

Is “Project Business” a state-approved management profession?

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ABSTRACT

This paper is mainly addressed to key personnel responsible for state approval and protection of "Project Business" as a profession. The economy and public authorities need this "organizational add-on profession".

We present our proposals with questions and answers. We have three roles:

- The Audience is the Advisory Board of the Ministers of Commerce and of Education
- Prof. Dr. Brane Semolic is the interviewer
- Klaus Pannenbaecker is the applier of this new profession

Let us tune up with an attempt to make a comparison with another profession – see Table 1.

Table 1: Comparison between professions

Questions	Answers
Above how many members does a group of musicians need a conductor?	Even a double quartet can manage without a conductor but when eight different instrumentalists get together a conductor is at least helpful.
Does a conductor have to be able to read sheet music?	Of course, otherwise he cannot communicate with the musicians.
Does a conductor have to be able to play each instrument?	In principle yes, but not perfectly; if he can, then he would perhaps be better off as a soloist.
Does a conductor have to learn additional skills to exercise his add-on profession?	Certainly, otherwise he will not be accepted by the orchestra or the audience.
Who are the most important people for a conductor?	The director as his client, the audience as the people who benefit from the concert, the press as quality controllers, the soloists as experts, the orchestra as the workers who fulfill the contract.
Can a conductor handle the music of every composer equally well?	Inconceivable; even conductors have favorite composers and orchestras.
What is an orchestra without a conductor?	A group of like-minded people but not certain to guarantee success.
Can every musician become a conductor?	No, only a musician who knows the music and his team.
Why do concerts flop?	Firstly because of the conductor. Sometimes it may be because of the director, the orchestra or even the audience.

After this tuning up we cannot give a definite answer to the key question: "*Is being a conductor a profession or a calling*"? Calling is in this case to be understood as a profession exercised with almost unlimited passion and convincing empathy.

Motivation

Projects are the opposite of routine business.

Projects must provide a benefit for the involved parties.

Projects are undertakings with specified targets, specified schedules and limited budgets.

Projects are undertakings that are characterized by changes during their implementation.

Project work demands successful networking.

Project work concerns all activities from the initiating idea to the start of useful service.

Project work demands the simultaneous use of planning, production and control of results (qualities) hand in hand with time outlay and costs ('magic triangle').

Project work depends on project specific methods and working principles and also capabilities, skills and talents of the people involved.

Course of action

Project management knows no borders between organizations or nations. Its recognition as a profession in Germany would have a signal effect comparable with the international recognition of personal certifications in the Nineties.

To achieve this goal, members of the IPMA and ICEC national organizations of Slovenia, Croatia, Denmark, Poland, India and Germany have formed a core team to provide mutual assistance to attain state approval of project management in each of their home countries.

IPMA and ICEC will place the experience gained at the disposal of their member organizations worldwide in a step-by-step and networked process of winning greater state protection of project management.

1 PROJECT BUSINESS AND CERTIFICATION

1.1. Why is it called "Project Business"?

"Management" is the totality of all constructive activities aimed at getting results.

All constructive activities include

- planning, monitoring, controlling
- bidding, selling, handing over
- living with change and risk
- instructing, guiding, motivating
- designing, calculating, procuring
- financing, invoicing, accounting
- working with in-house colleagues and others

1.2 What is special about the profession of "Project Business" a la IPMA / ICEC?

Everyone taking a driving test accepts:

- A driving test is an examination of theoretical knowledge and practical ability
- Both are imparted in the same course of instruction
- The instructor is not the examiner, the test concerns knowledge and experience valid for all vehicles regardless of age or model and all kinds of driving conditions such as road surface, weather, time of day
- Only vehicle types and sizes require different classes of driving license
- Almost all national driving licenses are accepted internationally
- Instructors and examiners are especially authorized personnel

In 1994 the majority of the IPMA Council (of national representatives) adopted the 4 - Level – Certification Program (4-L-C for short). The initiator of this service was the GPM together with the Swiss, Dutch and British national organizations. Today, 50 of the 58 IPMA member nations issue certificates which proves that this principle of an international professional orientation not only

bridges cultural differences in learning and practice but also is a major factor in promoting cross border trade.

This specialist terminology has met with great acceptance in the last 20 years and is now unrivaled. An unexpected and additional effect is the equally balanced package of knowledge and experience now embodied in the 4-L-C program. This is evidenced by two statements that are heard again and again. Employee: "I want a career but don't have an academic qualification. Your certification rates experience over knowledge. I can score with experience, but I need to learn why I am successful." --- In colloquial language people like that are called "fare dodgers".
Boss: "4-L-C works with the will of employees to make a career for themselves, to achieve. That is the most effective and enduring motivation in anyone's working life."

1.3 What experience has been gained after 20 years' PM qualification and certification?

GPM has gained the following insights in the last 20 years of qualification und certification:

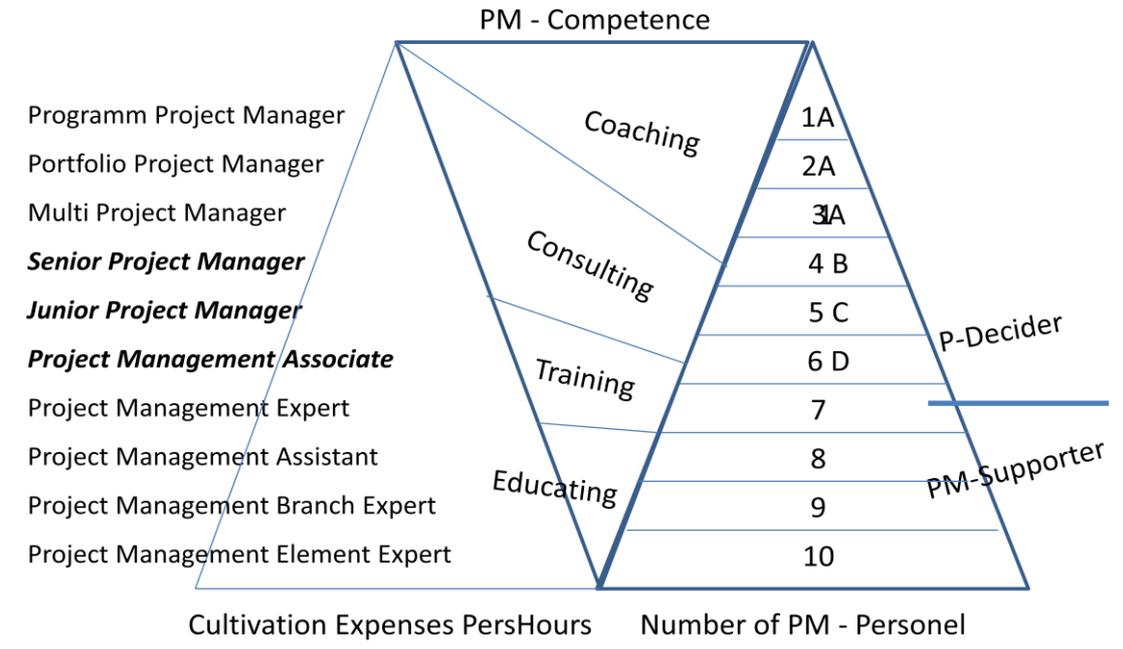
- Today, everything that is "planned" is a project. It starts at playschool and accompanies schoolchildren and students all the way to starting their first job.
- A project is called an undertaking
 - If its objectives have not yet been defined,
 - If the associated workload is unknown,
 - Its use is still questionable and no plans have been drawn up for arranging financing.
- This "undertaking" is usually delegated to an organization talent to run it. Project managers of this kind generally work with untrained, unmotivated and unqualified people.
- Results are seldom satisfactory. All that is left for the project manager after a project that has ended badly is a feeling of personal degradation. This is underlined by the often heard statement: "I won't join a project. When it's over, my desk will be occupied by someone else and there won't be any work left for me to do."

For this reason, GPM is on the way to extend its training spectrum beyond the learning of skills and their application to take in and place greater emphasis on soft facts and peripherals.

- Project-orientated planning and action requires not just PM knowledge but also how to put it into practice and accompany it through all the levels of a company or other organization.
- This is reflected most clearly in the "hierarchy of qualifiers":
 - Instructors impart knowledge and understanding
 - Trainers assist in putting knowledge into practice
 - Advisors help in suggesting alternative ways of solving problems
 - Coaches convince executives of the value of "Project Business"

The eight-step pyramid (Figure 1) shows the titles awarded in the IPMA 4-L-C program in initial capital letters. "Decision-makers" are the executives, "knowledge workers" are the PM specialists. Further information follows in the next section.

Figure 1: The eight step pyramid



1.4 What requirements does the "Project Business" profession meet nowadays?

"Project Business" requires specialist knowledge and can therefore be learnt.

"Project Business" use its own special terminology as defined by IPMA - ICB and PMI - PM BoK.

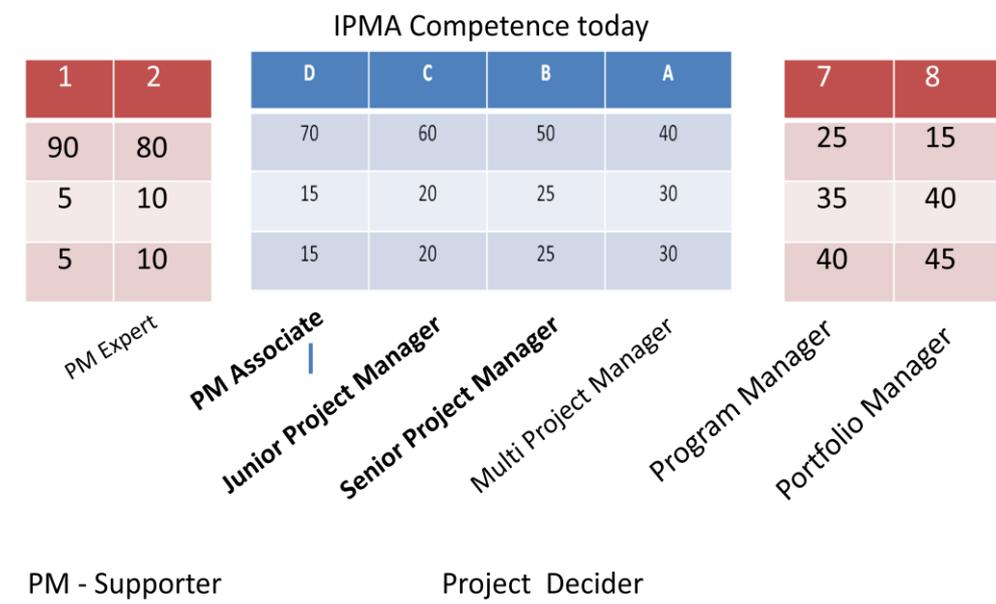
"Project Business" has differently defined degrees of difficulty.

"Project Business" as taught by the IPMA now comprises four (in Germany five) different levels of qualification and has become internationally accepted as a career model with 190,000 men and women being awarded certificates in more than 50 countries worldwide in the last 20 years.

"Project Business" can be extended from four to eight levels and would then meet the requirements of the European Qualification Framework (EQF).

The Figure 2 illustrates today's IPMA competences and the areas of needed expansion.

Figure 2: IPMA Competences – existing and new areas



Blue highlight shows the internationally accepted PM titles.

Red highlight represents the expansion necessary for an eight-level framework meeting EQF requirements.

The three rows of the tables shows the competence quotas in percentages

- Technical
- Behavioural
- Contextual

2 WHAT DO WE NEED TO KNOW?

2.1 What are projects?

Projects must provide a benefit for the involved parties and are the opposite of routine business.

Projects are undertakings with specified targets, specified schedules and limited budgets.

Projects are undertakings that are characterized by changes during their implementation.

Projects often require contributions from other specialist disciplines.

Projects are never performed by machines or systems but by people working in teams.

Projects are usually planned and controlled by the higher hierarchical levels of organizations.

Project results are decisive for the continued existence of companies.

2.2 What is project work?

Project work concerns all activities from the initiating idea to the start of useful service.

Project work demands the simultaneous use of planning, production and control of results hand in hand with time outlay and costs ('magic triangle').

Project work depends on project specific methods and working principles and also capabilities, skills and talents of the people involved.

Project work, subdivided into leadership and implementation tasks, demands targeted effort in internal and external, national and international networks.

Project work is like oil in a gearbox. Without lube oil, the gearbox can only be used for a short time. Motivation is the oil in teamwork.

So long as a routine operation still contains risks, minimizing them is an objective of project work.

2.3 What is "Project Business"?

"Project Business" is the cooperative interaction of all project work activities in all phases of a project for set benefits and objectives, measurable by attained qualities within an agreed time frame and budget.

"Project Business" is a specialization like business economics, political economics, agriculture or forestry.

"Project Business" encompasses all activities concerning content and processes from initiation to handover.

2.4 Is "Project Business" a profession that should be state-approved?

All innovative undertakings in human history can nowadays be described as projects: between start and finish certain things took place:

- Numerous changes due to unexpected risks and customer's wishes
- Schedule and budget overruns
- Experts have to work together in teams consisting of members who did not know each other before the project started
- Attendant conditions forced new processes to be adopted
- Lack of financial resources result in deficient quality

The abundance of Man's ideas and his urge to research everything, and both combined with his flexibility in designing and acting upon ideas, demand the presence of talented project managers.

Project management as practiced today deserves to be recognized as a profession in its own right and as an add-on qualification for most other professions. That would mean not just anybody may call themselves a project manager.

"Project Business" must be state-approved as a profession; that includes its titles such as project management expert, project manager, senior project manager, portfolio manager.

2.5 What is "Project Business" competence?

Learning in order to know is not enough. Nowadays knowledge and experience (in use of that knowledge) are needed.

The economy is no longer in a position or willing to tolerate learning being followed by trial and error in order to gain professional experience. This also applies to the project management profession. Figure 3 illustrates present and emerging areas of competences.

Figure 3: IPMA Competences – today and tomorrow

IPMA Competence today

Areas	Skills	Knowledge	Experience
Technical			
Behavioural			
Contextual			

IPMA Competence is today defined as Knowledge plus Experience crossed with Technical Behavioural Contextual

IPMA Competence tomorrow

Areas	Skills	Knowledge	Experience	Attitude	Aptitude
Technical					
Behavioural					
Contextual					

Skills is defined tomorrow as

Knowledge is learned
Experience is practiced knowledge
Attitude is (leading) capability
Aptitude is Innateness, (ability)

2.6 How many certifications of project personnel has PM-ZERT carried out?

PM-ZERT has been certifying project personnel in accordance with the rules of the IPMA 4-L-C program since 1994.

Since 1994 the autonomous department of the GPM has certified more than 30,000 candidates for all levels of the 4-L-C program.

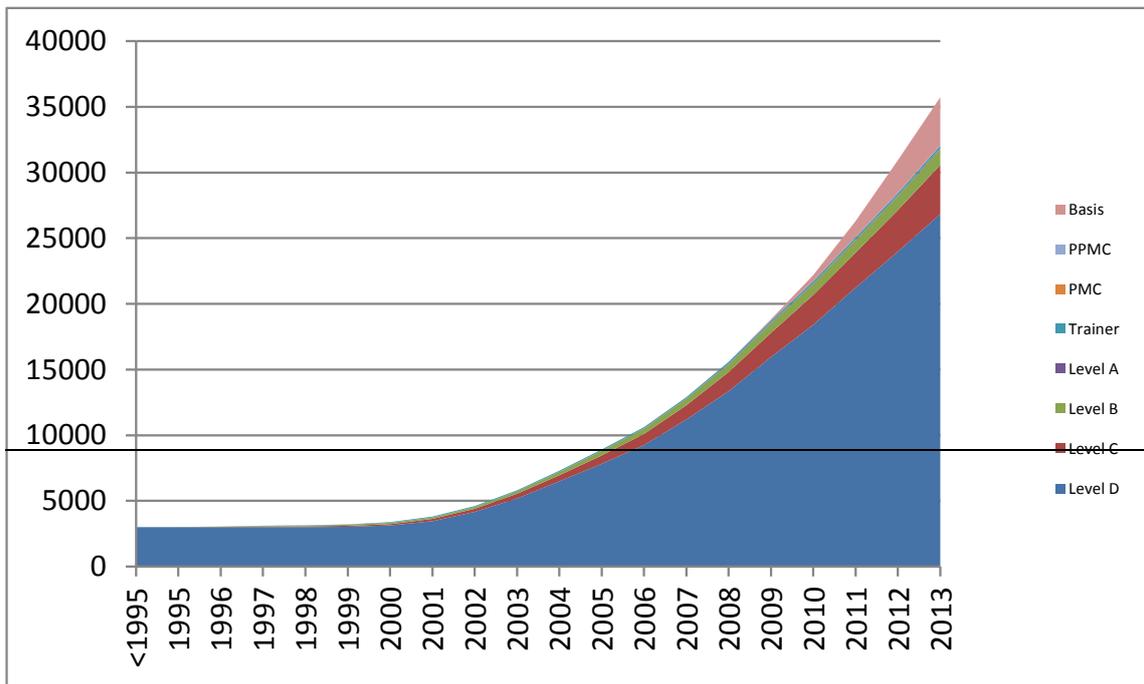
The table below correlates the annual and overall performance with the levels and totals up to 2013.

The average age of candidates is 34 with a range from 28 to 64; the proportion of female candidates is 34% with an annual increase rate of 2.5% over the last four years.

The question as to the motives for gaining this qualification with certification is best replied to with the most frequent answer: "I want a career but don't have an academic qualification. Your certification rates experience over knowledge. I can score with experience, but I need to learn why I am successful in PM."

Figure 4 is showing the annual issuing of certificates.

Figure 4: The GPM number of certificates



IPMA level		Other certificates	
Level D	PM Specialist		Certified Trainer
Level C	Project Manager	PMC	PM Consultant
Level B	Senior Project Mger	PPMC	Portfolio/Program Consultant
Level A	Project Director	Basic PM training	

2.7 What is the IPMA 4-L-C program?

Explanatory notes on these graphics: follow the arrows from left to right and from top to bottom.

PM competence, with its six fields, is the product of
 (knowledge + experience) x (methods + behaviour + environment)

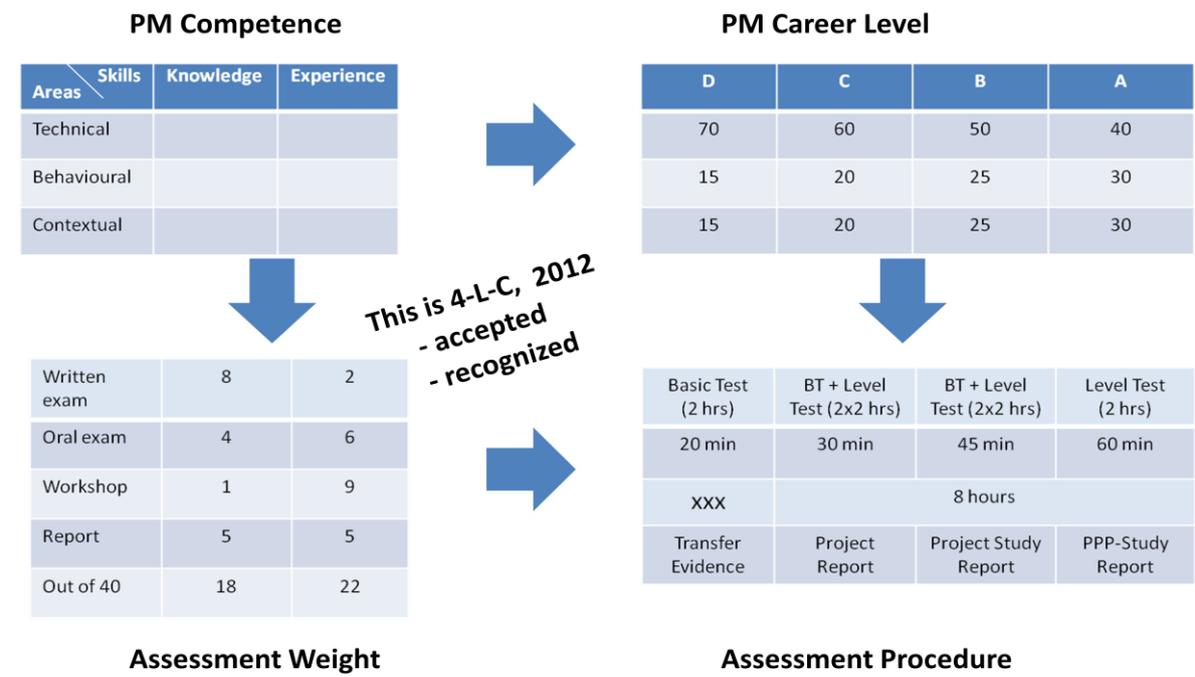
PM Career Level describes the four levels of an organizational hierarchy. The percentages are shown by the quotas of (method + behaviour + environment)

Assessment weighting shows the quotas on a ten-degree scale of (knowledge + experience) of the four customary kinds of examination. The importance of experience for each certification level can be derived from the sum of (knowledge + experience).

The assessment procedures illustrate the examination procedures for each kind of examination on each level (Figure 5).

Here is explanation how to read the Figure 5. Please start at top left and follow the arrows in bottom right.

Figure 5: IPMA Competences – today and tomorrow



PM Competence is a matrix of (Knowledge + Experience X (Technical + Behavioural + Contextual)).

PM Career Level describes the 4 Level of the hierarchy.

Assessment Weight shows the numbers out of 10 of Knowledge and Experience with the 4 well known assessment methods.

Assessment Procedure the different assessment contents and steps

3 REFERENCES

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