PARADIGM *SHIFT*

THE AIPM DIGITAL MAGAZINE

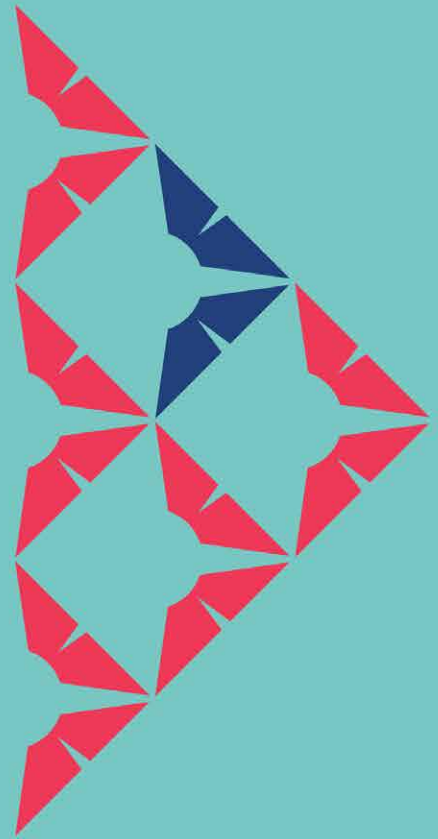Australian Institute of **Project Management**

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Cover image: a Cultural Liaison Officer from Queensland Corrective Services engaging with a First Nations prisoner (source: @Queensland Corrective Services 2021)

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

SID GOKANI

As we close the 2021 year and see COVID-19 restrictions starting to lift, I think we all feel a sense of relief and want to look to the future.

However, looking back on the year and reflecting on the interactions that I have had with leaders within AIPM and through our organisation partners, I feel a sense of pride and optimism because of the way that leaders have responded.

This year, our leaders have been challenged with making rapid changes to their business operations, shifting to new ways of working, responding to the ever-changing landscape of restrictions, and leading people who have been feeling the strain of uncertainty and lockdowns.

As I talk to business leaders in Australia, it is also clear that the strength of their organisation culture has been critical in their ability to respond and adapt to the changing landscape through 2021.

I think it is important to acknowledge this effort and to celebrate what has been achieved by our leaders through a difficult time.

I also want to congratulate the winners of the chapter-based 2021 Project Management Achievement Awards; to all the high achievers and to everyone involved in the projects leading the way. I look forward to seeing you all 'in person', COVID-19 restrictions allowing, at the upcoming National Conference in February as we announce the national winners and celebrate looking *Forward with Purpose*.

Enjoy reading,

Sid Gokani MBA GAICD
CEO Australian Institute of Project Management

IN THE NEWS

2021 AIPM AND KPMG PROJECT MANAGEMENT SURVEY REPORT

KPMG Australia collaborated with us to release our fourth project delivery performance report on International Project Management Day on 4 November. The report deep dives into the current trends in project management in Australia to help elevate the quality of project delivery, while highlighting issues facing project management professionals. This year we also addressed the current challenges and opportunities for the profession.

THE GREAT RESIGNATION

Across Australia, people are making the decision to leave their current roles in record numbers. This mass movement can be attributed to an altered business landscape, changing flexibility in roles and an overall burnout from the pandemic. Those in the age ranges of 30-45 are showing the most movement and many of these are motivated by higher-paying salaries and a lack of career development in their current roles. The project profession has a record number of roles in the market and recruiters are commenting that good talent has been hard to attract. To learn more about what your project management skills are worth, download our 2021 Project Management Salary Report Australia.

2021 AIPM AND KPMG PROJECT MANAGEMENT SURVEY

Looking forward with renewed purpose and relevance

KPMG — Australian Institute of Project Management

2022 NATIONAL CONFERENCE – FORWARD WITH PURPOSE

The Australian Institute of Project Management (AIPM) is excited to welcome 400 project managers to the Gold Coast in February 2022 to come together for the first time in over two years. We are building a legacy in project leadership through facilitating transformational change, driving value and delivering strategic outcomes. Our dynamic program includes keynote speakers Nigel Colin (MC), Phil Slade (behavioural economist, psychologist and journalist), Shade Zahari (award-winning leadership strategist and global peak performance consultant to Fortune 500's) and Rachael Robertson (leadership and teamwork expert) who will be addressing how we move project management forward. For your opportunity to network with project colleagues, be exposed to the latest thinking in project leadership and advance your organisation, book your tickets today. Early bird rates are available until 21 January 2022, book for you and your team today.

PROJECT SPONSOR CERTIFICATION AND MASTERCLASS

With a strong correlation between the performance of the project sponsor and the success of the project, organisations are looking to better define the role and ensure their executive team has the skills needed to deliver successful projects. The AIPM has therefore created a new certification level that validates the effectiveness of a project sponsor and as a driver of business and project success, Certified Practising Project Sponsor (CPPS). Learn more and submit your interest.

We have also created a new four-hour interactive project sponsorship masterclass to:

- improve the success rate of your projects with fewer blow-outs in time, cost and quality
- realise the intended long-term outcomes and business benefits of the projects once the products of the project are used in a BAU environment
- attract and retain high-quality staff
- be confident that sponsors understand their role and responsibilities
- improve relationships with community and customers through better delivery of projects.

The masterclass can be conducted virtually or face-to-face. Download the information kit.

Australian Institute of
Project Management

Project Sponsor
Masterclass

Maximise your sponsor performance and actualise project success.

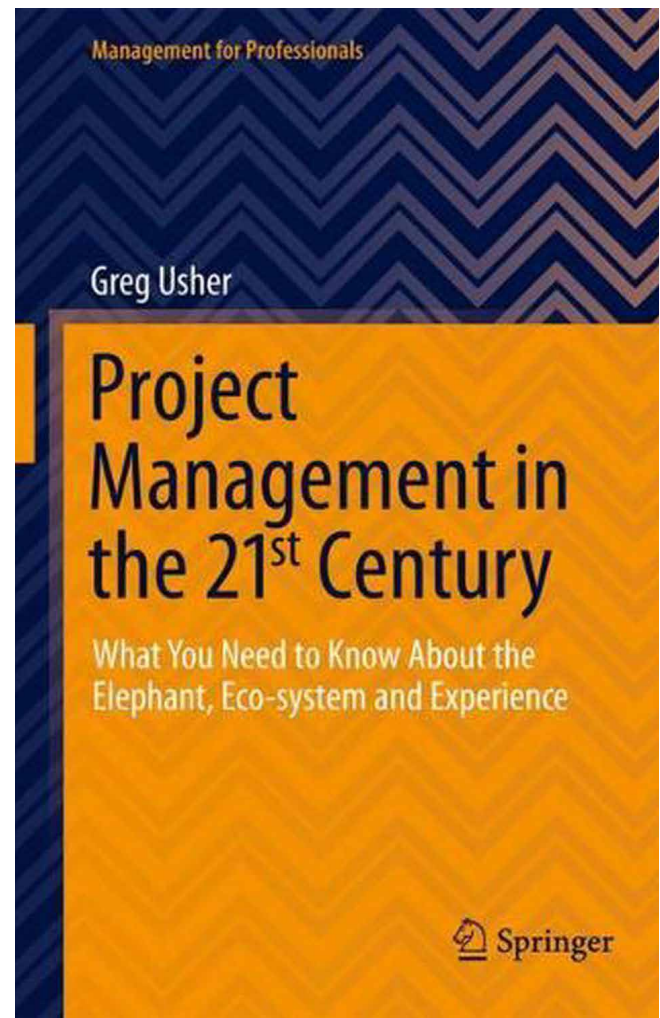**LEARN MORE**

PROJECT MANAGEMENT IN THE 21ST CENTURY

DURING A LONG LOCKDOWN IN MELBOURNE, DYLAN HESSELBERG RECEIVED A WELCOME COPY OF *PROJECT MANAGEMENT IN THE 21ST CENTURY: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE ELEPHANT, ECO-SYSTEM AND EXPERIENCE* BY GREG USHER. HERE, DYLAN OFFERS HIS REVIEW OF THE BOOK.

My vax-induced, less than flying start on the book soon turned into a thoroughly enjoyable and rewarding read. *Project Management in the 21st Century: What You Need to Know About the Elephant, Eco-System and Experience* is as much an adventure and education for the reader as its title is a mouthful. Anybody with a particular interest in the origins of project management as a discipline and what the future could hold for project management as a profession will appreciate the premise of the book.

THE 'PROJECT PEOPLE'

The author uses his book to express, in a most colloquial and light-hearted way, the trials and tribulations inevitably encountered by many, of what I like to call 'project

people' (although the book title expressly references 'project management', there are pearls of wisdom in it for all project team members, not only 'Project Managers'). In doing so he paints the ironically very clear picture of how dismally unclear and inconsistent the oxymoronic mutual understanding had by the full suite of 'project people' on a project often is.

A HOLISTIC PERSPECTIVE

The real gold in the book however is the lateral and unique way the author then digs beneath the surface of the perceived 'problems' faced by projects and those who deliver them. Leaving no stone unturned in his quest to decipher the mysteries of project management, the author successfully and convincingly draws relationships between projects and project people, to human behaviour and the building blocks of the universe itself. In doing so, the book challenges our perception of project management by contemplating it more holistically and suggesting that project management as we know it today may only be the ear, eye, or trunk of the proverbial 'elephant'.

DASHBOARD GREEN

Through a series of personal anecdotes, ample humour, and a deep dive into the linkages between projects, human psychology and the complexity theory, this book provides its readers with many well-articulated and entertaining hypotheses and offers – in addition to its novel, out of the box thinking about project management – some very practical tips, tricks, and tools to project people.

When all is said and done, Project Management in the 21st Century: What You Need to Know About the Elephant, Eco-System and Experience is a fun and insightful read that, 'in project dashboard speak', gets a green light from me.

Author: Dylan Hesselberg FAIPM CPPM is the current Vice-President of the Victorian Chapter of the AIPM. He's an experienced project professional and since moving to Australia in 2008, has had a hand in the delivery of significant public infrastructure in Qld and Vic. Dylan presently works as Director Technical Assurance at the Office of Projects Victoria (OPV) and is an advocate for enhancing project management capability across the public service.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN TIMES OF UNCERTAINTY

DIRECTORS AT SECOM TECHNICAL SERVICES HAVE SUCCESSFULLY IMPROVED EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT DURING THESE CHALLENGING TIMES THROUGH AN INNOVATIVE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND WELLBEING STRATEGY.

Ken Seiler, *Director,* and Chris Anlezark, *Director*

COVID lockdowns exposed the need for Secom Technical Services to ensure its employees felt valued and had a purpose; for many of us, all we had was work.

Creating organisational objectives and values, aligning a clear and defined culture of development and career progression in a time of fear and instability was paramount. Connection to the organisation drives a healthy culture. Trust, comprising ability, integrity, and benevolence, is the key ingredient to establishing a workplace where employees can flourish, and businesses can expect improved outcomes.

The culture and transformational leadership project focused on talent management through feedback, understanding and education, thus collectively achieving aligned objectives. It

is multifaceted and eternal to holistically support each employee through their career. There were certainly no cookie cutters used.

The five elements of the culture and transformational leadership project (source: Secom Technical Services)

1. ALIGNED EMPLOYEE VALUES

Company values are not just a poster on a wall at Secom Technical Services; they are genuine because they are relevant and demonstrated by all employees. Secom TECH Values (Trustworthy, Effective, Collaborative and Honesty) provide the beacon of connection and belonging for all employees. They help us measure all our behaviours and assist us with all recruitment strategies.

2. ELITE VETTING RECRUITMENT

We elevated vetting of candidates and better understood our leaders via the Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument (HBDI Profiling), empowering HR and the senior

management team to understand whole-brain thinking. Necessity is the mother of innovation, and we needed our employees to understand themselves to enhance collaboration. Motivating techniques need to be tailored to suit each employee. Understanding what makes our people tick is our superpower.

3. PROACTIVELY MANAGE PERFORMANCE

Future performance outcomes drive our strategy. We eradicated annual appraisals and numeric rating system, as it was too rigid and delayed for our dynamic workforce. Instead, we moved to monthly catchups to focus on achieving future objectives. Our strategy involves ongoing training around developing emotional intelligence and measuring the success of employees OKR's (Objectives and Key Results). We track employees progress on a SharePoint system tailored to suit our workforce. The performance framework ensures all employees:

- know what is expected to achieve overall business objectives

- receive regular recognition and feedback which aims to improve and develop performance outcomes

- identify learning and development needs for both management and employees to set career progression plans and develop future leaders.

Moreover, we don't shy away from addressing poor performance and/or unsatisfactory attitude; the standard you walk past is the standard you accept. We only want to be surrounded by people who strive to bring their best every day. It's all about a positive attitude and strong aptitude.

4. STRATEGY FROM WELLBEING

We have commenced regular and ongoing Momentum108 (M108) wellbeing surveys to provide the scope to identify our welfare. Wellbeing (or stability) is considered the starting point of positive psychological measurement. We are under no illusion that the past 12 months may have been difficult for our employees due to COVID-19 restrictions and being isolated from loved ones. However, the results are analysed and translated into organisational strategies for action to support our team.

5. FOCUSED LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Preserving integrity necessitates executives to demonstrate approachability, equality, and ethics. Our directors walk the talk, so its 'business as usual' to go the extra mile for our clients and our workforce. We are facilitating a leadership program delivered by Behavioural Scientist, Milo-Arne Wilkinson and Executive Trainer, Adam Murphy to ensure our workforce are empowered by their line manager. We are expecting

through completion of the program our leaders will have:

✓ a deliberate leadership style – leading by intention

✓ the ability to apply insight from neuroscience, behavioural economics, and psychology to leadership behaviour

✓ a faster intentional response rate in times of greatness and of great uncertainty, rather than reacting

✓ insight into the impact of a chosen leadership style and their willingness and ability to shift

✓ improved, even radical, honesty about what it takes to be an extraordinarily authentic leader

✓ greater stamina to stay the course when feeling vulnerable or uncomfortable in the knowledge that doing so will lead to better outcomes for the greater collective and its values

✓ greater awareness of brain health and the interconnection between the brain, belief systems and behaviour

✓ the psychological ability to solve problems, think critically and act purposefully

✓ the ability to recognise and navigate the changes required to establish their own leadership legacy

✓ address the concept of team and adapt the four different types of 'team' to all content delivered as seen in the following diagram.
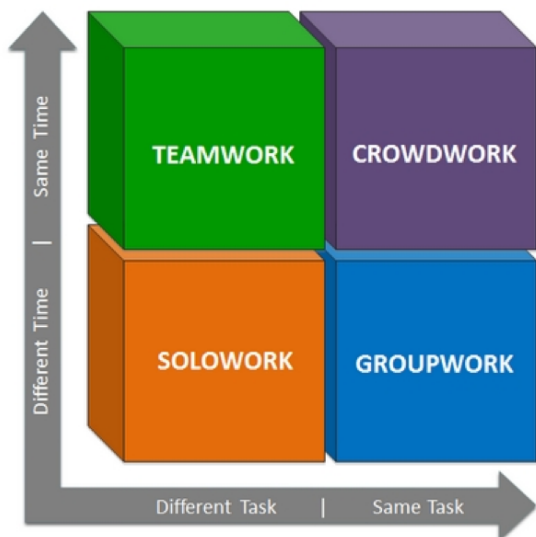
The four types of teamwork in nature (source: https://bioteams.com/2014/09/25/top-teams-understand.html)

COMMUNICATION AND MOTIVATION

The culture and transformational leadership project explores the key competencies of leadership strategies through effective communication and motivation. We celebrate constructive conflict to ensure ethical development, avoiding a 'groupthink' organisation. Identifying conflicting perspectives and proactively driving them to nurture growth and productivity creates a healthy working environment.

Motivation evolves and dissolves in constant fluid constructs throughout our lives. We need to seize opportunities to leverage high levels of motivation with employees when the time is right. Employees now feel confident to voice their opinions and own their career progression through their developed emotional intelligence and forward-focused advice from senior leaders. In a time of global uncertainty, we have our employees reflect on their conduct and aspire to be leaders in the electronic security industry.

ONGOING OPPORTUNTIES

The requirement to connect theory to practice and progress practical programs and methods to refine employee motivation is an obvious focus. The Secom Technical Services brand now has an identity to which employees are connected and proud. This initiative provides a new opportunity to tangibly manage performance and promote overall business objectives through the development of employees. Proactively managing performance outcomes has allowed the organisation to retain and attract talent while directly impacting attrition and achieving the greatest net profit in the organisation's 14-year history.

Author: Lisa Sutton, National HR Manager for Secom Technical Services, is an HR professional with over 15 years' experience working in a variety of industries, including electronic security, finance, childcare/aged care, and retail. She holds a Graduate Certificate in Human Resources from RMIT University and AHRI professional certification. Her areas of expertise include interpretation of IR laws, recruitment, change management, transformational leadership, and performance management.

CORRECTIONS 2030: A TRANSFORMATIONAL JOURNEY

WHEN P2E WAS ENGAGED TO DRIVE SIGNIFICANT TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE IN A COMPLEX ENVIRONMENT, IT WAS CRUCIAL TO USE EFFECTIVE PORTFOLIO, PROGRAM, AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT, COUPLED WITH ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE MANAGEMENT METHODOLOGIES.

In early 2018, P2E was engaged by Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) Commissioner, Dr Peter Martin (APM), to work collegiately with the organisation and develop a transformational program of work.

QCS Dog Squad Officers providing increased dynamic security (source: ©Queensland Corrective Services 2021)

AN EXTENSIVE REVIEW

With the new appointment of Commissioner Martin in mid-November 2017, and Machinery of Government changes taking effect on 21 December 2017, QCS became a stand-alone agency reporting directly to the Minister for Police and Corrective Services.

To gain a full appreciation of the organisation, its people, capability and culture, Commissioner Martin travelled to every correctional centre and community corrections facility in Queensland. The Commissioner listened to corrective services officers, unions, non-government service providers, representatives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, oversight bodies and other QCS partners in criminal justice and human services departments.

Commissioner Martin, commented that, "It was evident that to meet the challenges of the next decade, the QCS must transform into a forward-thinking, top tier public safety agency."

"Forward-thinking means we are strategic, innovative and evidence based. Top tier means we are trusted, respected and valued for our

Corrections 2030

Accountability | Excellence | Empowerment | Respect | Safety

Corrections 2030 (source: ©Queensland Corrective Services 2021)

expertise as a public safety agency."

This observation was the catalyst for QCS to embark on a journey to transform its strategy, culture, structure and its capability. With several major activities running in parallel, including the $265M Queensland Parole System Review (QPSR) Program, a complex and challenging environment was confronting QCS. Furthermore, a legacy of mistrust resultant from unintended consequences of previous reform activities, created a high degree of resistance, raising the risk of embarking on a significant change program. This necessitated the need for a clear, structured, and methodologically underpinned approach to gain business buy-in.

KEY OBJECTIVES

Working collaboratively with the Strategy and Policy business unit, P2E leveraged components of our eVolute™ cultural transformation methodology coupled with a contextualised Prince2/Agile methodology to govern and control the project activities necessary to enable cultural change and deliver against the key objectives on the next page.


A Cultural Liaison Officer engaging with a First Nations prisoner (source: @Queensland Corrective Services 2021)

- Development of a 10-year strategic plan that aligns to the Queensland Government's strategic priorities.
- Establish a contemporary organisational structure (corporate capability focused) in collaboration with the Commissioner and the Board of Management that would support delivery against the new 10-year strategic plan, and provide a holistic approach to how the QCS will contribute towards the Queensland Government's strategic priorities; with a particular focus on "keeping Queenslanders safe".
- Support of the Program Management Office's QPSR five-year program of work that responded to recommendations from the initial review by Walter Sofronoff in 2016.
- Establish and uplift the Enterprise Portfolio Management Office (EPMO) to enable supportive management and reporting of the transformational programs and projects.
- Uplift of QCS staff capability specific to devolved strategic planning and management.

After identifying and mitigating risk, a master schedule was created with instantiating controls and reporting mechanisms to manage against a compressed 12-month timeframe.

P2E eVolute™ Culture and Change Management Framework (source: ©P2E)
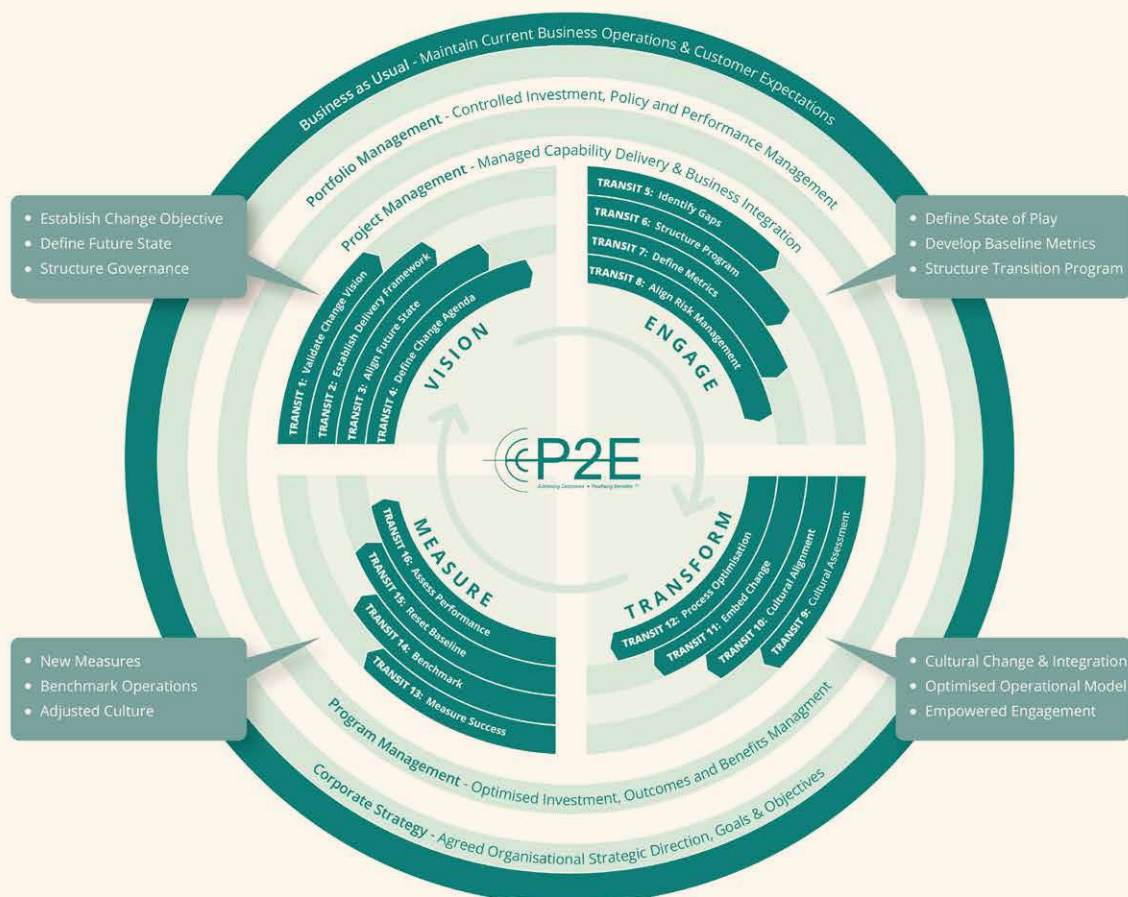
Commissioner Martin opening the first Brisbane based Strategic Planning Workshop (source: ©P2E 2021)

PLANNING

P2E were not correctional services subject matter experts. This removed the potential for us to seek to impose our own biases on the engagement and shifted our focus away from content to process. It was, therefore, imperative that we sought key information from the business experts that could contribute content knowledge to guide the evolution of the transformation program.

Collaborative and inclusive engagement helped to gather key data and develop a shared understanding of all operational and support areas of the business. This established an evidence-based framework for the proposed restructure of the organisation. P2E leveraged an action research paradigm across the overall approach, building rigor through the ongoing testing and challenging of emerging insights and findings through each successive cycle of engagement.

CONSULTATION

Every corrective services officer was formally engaged and encouraged to collaborate on the delivery of the transformation program, which is known as *Corrections 2030*.

Consultation was conducted from December 2017 to June 2018 to source key information. This included:

- an online staff survey
- state-wide workshops
- site visits (correctional and community correctional facilities)
- staff interviews
- executive workshops
- informal discussions
- research.

There was a groundswell of support from all corners of the state and a shared commitment to building a new future for QCS. This enabled the surfacing of key information specific to the organisation's perception of the current and desired future states.

We then explored the gap preventing QCS from moving to a future state. During this process, we also documented identified risks, opportunities, stakeholders and challenges.

During the above collaborative process, we sought staff feedback

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to enable adjustments to be made specific to our delivery. This was obtained by workshop assurance and pulse survey activities. We also leveraged an action research framework to test emerging insights with each successive cycle of engagement.

DELIVERABLES

P2E, in collaboration with the organisation were able to successfully deliver the following:

- consolidated workshop findings delivered as the QCS Strategic Planning Outcomes Report
- Commissioner approved organisational structure struck at Tier 4, with core business portfolio and unit functional descriptions
- Strategic Planning and Management Masterclasses
- Draft QCS 10-year strategic plan (*Corrections 2030*) and complimentary strategic framework
- MSP® and Prince2® executive overviews
- EMPO implemented tools and processes ready for transition into the organisation
- Queensland Parole System Reform PMO team capability uplift with a high focus on business change, restructure and repositioning of program governance.

THE FIVE PRINCIPLES THAT ENABLE CHANGE

Corrections 2030 strategically guides QCS and is underpinned by the following five key principles

that collectively enable the QCS to transform into a forward-thinking public safety agency.

1. Safety
2. Excellence
3. Empowerment
4. Respect
5. Accountability

DELIVERY

The QCS is now well poised, and championing delivery against Corrections 2030. Transformation within a vibrant, refocused workforce has been amazing to witness, with a significant cultural shift evidenced by the positive swing in the organisation's *Working for Queensland Survey* results. Of most significance is the pride evidenced by staff working within the agency and the regard with which QCS is held by other agencies and the public.

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

There were a number of critical success factors identified in order achieve the project's goals. These included:

- understanding and justifying the 'story' of WHY we need to change
- strong leadership and governance with clearly defined roles and responsibilities
- change champions supported by senior executives
- consistent and controlled messaging devolved from the Commissioner down

- contextualisation and application of methodologies (eVolute™ incorporating P3 and change management)
- clear articulation of the current and future states with an agreed understanding on what currently prevents QCS from getting there: 'the Gap'
- purposeful and targeted engagement across the organisation
- the business leading the transformation and understanding how they as individuals contribute towards it.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEARNINGS

Key transformational learnings from this engagement were:

- compassion for staff undergoing significant change
- open, positive and consistent communication about the future
- active listening and open collaboration
- do it with them, not to them.

POST-PROJECT ROLL OUT

The recent retirement of Commissioner Martin in July 2021 surfaced some concerns that this may change the transformational trajectory of the organisation, but his successor, Commissioner Paul Stewart (APM) has continued to chart a course that is directly aligned with *Corrections 2030*, to affirm the organisation's commitment to contributing to a safer Queensland.

The key takeaway I'll leave you with is, when undertaking significant enterprise-level transformation, do not underestimate the necessity for strong and focused leadership with a clearly articulated strategy, where staff are provided an opportunity to directly contribute through open engagement.

Corrections 2030 can be sourced here.

Author: Todd Hunt FAIPM CPPD, Managing Director of P2E is a Certified Practising Project Director, and a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Project Management, with experience spanning 30 years. Todd manages high value national and international programs and projects in complex organisations, across a variety of sectors, undergoing significant business transformation.

Southern Queensland Custodial Precinct (source: ©Queensland Corrective Services 2021)

ESCAPING THE CAGES: BREAKING FREE FROM RIGID WAYS OF THINKING

DAVID ARMSWORTH-MAW IS AN EXPERIENCED PROJECT AND PROGRAM MANAGER WHO, IN THIS ARTICLE, OFFERS STRATEGIES TO REDUCE ENTRAPMENT FROM PERSONAL AND SOCIAL NORMS, BASED ON RESEARCH HE HAS UNDERTAKEN AS PART OF A MASTERS IN COACHING PSYCHOLOGY.

In the rapidly changing hypercompetitive, uncertain, and globally connected world we're living in right now, project and portfolio leaders (PPLs) are facing intense demands on their personal adaptation capabilities to operate across multiple projects, cultures, organisational units, countries, professional disciplines, project teams, languages, technical vocabularies, and project phases.

Within this environment, PPLs need to be adaptive and innovative in their thinking to rapidly absorb and integrate new information, and successfully implement new and innovative solutions within their projects and portfolios.

However, it's easy to become entrapped in rigid ways of thinking which can constrain this adaptation and innovation, leading to dogmatism, a fixed mindset, resistance to change, and psychological inflexibility. Such entrapment can arise from personal and cultural social characteristics interacting to limit your ability to think and behave in a manner supportive of adaptation and innovation.

PERSONAL ENTRAPMENT

You may become entrapped by your management methodologies and how you see yourself. For example, you may believe that you're always/never correct; only *your way* to lead a project works; or *your* structure and sequence of work streams *must* be deployed in every situation.

You can become entrapped in how you describe themselves as well, which could be by over-stating of traits and skills such as 'I am a brilliant PPL', 'I am a project management guru', 'I am *the* project leader'; or under-stating of traits and skills, such as 'I am a poor PPL', 'I can't do technology', or 'I am not an influencer'.

SOCIAL ENTRAPMENT

Cultural social norms are explicit and implicit social group rules on having acceptable behaviours, expectations, and values. They might be enforced by the application of social sanctions such as public rebukes, low performance ratings, or exclusion from the social network, such as not being invited to social events.

As Daan van Knippenberg comments in his book, *Making Sense of Who We Are: leadership and organizational identity*, social norms can trap how your role as a leader is perceived and can be fulfilled. Such norms may imply that you're not a decision-maker, you don't hold power in the organisation, and are seen as 'the person who ticks boxes'. Others may see the PPL as hugely beneficial and give them a strategic decision-making position.

Differing social norms, sometimes phrased in 'right or wrong' language, can create boundaries for how the PPL thinks and behaves, preventing them from thinking 'outside of the box' or implementing change.

ENTRAPMENT REDUCTION STRATEGIES

Personal and social entrapment can prevent you, as a leader, and organisations from identifying and leveraging diverse thinking, approaches, and perspectives in periods when high-tempo adaptation and innovation are key to organisational survival and success.

Here are three strategies which can help reduce entrapment.

1. ENHANCE SELF-MANAGEMENT

Effective self-management will enhance your understanding of how you think, your assumptions and biases, and how your political, social and cultural awareness may be vulnerable to outdated and rigid thinking.

In the 2020 *Annual Review of Sociology*, the *Social Networks and Cognition* paper recommends you seek out honest input and feedback on your behaviour and thinking approaches, testing the accuracy of your assumptions, biases, and perceptions of yourself and your social networks.

2. EMBRACE AN OPEN MINDSET AND SEEK OUT DIVERSE RELATIONSHIPS

An open mindset doesn't hold onto preconceptions as the 'truth' of a situation and understands there are many alternative viewpoints on any situation.

Challenge yourself to explore whether you are:

- excluding non-confirmatory information because 'it doesn't fit'
- viewing the situation from only one (your) perspective
- limiting the potential and contribution of yourself and others because of social labels and norms
- dismissing ideas and input from different professional or social connections.

You should be reviewing your network and identifying which professional and social connections will enable you, according to the paper, *Network brokerage and the perception of leadership*.

3. PREPARE TO CHANGE

Continuously developing and growing involves reviewing thinking, behaviours, skills and knowledge to ensure that they remain flexible and adaptive. You can prepare yourself for future change by enhancing your current situational awareness and anticipating change by asking yourself 'Which parts of my thinking are becoming outmoded or rigid?' and 'What changes am I seeing occurring that indicate I may benefit from making personal or professional changes?'.

MOVING FORWARD

By being open to embracing new ideas, perspectives, and approaches, you can reduce your entrapment, enabling you to respond in an adaptive and innovative manner to the current challenges currently facing individuals, organisations, and society.

Author: David Armsworth-Maw has been a project and program manager for 20 years across a variety of sectors including real estate, consultancy, broadcasting, financial services, and law. David's most recent project management roles have focused on leading revenue-generating teams of legal project managers across the globe, within top tier law firms Allen & Overy and Ashurst. David is also an executive coach and is undertaking a MSc in Coaching Psychology at the University of Sydney.

A COVID FORCED BUSINESS PIVOT

DURING THE PANDEMIC, MANY COMPANIES HAVE BEEN PUSHED TO OPERATE IN NEW WAYS AND HAVE RESPONDED WITH INNOVATIVE PIVOTS. THE PROJECT BUREAU IS ONE OF THESE COMPANIES, AND MANAGING DIRECTOR ANDREW FOX DESCRIBES ITS JOURNEY.

Project Control Group (PCG) presentation (source: The Project Bureau)

At the outbreak of the pandemic last year, The Project Bureau was facing a crisis point where planned projects had vanished and we found that we needed to 'pivot' to provide a service to our customers that would not only support the customers in these trying times, but also allow The Project Bureau to survive and as Managing Director, the team was looking to me for guidance.

To help, I used SUCEDE, which is a decision support model developed by Dr Richard Barber from RiskIQ. Our companies have worked together in the past and I was able to utilise the concepts in this model to help in make decisions, in what could only be classed as very uncertain times.

THE VIRTUAL PMO

For many years, I had the notion of developing a virtual PMO (vPMO) to help organisations save headaches, time, and money, by moving the PMO from in-house, to a subscription model of a virtual project team, freeing up

several hundreds of thousands of dollars and removing a rather large workload of managing the PMO internally.

We had been too focused on high quality project delivery to get the time to work on designing this new service in the past. As they say, every cloud has a silver lining, and I used this period as an opportunity to focus my team on designing and launching the vPMO.

Through my doctoral research I had discovered significant research theories have been developed to explain perceived benefits contributed by PMOs. Indications were found that moderate improvements could be achieved in various aspects of organisational project delivery and strategic alignment, which leads to further research on revised implementation models aiming to peak project performance by utilising the PMO as a tool. Not surprisingly, PMOs in practice are implemented in a more complex way than those theories. Our team focused the solution on the current weak connection between practice and theory to restructure the PMO service into a virtual offering.

LEADERSHIP

This was quite a cultural shift that required leadership not only from me, but every single member of the team. To motivate us, we had some initial interest in the new service from our customers and while the temptation was to get to market quickly, we collectively made the decision that it would be best to hold off and design the vPMO properly so that it could make a real difference to our customers lives from day one.

As it turns out, this decision provided some amazing opportunities for The Project Bureau that we couldn't have planned for because, in the search for a Project Portfolio Management (PPM) tool to support the vPMO service, we came across a UK based company called BestOutcome who not only had exactly the tool we were looking for, called PM3, but had similar ethics to The Project Bureau in that they are outcomes focussed for their customers and always looking to save customers' money whilst delivering high quality.

PM3 is being used extensively in the NHS in the UK as well as other government departments and local councils, NFPs, as well as both small and large enterprises because of its simplicity of use, reporting automation, portfolio prioritisation and incredibly quick return on investment.

BestOutcome had a challenge in that they had received enquiries from Australia, but were unable to respond to those enquiries because they had no one to service customers should they decide to buy. Their managing director, David Walton, then reached out to see if The Project Bureau would be interested in entering into a partnership with BestOutcome to respond to this challenge.

CULTURAL CHANGE

This is where the change in culture had to be very carefully nurtured as moving to a project portfolio management (PPM) platform and a vPMO service meant taking a back seat from actual delivery that we were used to doing, to supporting our customers delivering successfully themselves.

INSIGHTS AND LEARNINGS

We had by this point uncovered the critical issues, checked our mental models, explored options, made decisions, engaged the right people and now we were sharing that purpose, not only internally, but with our customers and the broader project management community. Everybody in The Project Bureau was on board with the change in direction and were singularly focused. We had moved from apparent chaos to innovation.

> *The team were developing ideas at a very fast pace and putting them into practice. One of those was to further develop artificial intelligence in project management so we decided to make an investment in that, and employed an AI programmer who is currently developing some amazing concepts.*

CURRENT SITUATION

We have formally released both the PM3 product and the vPMO service and whilst we have received quite a few enquiries, we are not stopping there. We are actively engaging with our customers to gather reviews and concerns that could improve our service offering as an innovative product in the market.
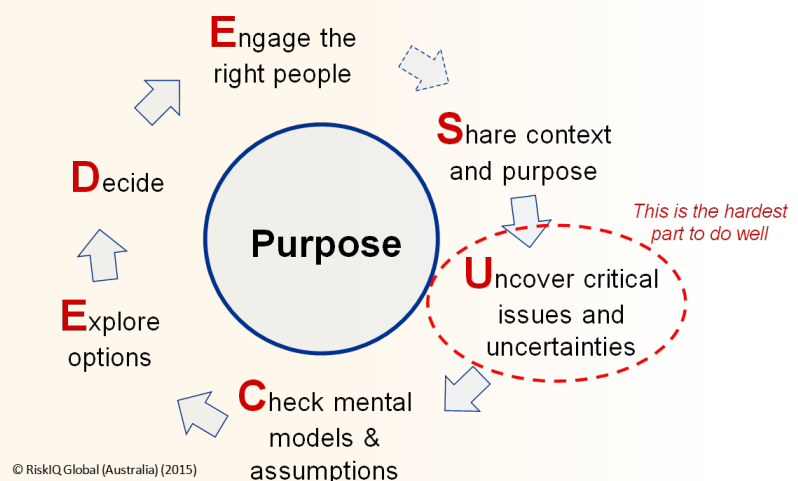
REFLECTING ON THE PIVOT

The biggest lessons I have learnt from all of this are to be ready to change even if I think I'm being successful at leading the business, and to apply the same project management principles that I use when delivering projects to my own business, especially when we need to pivot quickly. We can never become complacent and assume that what works today, is going to work tomorrow.

The pandemic has changed me as a leader; previously, I would have protected my team from exposure, but I have realised that sometimes it is best to let the team feel the impending doom to let them shine, which they truly did. We have grown to become a tighter knit team than before, and I am glad we went through this experience together.

Author: Andrew Fox FAIPM CPPD is the Founder and Managing Director of The Project Bureau and has delivered major projects and programmes for many organisations for more than a decade. He holds a Masters Degree in Project Management, is a Chartered Project Professional, a Certified Practicing Project Director, a Praxis, MSP, Prince2 and PMBoK Certified Practitioner, as well a registered Project Manager. He is also an AIPM assessor and lectures in project management at the Australian National University on the Masters of Project Management (MPM) degree, whilst undertaking a Doctorate of project management with UniSA.

The **SUCEDE** decision support model

Engage the right people

Share context and purpose

Decide

Purpose

This is the hardest part to do well

Uncover critical issues and uncertainties

Explore options

Check mental models & assumptions

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The SUCEDE decision support model (source: Dr Richard Barber, RiskIQ)

PROJECT PARENT: THE GREATEST CHALLENGE OF ALL

CLAIRE DONALDSON REFLECTS ON HOW HER MOST RECENT CHALLENGE AS A LEADER SAW HER FEELING UNPREPARED EVEN AFTER MONTHS OF PLANNING.

Throughout my career I have had the opportunity to undertake a variety of leadership courses and apply my learning in both project and organisational contexts, reflecting on challenges and successes to consider what I might try differently next time. I will not pretend that I am successful in being self-aware 100% of the time, or that setbacks don't knock my resilience on occasion, but I genuinely want my team to be successful, whatever that means for them, and that means I need to reflect and continually improve.

1. SETTING A VISION

Jack Welch, Chairman and CEO of General Electric (GE) between 1981 and 2001, said "Good business leaders create a vision, articulate the vision, passionately own the vision, and relentlessly drive it to completion."

A leader's success is not achieved by simply setting the vision but by ensuring it is understood and the team buy into it.

The type of parents my partner and I wanted to be and the environment we wanted our son to grow up in was one of the elements of project parent that I was more prepared for. We reflect on this vision often as a team and communicate it to our stakeholders (friends and family). The vision was on track, but the long-term success will not be fully realised for a number of years and will be dependent to the decisions we make as each new challenge arises.

2. MAKING DECISIONS

As a new parent I found myself bombarded with decisions which I had to make based on little to no relevant experience and almost always under time constraints. Is the baby crying in the middle of the night because he is hungry, tired, unwell, or needing changing? Is it gas? How do I help him relieve

My most recent challenge as a leader took me by surprise. After nine months of planning, reading, organising, looking after my mental and physical health, my beautiful son was born, and 'project parent' commenced. While the project kick off was a success, a healthy baby was born, and I was 'more or less' intact, it was several weeks into the project when I reflected about my experience over the preceding weeks.

The essence of being a good leader (source: Claire Donaldson)

gas? Massaging his tummy, holding him over my arm, or on my knee? How long should I try one technique before trying something else? There is only so much advice (helpful and contradictory) that Google, parenting books, healthcare professionals and other parents can provide, because as a parent you are the one who decides on what to do in each situation.

The ability to make timely decisions based on available information is an important leadership skill. On a potentially daily basis, we make decisions to progress our projects based on our experience, that of our team and or subject matter experts or other available sources. However, sometimes these decisions are wrong, and we also need to recognise and acknowledge when this is the case and implement a different solution. My experience of raising my son has been one of constant problem solving.

3. BUILDING TRUST

> *Building truly trusting relationships underpins my approach to leadership; I feel that without it, success is not possible.*

Being empathetic, understanding what motivates each member of your team and being emotionally intelligent are all skills which help engender trust and support high performance. This is also true with regards to parenting, where creating a trusting relationship between the parent and the child can improve the development of children. In both relationships, not only does the follower, or child, receive a positive impact through the psychological dependence (trust), but the leader or parent do as well.

4. SHOWING RESILIENCE

Resilience is a fundamental pilar of leadership and discussed often in the context of mental health, particularly stress management. The importance of physical health, including sleep, exercise, and a healthy diet to support resilience is also well known. While it is not surprising that I found all three components of my previously rigorous physical health regime were lacking as a new parent, the direct impact to my mental capabilities was notable. What is impressive is that new parents must overcome this and inevitably are more resilient as a result, but this requires them to reshape their coping strategies.

The analogy of a leader as a father, or parent, was first introduced by Freud in the 1930s (Freud, 1939, pp. 109-111), but was not a concept I grasped until becoming a parent myself.

> *Leadership is about succeeding through others and takes a lot of hard work, as does parenting. We work at it constantly, don't always get it right, but must keep going and support our team.*

I'll leave you with this powerful quote from inspirational speaker and author, Simon Sinek: "The first criterion for being a leader is you have to want to be one. Being a leader is like being a parent: anyone CAN be one but that doesn't mean everyone WANTS to be or SHOULD be."

Author: Claire Donaldson MAIPM CPPM is a mum, wife, and Mott MacDonald Advisory Lead for Queensland who has spent the last 13 years leading projects across various sectors in the UK, USA, and for the last seven years in Australia. Her motivation comes from supporting her team to provide lasting positive outcomes for the community in which they work.

THE GREAT JOB MIGRATION: CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR RELOCATING

PAUL CAMPBELL HAS WORKED IN LEADERSHIP ROLES AROUND THE WORLD, SO TO CONCLUDE OUR CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP EDITION, HE DISCUSSES THE CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS WHEN WORKING OVERSEAS OR INTERSTATE.

Paul on top of one of the tallest buildings in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia (source: Paul Campbell)

As a leader, understanding culture is crucial to be able to build relationships so your client or sponsor will be able to form trust in you and your decisions.

Everyone is proud of their country or location and their culture, and it is important to not impose your way of life on the people you are working with.

As a leader, understanding culture is crucial to be able to build relationships so your client or sponsor will be able to form trust in you and your decisions. Everyone is proud of their country or location and their culture, and it is important to not impose your way of life on the people you are working with.

FITTING IN

When working overseas, I avoided most expatriate clubs and associations: I wanted to know how the local people lived and thought, so I could relate how to manage the projects or sponsors to fit with their culture. I found that many of the expat social clubs were complaint clubs about weather, business practices, food and so on. One of the worst things you can say, unless asked, is "this in the way we do it in Australia (or Melbourne or Sydney, etc.)".

I also read up on a country's cultural practices before I landed in a new country, if possible. Some are so large and varied, like the USA, that culture changes from state to state, so any research you do needs to be specific about where you will land. Australia is the same with state-based cultural differences.

GAINING ACCEPTANCE

Shaking hands is - or used to be pre-pandemic - a normal form of greeting. You will find that greetings are different in all countries, and respecting the local way of greeting will get you

through some hesitancy in being accepted quite quickly and you can start building trust.

Most Muslim women do not shake hands, so wait until she offers her hand; most Muslim men kiss both cheeks (or three times for good friends), and some shake hands and then place a hand on their heart. On the other hand, you will most likely have heard of Namaste, a South Asian greeting with no touching.

By accepting the local form of greeting, I seemed to get accepted quickly and made friends in each country, some of whom are still friends 20 years or so later. Eating habits also vary by country, so it's important to learn to accept these differences.

USA

My experience in the USA taught me that unless it is in a written agreement, it is not agreed. This varies from the east coast to the west coast, and from Canada to Mexico. As a general statement, the USA is a tough market and unless you have a unique selling point, it will be hard to succeed. There is the same difference between city and rural as in Australia, with rural businesses generally being more responsive to a handshake agreement.

UAE

In the UAE, watches and diaries are decorative; I have had

appointments delayed by hours or days because a family member has visited, and family comes first. Even when the appointment goes ahead, I have even been invited in to share a tea or coffee, so don't expect business to happen fast.

Consulting fees are common in the UAE, and it may be hard to avoid being charged. I was able to get around it by deferring to a local business partner to handle that part of the business. You can of course refuse, which will soon tell you how serious the buyer or prospect is.

ASIA

There is no single 'Asian' culture. Every country is different, as you may know by the way people dress, worship and live. Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Yangon, Ache, Bangkok, and Seoul, etc., are all very different in the way business is conducted. Read up on them before you go.

One of the best books I read was by Edward De Bono, a guru on thinking. He wrote *Parallel Thinking* which describes the eastern culture habit of allowing contradictory obstacles to be resolved in parallel rather

Paul with Fanning Island school children in 1977 (source: Paul Campbell)

A lunch meeting for Paul in Tehran, Iran (source: Paul Campbell)

than sequentially, contrary to the typical western approach, "eliminate the bad and the good is left".

AUSTRALIA

As we know, about 30% or 7.5 million of Australia's population was born overseas. In addition, each capital city took in quantities of displaced people, as well as having an underlying cultural difference based on how it was settled, which persists into this 21st Century. I'd even suggest that the state-based differences are now becoming more pronounced, in politics, if not in business.

RELOCATING

I'd suggest that someone looking to accept a role in an overseas or interstate project, do background research on the culture you would expect to encounter. Remember, you are a guest in their location, so it is important to respect that and the way they live.

Author: Paul Campbell FAIPM CPPD is an internationally experienced project director, with experience managing diverse projects in the fields of IT, construction, security, and health care. He is now consulting privately under CPPD Projects. Paul is a Fellow of the AIPM, and was a President for the NSW Chapter for five years.

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