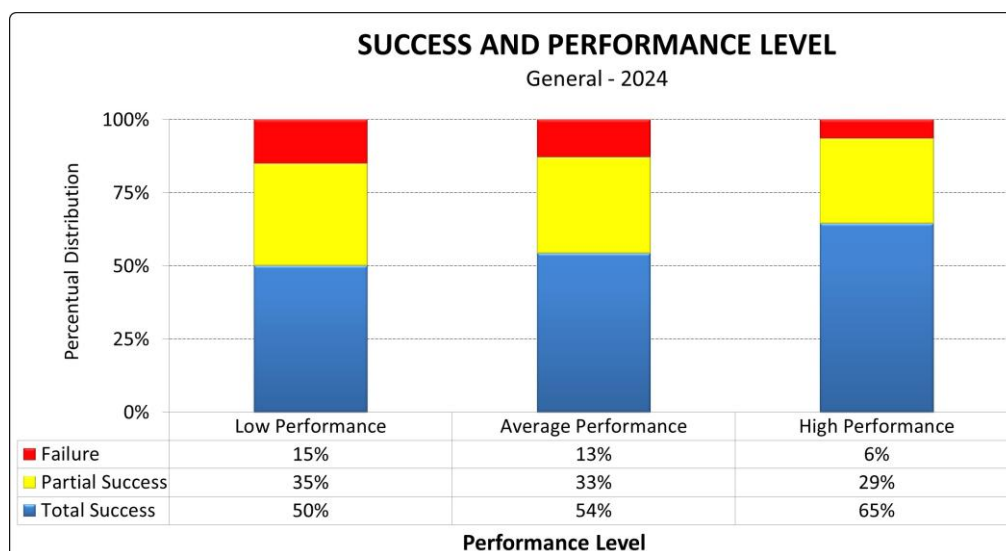


Figure 3 – Performance Level and Success – 2024 Data [1].

Number of Participating Organizations		
Low Performance	Average Performance	High Performance
68	47	15

In the 2021 survey, the numbers were slightly more favorable to high-performing organizations (levels 4 and 5): they report almost twice the overall success rate compared to low-performing organizations (levels 1 and 2). Most importantly, high-performing organizations have a failure rate almost four times lower than low-performing ones.

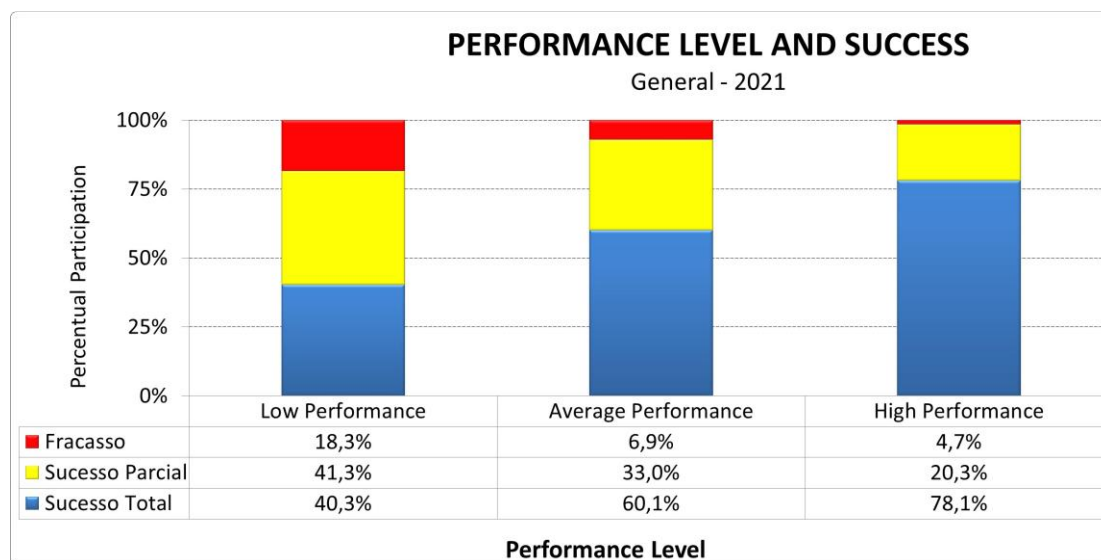


Figure 4 – Performance Level and Success – 2021 Data [1].

Number of Participating Organizations		
Low Performance	Average Performance	High Performance
71	69	41

In conclusion, the sacrifice is worth it. A strategy that targets high performance will yield enormous benefits, including greater goal achievement, reduced losses due to cost overruns, and potential market losses.

5 – WHO ARE THE BENCHMARK ORGANIZATIONS

Our research data shows that benchmark organizations are spread across a large spectrum, with a strong predominance of private organizations. For example, among the 15 high-performing organizations in the 2024 sample (levels 4 and 5), we have [1]:

	2024
Total of organizations	117
Benchmark total	15
Type of organization	
Private	12
Govern – Direct Administration	2
Govern – Indirect Administration	1
Project Categories	
Construction and Assembling	6
Software Development	2
New Product Development	2
Organizational Changes	1
Design- Engineering and Architecture	1
Other Categories	3
Business Activity	
Information Technology	3
Food and beverages	2
Construction	2
Engineering	2
Oil and gas	2
Agriculture	1
Equipment & Machines	1
Other Areas	2
Organization Sizes	
Less than R\$ 1 billion (US\$ 170 million)	3
R\$ 1 to 10 billion (US\$ 1.7 billion)	9
More than R\$ 10 billion (US\$ 1.7 billion)	3
Customer type	
External customer (Project Oriented Organizations)	8
Internal customer	7

Observation: According to our politics, we do not publish names of participating organizations in the research.

6 – CASES

Below, we present some cases of Brazilian organizations that have achieved the platform of excellence in project management and maintained it. The selected cases represent

benchmark organizations of different types, different sectors, and different sizes. They are as follows, in alphabetical order:

- Central Bank of Brazil (Government / Finance sector) – Equivalent to US Federal Reserve Bank
- Moura Batteries (Private Organizations / Manufacturing sector)
- Reta Engineering (Private Organizations / Engineering & Construction sector)

The texts of those cases were written by professionals of each above organization. In the following pages those cases are described.

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About the Author



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Darci Prado is a consultant and partner of Falconi Consultants in Brazil (<https://en.falconi.com/>). He holds a Chemical Engineering degree from UFMG (Federal University of Minas Gerais). He concluded graduate studies in Economical Engineering at UCMG (Catholic University of Minas Gerais) and holds a PhD in Project Management from UNICAMP (Campinas University). He has worked for IBM for 25 years and was a professor at UFMG Engineering School for 32 years. He got the IPMA Level B Certification in 2006. He was one of the founders of Minas Gerais State and Parana State PMI chapters.

In 2005, together with Russell Archibald, he pioneered a Project Management Maturity research in Brazil and expanded to Italy in 2010. This research is ongoing, and it is the only one of its kind in the world regarding the analysis of the relationship between maturity levels and success for long period of time (20 years). He is the author of nine books on project management (<https://www.editorafalconi.com/loja?lang=en>) and is also the author of a PM methodology and a PM software application. As an international speaker, he has been invited multiple times to present in the USA, Italy, France, Portugal and Mexico.

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Case 1: CENTRAL BANK OF BRAZIL

By Carolina Bacelar Boros and Renata Silva Coelho Vissotto

Abstract

This article presents a longitudinal analysis of the evolution of project management maturity at the Central Bank of Brazil (BCB), highlighting lessons learned, critical success factors, and challenges faced. The research is based on formal maturity assessments, institutional documents, and national and international awards and recognitions. The study showcases the path followed by the BCB to consolidate a project culture and proposes recommendations for the continuous improvement of project management in the Federal Public Administration.

Keywords: project maturity, project culture, Central Bank of Brazil, public management.

1 - Introduction

Project management has emerged as a strategic discipline in public and private organizations, becoming a crucial element in value delivery, innovation implementation, and institutional alignment. The Central Bank of Brazil (BCB) [1], a federal agency whose mission is to ensure the stability of the currency's purchasing power, foster a sound, efficient, and competitive financial system, and promote the economic well-being of society, has established itself as a national and international reference in project maturity. This prominent position is the result of more than two decades of systematic investments in structure, processes, and people's skills development.

The BCB's current corporate portfolio comprises 35 active projects across various departments and reflects the institution's commitment to modernization, operational efficiency, and the generation of public value. This portfolio embodies a long-term view that casts project management as the driving force behind institutional transformation.

The BCB's journey in project management is characterized by continuous and structured evolution, initiated in 2004 with the acknowledgement of the gains that the creation of the Project Management Office (Gepro) would bring to the strategic initiatives of the BCB. This institutional milestone catalyzed the development of consolidated structures, culminating in the current Office of Corporate Governance, Innovation, and Projects (Espro), and drove the dissemination of a project culture throughout the organization.

From this foundational point, the BCB advanced through successive waves of improvement, each marked by formal maturity assessments, methodological reviews, and capacity-building investments. This systematic approach enabled the institution to build, over two decades,

one of the most recognized models of project management maturity in the Brazilian public sector.

This article analyzes the evolution of project management maturity at the BCB, highlighting lessons learned, critical success factors, and challenges overcome. The text is organized as follows. The second section describes how the institutional context enabled the blossom of a project culture. The third and fourth sections present the project maturity evolution journey of the BCB. The fifth section describes how the BCB is preparing itself to face the challenges in the 2026-2029 strategic cycle. The sixth section highlights the factors that led the BCB to establish a consolidated project culture. The seventh section focuses on current practices of project management in the BCB. The eighth section concludes the text.

2 - Institutional Context and the Importance of Project Maturity

The BCB operates in a complex organizational environment shaped by the demands of the National Financial System (SFN), imperatives for constant innovation, and growing pressure for results aligned with its mandate. In this context, project management transcends its operational role and emerges as a strategic discipline, capable of coordinating resources, professional skills, and activities to deliver tangible results and measurable benefits.

The consolidation of a project culture within the BCB did not occur spontaneously; rather, it resulted from a deliberate and sustained movement to strengthen the value of discipline. This process began in 2004, when Gepro, the unit responsible for introducing project management practices, was created. It promoted systematic training for staff, and established sound governance mechanisms for overseeing corporate projects.

The subsequent institutional evolution involved the experimentation of different organizational models. This process culminated in the establishment of Espro, currently under the Secretariat for Governance, Coordination, and Strategic Monitoring (Segov). The current configuration ensures not only the necessary institutional support to Espro, but also integration between project management and strategic objectives.

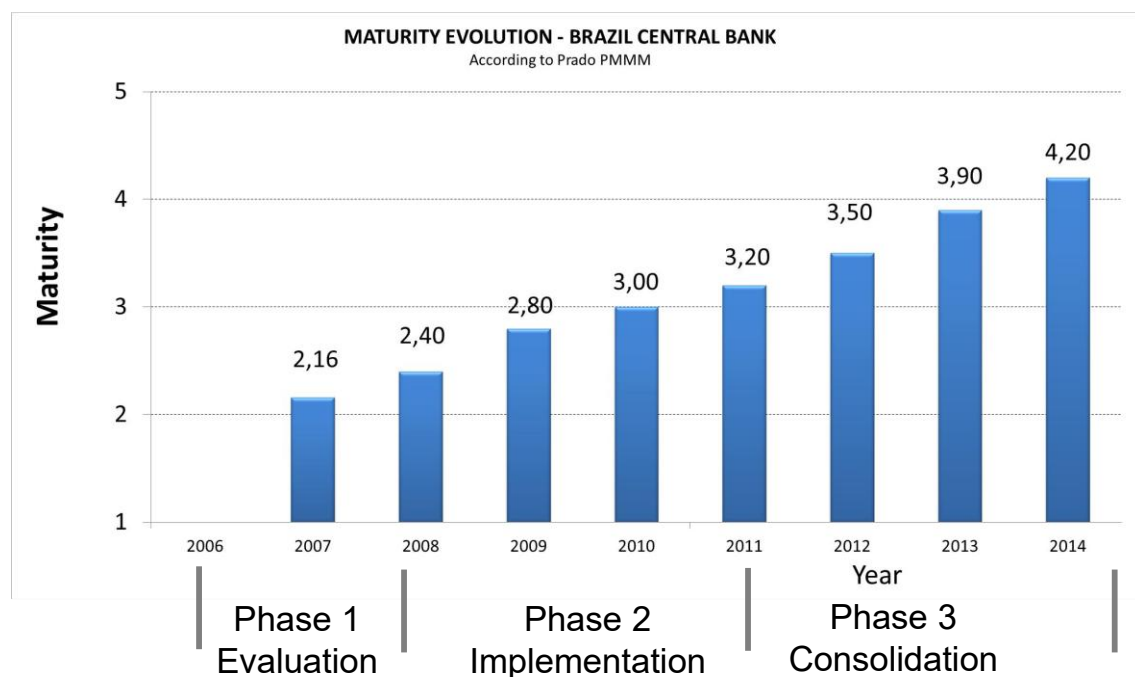
At the BCB, project maturity is an important asset that renders transformative capability to the institution. It casts the BCB as an agent of innovation, efficiency, and public value creation. Project maturity is understood as the degree of development of management proficiencies, processes, and practices, reflecting the organization's ability to plan, undertake, monitor, and finish projects effectively and in strategic alignment with the needs of internal and external stakeholders.

This strategic approach to project maturity has allowed the BCB not only to optimize its internal processes but also to stand out as a benchmark for other public and private organizations. Internationally, acknowledgement of this expertise is evidenced concretely through frequent benchmarking requests from other central banks, which identify sound

practices in the Brazilian model that could be reproduced in their own context. All these requests demonstrate that excellence in project management transcends organizational and geographic boundaries.

3 - The Project Maturity Evolution Journey at the BCB

The BCB's project maturity evolution journey can be divided into three major phases, preceded by a preparatory period. The figure below summarizes the main milestones and results of this trajectory.



Figure

1 – Evolution of corporate project maturity at the BCB

a - Preparatory Phase: Strategic Foundations (2004–2007)

The inaugural milestone of this journey occurred in 2004, with the formal recognition of the strategic relevance of project management, materialized through the creation of Gepro. This foundational period established two institutional pillars: the creation of the Central Bank's Institutional Development Reserve (Redi-BC), a financial mechanism dedicated exclusively to funding corporate projects; and the establishment of the Corporate Projects Committee (CPC), a collegiate body responsible for evaluating the use of Redi-BC resources across corporate projects, ensuring methodological alignment and integrated governance.

The main challenge in this phase was to establish the relevance and value of project management in an organization traditionally focused on enacting financial regulation and

supervising the financial system. The BCB decided to formally integrate Gepro as a component of the BCB's organizational structure. This decision was essential to provide institutional support to the project management office and established the first critical success factor later identified: senior leadership engagement as a prerequisite for more significant organizational reforms.

b - Phases 1 and 2: Assessment and Implementation (2007–2011)

The first formal maturity assessment in 2007, using the Prado-PMMM model, revealed a score of 2.16 (on a scale of 1 to 5), identifying significant gaps in project management processes. This result highlighted several needs: improving management tools, strengthening governance mechanisms, and structuring more robust practices to ensure project success.

The institutional response materialized through the corporate project "Maturity Implementation" (2008–2011), a strategic initiative managed by the project office with the following objectives: to promote consistent advances in project management, overcome the gaps identified in the Prado-PMMM assessment, and align the BCB's practices with market best practices.

This phase involved comprehensive methodological reviews, hiring specialized external consultancies, investing in team training, and strengthening governance. By the end of the period, a new Prado-PMMM assessment recorded a score of 3.20, confirming the relevance of two additional critical factors: continuous investment in training and the support of specialized consultancies for knowledge transfer and best practices adoption.

c - Phase 3: Consolidation (2011–2014)

The third phase began immediately after the conclusion of the "Maturity Implementation" project with the launch of the corporate project "Maturity Consolidation." This initiative focused on four fronts: improving assessment models, developing indicators, strengthening the project knowledge base, and offering intensive specialized training. In parallel, it promoted stronger governance and transparency by implementing the Project Management System (SGPro), an IT-based platform that supports project management.

The greatest challenge of this phase was sustaining the changes implemented in previous years, ensuring that improvements became a permanent part of the organization's culture. In 2014, with the conclusion of the "Maturity Consolidation" corporate project, a new Prado-PMMM assessment recorded a score of 4.2, consolidating the BCB among high-maturity organizations in project management. Adherence to maturity dimensions reached the values presented in Figure 2.

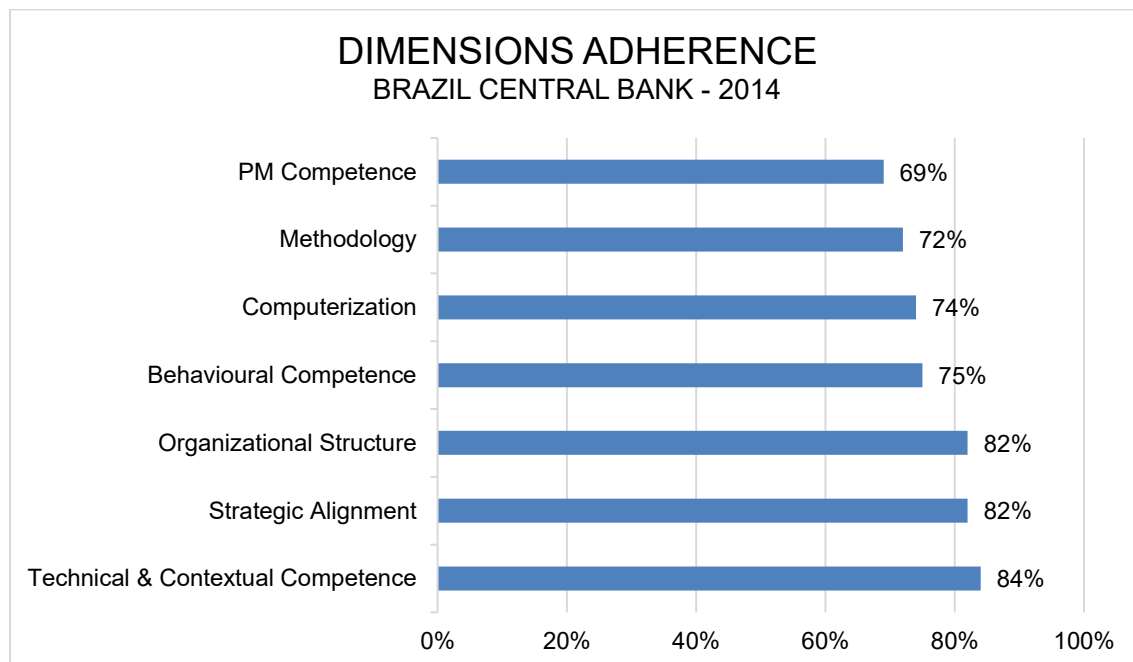


Figure 2 – Adherence to maturity dimensions according to the Prado-PMMM model, 2014

4 - Post-2014 Institutional Reconfiguration

The evolution of BCB's project management maturity has been marked by institutional transformations that redefined the structure of strategic governance. The Department of Planning, Budget, and Management (Depog), previously in charge of managing the Redi-BC, was transformed into Segov.

The Redi-BC, created in 2003 to fund institutional development initiatives in the form of corporate projects, had its resources fully transferred to the National Treasury in 2018. This decision formally ended the existence of the Redi-BC, and funding for corporate projects began to be carried out through the Federal General Budget (OGU).

This institutional transition had a direct impact on Espro, requiring adaptation to a new operational model. This adjustment period, which led to an approximately one-year gap in the proposals of new corporate projects, was strategically used for methodological review, updating decision-making flows, and redefining institutional roles. The resulting reconfiguration produced significant gains: processes became leaner, more responsive, and oriented toward delivering benefits. Internal regulations on project management, previously highly bureaucratic, were simplified, granting Espro greater decision-making autonomy and operational flexibility.

This paradigm shift was only possible due to the very high level of project management maturity achieved during the first ten years, from 2004 to 2014, a period that was essential in shaping the institution's capabilities. The BCB's trajectory has been marked by periodic

assessments, technical and behavioral training, methodology institutionalization, and national and international recognition. The current maturity enables safe strategic decision-making, process adaptation, and the maintenance of sound governance, even in times of change.

In 2024, a new Prado-PMMM model assessment recorded a score of 4.1. Adherence to the maturity dimensions reached the values shown in Figure 3.

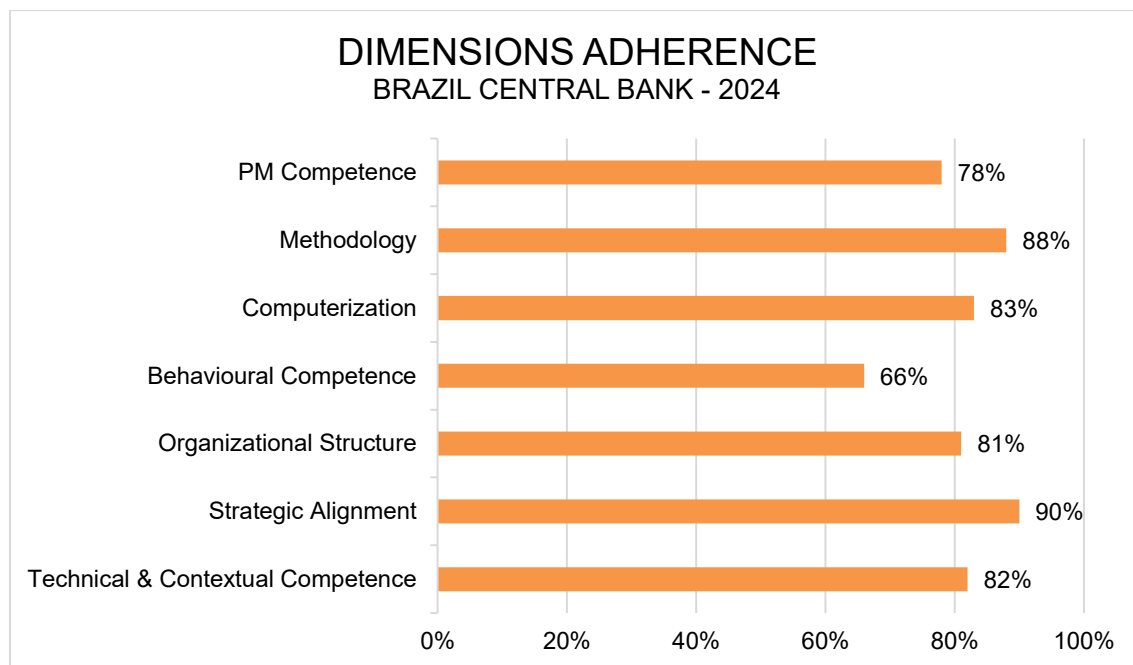


Figure 3 – Adherence to maturity dimensions according to the Prado-PMMM model, 2024

5 - The “Inova” Corporate Project: Preparing for the Future

The “Inova” corporate project represents the BCB’s structured response to the need to reposition strategic management for the 2026–2029 cycle. Focused on innovation, employee participation, and the updating of methodologies and tools, the project aims to raise the institutional level of project management maturity, consolidate innovation governance, and enhance the strategic planning process.

The major deliverables are: i) a comprehensive strategic diagnosis addressing the challenges to be faced by the BCB; ii) the definition of strategic guidelines; and iii) the mapping of the guidelines into strategic objectives and actions. The project incorporates benchmarking activities with leading central banks, as well as targeted training for the BCB’s project community.

The project “Inova” aims to increase the project maturity level from 4.1 to at least 4.3 in the Prado-PMMM model. To ensure systematic monitoring of this progress, annual maturity assessments are being recorded in the project’s benefits management module, allowing for early identification of trends and adjustment needs. The project also includes technical and behavioral training, the update of the methodology with focus on benefits management, strategic participation in events, and improvements to regulations and tools supporting corporate project management.

The institutional modernization promoted by “Inova” reflects an organizational culture that values adaptability, learning, and value delivery. The launch of PIX, an instant payment system created by the BCB, during the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic exemplifies this institutional readiness: even in a scenario of uncertainty and operational restrictions, the BCB demonstrated technical capability, strong governance, and a consolidated project culture to deliver innovative solutions with high social impact.

6 - Critical Success Factors and Challenges Faced

The achievement of the progress observed throughout the evolution of BCB’s project management maturity was due to several critical success factors, including:

- the engagement and sponsorship of the BCB’s governor at every stage, while the board of directors maintained continuous strategic participation, especially during periods of greater complexity
- the continuous training for members of the project office, project managers, and project team members
- the support of specialized consultancies, which brought external knowledge and market experience
- the creation of a well-defined methodology, which provided predictability and organization to the corporate portfolio; and
- a dedicated budget allocation for corporate projects, approved annually by the BCB’s board of directors and managed by Espro.

The main challenge faced was related to transforming the institutional culture. Because corporate projects require collaboration among multiple areas – with managers and teams largely devoted to the activities of their own organization’s technical units – it became essential to build a strong culture of cooperation among staff, sponsors, and Espro itself.

The solution adopted was the creation of Project Executive Committees, governance bodies that bring together managers from the areas involved in a project and act as coordinators among the various institutional stakeholders. This structure ensures continuous dialogue among stakeholders, promotes alignment of expectations, and guarantees the sponsorship needed for project execution.

Governance evolved into an integrated model connecting six key elements: project managers and teams, project executive committees, the corporate PMO, the IT sectoral PMO, the Strategic Governance Committee (CGE), and the Governance, Risk, and Controls Committee (GRC). This architecture enables coordinated and agile decision-making, ensuring that projects maintain consistent strategic alignment.

7 - Current Project Management Practices and Maturity at the BCB

Project management maturity at the BCB is not merely the result of a historical process but also of consolidated and continuously improved institutional practices and processes. Espro has become the catalyst for project management, responsible for disseminating methodologies, promoting training, monitoring results, reporting to various decision-making bodies, and ensuring that projects align with the institution's strategic planning. By fostering the dissemination of project management culture, as well as facilitating dialogue between technical areas and senior management, Espro ensures that corporate projects are always oriented toward generating benefits.

Among current practices, a key highlight is the institutionalization of annual maturity assessments, which allow for the systematic monitoring of results and, most importantly, the identification of improvement opportunities. The results of these assessments are used to guide strategic decisions, set priorities, and adjust processes, ensuring the sustainability of achieved progress.

In addition to maturity assessments, the BCB employs portfolio monitoring practices, with a special focus on tracking benefit indicators. These indicators allow for the measurement of the public value generated by projects, strengthening evidence-based decision-making. The systematic use of dashboards, management reports, and periodic meetings of executive committees ensures transparency, accountability, and process governance, promoting an institutional culture driven by results, continuous learning, and the progressive improvement of strategic management.

Another relevant aspect of current practices is the emphasis on knowledge management. The initial version of SGPro was based on off-the-shelf software, which had limitations in customization, integration with BCB systems, and access. Over time, the tool evolved into an internally developed solution, fully tailored to the organization's needs. The new SGPro is user-friendly, functional, and, most importantly, free from licensing dependencies, being available to all staff. Access is provided directly through the internal network, with no additional credentials required, ensuring that project information is 100% accessible to all employees, 24/7.

Currently, project management at the BCB is widely institutionalized and consolidated. This consolidation is reflected in the continued access to a dedicated budget allocation for the development of these initiatives. The methodology adopted was recently audited by the

BCB's Internal Audit. It shifted from a lengthy and rigid model to a more objective and flexible framework, which allows for adaptations based on the nature and specific challenges of each project. In 2025, the strategic portfolio includes 35 active corporate projects, and Espro's focus is increasingly on delivering tangible benefits and acting as one of the BCB's hubs for innovation.

8 - Concluding remarks

Important awards and active participation of the BCB in specialized forums are evidence of the consolidated project culture in the BCB.

In 2014, Espro was awarded "PMO of the Year" by *MundoPM* magazine [2], the leading national publication dedicated to the subject. In 2015, it was invited to present its work in Dallas, USA, during the 9th Annual Project Management Symposium [3], and in 2016, in Lille, France, at the *Ecole Supérieure de Commerce*. The case was published in *PMWJ* magazine [4]. More recently, in 2023, the BCB was a semifinalist in the PMO Brazil Awards, in the "PMO of the Year" category, alongside large Brazilian companies with strong national and international reputations.

In 2025, this recognition was further enhanced through its participation as a member of the PMI-DF Governance Committee [5], with the mission of representing public organizations in matters related to project management.

These milestones highlight BCB's role as an agent of transformation and a technical reference in the public sector, consolidating its position among the most mature institutions in managing corporate projects.

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Important

This text was prepared in July 2025.

The opinions expressed in this article are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not nec

Case 2: Moura Batteries

By João Victor da Nobrega and Allan Bruno da Silva Andrade

1 – ABOUT BATERIAS MOURA (Moura Batteries)

Baterias Moura is a leading battery manufacturer in South America, with nearly 70 years of history marked by innovation, sustainability, and a strong commitment to excellence. Headquartered in Belo Jardim, Pernambuco, the company employs approximately 7,000 people and operates eight manufacturing facilities in Brazil and one in Argentina. Its broad distribution network ensures nationwide coverage in Brazil and presence in several other countries.

The company maintains a robust and diverse project portfolio, encompassing initiatives in technological innovation, industrial capacity expansion, sustainability, digital transformation, and continuous improvement. It currently manages an average of more than 300 projects per year, with a balanced distribution across strategic, tactical, and operational levels.

2 – PMO STRUCTURING

As discussed by Rad and Raghavan (2000) and Sanchez et al. (2017), the use of project management has expanded significantly across organizations, driven by the need to maintain alignment with initial planning. However, high failure rates persist. Rad and Raghavan (2000), for example, analyzed a sample of 8,380 information technology projects across various sectors and found that only 16.2% were successfully completed within scope, time, and budget. The report "The CHAOS Manifesto 2020: Beyond Infinity," produced by the Standish Group, found that 19% of projects end up failing, with the key success factors being an effective sponsor, a qualified team, and a suitable organizational environment. These data reinforce that, despite their strategic relevance and potential benefits, many projects still fail to achieve the intended results.

Given this panorama of high project failure rates, even with advances in management practices, the need for organizational mechanisms that strengthen governance, promote greater strategic alignment, and ensure better success rates becomes evident. The creation of Project Management Offices (PMOs) has established itself as a fundamental strategic initiative to promote greater organizational alignment and maximize value delivery.

According to the *PMBOK® Guide – Seventh Edition*, PMOs contribute to improved project performance across multiple dimensions such as schedule, cost, quality, and risk. They also act as key facilitators connecting project work with strategic objectives, promoting stakeholder engagement, talent development, and clearer perception of the value created by project investments (PMBOK, 2021).

In this context, in 2014, Baterias Moura established a local PMO within the Engineering Department, focused on guiding, supporting, and monitoring the execution of Product Engineering projects, directly contributing to risk mitigation, efficient resource allocation, and achieving expected results with greater consistency and predictability.

Initially, the PMO had a lean structure of just two employees and a relatively small portfolio. Despite its limited initial scope, the challenge was significant. The company faced a scenario of low project management maturity, with poorly standardized practices (lack of consistent methodology), a lack of consolidated indicators, and resistance to change from some departments. The cultural shift required to consolidate a structured project management approach required time and persistence. It was necessary to demonstrate, in practice, the value of professional project management to internal clients, building trusting relationships, and delivering consistent results.

3 – MATURITY EVOLUTION

In this context, the Project Management Maturity Survey, based on Professor Darci Prado's MMGP model, was adopted from the outset as an essential tool for both diagnosis and guidance. The initial measurement, conducted in 2014, revealed a maturity level of 2.1, reinforcing the perception that significant improvement was needed.

From that point forward, the survey was administered annually, serving as a strategic guide for the PMO's development. Based on each year's results, specific improvement actions were defined, including the creation of methodologies, team training, implementation of tools, and the structuring of governance. Progress was gradual but consistent, always respecting the organization's pace and fostering engagement across all departments involved. From the beginning, the focus was not on speed of implementation, but rather on the sustainability of results.

Chart 1 below illustrates this continuous progress, showing the maturity evolution from the "Started level" 2 in 2014 to level 4 ("Managed") in 2024.

Chart 1 - Maturity Evolution

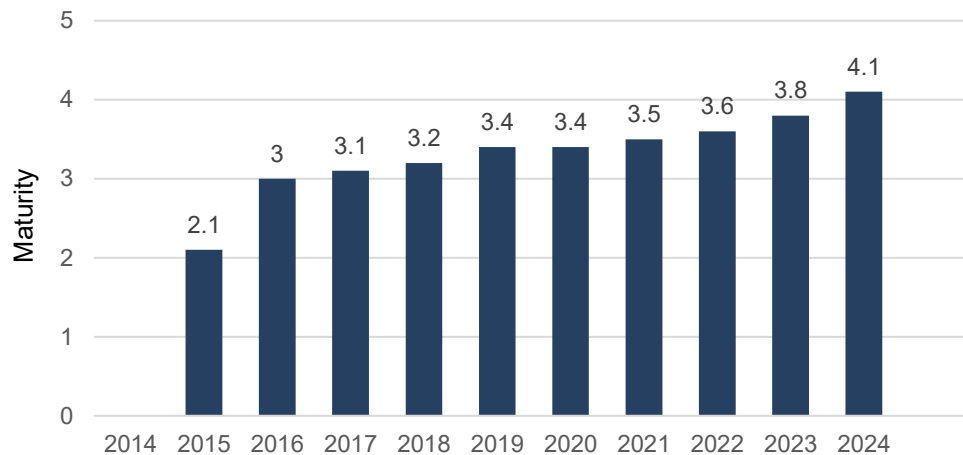


Chart 2 provides a comparison between maturity level scores from 2015 and 2024, clearly reflecting the significant improvements over the years.

Chart 2 - Score by Level

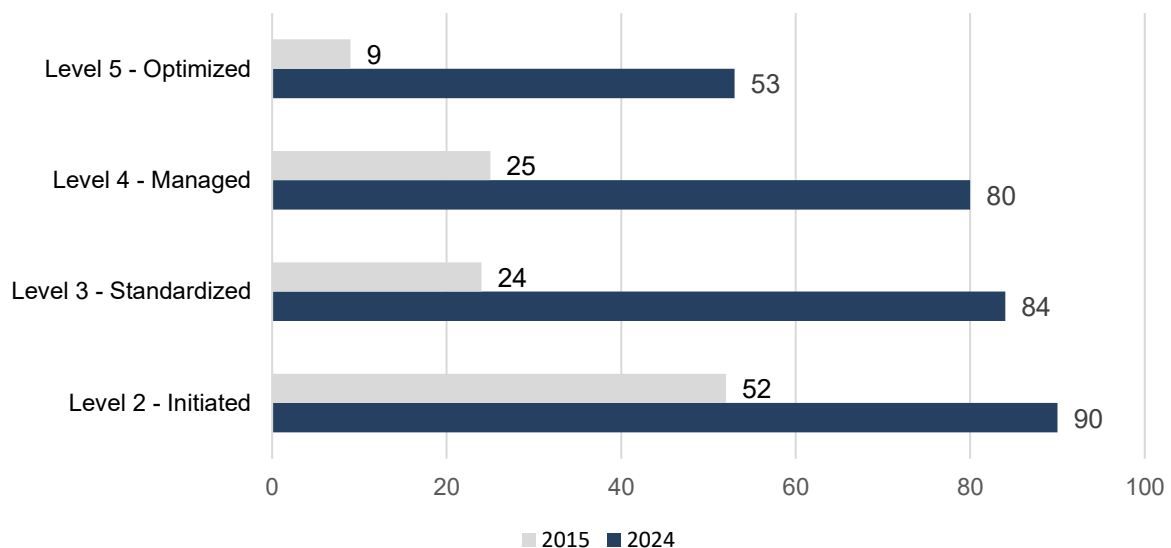
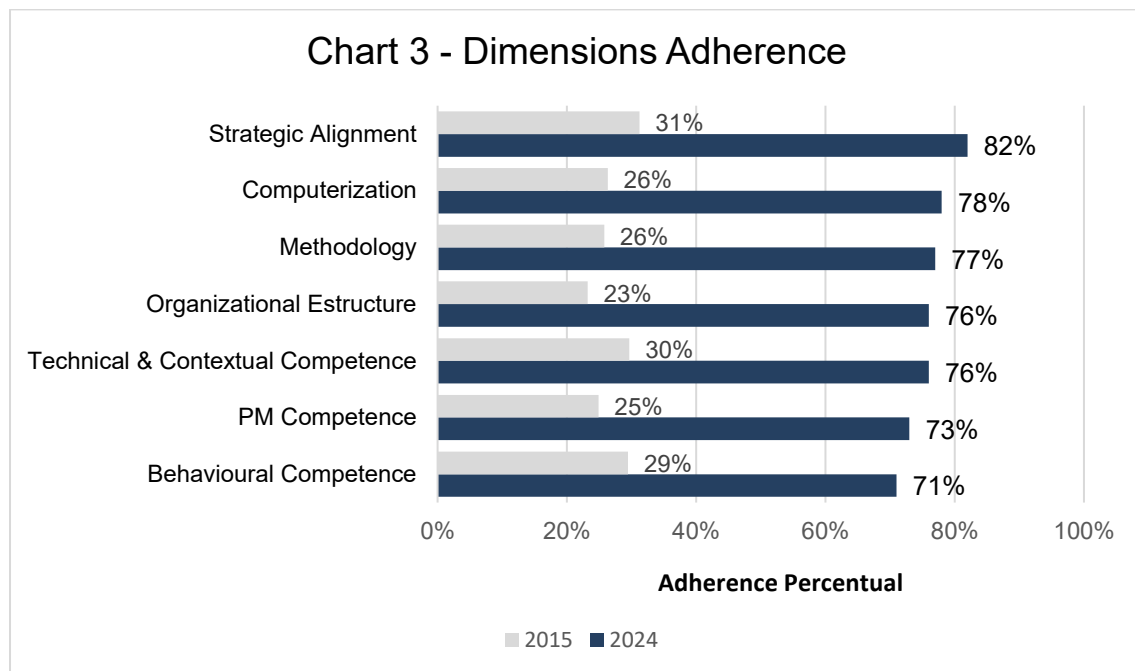


Chart 3 presents adherence to each of the maturity dimensions evaluated in the survey, further confirming this positive trajectory.



4 – CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

The evolution of Baterias Moura’s PMO over more than a decade has been supported by several factors that became pillars of its success. The key contributors to this journey of excellence include:

- **Strategic alignment and autonomy:** The PMO currently reports directly to the General Director through the Strategy, PMO, and Profitability Manager. With a PMO Manager and a team of 17 people, compatible with the complexity of the portfolio, the department ensures authority, visibility, and influence in corporate decisions. This strategic position ensures that the project portfolio is always aligned with organizational objectives.
- **Robust organizational structure and consistent methodology:** Operating on three fronts—investments, industrial projects, and R&D&I projects—the PMO operates with its own methodology based on the PMO Value Ring (PMI PMOGA), which ensures governance, clarity of scope, and efficient execution.
- **Technological integration with PPM (Project and Portfolio Management):** the adoption of an integrated portfolio management platform connected to our ERP, which allows for a real-time view of projects, strengthening data-driven decision-making.

- **Culture of learning and community:** the creation of the Moura Project School—structured as a true in-house mini-MBA—is one of the pillars of the organization's ongoing project management training, with modules available to the entire organization. With an average of seven modules per year, the program offers training on essential topics such as Project Fundamentals, Integration Management, Scope, Stakeholders, Artificial Intelligence, Agile Methodologies, among others, totaling over 700 hours of development over the years. This initiative, combined with internal events, fosters talent development, the sharing of best practices, and the strengthening of the project management ecosystem, both inside and outside the organization.
- **Generation of measurable value:** the use of indicators such as NPS (Net Promoter Score, which evaluates both the service provided by the manager, customer satisfaction and project results), IQP (Project Quality Index, which is the average of three indexes that evaluate the efficiency of time, scope and cost, offering an integrated view of project performance) and the maturity level itself (MMGP) reinforces the commitment to concrete deliveries and to the generation of value for the organization and for society.
- **Flexibility and Adaptability:** The PMO's approach demonstrates its ability to adapt to the current situation, without losing sight of governance principles and a focus on value. This flexibility has been essential in responding to challenging scenarios, such as during the pandemic, when the PMO required strategic action to quickly review and adapt the project portfolio, prioritizing critical initiatives and adjusting resources according to new business demands. Likewise, during periods of high sales demand, the PMO has played a key role in enabling investments in projects aimed at expanding production capacity, ensuring agility in decision-making and alignment with the organization's strategic objectives.
- **Benchmarking with other companies and market references:** Active participation in events, conferences, and awards ceremonies has always been viewed by the organization as a strategy for continuous learning and evolution. This approach has strengthened the PMO's position as a national and international benchmark, in addition to fostering valuable exchanges with other organizations.

These factors, combined with strong senior leadership sponsorship and an organizational culture focused on excellence, were crucial to consolidating a PMO that not only delivers projects but also transforms strategy into sustainable results.

5– BENEFITS ACHIEVED

The decade-long journey of Baterias Moura's PMO has resulted in concrete, measurable, and sustainable benefits that directly impact the company's performance and strategic alignment. The consolidation of project management as a core organizational competency has produced improvements across multiple dimensions.

A project-oriented culture has taken root at all levels of the organization, supported by standardized practices, a shared vocabulary, and cross-functional collaboration. This increasing maturity has led to continuous improvements in key performance indicators, with more predictable delivery, tighter control of scope, schedule, and cost, and a significant reduction in deviations.

Portfolio management has also matured, with project selection and prioritization becoming more aligned with the company's strategic objectives. The portfolio is now managed based on clear criteria for value, risk, and impact.

Recent Results (2023–2024)

Between 2023 and 2024, the organization recorded notable progress:

- **9%** increase in the number of projects executed
- **73%** reduction in project delay rate
- **5%** reduction in budget overrun rate
- **25%** improvement in cost efficiency

Moreover, the sustainability of results is evidenced by the continuous improvement in project management maturity, measured annually by the Prado-MMGP Maturity Survey. The organization's maturity level rose from **2.1 in 2014** to **4.1 in 2024**, reflecting a solid, consistent trajectory focused on value creation.

These benefits not only reinforce the PMO's importance within the company but also position Baterias Moura as a national benchmark in project management—with a structure that transforms strategy into concrete results.

6– RECOGNITION AND AWARDS

Over the past decade, the history of Baterias Moura's PMO has been marked not only by consistent results but also by significant recognition nationwide. These awards reflect the organization's commitment to excellence in project management and the maturity it has gained over time.

Key highlights include:

- **6-time winner** of the *Best PMO in the State of Pernambuco* (2017, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022, and 2023)
- **3-time finalist** for the *Best PMO in Brazil* by *Mundo PM Magazine* and *PMI-PMOGA* (2018, 2022, and 2023)
- **Winner of the Best PMO in Brazil (2024)** by *PMI-PMOGA – PMO Brazil Awards 2024*
- **1st place in the Americas (2025)** in the *PMI-PMOGA – PMI PMO Global Awards 2025*, a global competition currently underway

These achievements reflect an organizational culture that prioritizes continuous learning, innovation, and management excellence. For Baterias Moura, participating in events, conferences, and award programs has always been a strategic opportunity to benchmark, learn, and grow. These moments have allowed the company not only to share best practices but also to absorb valuable insights from other organizations, further strengthening the PMO's performance and its contribution to company-wide results.

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Case 3: Reta Engineering

By Tulio Duarte Faria

Reta Engenharia (Reta Engineering) is a Brazilian company specializing in engineering consulting, planning, and project management, with a strong presence in industrial projects, infrastructure, and capital-intensive projects. Throughout its history, it has participated in more than 420 projects, with a total estimated CapEx of over US\$200 billion. Its portfolio encompasses feasibility studies, strategic planning, contract management, cost control, and implementation of methodologies such as FEL, AACE, and PMBOK.

Reta's culture is based on technical excellence, professional ethics, and a commitment to results. The company values building trusting relationships with its clients, guided by transparency, collaboration, and shared responsibility. Its multidisciplinary team works in an integrated and performance-oriented manner, seeking solutions that balance deadlines, costs, quality, and sustainability in each project.

1 – The importance of the Prado-PMMM Model for the evolution of Project Management Maturity at Reta Engenharia

Original Situation

Reta Engenharia was founded to become the most efficient and reliable link between project design and final delivery. Throughout its 30-year history, the company has built a strong market presence by continuously improving its management methodologies, ensuring excellence in the oversight and execution of highly complex projects.

Its multisectoral approach has enabled the development of tailored strategies aligned with the specific needs of each client's business model. This has promoted personalized management practices that reflect the client's strategic objectives. In this context, Reta has expanded its use of agile methodologies and modern management tools, emphasizing value creation, process efficiency, and the elimination of excessively bureaucratic or merely formal procedures.

In its early years, the company's operations were heavily influenced by the construction sector, reflecting the background of its founders. This initial focus brought significant advantages, especially in technical and execution aspects. However, to expand its reach and offer comprehensive solutions throughout the entire project lifecycle, it became necessary to evolve in other aspects of project management.

In this context, adopting the Project Management Maturity Model (Prado-MMGP) was crucial for diagnosing the company's current status and guiding a structured development plan. The

initial application of the survey revealed strong adherence to technical and information technology dimensions, but also highlighted significant gaps in methodology, strategy, and organizational structure. By the end of 2010, the company achieved a maturity index near 3. This result served as a wake-up call: consistent investment in processes, people, and technologies would be necessary to sustain the desired growth.

Structuring Actions for Growth

Faced with this scenario, the company embarked on a transformational process. Significant investments were made in training the team, with a special focus on PMP (Project Management Professional) certification. As a result, approximately 20% of engineers became certified, driving the adoption of robust methodologies and improving project delivery.

At the same time, a decisive investment was made in cutting-edge technological tools. The introduction of Primavera P6, starting in the 2010s, and 4D BIM starting in 2014, positioned the company at the forefront of project planning and control in Brazil.

Research Results after Implementation of Actions

The results of these efforts are tangible. In 2021, the company achieved a Prado-MMGP maturity index of **4.37**—one of the highest in Brazil (see Figures 1 and 2). This achievement contributed directly to the company's solid and sustainable growth, deeper relationships with strategic clients, and increased competitiveness.

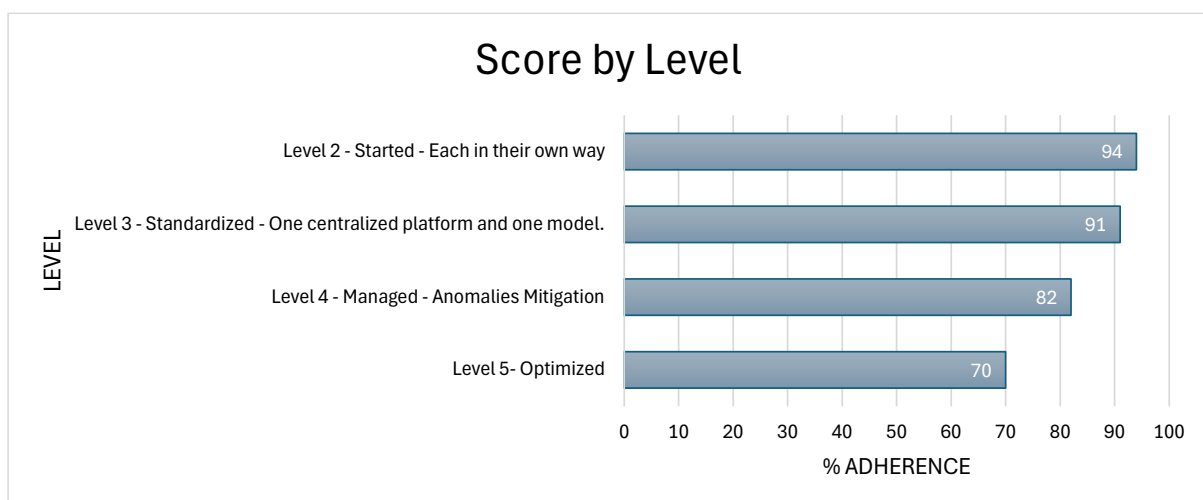


Figure 1 – Score by level – Maturity Evaluation 2021

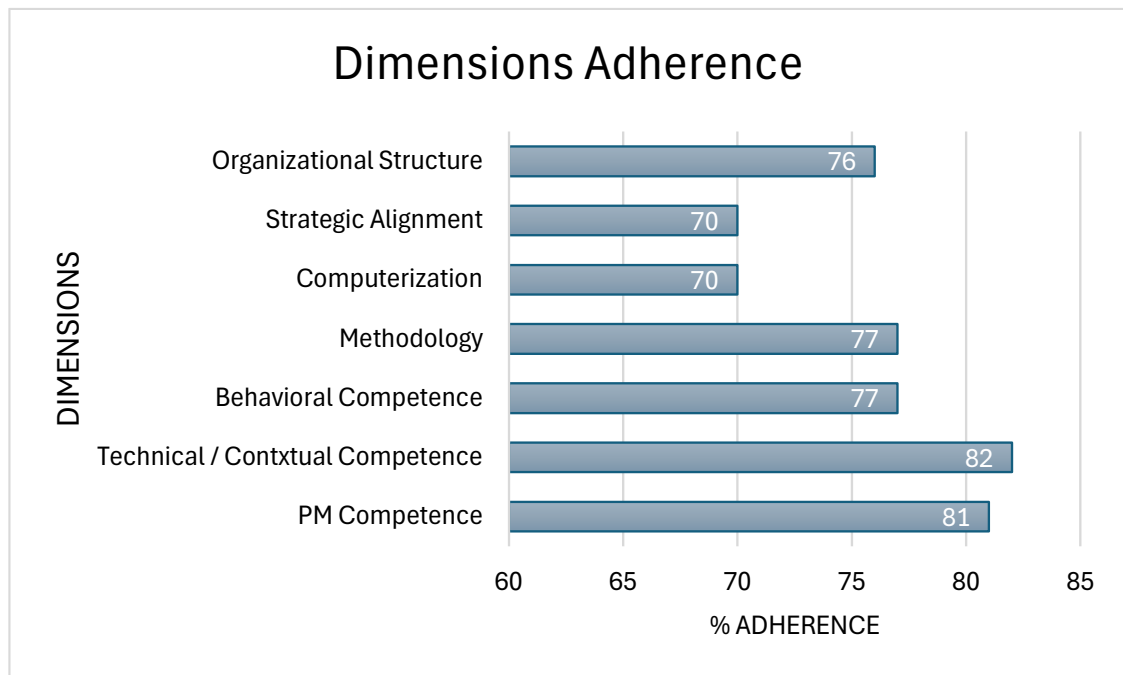


Figure 2 – Dimensions Adherence – Maturity Evaluation 2021

By consistently investing in project management maturity, the company not only raised its internal standards but also strengthened its position as a benchmark in the engineering and consulting sector.

2 - Organizational Results Achieved - Company Growth and PMO Structuring

In recent years, Reta Engenharia has experienced consistent growth, fueled by client trust, the reliable delivery of projects with high technical and managerial standards, and the rising maturity level in the projects it leads (see Figure 3). This progress has established the company as a leading national reference in engineering consulting for industrial, infrastructure, and capital-intensive projects. The expansion of its geographic presence and the diversification of its portfolio reflect a strategic positioning centered on operational excellence, innovation, and value creation throughout the project execution chain.

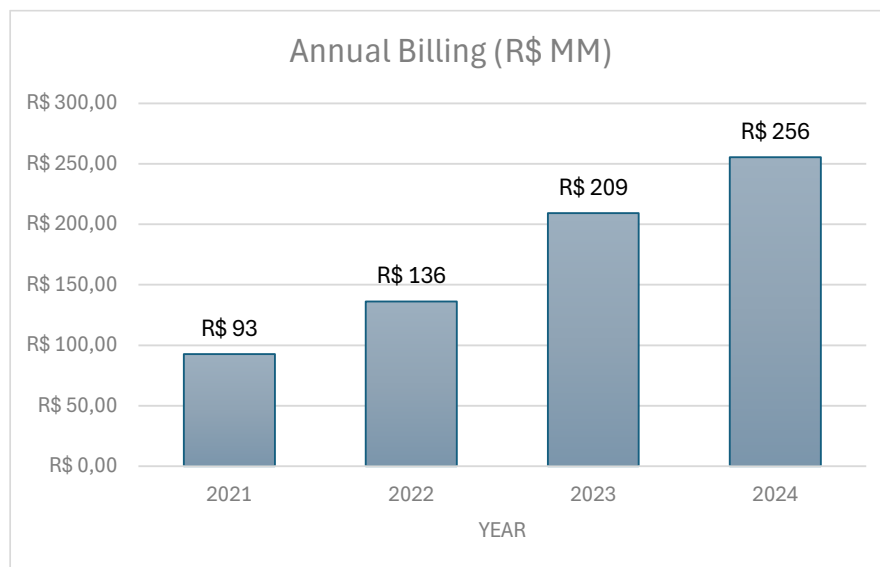


Figure 3 – Company Billing Growth

Corporate PMO Structuring

Drawing on insights from the Prado-MMGP Model research, Reta was able to strategically plan its maturity evolution. The company structured its **Corporate PMO (Project Management Office)** to standardize methodologies, strengthen governance, and enhance predictability and control throughout the project lifecycle.

Acting as the strategic core of the organization, the PMO provides technical support to project teams, consolidates performance indicators, and ensures alignment with international best practices. This structure has been fundamental in advancing project management maturity and sustaining the company's growth in a cohesive, integrated, and results-driven manner.

3 - PMO Operating Model

Reta Engenharia's PMO operates as a corporate structure that provides strategic, technical, and methodological support to all of the company's projects and contracts. Its central role is to ensure standardized processes, reliable information, and consistent delivery quality—regardless of the project's size, sector, or location.

To fulfill this role, the PMO works transversally across the organization, supporting field teams and contract managers with tools, guidelines, and continuous monitoring. It also conducts periodic training sessions, systematic technical reviews, and internal audits to ensure that corporate standards are properly applied—and adapted when necessary—to the specific requirements of each project. This model enables Reta to maintain a high level of delivery reliability, even in complex and dynamic environments.

Methodologies and Standards

Drawing from the world's leading project management frameworks, Reta's PMO has developed and maintains more than 120 procedures, standards, and documentation templates. These tools guide teams from the initial planning stages through project completion. The materials are based on best practices promoted by internationally recognized organizations, including:

- Project Management Institute (PMI)
- Association for the Advancement of Cost Engineering (AACE International)
- Construction Industry Institute (CII)
- Global Alliance for the Project Professions (GAPPS)

The PMO tools are applied **adaptively**, respecting the specific characteristics of each project and business model. This flexibility enables tailored application without compromising governance or technical rigor. The PMO structure also fosters integration between technical and administrative areas, encourages a culture of lessons learned, and maintains a robust system of performance indicators. As a result, all contracts follow clear, auditable standards oriented toward value generation for the client.

4 – Critical Success Factors

To support the evolution of project management and achieve the expected results through its Corporate PMO, Reta Engenharia adopted a solid approach based on strategic and operational pillars that became critical success factors. This model was built through integrated initiatives and institutional commitment, ensuring legitimacy, clear direction, and effectiveness throughout the PMO's implementation.

Among the key factors that contributed to these achievements, the following stand out:

- Strong senior leadership engagement – including the CEO, directors, and superintendents, who were actively involved in the structuring, implementation, and consolidation of the PMO.
- Commitment from the technical management team, which proactively adopted the best practices and guidelines established by the PMO.
- Highly qualified technical staff, with professionals experienced in process standardization, procedure development, and the application of internationally recognized methodologies.
- An organizational culture focused on continuous improvement, promoting innovation, learning, and a constant pursuit of excellence.
- Ongoing investment in training, with workshops, development programs, and technical and managerial education initiatives.

- Systematic use of performance indicators, allowing for real-time monitoring, informed decision-making, and increased predictability in project execution.

5 – Challenges

During the process of structuring and consolidating the PMO at Reta Engenharia, progress was steady and ultimately successful. However, some specific challenges were encountered along the way — all of which were addressed effectively.

Among the aspects that required greater attention, the following stood out:

- **Alignment across different areas** – Efforts were needed to promote integration between technical, administrative, and operational teams.
- **Adapting procedures to varied contract profiles** – It was essential to preserve flexibility while maintaining governance and standardization.
- **Continuous team development** – This required planned investments in training and a maturation period for the full assimilation of new practices.

These challenges provided valuable lessons, reinforcing the importance of adaptability, structured implementation, and long-term vision when building a project management culture.

5 – Benefits

The consolidation of the PMO at Reta Engenharia has generated a range of concrete benefits, enhancing efficiency, predictability, and quality in project management. These results emerged gradually but consistently and reflect the team's strong engagement, the company's technical maturity, and the disciplined application of established methodologies.

The main gains observed include:

- Improved productivity, standardization, and delivery quality – Promoting greater operational efficiency, technical consistency, and uniformity in project management across departments.
- Greater predictability and project control – Supported by robust performance indicators that enable faster, more informed decisions with a lower margin of error.
- Enhanced communication across departments and stakeholders – Enabled by structured workflows, standardized terminology, and integrated processes.
- Reduced rework and mitigation of operational risks – Achieved through the rigorous application of planning, control, and critical analysis practices.
- Higher client satisfaction – Resulting from more consistent project deliveries that meet deadlines and comply with technical and contractual requirements.

- A strengthened performance and learning culture – With a focus on results, lessons learned, and the ongoing technical development of teams.

6 – Conclusions

The structuring of the PMO at Reta Engenharia marked a major milestone in the company's journey toward process improvement and increased project management maturity. Anchored in well-established practices and supported by strong institutional alignment, the company successfully overcame specific challenges and consolidated a structure capable of delivering greater efficiency, predictability, and quality.

The result is a more prepared and integrated organization, focused on generating value in highly complex projects. Many of the company's most important steps toward maturity in project management were guided by the diagnosis provided by the maturity research model developed by Professor Darci Prado.

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Important

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