Human resource management in the project-oriented organization: Employee well-being and ethical treatment

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Abstract

As part of a wider study into Human Resource Management (HRM) practices in project-oriented companies, we investigated the issue of employee well-being. Project-oriented organizations adopt temporary work processes to deliver products and services to clients. This creates a dynamic work environment, where additional pressures can be imposed on the employee from fluctuating work-loads, uncertain requirements, and multiple role demands. Those pressures can create issues for employee well-being and ethical treatment, which need to be managed. HRM has traditionally had two roles, a management support role, providing the organization with competent people to undertake the work processes, and an employee support role, caring for the well-being of employees. In this paper we report our results on the HRM practices adopted in project-oriented organizations to fulfil the second role. We find that by and large in project-oriented organizations the management support role dominates, and they are not very good at caring for employees. The need for profit and responding to client demands often takes precedence over employee well-being. However, some of the organizations we have interviewed have adopted HRM practices to care for employees, and we report those. Also providing employees with career development opportunities is as important for the individual as it is for the organization, and we report practices for that.

Introduction

Human Resource Management (HRM) in the project-oriented organization is a relatively underexplored topic. This is strange since HRM should be a core process in all organizations affecting the way they acquire and use human resources, and how employees experience the employment relationship, (Legge, 1995; Keenoy, 1999; Winstanley and Woodall, 2000; Francis and Keegan, 2006). HRM is of strategic importance to all organizations, contributing to the success of the organization, (Pfeffer, 1998; Huselid, 1995), and helping to create competitive advantage, (Amit and Belcourt, 1999). Thus HRM should be linked both vertically and horizontally with the strategy of the organization, (Lengnick-Hall and Lengnick-Hall, 1998):

- vertically: so that HRM practices support the organization's strategy choices
- horizontally: so that HRM practices support other operational practices under the umbrella of the strategy of the organization

Project-oriented organizations adopt project-based ways of working as a strategic choice, (Gareis, 2005), in response to their customers' demands for bespoke products or services, (Turner and Keegan, 2001), and so the HRM practices and processes adopted by the organization should support that choice, and the HRM and project management practices and processes adopted should support each other.

The conditions under which HRM emerges in the project-oriented organization may differ from those associated with mainstream HRM, which is shaped by the typically large, classically managed organizations, based on the Taylorian model of management, (Schuler and Jackson, 1996; Flood et al, 1996). We expect the working environment in the project-

oriented organization to be different. The project-oriented organization adopts temporary organizations in the form of projects and programs, and associated temporary work processes to deliver its products and services to its customers. This creates a dynamic work environment. Every time a new project or program starts or an old one finishes the HRM configuration of the organization needs to change. There is no reason why we should expect the traditional, normative models of HRM to be appropriate for this context, (Huemann et al, 2007). If the project-oriented organization is to adopt HRM practices and process that are support both vertically and horizontally its strategic choice of project-based working, they should be designed for that purpose. We propose that project-oriented organizations will require both additional and different HRM practices and processes than those suggested by the traditional approaches:

- They will require additional processes specific to the project and programs they adopt to undertake their work. Projects and programs are temporary organizations, and so HRM practices and processes will be required specific to those organizations.
- They will require different practices to deal with the dynamic nature of the working environment in the project-oriented organization.

Further that dynamic working environment can create additional stresses on employees. For instance work-loads can be difficult to predict, and they can lead to peaks for employees as the demands of projects for different clients peak simultaneously. There can also be uncertainties about an employee's forthcoming working environment and the colleagues he or she will be engaging with, which can create additional stresses. Employee well being and ethical treatment can be a significant issue in this context.

We therefore undertook this research project to explore the kinds of HRM practices and processes appropriate for the project-oriented organization to be strategically linked to the temporary nature of the work processes and the dynamic nature of the work environment. However, rather than just adopting a purely managerialist (Keegan and Boselie, 2006) or unitarist (Geare et al, 2006) perspective, we are particularly concerned to investigate how these practices and process affect the employees perception of the work environment and the employment relationship, (Legge, 1995; Keenoy, 1999; Winstanley and Woodall, 2000; Francis and Keegan, 2006). Therefore the aims of our research project are:

1. to explore if, and to what extent, the distinctive characteristics of project-oriented organization lead to the need for specific HRM practices
2. to consider the implications for organizations, projects and individuals of these emergent practices.

Elsewhere we have described the new and different HRM practices that arise in the project-oriented organization to support the work processes, (Turner *et al*, 2007). In that paper we take a managerialist perspective. In this paper we wish to describe what we have found about the practices adopted to manage employee well being. In the next section we describe the nature of the project-oriented organization and how it creates the need for new and different HRM practices. We then discuss the work pressures that arise in this environment, and how they create issues for employee well-being. After describing our methodology, we present our results and draw conclusions.

The Project-oriented Organization

Interest in project intensification (Soderlund and Bredin, 2006), project management and project-based organizations (Turner and Keegan, 2001; Gareis, 2005) has intensified in recent years. Reasons for this include the need for organizations to adopt appropriate structures to respond to 'the highly differentiated and customized nature of demand' (Sydow *et al*, 2004, p.1475) in organizations in the creative and cultural industries, high technology sector and professional and consulting industries. Interest has also increased because of a tendency for firms in all types of industries 'to undertake projects as a growing part of their operations even while their primary productive activity might be volume-based or operations-oriented' (Sydow *et al*, 2004, p1475). Most writers distinguish between those companies that do most of their work in projects and/or have a main emphasis on the project dimensions, and firms where the functional dimensions of organizational structure and processes dominate and projects take place in the back office to support the functionally based front office, (Turner and Keegan, 2001; Lindqvist, 2004).

In essence, what defines a company as project oriented is that it perceives itself as being project oriented and shapes its policies and practices for working, for organizational culture and for strategy towards the challenge presented by management by projects. Turner and Keegan (2001, p256) defined a project-based company as one 'in which the majority of products made or services delivered are against bespoke designs for customers'. This implies that it is project-based perforce because of the customized nature of the demand from their customers. However, the corporate governance still needs to make the choice to adopt project-based ways of working as a strategic choice. Gareis (2005, p25) suggests that the POC is such by choice. It is one in which the people of the organization:

1. define "*management by projects*" as their organizational strategy
2. apply projects and programs for the performance of complex processes
3. manage a project portfolio of different internal and external project types
4. have specific permanent organizations like a project portfolio group or a project office to provide integrative functions
5. view the organization as being project-oriented

Thus the POC needs to adopt HRM practices which support this strategic choice. From this list we can identify the specific pressures in a POC which we believe create the need for new and different forms of HRM:

Temporary work processes
POCs use temporary organizations, (projects and programs) to perform work. Every time a new project or program starts or an old one finishes the human resource configuration of the parent organization changes. Thus not only will the organization require HRM practices in the parent organization, it will need to apply practices specific to the temporary organization that is the project. This creates the need for new HRM practices like assigning personnel to projects, assessing, developing and rewarding their work on projects, dispersing them on project completion, and linking project assignments to careers.

Dynamic work environment
The temporary nature of the work creates dynamic work boundaries and contexts. The number and size of projects performed can constantly change, making predictions of future resource requirements difficult.

Project-portfolio resource and role demands
At any time a project oriented company holds a portfolio of different internal and external project types (Gareis, 2005). A person can work in different projects at the same time, maybe even in different project roles. This can create role conflict at an individual level (Rau and Hyland, 2002). The organization also needs HRM practices to assign people to several projects or programs, and to smooth the demands between projects and programs.

Specific management paradigm
The ideal POC has a specific management culture expressed in the empowerment of employees, process-orientation and teamwork, continuous and discontinuous organizational change, customer-orientation, and networking with clients and suppliers (Gareis, 2005). Therefore specific competences and skills are needed by project personnel to work together in projects. This may require the POC to adopt training and development practices to develop employees capable of working in the project environment, which in turn may require it to adopt specific HRM practices in these areas matched to the management paradigm adopted.

Organizations which perceive themselves as project-oriented and adopt management by projects as a strategic choice are subjected to these pressures. They need to adopt HRM practices which support this strategic choice, (Pfeffer 1998; Huselid, 1995), and align HRM practices vertically and horizontally with it (Lengnick-Hall and Lengnick-Hall, 1998). Turner et al (2007) describe the new and different HRM practices adopted by project-oriented organizations. However, they also need to recognize the pressures placed on the work experience of employees by the dynamic work environment, and adopt and adapt HRM and work practices that look after their well-being and ensure they are treated ethically. We now describe the work pressures which arise in this environment.

Well-being of employees

In the dynamic work environment where the HR configuration is constantly changing, the challenges of ensuring employee well-being and ethical treatment is important but may be overlooked. The temporary nature of the work and the dynamic nature of the work environment can create specific pressures on employees. These may include the following:

Achieving a work life balance
Employees can find it difficult balancing their workload in the face of peaks in project work, especially against unpredictable demands from customers. This in turn creates problems in managing their work-life balance. Recent research has shown that companies have problems in grasping the work and emotional situation of the individual, (Söderlund and Bredin, 2006), and multi role assignments that may lead to burn out for younger employees or to manage the damaging consequences of role overload and role conflict, (Huemann et al, 2004; Zika-Viktorsson et al, 2006).

Uncertainty of future work assignments
Temporary projects bring a degree of uncertainty for employees who cannot be sure what kinds of projects they will be assigned to or colleagues they will work with. Noe et al (2004) suggest that both tasks and roles, and managers and co-workers, are core aspects of employee work experience. From an organizational and managerial perspective, failure to address the role conflict of project work may damage efforts to retain workers as both can cause job dissatisfaction and in extreme cases physical, psychological and behavioural withdrawal and

voluntary turnover. It can also impact on the organization's initiatives to improve the work environment with staff working away at client's sites, (Lindgren and Packendorf, 2006).

Linking project assignments to career development
Finally there is a need to link project assignments to career development, both from an organizational and individual perspective. The organization needs to develop staff for its future projects, but if staff members do not feel that their project assignments offer them the development opportunities they aspire to, they may look elsewhere.

When it comes to considering the effects of HRM practices, the organizational or managerial perspective dominates and the effect on individual employees can be marginalized. Failure to consider the specific requirements of HRM in project oriented companies may mean theorists overlook these issues, and fail to consider effects, positive and negative, of project-oriented work practices in individuals. However, we have also observed that project work does seem to be inherently more interesting than routine work. Project-oriented companies have greater success of retaining their employees doing project work than those doing routine work

Methodology

For our research, we adopted a radical constructivist approach (von Glasersfeld, 1995), consisting of two stages:

1. First we reviewed the literature on the POC and identified specific pressures in that working environment which could affect the emergence of HRM practices in a project-led context. We also reviewed the project management, general management and HRM literatures to find what has been written about HRM in that context. Our literature review is described in Huemann et al (2007).
2. Second, we conducted semi-structured interviews to explore pressures encountered in project-oriented organizations, and the HRM practices adopted in response. We interviewed people in 15 companies, from several different industries. The companies interviewed are shown in Table 1.

Throughout we formulated proposals about the nature of the work environment in the POC and the new and different HRM practices adopted to meet its needs. At each stage we reviewed and revised our proposals based on what we had learnt at that stage, to develop a model of the HRM practices adopted in the POC.

The Nature of the Problem

The problem of employee well-being was most significant in organizations undertaking small to medium-sized projects. It is less severe in organizations undertaking large projects or small assignments. (We define a small assignment as task of a few weeks' work or less, involving just one or two people. Such an assignment is in our view not a project because it is not a temporary organization, Turner and Müller, 2003. However, we include them in our discussion for completeness, and we also recognize that some people might classify them as projects. Large projects are temporary organizations which exist for more than a year and involve several people or more. Small to medium-sized projects are temporary organizations which exist for several months and involve several to many people.)

Small assignments

In organizations undertaking small assignments, long working hours are not a significant problem. With Company 15, assignments are given to people who have sufficient time to available to meet the client's desired completion date. If nobody in the organization is available, then either the work is refused or it is given to another office or to contract staff. It is very easy to manage an employee's workload in this context.

Large projects

In organizations undertaking large projects it was also easy to plan an employee's workload. In companies 12 and 13, the assignment of people to projects is planned through the annual budgeting cycle. It is therefore easy to ensure that the norm is that people working on projects work a normal working week, (forty hours, 9 to 5). It might be the case that at critical points on projects longer working hours are required, especially during final commissioning. But such events can be forecast, and action taken to reduce the pressure on employees. For instance, the following is possible:

- ensure project staff have time with their families just before or just after the forecast period of intense work
- employ contract staff to supplement for normal staff during the period of intense work

The problem with organizations undertaking large projects was often more that employees needed to spend long periods of time away from home if the project is in a distant location. Company 11 reported one employee who had been working for sometime in South Korea who threatened to resign if he was not brought home in the near future. Company 13 also requires their medical staff to work for long periods in remote locations. One of the people we interviewed in Company 14 had just finished an assignment to one large project that had lasted five years, and had just been assigned to another that could potentially last the same length of time. Although both were within fifty miles of his home, he was feeling isolation from his normal business unit. He saw his career as being in that business unit, and yet he was spending long periods of time away. He was suffering the "no-home syndrome" described by Keegan and Turner (2003).

Company 15 reported a slightly different problem. Again they can ensure that the correct number of people are assigned to a project to ensure that people can work normal hours for most of the duration of a project. Yes, again at project commissioning there is a requirement for people to work long hours, but those occasions can be planned and ameliorated as above. It is the case that the project managers and deputy project managers find it difficult to delegate their work, and so they work slightly longer working weeks than normal, fifty hours rather than forty. Most of the project team members could work normal working weeks, but the project managers and their deputies found themselves working slightly longer. The main problem they suffered is that many of the project managers are very task focused, and are excited by the science. They end up working longer hours than needed, not because it is particularly necessary, but because they enjoy the job, and they encourage the people around them to do the same. This was recognized by the organization, and they tried to counter it by ensuring that at least one of the project management team of three on each project (project manager and two deputies) was people focused and not task focused. The deputy program manager we interviewed in the afternoon told us that the project manager and one of the

deputy project managers we had interviewed had both been chosen because they were people focused. Indeed the project manager the deputy was working for was known to be particularly task focused and so the deputy had been specifically chosen to counter that.

Small to medium sized projects

The most significant problems of ensuring employee well-being and avoiding excessive levels of work occur with small to medium sized projects. Projects typically last three to nine months, and so that causes several issues which can lead to project demands peeking together:

- With projects lasting three to nine months it is less easy to pace the work. The clients have tight timescales, and so the projects require intensive working all the way through
- Again resource demands will peak at commissioning, but now that is occurring two or three times a year, and at times that are less easy to plan and balance.
- With much shorter timescales on projects it is not so easy to give the project member two weeks of to be with his or her family, or pursue other non-work interests, either immediately before or immediately after the peak.
- Projects cannot be planned as part of the annual budgeting cycle, because most of them are not known about at the time the budgets are drawn up, so it is less easy to ensure that there are sufficient people for the encountered project work-load.
- The resource demands for successive projects might be quite wildly different, and that makes it difficult to plan for the required number of project staff. It is possible to employee temporary workers, but it can take one, two or even three months to find an appropriate person which is to much use for projects lasting six months. Company I10 specifically mentioned this as a problem.
- People will be working on more than one project at once and so there is a chance that two or more will peak together.
- To win the work, contracting companies deliberately underestimate the required workload, and then employees have to work long hours to complete the project in time. Clients collude with this by assigning the work to the lowest bidder even though they know that the work cannot be done in that time.

We found in some of the companies we interviewed that it was quite common for people to regularly work 60 or even 70 hour weeks.

Project Management 9 to 5

By and large the companies we interviewed were not very good at managing these problems, especially contracting companies, and sometimes they didn't seem to care. Reasons include:

(a)   Contracting companies need to make a profit, and that requires them to bid a price that will enable them to win the work, and once they have won the work, they need to do it at a cost less than the price.

(b)   In some contracting (and consulting) companies, employees are set targets for utilization, which gives them a target to work as much time as possible. If they are falling short of their targets, they may start to adopt inappropriate behaviours, such as not taking holidays, working while ill, or not taking training.

(c)   Managing the problem requires some effort, particularly in the creation of a resource management system. While no resource management system can completely solve all the problems we outlined above, it can certainly help to reduce the stress on employees.

(d)   Some consulting companies don't want to resource management system because they want employees to be responsible for their own utilization. People who perform well and network well will have high utilization; people who do not perform well and/or who do not network well will have low utilization and so will leave the company. A resource management system will help achieve high utilization even for poor performing employees. Company 15 was better than most at managing employee well being, so perhaps that is why they were the most open about wanting their employees to be responsible for finding their own assignments by developing and maintaining networks. Company 8 was also quite open about making employees responsible for their own utilization, and hence for finding their next assignment for themselves.

There were some examples of companies making an effort to manage employee well-being.

1. Company 8 has divided HRM roles among three broadly different groups, one of which is HRM roles in the line. The purpose of having the line manager look after the majority of HRM issues, including employee well-being, is to give that responsibility to a person with a broad view on the employee's project portfolio and responsibilities. While the intention is positive, the outcome is less so. The 'people care managers' we interviewed all have very large groups of employees to manage. In some specific cases they are managing 47 employees at any one time. It become clear during these interviews that monitoring the well-being of employees is difficult when there is so little time to devote to each person. Some specific managers tried to ensure employees take time off between projects, either by going on vacation or training, but this was achieved from all the time for all employees. One major issue was the high utilization targets in this company and the stigma of being 'on the bench'.

2. We have already mentioned that Company 15 made an effort to assign a project management team (of three) with at least one people focused person. They mentioned the need to ensure that project team members spend time with their families. They particularly mentioned the spring holiday, when children are off school for a week, and encouraging project team members with families to spend time with their children. (It was spring when we were doing the interviews). Because they are undertaking large projects, it is easier to ensure that projects are adequately resourced. The main problem, as we said, is that many team members are excited by the science and so perhaps give more attention to the task than strictly necessary.

3. Company 15 also put a lot of effort into socializing on projects. That makes people feel much more part of a team, but also enables concerns to be much more freely aired.

4. In Company 11, the managing director of the Paris office maintained a close working relationship with all his staff, and so was well aware of the concerns they had. As we have mentioned, one staff member wanted to return from South Korea, and another was concerned with the amount of time he was spending in Dubai. Again by maintaining a close working relationship with staff, the managing director enabled staff to voice their concerns, which enabled the problems to be managed.

5. Turner and Müller (2006) give the example of the Swedish telecommunications company that also included as a criterion for selecting project managers that they could achieve a

work-life balance. So that company is actively ensuring that project managers are adequately people focused.

All the examples we are able to give of companies actively managing employee well-being are companies either undertaking large projects or companies undertaking internal projects. For companies undertaking large projects the work environment is less dynamic, less frenetic, and so there is greater scope for balancing the work load. For companies undertaking internal projects, there is less of an immediate focus on making a profit. Yes, they need to undertake work in a cost-effective way. But many companies do recognize that keeping their employees healthy contributes to cost effectiveness. The equation changes when clients employee contractors or consultants. Because of the principal-agency relationship, (Müller and Turner, 2005), clients feel the need to employ the cheapest contractor, and so they contribute to the frenetic work environment. Perhaps clients need to take some responsibility for the well-being of the employees of their contractors and consultants.

Enjoyment of Project Work

Given these problems, why do people continue to work in a project environment? The answer is they seem to enjoy it. Company 13 reported that people working in the project-oriented parts of the business have longer periods of employment with the company than people working in the routine parts. Project personnel may work for the company for 20 years, whereas the average term of employment of a call centre worker is six months. This is partly because the routine work attracts transient labour, but also because the temporary nature of project work gives greater variety and more interest. In addition, project managers we interviewed in Companies 8 and 15 said how much they enjoy project work. One person we interviewed from Company 8 had suffered burn-out a few years earlier, but he had now returned to work and was finding satisfying work in a project support role. He also revealed that the company had made efforts to find him a role in which he could function more effectively and where the danger of burnout was minimised.

Working as a project manager does seem to be self-selecting. Dolfi and Andrews (2007) report that people who have worked as project managers for five or more years are more optimistic than people who have been project managers for fewer than five years. They suggest the reason is that people who do not like the work environment move on to other careers. In company 15, one of the deputy project managers we interviewed stated quite explicitly that people who do not like the work environment tend not to stay more than two years. So project management attracts people who thrive in that work environment. Lee-Kelly and Leong (2003) report that project managers become more self-confident with experience, changing their perception of the task, and perhaps increasing their self-awareness and improving their self-management and self-regulation.

Thus, as we have seen, it is difficult for project managers and project team members to achieve a work-life balance, but those who enjoy the life-style stay the course and continue to thrive in it. However, it is easy for companies to abuse that position, and subject project managers and other project personnel to excessive working hours. Both employers and clients have a role to try to ensure that project managers and other personnel do strike an appropriate balance in their lives.

Matching Projects to Career Development

Project managers enjoy their career, and the career is self-selecting. But for it to be attractive, projects assignments must be linked to career development needs. It is important to ensure project managers achieve the development opportunities they require, and are satisfied in their development. Many of the organizations we interviewed had career structures for project managers, with defined grades and defined competencies at each level. Elsewhere, (Keegan and Turner, 2003; Huemann et al, 2004), we report that many organizations in the engineering industry have defined careers structures for project managers, and spend 15 years developing a project manager to manage projects of $100 million or greater. We report that they use what we dubbed the spiral staircase career, where potential project managers gain experience in technical, client interfacing, and line management roles as well as project management roles. We also identified that companies in the information system industry use what we dubbed a Battersea Power Station career, with managers following the spiral staircase up to about level 3 (of 7) but then following just one path from that point forward; climbing the chimney stack up the function for the remainder of their career. Microsoft dubs the different career paths "swim lanes", and allows people to change lane in the early stage of their career. Thus organizations do offer project managers structured careers. But it is important to ensure project managers are offered appropriate development, and that it suits their needs.

Many organizations identify development needs in the annual appraisal. Company 6 for instance have a highly structured appraisal system linked to the annual budgeting cycle. Staff members are appraised twice per year, and set development targets. Individuals are given their own development budgets, to spend as they wish (though in consultation with their manager) and they are judged at the end of the year on whether they have achieved their development targets. Also in Company 10, each individual is set an individual development target, and their annual bonus is influenced by how well they achieve that objective. But the organization also has duties to identify appropriate projects for the individual to work on and to ensure that he or she achieves those opportunities. Company 8 has started to focus attention on employee development opportunities after a period of retrenchment in which budgets for development were very thin. The HRM Director expressed concern that this had damaged the company's ability to attract and especially retain talented personnel and leaders at the corporate centre had begun to recognise and address this problem. In interviews with project managers and project personnel there was clear evidence that mentoring programmes, which had been heavily invested in about seven years previously had been allowed to lapse, while on the other hand most interviewees told us that they did have opportunities, and finding, for development on an annual basis. One development barrier identified was a lack of excellence in senior project and programme management which has now been targeted for action with the appointment of a director for program and project management and appointments of highly experienced senior project managers and directors. Company 15 has project management as a function within the organization, so project managers are appraised by line managers in project management, and development requirements identified in the project management line. They take great care to provide project managers with the opportunities they require. The Deputy Program Manager we interviewed last described how one of the Deputy Project Managers we had interviewed earlier in the day had been carefully groomed, particularly since he is more people focused than task focused and so will help achieve that balance on the project team he is assigned to.

Company 12 takes a somewhat different approach with a Programme Management Council and Development Cells. The Programme Management Council maintains an overview of the

project and programme management requirements for the organization. The development cells then work to ensure that people are developed to meet the requirements. Promising project managers are identified and then offered development opportunities to meet their own and the organization's requirements. In particular the Development Cells try to stop line managers Bogarting good project managers, holding them in inferior positions where they are performing well, both to the detriment of the individual and the company. The company also runs a consortium masters programme for project managers in conjunction with the University of Manchester and Pennsylvania State University (Erie). (There are three other companies in the consortium which also sponsor staff members onto the master programme.) Promising project managers are encouraged to attend the programme, the company pays for their study and tries to allow them time to find time to undertake the programme. Using this approach the company shows commitment to its project managers and their career development, while providing a ready supply to meet their needs.

Conclusions

As we have seen, the dynamic work environment in the project-oriented organization imposes considerable pressures on employees. In this chapter we consider the problem of employee well-being in this dynamic environment. In our research we confirmed that it is a problem, and, unfortunately, by and large project-oriented organizations are not very good at dealing with the problem, both because it is often a threat to profitability, and because to deal with the problem effectively requires an effective resource management system. However, there were some welcome examples of organizations taking positive steps to improve employee well-being, to make project management a job for working 9 to 5. In spite of, or perhaps because of, the pressures of project working, it is a career that those who choose it enjoy, although it does tend to be self selecting; those who don't like it as a career opt out within five years. This can lead to issues of diversity, with all project managers in an organization looking the same, which Company C4 was taking positive steps to manage. Finally, if project management is to be made an attractive career to as wide a range of people as possible, organizations must ensure that project assignments match people's career aspirations.

Acknowledgement

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Co No	Organization interviewed	Maturity as POC	Nature of projects	Interviewees	Location
1.	IT consulting industry Subsidiary of an American company	High	Internal and external Durations 4 months – 1 year	HR manager three project managers resource pool manager	Austria
2.	Business unit of an IT consulting company Subsidiary of an American company	High in unit, Variable throughout company	External Durations 4 months – 1 year	Project manager	Austria
3.	Global IT Outsourcing Company	Medium	Mainly external Durations about 6 months-1 year	HR manager project manager	Austria
4.	Global Electronic company	High	Internal and external projects and programs Durations 4 months to 4 years	HR manager	Austria
5.	Telecommunication company	Medium to high in unit Variable in company	Mainly Internal projects and programs Durations about 3 months-2 years	HR manager PM office manger three project managers Line manager two project team members	Austria
6.	Management consultancy	High	External	Two consultants HR Manager	The Netherlands
7.	Information systems consultant	High	External	Two project managers	The Netherlands
8.	Company specialized in IT and Business Process Outsourcing	High	External Large scale projects	HR Director Head, PPM (Project and Program Management) Capability 2 Program Managers PPM Capability Leader PM Office Manager 2 Project Managers Project Team Manager 2 Project team members	The Netherlands

#	Company		Project type	Roles	Country
9.	Company specialized in IT and Business Process Outsourcing	High	External Large scale projects	HR Director Project manager PM Office Manager Project manager Project team members	The Netherlands
10.	Company specialized in IT and Business Process Outsourcing	High	External Large scale projects	Program manager	Ireland
11.	ICT vendor Subsidiary of an American company	Variable throughout the company	Internal and external Tiny to very large	Practice manager for program management	Ireland
12.	Construction consulting company Subsidiary of a British company	High	External Large to major	General manager	France
13.	Gas turbine and aero-engine manufacturer	Low to medium	Internal and external	Consultant, PM Office Manager, Project manager, HR director	UK
14.	Medical and security assistance Global operation	High Low	Internal ICT External client development	Sales and Marketing	UK
15.	Engineering design and construction management	Employee owned	External Small to major projects	Program manager Project manager QS manager Unit manager HR Manager	United Kingdom
16.	Aerospace research and development	Public sector	Internal Small to major projects	Deputy PM (Resources) Deputy PM (Technical) Project Manager Deputy Program Manager Former Project Manager Diversity Manager	United States

Table 1: Companies interviewed

Turner, Huemann, Keegan