Multi-Project Management

Multi-Project Management is the role of a senior manager, referred to this paper as a 'Project Director'. Project directors are managers of project and program managers within a functional area of an organisation. This role should be focused in two areas, firstly providing oversight and direction to the programs in their area of responsibility and to any projects that are outside of programs (this is probably the majority), secondly providing management input to the organisation's project managers to provide discipline and guidance, to help them develop and grow. Unfortunately, the role of the Project Director has been somewhat overshadowed by the emergence of portfolio and program management.

PMI recognise the role as the 'Manager of Project Managers' in composite and strong matrix organisations. AIPM as a 'Certified Practising Project Director' in their competency standards and RegPM credential structure. The role of the Project Director may be subsumed into an appropriate PMO as long as the PMO is focused on driving value and creating excellence, but is probably more closely aligned to supporting and being part of a departmental management structure.

At the moment, there is very little focus on this aspect of developing project management capabilities within an organisation[1]. Where Project Directors exist, they are an important stakeholder for the project manager to work with[2].

Multi-Project Management

Multi-Project Management focuses on the management of a number of projects, programs and other work, within a designated area of management responsibility such as an IT Department or a fabrication facility. This management function differs from program management in a number of key aspects:

- There is limited correlation between the objectives of the various projects and programs being undertaken; eg, a number of design and fabrication projects may each have a different external customer.

- The function is relatively stable and permanent (programs close once their objectives are achieved).

- The primary focus of this management function is resource optimisation, minimising conflicts and process clashes, and developing the project/program delivery capability of the department/facility.

- This senior management function may be assigned to a strategic PMO or operate as an independent part of the overall project and program governance structures.

- However, the role is quite separate from, and should be distinguished from, that of a project/program sponsor. The sponsor is responsible for supporting and championing his/her project or program from inception to the time the full value has been achieved from the initiative; an advocacy role. The 'Project Director's' role focuses on balance coordination and capability enhancement across all of the projects and programs (and staff) operating within the business unit.

---

[1] A German standard, **DIN 69909 "Multiprojektmanagement"** (Multi-project management – Management of project portfolios, programs and projects) - 2011 offers some guidance in this area.

[2] For more on the **Managers of Project Managers** see:
https://www.mosaicprojects.com.au/WhitePapers/WP1055_The_Managers_of_PMs.pdf

www.mosaicprojects.com.au

For more White Papers see: https://mosaicprojects.com.au/PMKI.php

The overall capability of an organisation to manage its projects and programs is central to the successful delivery of the benefits the project and program were initiated to realise. Multi-Project Management is a key element within this overall capability framework[3].

Enterprise Project Management

Enterprise Project Management (EPM) tools are becoming increasingly common and provide integrated views of the organisation's projects and programs. Whilst the running of these sophisticated applications is almost certainly the role of a technical PMO[4], making effective use of the information to manage the organisation is a multi-project function that falls under the umbrella of Multi-Project Management.

_____

---

[3] For more on the overall **PPP Framework** with an organisation see:
https://www.mosaicprojects.com.au/WhitePapers/WP1074_PPP_Taxonomy.pdf

[4] For more on **PMOs** see: https://www.mosaicprojects.com.au/WhitePapers/WP1034_PMOs.pdf