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BPTrends Associates

Business Process Change

A Guide for Business Managers and BPM and Six Sigma Professionals

Second Edition

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MCC

Processes and Project Management

The discipline of Project Management has been around for quite a while. There is an established professional organization - The Project Management Institute (PMI) (www.pmi.org) - founded in 1969, which has about 30,000 members. PMI has published a Body of Knowledge (PMBOK), offers certification, and has overseen the publication of a number of books on different aspects of process management.

In addition, in Europe, there is the International Project Management Association (IPMA) (www.ipma.ch) which also offers certification. Like PMI, IPMA supports conferences and other professional events.

Each association supports a general process management methodology and each also describes a variety of more specific process management initiatives that go by names like GANT, PRINCE2 and PRISM.

Let's consider the PMI approach, which is the best known approach in the US. PMI does not prescribe a set of phases or steps. They understand that projects vary quite a bit, from building freeways to defining process changes within a sales organization. Instead, they specify knowledge and practices. Moreover, they recognize that different groups have specialized knowledge and practices specific to their domain. They represent this using the three circles shown in Figure 1. In essence, PMI defines generally accepted project management knowledge and practices.

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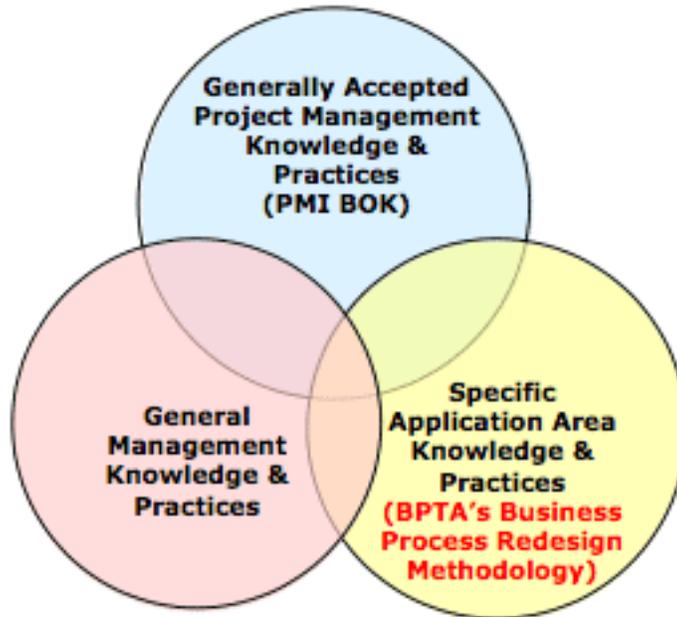
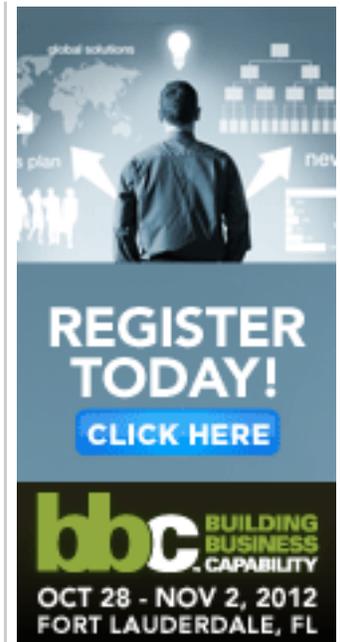



Figure 1. PMI project management vs. process redesign project management

In our BPTrends Associates class, Managing a Business Process Project, we assume that students already know about the generally accepted project management practices. We assume they know how to use basic software tools like Microsoft's Project Manager and Gant diagrams. We focus our training on providing the domain specific information needed for process change projects. We specify the types of jobs or roles typically involved in a BPM redesign project, heuristics for calculating how long different types of process redesign activities will take, etc.

This mixed approach seems to work very well. We expect process practitioners to learn about the general principles of project management from PMI or some other project management methodology and we focus on providing the specific knowledge and techniques that will make process practitioners expert at managing business process redesign projects.

In addition, we sometimes venture into operational management considerations and provide information and training in how managers should manage processes on an ongoing basis. Operational process management involves a different set of



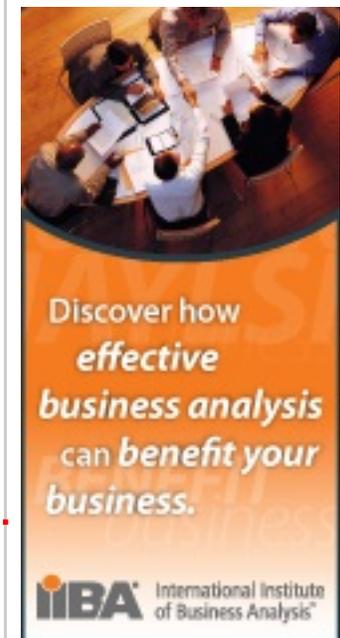
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techniques focused on managing the goals and motivations of the employees who actually execute the processes on a day-to-day basis.

Process groups approach this in rather different ways. One group, for example, begins with the premise that most internal projects undertaken by large corporations involve process change. They assume that 85% of the projects going on in a large organization involve process change. They don't separate process change from project management and treat them as a single methodology. They would say that PMI and similar approaches are OK when you encounter one of the 15% of the projects that are exceptions, but that, otherwise, it isn't worth discriminating between process management and project management.

There is something appealing about this comprehensive approach. But taken too far, one finds process expanding to include too many topics. For example, use of BPMS tools are also elements of a comprehensive process redesign approach. Similarly, modeling notations are also elements of process redesign. There is a lot involved in just learning how to identify and analyze process problems and to redesign effective solutions. If we let someone else teach project management, BPMS tool use, and establishing and maintaining employee redesign teams, we can focus on what we think of as the core skills of BPM.

We wouldn't assert that our approach is the only or the correct solution, but it works for us. It separates concerns and lets us keep our classes focused on process redesign, and lets others teach the use of planning and scheduling tools and project management heuristics.

Till next time,

Paul Harmon

BPTrends LinkedIn Discussion Group

We created a BPTrends Discussion Group on LinkedIn to allow our members, readers and friends to freely exchange ideas on a wide variety of BPM related topics. We encourage you to initiate a new discussion on this publication, or on other BPM related topics of interest to you, or to contribute to existing discussions. Go to LinkedIn and join the [BPTrends Discussion Group](#).

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