



## Strategic Management & Project Management Discussion paper 4

Strategic management's purpose, arguably is to relate the firm to its environment and identify potential threats and opportunities. Over recent times there has been growing attention to the function that project management can or arguably should play in the realisation of an organisations strategy. The increase in this realisation has led to the enterprise management focus of project delivery. The change therefore is one of taking project management from a technical or even tactical function to one of a strategic function.

There is a growing belief amongst senior managers that aligning the management of projects with the strategic management function, can increase the realisation of said strategies. It is in the ability of project management and its practitioners to implement the firms strategy and react to any changes due to market forces, that PM is proving its worth.

So; where does this leave us with regard to our previous discussions on PM knowledge and the selection of an appropriate manager for a project or indeed a program? Do we need to consider the distinction between the attributes of a project manager and a program manager? There seems to be widespread use of both terms globally in various industries, without due consideration to the functions and even attributes required of the individuals designated the titles.

Projects & Project Managers	Programs & Program Managers
Narrow scope & specific deliverables	Wide scope and may need to change to meet benefit expectations
Manager keeps change to a minimum	Manger expects and embraces change
Success Measures – Budget, Time, to Specification	Success Measures – ROI & Benefit delivery
Leadership style focus – task delivery	Leadership style focus – Managing Relationships, Conflict resolution, Political aspects of stakeholder relationships
Manage Technicians & Specialists	Manage Project Managers
Team players who motivate by knowledge & skill	Provide vision and leadership
Conduct detail planning for delivery of 'products'	High level plans to provide guidance to projects
Manages/monitors tasks, work, 'product' production	Monitors projects through governance structure

**Program Management:** Within the Project Management context, a program is defined as “a plan or system under which action may be taken toward a goal”, e.g. a development program, building program, maintenance program etc.

PRINCE2 defines a program in the project context as:

***‘A portfolio of projects selected, planned and managed in a coordinated way and which together achieve a set of defined business objectives. Program management methods and techniques may also be applied to a set of otherwise unrelated projects bounded by a business cycle.’***

Often, a project may be part of a Program. A Program would normally consist of many projects with a common goal. The Association of Project Management (APM) Body of Knowledge (BoK) states: “There is widespread variation in the use of the term Program Management. The most common – and cogent – definition is that a program is a collection of projects related to some extent to a common objective.” From a more generic organisational point of view, programs can also include ongoing operations or support to projects. A program is a collection of change actions (projects and operational activities) grouped together to realise strategic benefits. This means that one of the key differences between projects and programs is that the program will deliver benefits that could not have been achieved if the projects had been managed independently of each other.

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