



VDVL Project Management

1. Introduction

Over the last 30 years, project management has evolved into a discipline which is applied worldwide and in many sectors by national and international companies, large and small. Project managers are increasingly better trained in their profession, but certification is no guarantee for success: only 30% of projects succeed in achieving their objectives. It clearly takes more than a certified project manager to execute a project successfully!

According to VDVL, a well-balanced mix of specific and professional knowledge and skills, together with the project manager as a person, is the key to successful project management. This white paper expounds this vision further, and shows what the demonstrable added value is for our clients.

2. Successful projects

What is a project? Prince2 defines a project as a management environment which is created for the purpose of delivering one or more business products according to a specified business case. PMBoK defines a project as a temporary endeavour undertaken to accomplish a unique product or service with a defined start and end point and specific objectives that, when attained, signify completion.

Together with many other definitions, these definitions share the following characteristics:

- A project realizes a unique (in the sense of new) result
- within a specified period with a defined start and end point
- by employing a limited amount of people and materials
- a temporary organization alongside the existing organizational structure.

Through its unique and one-off character, a project by definition involves (many) uncertainties. Although a project used to be successful if you delivered the agreed end result as required, on time and within budget, it has become clear in the meantime that this is not everything. The parties involved each have their own wishes and expectations of what a project should deliver and thus success is no longer straightforward to define.

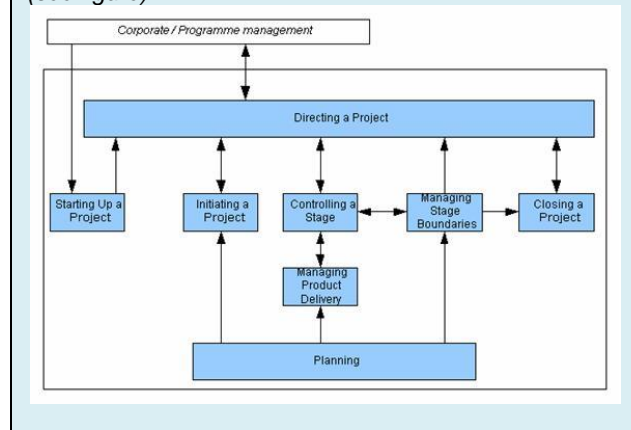
According to VDVL, the success of a project is not only determined on the basis of the realization of the defined project objective within established constraints (scope, quality, budget, time), it must also be realized in accordance with the agreed-upon expectations and requirements of all stakeholders.

3. VDVL's project management approach

In our point of view, the project manager is the only person responsible for achieving the project objective. A capable project manager reduces uncertainties - by definition the *raison d'être* of a project – by planning, organizing, controlling and managing as many aspects of a project as possible and thus maximizing the probability of success. A project management methodology is certainly helpful. In the Netherlands, Prince2 is the most widespread methodology (see box 1); outside the Netherlands, PMBoK is used very often (see box 2).

PRINCE2 (Projects IN Controlled Environments 2) is a structured project management methodology, applicable to all types of project, of which the characteristic elements are that it approaches project management from a process model, and that it is focused on the client's business case.

PRINCE2 puts the emphasis on subdivision of projects into manageable and controllable stages and divides the project management process into eight main processes (see figure).



Usage of a project management methodology helps to structure a project and is at least a good checklist, but is not a panacea, and should be applied with common sense.



PMBok (Project Management Body of Knowledge) is a standard developed for project management in 1987 by the US Project Management Institute (PMI) (IEEE Std 1490-2003).

PMBok distinguishes five processes (initiation, planning, executing, monitoring & controlling and closing) and nine knowledge areas:

1. Integral management of all aspects of the project: these aspects must also be viewed in relation to the portfolio and the strategy of which the project is a part. Preparation and distribution of plans and progress reports are the keywords here.
2. Project scope: what comes within the assignment and what does not?
3. Time management: checks whether the project can still be completed within the agreed time limits.
4. Cost management: checks whether the project can be realized within the agreed budgets.
5. Quality management: checks whether the project still fulfils all the client's contractually agreed requirements.
6. Risk management: set ups all possible operations to keep potential extra challenges under control.
7. Human resource management: checks whether all necessary competencies are present in the project team.
8. Communication: respect the agreements about communication and reporting lines.
9. Procurement management: checks whether the necessary infrastructure has been ordered and is available in time.

Besides professional knowledge, (a certain) knowledge of the sector and the subject is an important success factor. Whether it be to prepare a plan, or to negotiate successfully with suppliers or involved parties, the project manager acts more effectively when he understands the backgrounds of his assignment. The timely recognition of risks and mitigation of their impact require that the project manager to understand the nature and effects of his assignment.

To set up, plan and manage a project, 'hard' skills like planning, budgeting and reporting are just as important as the 'soft' skills. The creation of clarity about and support for the project result in the stakeholders, the composition, cohesion, motivation, encouragement and facilitation of project team members, and managing the expectations of the client, user and participant all

contribute equally to the successful realization of a project.

The way in which the necessary 'soft' skills are fleshed out, strongly depends on the project manager's personality. Every environment, project and situation demands a particular style of conduct. The more different behavioral styles a project manager is capable to use, the greater the chance will be his behavior contributes to the project success.

The successful project manager is empathic, and can deal with the situation flexibly through his experience and self-confidence. Due to his self-knowledge, he knows where his qualities lie and what qualities must be included in the project team. The project manager continues his self-development through reflection and his capacity to learn.

4. VDVL project managers: capable, versatile and result driven

To be successful, a project manager must possess project management expertise, material expertise, and have several behavioral styles at his disposal. The VDVL project manager is certified and has several years' experience with at least two project management methodologies (Prince2 and PMBoK). Besides this, he has several years' knowledge and experience in the ICT sector (telecom, internet) in operational processes (from Pre-sales to Billing) and IT (BSS, OSS, Network Management) and he has the experience and self-knowledge to act effectively in every situation.

The VDVL project manager is supported professionally by a *practice*. This varies from practical examples and access to relevant literature and articles in a (digital) library, to one-on-one coaching and shadow management in strategic and complex plans. By means of collective sparring sessions, experiences are shared and our project managers are continuously challenged to reflect on the effectiveness of their actions and the opportunities for choice they have in these matters.

5. VDVL references

The types of project with which VDVL has built up so much experience are service introductions, process and IT implementations, innovation and change programs in which a certain culture shift (mindset) is achieved, and finally, long-term



programs in which several releases of a system follow each other and management and renewal take place interleaved together.

A more specific list of projects, which VDVL has been able to achieve success:

- New trouble ticketing system at KPN
- Wholesale Broadband New Fulfillment and Provisioning system at KPN
- VoIP, phoning via cable, at CAIW
- VoIP migrations, including Multikabel and Zeelandnet to Ziggo platform
- IP Centrex service and platform development at Tele2
- Pilot SIP Exchange & ENUM for the Joint Cable Companies
- Improvement in Service Assurance processes & ICT at T-Mobile
- Implementation of trouble ticketing system at Ziggo
- Migration Billing System at T-Mobile
- COIN Number portability system simplification

For more detailed information about our system implementations, please refer to our white paper "Implementation of Business Solutions". You may request this from us or download it from our site www.vdvl.nl.

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