Project Management Implementation as Management Innovation:
A Closer Look

Webinar 2014

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Agenda

• Overview of the Research
• Some Findings
• Implications for Research and Practice
Overview of the Research
The Research Team

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- Svetlana Cicmil, University of the West of England
- Stella George, University of Calgary

- Partially funded by a PMI Research Grant
Origins of the Research

- Organizations all over are implementing PM
- But what is being implemented globally and how is a complex and under researched phenomenon
- Value project (2004-2009) suggested tailoring PM implementations to organizational realities
- How do organizations address the complexities, risks, and uncertainties involved in project management implementations?
When do organizations start implementing project management?

Polling Question
Theoretical Lens

• We draw from Schumpeter (1934)
  – new to the world is invention while new to the setting is innovation
  – invention belongs to the realm of ideas while innovation is the practical implementation of these ideas
Management Innovation is...

- *intentional* activity
- directed at *changing management processes, practices, ways of working, and structures*
- by *introducing ideas that are new to the locality*
- aimed at *delivering organizational benefits*

(West and Farr 1990)
This lens allowed us to…

• Deeply analyze project management implementation
• Provide interesting insights about decision making, behavior, identity, culture and power
• Explore the organizational and behavioral factors that affect and are simultaneously being produced in project management implementations
Empirical Evidence

- “Value” project (2005-2008) database provides 65 detailed case studies of organizations around the world who implemented project management
- 48 cases of rich information on innovation journeys
- 10 complex journeys were explored in detail
- 3 cases updated through interviews to 2012
Research Process

- Aimed for useful recommendations for practitioners
- Had to figure out how to compare the implementation journeys of these organizations in a generalizable way
- Recognized that each implementation involved innovation investments at points in time.
- This insight allowed us to “map” the implementation journeys as a series of innovation events.
Innovation Event
Who initiates PM implementation journeys? and why?
## Innovation Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continuous</th>
<th>Episodic</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PERSISTENT EVENTS.</strong></td>
<td><strong>TECTONIC EVENTS.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment in one division that builds upon or supports existing practices</td>
<td>Investment that builds upon or supports existing practices but is disruptive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eg. revision or adoption of templates or certification or training</td>
<td>Eg. introduction of new and very different tool set</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SCOPE</strong></td>
<td><strong>SCOPE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment aimed at broadening the scope from project to organization management</td>
<td>Investment originating at the organization level and entailing significant changes to past practices</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eg. moving a successful PM model from one dept to whole organization</td>
<td>Eg. Introduction of entirely new model of PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TURBULENT EVENTS.</strong></td>
<td><strong>PUNCTUATED EVENTS.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Plowman et al, 2007; Street & Gallupe, 2009
Innovation Journeys

- Continuous
  - Persistent
  - Polishing Journey
  - Integratory Journey

- Episodic
  - Renovation Journey
  - Intervention Journey
  - Serial Fix or Quick Fix
  - Reinforcing Journey
  - Revolutionary Journeys
  - Punctuated
  - Rejected Fix
  - Rejected Implementation
  - Rejected Rollout

- Radical
  - Embedding Journey
  - Turbulent

- Convergent
  - Reinforcing Journey
  - Embracing Journey
Mapping the Innovation Journey
Case 75

Continuous

Convergent

Episodic

Radical
Some Findings
What is most important to consider in implementing appropriate project management processes in context?
Observations on Journeys

• Successful Journeys involved
  – Organizational level support or trigger
  – Radical then continuous convergent innovations

• Problematic Journeys entailed
  – Fixing
  – Champion position / removal
Observations on Journeys (con’t)

- Consider
  - Context and strategic ‘fit’ - homogeneity is not a given
  - Innovation life-cycle and sustainability

- Change in Journeys over time
  - Earlier journeys began with radical
  - Later Journeys began, ended and involved more persistent
Project Management Implementation...

- Changes practices and belief systems that impact identity construction
  - Ignoring identity issues hinders socialization and intergroup integration
  - Attention to intergroup safety is essential to organization wide acceptance
Project Management Implementation…

- Requires attention to learning, socialization, routinization, contextual factors, role of power and history, labour process, employee relationships and organizational governance
  - Neglect of these aspects wastes resources
- Championing requires the skills of a political entrepreneur
  - Losing the champion stalls the implementation
Role of Uncertainty

*In times of plenty innovation is a luxury, in times of pressure innovation is a necessity* (paraphrasing West, 1990)

- Senior managers drive innovation in times of pressure and urgency
- Project communities drive continuous convergent innovation
- Uncertainty is just as important to successful project management implementation as sustained momentum and routinization
Contributions and Implications
Conceptual Contributions

• Reviews management innovation concepts and their implications for project management
• Adds to our understanding of project management implementation by identifying specific innovation events and journeys
Methodological / Empirical Contribution

- Mapping model for representing innovation events and journeys
- Focus on implementation dynamics
- Examines similar management innovations across organizations
Practical Implications

• PM implementation is best understood as…
  – A management innovation generating significant organizational change
  – A group activity the success of which depends on group processes such as intergroup safety, reflexivity, participatory decision making, collective learning, socialization and routinization, identify, culture and power
  – Led by change agents

• Maintaining uncertainty is important to help generate urgency and continuous improvement
Practical Implications

- PM Implementations need Executive Support
  - PM Professionals drive continuous convergent efforts
  - Senior executives get involved when there is a sense of urgency (episodic)
  - Project management professionals need to be prepared to respond as a trusted advisor or executives will look elsewhere
Practical Implications

• Awareness of stages in the implementation journey helps inform planning and management of PM Implementation…
  • Starting the journey entails identifying triggers and best next steps
  • Continuing the journey requires ensuring the next innovation fits with the trigger and innovation events that have come before
  • Intervening in a journey in progress can be improved by recognizing the trigger, type of innovation event and likely outcomes
Thank you! Q&A

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Some data in this research was provided as part of PMI supported research project Researching Value of Project Management – we thank all the researchers who collected it.
Final Comments

Publications:

- Monograph is available: Project Management Implementations as Management Innovation
  - *Sponsored Research monographs are available to members for free download.*
  - *Monographs can also be purchased at the PMI Store on PMI.org.*

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Case 23
Case 25

Continuous

Episodic

Convergent

Radical
Case 34

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Case 43

- Continuous
- Episodic
- Convergent
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Case 47

Continuous

Convergent

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Radical
Case 63

Continuous

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Radical
Case 72