Method and process are important in project management, but knowing how to use them is even more so. As a project manager you can best increase your effectiveness by developing your soft skills, recognising that finessence can be more effective than force. Once developed, you will find that these skills are transferable across project types and whole industry sectors. This book illustrates the application of NLP to develop competencies — better equipping you to communicate across cultures, reframe problems, manage stakeholder groups, resolve conflicts, motivate teams and become an even better leader.

• Uses NLP as a practical and effective method of developing soft skills
• Demonstrates tools to create flexibility and change behaviour
• Covers language and behaviour patterns and cultural context
• Teaches how to lead, motivate and influence others
• Written by a highly qualified project manager, trainer and neuro-linguistic master

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Peter Parkes has held programme director roles in the private and public sectors, public private partnerships (PPPs), and 'Big 4' consultancy practices. He is a Fellow of the Association for Project Management (APM), of BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT and of the Chartered Management Institute. With the APM he is a Trustee and Board Champion for best practice groups and a regular speaker on aspects of project management. He is a professional member of the Association for NLP and an NLP Master Practitioner.

You might also be interested in:

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If all books placed as much importance on soft skills as this one then perhaps we might start to see a sea change in the way projects are managed.

Chris Field PMP MBCS CITP
President of PMI UK Chapter

I recommend every project manager reads this book (in addition to PRINCE2!)

Andy Murray CDir
Lead author PRINCE2 2009
Refresh; Director of Outperform
‘To be effective, project managers must learn the language of the boardroom. Peter and this book will help you to do that.’

**Neville Bain**, Chairman, The Institute of Directors; Author of ‘The Effective Director’, ‘The People Advantage’, ‘Winning Ways Through Corporate Governance’, and ‘Successful Management’

‘If all books placed as much importance on soft skills as this one then perhaps we might start to see a sea change in the way projects are managed. All too often the fact it’s people that deliver projects is forgotten, something not lost on this book which should be applauded.’

**Chris Field**, PMP MBCS CITP, President, PMI UK Chapter

‘I recommend every Project Manager reads this book (in addition to PRINCE2!)’

**Andy Murray** CDir, lead author, PRINCE2 2009 refresh; Director, Outperform

‘Important contextualised contribution to the development of competence in the so-called soft skills, hard to master, but an indispensable component of effective practice in a profession whose time has come.’

**Andrew Bragg**, Chief Executive, Association for Project Management

‘I first spoke with Peter during 2007 about the need to develop self awareness and soft skills in project managers in order for them to become better leaders, and I was impressed with Peter’s application of NLP at the time. It appears that this conversation seeded a book, and an excellent one too. Well done!’

**Sean O’Neill**, Vice President, UK Head of Programme Leadership, Capgemini

‘I have no hesitation in recommending this book to project professionals whether starting out on their career, or those with more experience seeking to constantly improve their performance.’

**Alistair Godbold**, Deputy Chairman, APM

‘Read it, apply it and not only will it make you a more effective project manager, it will also ensure the projects you are engaged in are more successful.’

**Steve Jenner** FAPM, Chairman, Portfolio Management Specific Interest Group; (Formerly Director of IT for Criminal Justice)

‘Peter’s book brings analysis, insight and valuable pointers to improving those very important soft skills such as building rapport with stakeholders, handling difficult situations and being assertive. I recommend Peter’s book, read it and help improve both your personal performance and your team’s performance.’

**Paul Hirst**, Head of PPM capability, HMRC

‘For anyone who believes that people skills are important in the delivery of projects then this book is for you.’

**Paul Goodge**, Vice President, Bid and Programme Management, Thales
‘NLP is a perfect technique to help all project players to improve in this area – enabling misunderstandings to be avoided or spotted and difficult issues confronted which will lead to better project outcomes. I recommend that all project players spend time to learn from the topic and improve their own capability and performance.’

**Martin Samphire, Vice President, Hitachi Consulting**

‘With NLP our people can learn to be even more effective in their dealings with their teams, clients and key stakeholders. The release of Peter’s book is perfectly timed and fills a large void in the market.’

**Peter Chana MAPM, MCIOB, Programme Director, Bovis Lend Lease Consulting**

‘The effectiveness of project leaders is defined by their level of emotional intelligence in conjunction with real experience in end to end delivery. Peter demonstrates both and we are pleased to work with him. His new book gives away some of his trade secrets and all project professionals would benefit from buying a copy.’

**Matt Rawson, MBA (Project Management) CPM; Director, Programme, Project and Change Management, Practicus – the outcome delivery partner**

‘Peter’s inspirational approach uses NLP to enhance project and project manager success. Common sense, mature, and professional.’

**Sam Brown, Director of Projects, Enable East (an NHS Trust)**

‘One of the main reasons for projects of all sizes failing to deliver is the project manager’s lack of soft skills for managing people. In this book Peter helps you to develop the skills in dealing with team members and stakeholders that are essential to be a successful project manager.’

**David Lillicrap, Head of Programme Management, London Borough of Ealing**

‘Peter has demonstrated underpinning skills in leading, motivating and influencing in his work over many years. We are glad that he has now captured the essence of these and many other skills in his book on application of NLP for professional project managers.’

**Chris Dunn, Director, Hays Transformational Leadership**

‘Soft skills are the difference that makes the difference in leadership of change. Getting change to work well is really all about people. Peter tirelessly promotes this in project management, both through Alchemy, and more specifically in this book, which is a major contribution to the discipline.’

**Paul Matthews, Certified Trainer in NLP; MD, Alchemy for Managers**

(Full and additional quotes can be found on the supporting website www.nlp4pm.com)
NLP FOR PROJECT MANAGERS
Make things happen with neuro-linguistic programming
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NLP FOR PROJECT MANAGERS
Make things happen with neuro-linguistic programming
Dr Peter Parkes
To Mum and Dad, who taught me everything they knew.
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Peter Parkes joined the nuclear industry (UKAEA) in the mid-80s following a PhD and post-Doctoral research in solid state chemistry. He rose up to become head of capability for BNFL and actively involved in expansion into global markets and different cultures. Following an executive MBA in the mid-90s and a Master’s dissertation on best practice for project management of technology, Peter’s career took a right turn into delivery of complex platforms and technology enabled change. Since then, Peter has held Program Director roles in the private sector, public sector, public private partnerships (PPPs), and ‘Big 4’ consultancy practices.

Being dedicated to ongoing personal and professional development, Peter is a Fellow of several professional bodies including the Association for Project Management (APM), BCS and Chartered Management Institute, and is certificated with them to the highest level. With the APM he is Trustee and Board Champion for best practice groups. He sits on APM’s steering group for the project management body of knowledge and is a contributor on topics of portfolio management, governance, sponsorship, and assurance. He is a regular speaker on aspects of project management to various management schools, professional bodies and industry conferences.

Since adopting NLP in a professional environment in the early ‘90s, he went on to become an NLP Master Practitioner and is a professional member of the Association for NLP. Today he is a Director with Peak Performance, offering consultancy, coaching, and NLP-based project management training.
We can now buy almost any car and expect it to work perfectly from the start – very different from a few decades ago. So why not aspire for a world in which every project succeeds? That involves organisational change and improved processes and systems, but primarily it is about people – their attitudes, behaviours and relationships. Project management professionals are already driving this cultural shift. This book, by an eminent practitioner of both neuro-linguistic programming and Project Management, makes a valuable contribution by marrying the two fields to reinforce our understanding of how people can maximise their effectiveness in managing and responding to change. It provides interesting and useful insights for those at all stages in their career development. I am pleased to recommend it.

Mike Nichols  
Chairman, Association for Project Management  
Board Member, Major Projects Association  
Chairman of BSI Standards Policy and Strategy Committee  
Chairman, The Nichols Group
Method and process are important in project management, but knowing how to use them is even more so. Most project managers can increase their effectiveness most by developing their soft skills, recognising that finesse can be more effective than brute force. Once developed, they will find that their skills are much more transferable across not only project types, but whole industry sectors. This book showing the application of tools like NLP to develop competences will help you on that journey and will certainly whet your appetite for more. Peter’s lively style is compelling and benefits from his imaginative use of appropriate quotations and personal anecdotes. For me the book throws light on a major component of our journey towards greater professionalism in project management.

Bob Assirati
Deputy President, BCS The Chartered Institute for IT
Honorary Fellow, Association for Project Management
Major Projects Director, Office of Government Commerce
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Paul Matthews from Alchemy who has been a guide to further learning around the broader subject. Arielle Essex and many other trainers. Anthony Robbins for showing how it can be done.

Geoff Lowe, a fellow board member of the Association for Project Management and former colleague from BNFL who introduced me to world class performance in project management.

Paul Goodge and Richard Allen, two lights in project management, for discussions on the application of NLP.

Liz Wilson and John Zachar for discussions on competence frameworks for project management.

BCS for commissioning this book and helping me to achieve another target. Matthew Flynn from publications for his patience when we had to re-plan due to an accident in Australia that scuppered the original estimates.

Finally my wife Sandra, a fellow NLP practitioner, for instilling some of the discipline from her Master’s in Education for Leadership Development – the best trainer that I have seen. And also for putting up with some of my defective meta-programs for so long.
WHO THIS BOOK IS AIMED AT AND WHAT YOU WILL GET OUT OF IT

This book will help program and project leaders, and other project professionals, to be even more effective in managing three key resources for projects: themselves, their team, and the various stakeholders that they interact with. If you want to be even more effective in project management then this book is for you.

Dedication and hard work alone will not be the decisive factor in project success. In order to advance your career you will need to develop excellent ‘soft skills’. In my journey through project management I have been on hundreds of days of training courses and read dozens of books, and from these have found the approach and toolset of NLP to be the most effective for developing soft skills.

As a project manager, this book will map out a journey for you, from the elements of method to competence in the key skills for effective delivery; from your first role as a project manager to the highest professional levels of chartered status and above.

If you are working on relatively small projects that are well defined and with an in-house delivery model, then elements of this book will help you to develop your team motivation techniques. It will also show you how to present yourself and manage your state in potentially stressful situations.
For more experienced project and program managers, this book will help you to manage the increasingly complex stakeholder arrangements that you will face. It will also show you how to choose behaviours and language appropriate to the context and task.

For those responsible for portfolios of projects, this book will help you to manage ‘the big picture’ and the process of negotiation and accommodation. It will also introduce you to high performance coaching and modelling of excellent behaviours in others.

Effective leadership of projects and programs is a transferable skill, and this book applies across sectors and disciplines. Going further, it is my opinion that if you are not confident in managing projects in other sectors outside of your domain of expertise then you probably have not yet developed key skills to a sufficient level. After all, the exams and assessments for all levels of project management by all accrediting bodies are sector independent. This book will help you to make those skills transferrable.

Learning and applying the techniques of NLP has made my life in project management one with a bit more finesse and a lot less brute force. I am sure that it will help you in the same way should you choose to follow this route.

**WHAT NLP CAN DO FOR YOU AS A PROJECT MANAGER**

Once you adopt the approach of NLP and start to learn some of the tools that it offers, it will help your development enormously. For a project manager it will:

- give you an understanding of why you do what you do, and what other choices are available;
- help you to control the way you think, feel and act;
- manage stress;
- strengthen your ability to connect with others and develop rapport;
- help you to pick up and decode what is being communicated outside of the obvious – words will give you an edge in everything from negotiation to leadership;
- enable you to communicate more effectively and persuasively;
- motivate and lead;
- show you how to develop flexibility in behaviour to match the context and requirements;
- help you to develop new skills;
- enable you to model excellent behaviours from role models that you meet.
MY PERSONAL JOURNEY INTO NLP

As a student of formal project management in the early 1990s, I gobbled up all of those helpful tools and techniques to help me in my transition to manager of major projects in the nuclear sector. I became qualified by the APM, adept in the PMI Body of Knowledge, overly familiar with British and ISO standards, and took my PRINCE exams. They made a huge improvement compared to ‘management by instinct’, which seemed to be the default method at the time. My Master’s dissertation, as part of an executive MBA at Lancaster University Management School, was on project management of research and development. (R&D was an area that until then had been seen as chaotic, and left to the scientists in case innovation was stifled.) Involvement with best practice groups followed, alongside papers and presentations to conferences.

As my career progressed, projects became even less well defined than in R&D. They became more about eliciting tacit requirements, encouraging cooperation, resolving conflict, accommodating divergence, managing expectations and realising benefits. At the same time, projects moved from being insular and in-house to international collaborations. We had to deal with a widening group of stakeholders, from regulators to politicians. These changes, and the complexity of human interactions involved in them, were not easily accommodated by the formal tools focussed on management of time, cost and quality.

While involved with graduate recruitment in the mid 1990s, a forward thinking professional from human resources (HR) recognised that the PhD graduates we were bringing into the company to become nuclear scientists and engineers did not have the most highly developed soft skills. It did not matter so much for technical specialists, but candidates for management and delivery roles were also drawn from this pool via promotion. Two five-day NLP modules were introduced into the graduate training program. I was invited to participate in these courses as a ‘model’ for some of the skills. At that time, the course proved unpopular with most of the male recruits, while many of the female recruits found it insightful. A couple pursued personal development to become certified NLP practitioners themselves, as well as excellent scientists, engineers and project managers. Of that small first group of scientists and engineers, one went on to be head of communications and another became HR manager. I observed first-hand the power and the results of some of these techniques.

As I followed my own personal development and ran out of technical courses, I started to do more and more training in advanced communication and behavioural skills. As well as traditional courses on mentoring and counselling, this included NLP practitioner, master practitioner, NLP modelling, hypnosis etc. Short courses with most of the NLP gurus, including Anthony Robbins and ‘The Fire Walk’, were also undertaken. The more of these I did, the easier delivery became, until I was convinced that, if things were difficult then it was because I was not using the most appropriate behaviour. Since then, I have used my NLP training as a project manager to communicate across cultures, reframe problems, align goals, manage stakeholder groups, resolve conflicts, find accommodations, motivate teams, mentor and coach managers, and generally be a better leader. So, if you too want an easier life, then get with the program!
WHY ME?

In writing this book I do not attempt to set myself up as the world's most proficient in soft skills. There are naturals who appear to effortlessly engage with other people and glide through the world. In contrast, in my early career I found that gaps in my own soft skills limited my effectiveness. Those naturals, however, being unconsciously competent, would find it difficult to tell you how they did things that were implicit in their nature. (Other project management competences may not be natural to them anyway). I have had to move through the cycle of conscious incompetence to at least a level of conscious competence. I do not yet consider myself to have fully reached the stage of those naturals, i.e. unconscious competence; my wife will tell you that I sometimes have lapses where my mouth is engaged before my brain. But hopefully, less frequently. I believe that the fact that I have had to study this subject, hard and in a structured way, puts me in a good position to help you on your journey.

In no small part due to personal and professional development, I have achieved the highest levels in project management, academically, with the professional bodies and in several sectors of industry. I have been able to progress from relatively small R&D projects, through delivery of infrastructure and business change, to policy-led projects. I have led programs in the private sector, public sector, public private partnerships (PPPs), and 'big four' consultancy houses. Of these, PPPs proved the most challenging, having to bring together two worlds, and two sets of values, behaviours and capabilities to deliver tangible outcomes for citizens and shareholders. As I write this book, I am managing the portfolio for a high-technology company in the automotive sector and dealing with government policies and politicians on a regular basis. A world away from the research laboratories where I started out on my career.

Like my life, this is a work in progress. I am keen to get feedback, either directly or via the supporting website (www.nlp4pm.com).

A BRIEF NOTE ON USE OF LANGUAGE

In a topic like NLP, language is important. The first thing to notice is that I have used a consistent spelling for the word ‘program’ – Americans use this spelling and it is universal in NLP for terms such as ‘meta-program’. Hence I have not reverted to the English spelling for references to projects and ‘programmes’.

Project management means different things to different people. Some refer to themselves as ‘program’ managers, or to managing a portfolio of projects. As you will read in section 1.1.3, this is all subjective. Hence I have used the abbreviation ‘PM’ throughout. Don’t worry which flavour this refers to – it means you.

Similarly, I will use ‘project management’ as referring to the whole domain, encompassing programs and portfolios.

NLP – some combine the words ‘neurolinguistic’, while others use two words. I use a hyphen to maintain the three letter abbreviation, but I will mostly use the three letter abbreviation, as it is a mouthful.
INTRODUCTION

STRUCTURE OF THIS BOOK

Other books attempt to teach you about NLP, or at least support training in it. The domain of NLP is very broad, and since it originated from modelling of successful therapists, guides and courses will generally focus on aspects such as life coaching, wellbeing, relationships, etc. This book is unique in that I will show you how NLP can be directly applied to project management in a competence based approach.

The structure of the book follows an NLP approach itself. At the core of NLP is the presupposition that we all have unique world-views, and we only communicate effectively when we find a way of causing overlap of these distinct worlds. Hence, I will first introduce the world of projects and the world of NLP, before going on to bring the two worlds together and describe the many applications of NLP for soft skills in project management.

The first part of the book gives an overview of where so-called soft skills are relevant to the different aspects of project and program management, classic stages of the project life cycle, and the various bodies of knowledge (BoKs). Key skills and behaviours from the various competence frameworks are compared, and requirements for becoming an effective project professional are discussed,
including those being assessed for a register of project professionals by the Association for Project Management. Now that project management has been recognised as a discipline in its own right, these competences will form the core of any new chartered profession.

The second part lays the foundations for understanding the world of NLP, leaving most of the application for the final part.

The final part of the book brings together the worlds of projects and NLP, and provides a large number of exercises specifically aimed at developing competence against skills and behaviours identified as key requirements for effective leadership and management of projects and programs.

THE WORLD OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Formal project management had its fiftieth anniversary around 2010. Methods, mainly for managing time, cost and quality, have been codified and form the backbone of the new profession. In the new millennium, however, Dr Martin Barnes CBE, former Executive Director of the Major Projects Association, re-defined project management as ‘Getting things done by people’. This innocent remark is striking because it was Barnes who set in stone the basic tenet of the ‘iron triangle’ for project management by the three dimensions of time, cost and quality.

Our world is changing with increasing frequency, and much of this change is now being delivered through the discipline of project management. Projects themselves are becoming increasingly complex, as we move on from focussing on delivery of assets and technology to management of stakeholders, benefits, and emerging opportunities and risks. Hence requirements for project and program professionals must continue to evolve to meet these increasing expectations.

Without doubt, the structured methods of PRINCE2 and PMI codify good practice and have helped to guide entrants to the profession. They have become de facto standards along the way. Hundreds of thousands of people have now been taught, examined and certificated in these methods around the world. As yet, however, we have not seen a resultant increase in project success, especially in IT projects. Maybe this is because for complex projects:

\[\text{Method} + \text{Soft Skills} + \text{Leadership} = \text{Success}\]

I think so. In other words, as Louis Armstrong sang:

‘Tain’t what you do, it’s the way that cha do it, that’s what gets results’

Hence, I see what is introduced in this book as quite complementary to the structured methods. For professional bodies under the International Project Management Association (IPMA), there is certainly a requirement to demonstrate competence in delivery as well as knowledge and experience of method in order
to advance beyond the basic levels of qualification. Chartered status for project managers, as proposed by the Association for Project Management, will certainly require demonstration of competence against a wide range of skills, which are covered in Part 3 of this book.

THE WORLD OF NLP

Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as ‘A model of inter-personal communication chiefly concerned with the relationship between successful patterns of behaviour and the subjective experiences (especially patterns of thought) underlying them.’ I prefer to call it the modelling of success.

It originates from early work on cybernetics and systems, and the metaphor of the human mind being like a biological computer, running long established core programs as behaviours. Modelling of world-class therapists led to even greater understanding of the workings of the mind, and tools and techniques for understanding, eliciting and modifying behaviours.

NLP is well established in top level sports and is widespread in the pursuit of personal development, especially for removing limiting beliefs and modelling peak performance. It is increasingly gaining acceptance in training and human resource management. It has been popularised to eliminate phobias, change compulsive behaviours and manage stress. It can be used to deal with inner conflict and manage health issues. In this book I will be constraining myself to a fairly formal approach, but having had personal experience of all of the other areas, I will give pointers in a final part on ‘taking things further’.

WORLD-VIEWS – THE COMPLETE PROJECT MANAGER

‘The biggest room in the world is the room for self improvement’

Japanese proverb

I believe that to be a complete project manager you need both hard and soft skills. When BNFL (British Nuclear Fuels) went through an initiative for ‘world class performance’ for project management in the mid-1990s, it largely abandoned trying to train poorly performing managers and instead set up selection centres based on behaviours of successful project managers. It then invested heavily in the development of those managers. Improvements in hard and soft measures of project delivery were significant, especially in forecast vs out-turn for time and cost.

But if you entered the profession via competence in processes and tools then take hope. It has been established that soft skills can be developed and improved. In Goleman’s original book in 1997 Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ, he convinced a proportion of the five million readers that EI was important. But the book fell short in not showing how to improve it. This book
will provide you with an approach and some useful tools to help to improve your emotional intelligence, even where it might already be considerable.

By the fact that you have picked up this book, I know that you will approach the exercises with an open mind, and trust that you will get good use from the knowledge in your own journey of personal and professional development.

All books are poor substitutes for personal coaching, hence the price difference. Neither can they remain practical and be comprehensive. (The encyclopaedia of NLP is 10 times the length of this book.)³ This introduction to the topic and its application will stimulate those who are ready to take the next step and do some hands-on training. For the rest, I expect to at least broaden your map of the world.

‘No man can reveal to you aught but that which already lies half asleep in the dawning of your knowledge’

Kahlil Gibran
PART 1  THE WORLD OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This book does not pretend to be comprehensive across the body of knowledge for project management (PM BoK), but rather to bring out the soft skills elements in the management of projects, as these can be overlooked or taken for granted when the tools and techniques are taught. In Part 3 of the book, we will show how to develop these soft skills. I believe that the tools and techniques are also important, but these 'hard skills' are easier to learn, and fairly well understood and trained. As a first point of reference to tools and techniques, I personally use:

- *Project Management Pathways*;\(^4\)
- *The Handbook of Project-Based Management*;\(^5\)
- the PMI Body of Knowledge;\(^6\)
- the suite of OGC publications, including those around PRINCE2\(^7\) and Managing Successful Programs (MSP).\(^8\)

Projects are carried out in all sectors, there are lots of types of projects and project management itself has a broad scope. I am conscious of the fact that many people with the title of project manager, sometimes down in the supply chain, have accountability for a limited subset of overall activities. Similarly, some holding the title act as client, and may have limited experience of execution itself, being more concerned with governance and assurance of work carried out by suppliers. Some are responsible for the front end of the life cycle, including assessment of options and business case, while others may be accountable for implementation and benefits realisation. Some focus on technical aspects and others on stakeholder management, etc. Hence, this chapter paints a picture of the breadth and depth of the profession, across all components through the life cycle, especially for those starting out their careers with limited experience to date.

Having scoped all aspects of project management, I then provide a review of the skills and characteristics for effective project management provided by relevant authorities, before finally looking at assessment models, qualification frameworks and requirements for career progression. Tools and techniques to improve competences and provide flexibility for behaviours will be provided in detail in Part 3, after laying out some of the fundamentals of NLP in Part 2.

If you feel that you already know all there is to know about project management, then skip to Part 2.
1.2 WHAT IS PROJECT MANAGEMENT?

1.2.1 Models for project management

In order to understand what project management is, and what skills are necessary to successfully carry it out, we need to agree on what projects are. That may sound a trivial question, but I remember a debate lasting half a day with the supervisor of my Master’s dissertation on that very topic. His view was that it was adequately defined by the ‘Iron triangle’ made famous by Martin Barnes, now President of the Association for Project Management.9 (Note that I have added ‘performance’ to the dimension of scope, as Martin always maintained that this is what he meant.)

![Figure 1.1](image)

Various texts on project management, however, show this to be only one, rather restricted, model.10 Personally, I prefer a definition promoted by Martin Barnes decades later:11

‘Project management is getting things done through others’

With this model in mind, if you don’t relate well to others then you are off to a poor start.

For projects, as against operations or ‘business as usual’ (BAU), we must introduce the fact that we are managing some change, whether that is creation of an asset such as a structure, an organisational change or other outcome. There are indeed some who say that project management is change management, and any
assets that are created are there only to support the change. *Project Management Pathways*\(^{12}\) includes the definition:

> 'The controlled implementation of defined change'

A government grant-backed initiative called ‘Rethinking project management’\(^{13}\) attempted to redress the fact that project management had evolved into a tool-based system and was glossing over general management competences. I over simplify the outcome of this, but there was a move to create an alternative triangle, which was less ‘iron’ and more soft. This has found favour, particularly amongst consultancy based organisations.

One model/definition of project management that I would like to mention is that of a decision-making process. When I first came across this I thought that it had little substance, but having had the stress of working with stakeholders who couldn’t make a decision to save their lives, or at least that of the project, and people who had no idea what information was needed in reports to support
decision-making (none, too much, not relevant, etc.). I increasingly favour this model. Perhaps this is what led me to help develop frameworks for governance, sponsorship and assurance.

Figure 1.3 Managing the benefits

Figure 1.4 The decision-making model for project management
My favourite model, however, I save to last. In studies of attitudes to project management in different cultures, Rodney Turner discovered that adoption of even the best tools and processes by competent people was not sufficient, and concluded that:

‘Project management is an attitude of mind’

We will discuss other aspects of project management under considerations of life-cycle aspects, components of bodies of knowledge and competence frameworks.

1.2.2 Management of projects versus business as usual
In the last section I blurred the relationship between definition of projects and ‘business as usual’ (BAU). This was intentional, as the availability of graduate and postgraduate level qualifications in project management is relatively recent, and in the past many people, including myself, entered the profession sideways after already achieving some success and competence in operational roles. Hence, the early definitive guide by one of the godfathers of project management, Rodney Turner, was entitled The Handbook of Project-based Management.14 (In my view, this remains the most complete and practical guide to the nuts and bolts of the profession.)

Nowadays, on the face of it, people can directly enter the profession via education and training without necessarily having exposure to people management. This is a particularly worrying trend when some organisations offer online or five-day courses culminating in multiple choice exams to become ‘accredited’ PMs with no requirements for prior experience. The buyers, that is the people taking these courses, recruitment agencies, and the people employing them, often do not know how these very short knowledge-based courses fit in to overall qualifications and competence. After some attempts to introduce BAU competences into the PM BoKs, these are now reflecting only a subset of the differences of management competences in application to projects.15

So, apart from the specific tools and techniques of project management, what are the main differences in relation to BAU?

- Each project is unique, i.e. a PM must keep relearning context, fast.
- Short deadlines can impose severe time pressure.
- Changing sponsors and senior stakeholders rather than fairly static line management means that relationships have to be developed fast.
- Limited direct authority of PMs – must use influence/leadership.
- Constantly changing teams, as resources are usually drafted in and change through life cycle.
Projects purposefully disrupting the status quo through change, rather than seeking incremental improvements, which causes resistance from some peers.

- Often a fresh team for every project, with little chance to develop resources.
- Don’t have luxury of time to develop relationships with key stakeholders.
- Partnership projects put PMs in separate lines of command.
- Virtual teams are often used.
- Change of company and even sector from project to project.
- Increasing proportion of partnership projects where PMs manage resources outside their own organisation.

All in all, these elements constitute the key difference to me, which I refer to as:

‘Management at the sharp end’

1.2.3 What’s in a name? Portfolios, programs and projects

Projects have become very popular. Even things that I would judge as being BAU are now being called projects, perhaps so that the person managing them can call themselves a (project) manager and get a pay rise, even though they may not actually be managing staff. I came across a nice lady from a very small marketing firm recently who described herself on her business card as ‘Project Director’, even though she had no staff and no budget and managed nothing bigger than small customer engagements, usually consisting of herself. She seemed to have had no exposure to projects apart from having to meet client deadlines, and no knowledge of any body of knowledge. But enough of that gripe, and whether people call themselves directors or supervisors, what about the fundamentals?

Good practice says that we should use work breakdown structure (WBS) to make complicated things less so. Once we have a work breakdown structure then it assumes fractal geometry to those in it, and you may not be able to tell where you are in the structure, especially when things are contracted out, unless you are at the top or the bottom. Initially, everyone started to call themselves project managers down the chain. But some noticed that they had people calling themselves project managers reporting up to them, maybe from supplier organisations, and started to call themselves program managers. As the contagion spread, program managers found that they had program managers reporting to them, so they must be managing a portfolio...
**Figure 1.5** Portfolios, programs, projects and work packages in a work breakdown structure

![Diagram of portfolios, programs, projects, and work packages](image)

It is all relative, and you can find jobs advertised for PMs that vary in salary by an order of magnitude. To me, what matters are the main duties that you carry out. The table below is my own simplification, but illustrates the spectrum of activities from technical assurance to strategic alignment. But carry on reading, as the book is written to cover this spectrum, from beginners to grand ‘meisters’. (And I will refer to all of them, for simplicity, as ‘PMs’.)

Note that when I started out in project management, I thought I had to do ALL of these activities. Now, the role of sponsors and governance has been developed

**Figure 1.6** Key responsibilities for managers of portfolio, programs and projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key responsibilities</th>
<th>Key activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Portfolio</td>
<td>Strategic alignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resource pool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Governance framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assurance framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>Delivery of benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understand corporate strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Management of context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Management of senior stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Development of PM capability – people and processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Business readiness and implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Management of risks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Benefits realisation (leadership)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Continued)
so that duties are properly separated, and not only do we do the projects right, but we also do the right projects in the first place. Or so the theory goes.

1.2.4 Types of projects – complexity and uncertainty
I have found the matrix below, adapted from one first popularised by project management guru Eddie Obeng,\textsuperscript{18} to be a useful framework to put projects on:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not sure what we are trying to achieve</th>
<th>‘Challenge’</th>
<th>‘Quest’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Know what we are trying to achieve</td>
<td>‘Factory’</td>
<td>‘Capability’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know what processes and technology to use</td>
<td>Not sure how to do it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perhaps most projects are mostly in the bottom left box for most of the time. For organisations with this type of delivery, e.g. construction companies and consultancies, they are likely to have well developed processes, capable PMs and supportive culture. Projects could be considered as their BAU.

At the opposite extreme, we have what appears at first sight to be complete nonsense. How can we be trying to deliver what we don’t know, especially when we don’t know how to deliver it? Unfortunately, these are some of our most
prominent projects, as they are often the ones driven by politics and policy: someone thinks that something should be different, e.g. immigration or the health service, but the implementation is not thought through before deadlines and budgets are set, and often remains disconnected. Is it such a surprise that projects such as these are perceived to ‘fail’ so often?

The bottom right box contains the most interesting type of projects for me — knowing roughly what you want but having to work out how to do it. The most prominent example of these was President Kennedy’s moon challenge, ‘We will put a man on the moon…’. That project (program?) is credited with generating all kinds of intellectual property, but the biggest asset was probably to create organisational capability, the benefits of which are still accruing.\textsuperscript{19} Strangely, it is in this context that the most formalised tools of project management were developed, including the use of PERT (program evaluation and review technique).\textsuperscript{20} Undoubtedly, this was to help to manage the ensuing size of the resulting program, as traditionally innovation type projects shunned structure.\textsuperscript{21}

Challenge type projects are the ones that most of us spend most of our time doing. The technical skills are probably within our organisation and we are trying to apply them to meet a new specification or extend functionality. Within such organisations the focus can be on the technical, and the less tangible side of projects can sometimes be omitted, for example by getting so caught up in the elegance of a technical solution that we lose sight of the functionality that is most important to the end user, or the price they were willing to pay. Gold-plated Rolls Royce anyone?

Of course, determining where your project fits on this grid helps to determine what your principle measures of success are. The figure below contains my suggestions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of project</th>
<th>Principle measures?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Factory’</td>
<td>Time, cost, quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Capability’</td>
<td>Benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Functionality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Challenge’</td>
<td>Innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Capability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Quest’</td>
<td>Outcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stakeholder satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Risks to organisation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.2.5 Mega-projects
The term ‘mega-projects’ has recently come into vogue. Having myself come from the nuclear industry, these tended to be the norm, but can be quite threatening if you have only managed small teams before. In my view, these are quite manageable using the discipline of project management, and particularly work breakdown structure (WBS), governance and assurance. I had the pleasure of reviewing the UK’s lifetime nuclear decommissioning program, which was £60 billion over 100 years, but this was perfectly well structured into manageable projects through effective use of WBS. If you are in an organisation that has not reached a level of maturity to consistently manage standard project management processes, then do not attempt to deliver these by the seat of your pants or you will fail. Where such ‘mega-projects’ have failed, subsequent reviews have found the maturity of the delivering organisations to be at fault, particularly on governance, and wide-scale capability programs have resulted. This has not prevented individual PMs being named and shamed, effectively ending their careers. (See Section 1.5 on organisational maturity.)

1.2.6 Complex projects
There is increasing dialogue around ‘complex projects’. From a purist point of view, I think of complex systems as those with ‘emergent properties’ such as swarms of starlings or shoals of fish, which behave like a single entity where the whole has behaviours that are almost impossible to predict from the components. I hope that people do not mean that they cannot forecast these huge projects, but are instead referring to size and the fact that they are complicated. Neither of these two factors on their own give cause for concern, as both can be dealt with through work breakdown structure and governance under a competent PM. (We will look at skills for ‘chunking’ from the big picture to the detail in Section 3.14.)

The only real issue is whether the organisation is sufficiently mature and the project manager is sufficiently knowledgeable and competent to do the job. In some cases this has not been the case. In terms of project management competence, although the International Project Management Association (IPMA) provides a standard grading of PM maturity on a scale of 1 to 4, with 4 being suitable for ‘complex projects’, most courses and qualifications only address level 1. I have seen disasters where ‘level 1’ PMs, or rather PMs with only level 1 training and experience, have been put in charge of large complicated projects without the safety net of close mentoring and support, with dire consequences.

We will leave competence of PMs to Section 1.8, but how do we determine how complicated a project is? A tool that I have found particularly useful is the risk potential assessment (RPA). This was developed by the UK’s Office of Government Commerce (OGC) and is used to determine the level of scrutiny that a project is subjected to. At the top end of the risk profile are ‘high risk projects’; for these, external highly experienced reviewers are called in to assure the project at each phase. It is a pity that the RPA is not used to determine the level of PM that should lead the project, but maybe this is in the pipeline, with the OGC pushing for greater professionalism.
### Figure 1.9 Example risk factors for government projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>High risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>Driven by legislation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Public facing, e.g. new system for taxation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>Budgetary size means that the project has to be approved and reported above government department, e.g. to the Treasury.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact on BAU</td>
<td>Operations may be significantly affected by the project, e.g. to take old system down to replace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependencies</td>
<td>The project is dependent on other projects, managed separately to deliver components of the solution or other projects are dependent on it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security of information</td>
<td>Personal information that must be kept secure is being transported and could be accessible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholders</td>
<td>Stakeholder map is complex and includes senior figures who have capability to de-rail the project, e.g. government ministers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply chain</td>
<td>Significant components are delivered through partnership organisations and suppliers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior support</td>
<td>Does the project have sufficient senior support to keep it on course?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting capability</td>
<td>Is there sufficient capacity and capability in the organisation and applied to the project to deliver it?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note how few of these factors are addressed by process-based management and how much they can be affected by soft skills. Basically, the higher risk the project then the more capable the PM needs to be in terms of soft skills, though even ‘small’ projects benefit from them.
1.2.7 Small projects
Although there is a lot of focus nowadays on large and complicated projects, most organisations deal with what might be termed small or simple projects. These projects have challenges of their own, in that:

- Being small, the PM assigned may be relatively junior and struggle without the support of a mentor or proactive program management office (PgMO).
- There may not be organisational support to them, e.g. no project support office (PSO).
- The project may be viewed as less important and struggle to secure resources, including the time of the sponsor (assuming that there is one).

Despite being small in terms of budget, the project may be large in terms of consequence, e.g. impact on reputation or in providing avenues for future revenue of the company. In my mind, the best way to judge a project is using the risk potential assessment already introduced, as this includes other factors to budget, including criticality, complexity, and impact. This method of assessment should judge where your best PMs are assigned, not simply on size of budget. Of course, the project may only be small in current phase, but grow considerably as it passes through successive phases and gates, as for R&D projects. One of the big challenges for PMs of small projects is influencing senior stakeholders when the project may not appear very important. (Influencing skills are covered in Section 3.15.)

1.2.8 Partnership projects
Organisations enter partnership projects for various reasons, including sharing of risk and to fill capability gaps. From a project management perspective, aside from aspects of virtuality and perhaps cultural differences, which are dealt with separately, the biggest challenge is that ownership of the project is less clear and there is no single chain of command. Best practice for governance recommends that there is a single sponsor for the project, but stakeholder management undoubtedly becomes more complex. Rather than have success criteria for the
project, these can degenerate into win-lose arrangements, with the PM stuck in the middle. Those projects found most successful have been ones where a superordinate goal can be identified that all organisations can align too. (In NLP this is referred to as ‘chunking up’ to a common goal.) It is also in the PM’s interest to create a very strong project identity, i.e. separate from those of the parent organisations. (Creating project identity and motivation of project teams is dealt with in Section 3.)

1.2.9 Virtual projects
More companies are virtualising as they dispose of non-core assets, but the rate is exceeded by the number of virtual projects, where the overall capability is created by combining elements from different organisations, often in different countries, in different times zones, etc.

The element that I want to address here in relation to this book is the fact that much of the communication in these projects is via teleconferencing at best, and often by email. Both of these innovations are very welcome to the project manager, who like me used to have to spend half their lives in transit between different teams. The downside, however, is that the opportunities for miscommunication are multiplied, and multiplied again when we add in differences of culture, and again when people do not share a common first language. If we struggle to be effective in face to face situations, then the prospect of doing so without the face to face bit is daunting. In Section 3 we will read that most of our communication is non-verbal, and what to do about it.

I worked with one Head of IT, who in NLP terms had an aural preference, and he would choose to hold teleconferences with people who were on the floor above, let alone in the next building. Things did not run smoothly and each day was consumed by conflict and fire fighting due to avoidable misunderstandings.

Hence, if you are ever involved in leading such projects then remember the adage:

‘It is difficult to see eye to eye until you have met face to face’

For those struggling to hear my tonality or to see my body language on this printed page, that means get on the plane for at least the first meeting.

1.2.10 Multicultural projects
Most projects are now multicultural in that people are more mobile, and so even a moderately sized project office in London is likely to have people from several races and cultures in the team. Turner pointed out, however, that there are considerable problems in using the suite of Western-oriented techniques for project management in non-Westernised countries, as aside from the processes, project management is an attitude of mind and is strongly influenced by world-view – a concept at the heart of NLP. Cultural differences were studied in terms of the factors of: individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance (fear of change), and power-distance (acceptance of authority and social inequalities). In NLP terms, we can view these as relevant meta-programs or unquestioned behaviours to be
considered for effective project management. Turner’s research also revealed that different combinations of these factors are better for the different phases of the project life cycle, and notes that, while Western cultures are better at delivery, they are relatively poor at initiation and close-out. Does this ring true with you?

From an NLP perspective we need to appreciate that even people from our own culture and background have different world-views to ourselves, and for different cultures this can be more different than same. There are some elements in our favour, however. Firstly, the well-known experiment giving the ‘Maharabian statistics’ showed that people picked up much more from tone than words, and much more from body language than both combined. On the face of it, this means that you will convey more accurate information in person to someone from a different culture who doesn’t speak your language than to someone in the next office via email! If they are aurally biased rather than visual, then even more so. This doesn’t quite stack up when considering the need to relay technical content, but the point is that you will probably fail to get even this over unless you at least attempt to understand the world-view of your audience.

In a seminar on cross-cultural projects some years ago, one of the participants relayed a story from a joint project between a telecoms company in Scandinavia and an American company. The request to invite ‘significant others’ led to Americans leaving the plane in Hawaii shirts with their wives, to be met by a brass band and members of the royal family. Being visual, I have held that picture to my heart as I despatch each email overseas.

From an NLP perspective, it is worth noting that rapport is no more difficult to achieve across cultural boundaries, and this is the foundation for all effective communication.

1.2.11 Change management projects
As we have seen in models for project management, one definition (used in Project Management Pathways) is:

‘The controlled implementation of defined change’

Some people, mainly coming from HR rather than project management backgrounds, think of change management as something different to project management, and regard the latter as too formalised. Personally, I prefer to regard all projects in terms of change management, and put the focus on outcomes and change of behaviours. I have certainly found this to work with IT, where the fashionable term is now ‘IT enabled transformation’. In frameworks like MSP (Managing Successful Programs), however, responsibility for the transformation part is separated out from the role of the PM, who is only there to deliver the physical asset. A separate resource, usually from ‘the business’, is nominated to lead on change of behaviours.
I have worked with this framework and am not a fan of this aspect since benefits realisation planning, to me, is best left with the PM to make sure that it happens. The language in common usage for change management, with end states of target operating models via business blueprints, also lends itself perfectly to the project management discipline. Some change projects are referred to as process-enabled change, and again the PM is well positioned to address these aspects, especially since the business analysts carrying out this type of work usually report in to the PM during the requirements gathering phase. I suspect that the division arose because the PMs available were largely experts in the technical domain and were not deemed competent to address some of the softer work-packages such as stakeholder management, requirements management, communications, benefits management, etc. In Part 3 of this book we will be addressing the breadth of skills for change management.

I was challenged as to how construction can be regarded as change management. Working with colleagues in regeneration, or what was town planning, the vocabulary is entirely consistent, with a focus on building communities rather than building houses, and taking a macro-view of the urban plan, including transport, health, education, leisure, etc. Hence the overall program is definitely about creating change.

With regards to physical buildings themselves, even here the focus is on ‘liveability’, with many new schemes including associated leisure, shopping, etc. In many new homes you will now see the kitchen and bathroom being designed, and even built, first, as construction is being dictated to by the values and requirements of the end user, rather than the construction process.

For the UK’s huge national program for schools, the focus moved away from providing buildings to provision of an educational environment, with ICT support, maintenance, operations, etc. packaged up and outsourced via contract with a focus on lifetime costs. What was contracted was not a physical asset but a changed learning environment.

With regard to what are referred to as cultural change programs, I think these exist mainly in the conversations of the boardroom. In one transformation program in a local authority where the sponsor asked me how I was going to do cultural change, I replied, ‘I cannot do cultural change, as it is established that it takes five or more years to change culture, and I intend to be out of here within 12 months. What you will get is technology and process-enabled change that will give you effectiveness and efficiency.’ He replied, ‘That will do.’ While implementing organisational design (OD) and business process re-engineering (BPR) certainly help, I think that cultural change only occurs with change of leadership.

1.2.12 R&D projects
I include R&D projects here as that is where my career started out and has recently returned. While doing an executive MBA I was asked to carry out a study on how to manage small R&D projects. It was considered that we knew how to do big projects, but were not so good at small ones. Many of the small projects referred to were over £1 million annual spend (and big ones over £100 million). I wrote a dissertation on best practice for management of R&D.
but the key features were not about size. The most important aspect was a focus on managing the overall portfolio rather than individual projects. It is well established that most R&D projects do not come to fruition. Some succeed technically but fail to go into production or fail to achieve market share. The real focus had to be on terminating projects early that were less likely to be commercially successful in order to concentrate resources on to new projects to take their place and give those that were likely to succeed priority for resources. Cooper’s Stage–Gate process became widely used across a number of sectors to crystallise these thoughts, and independent ‘end of phase’ reviews became the norm. (A very similar funnel process is used in sales to convert leads.)

Figure 1.11 Innovation funnel/portfolio management for R&D projects

The Stage–Gate process morphed into the OGC’s Gateway Review Process, and independent reviews became project boards under the PRINCE method. With Gateway, however, the process starts much later in the life cycle, effectively when decisions need to be taken on outsourcing of the project. The other key difference between the original ‘stage and gate’ and the Gateway process is that the former is designed to kill projects early, whereas Gateway is designed to improve the chances of project success, and it is not possible to recommend closure. Maybe it should, particularly at the early gates before too much resource has been consumed. It has been recognised, however, that the biggest influence on project success is early in the process, and there is a move to introduce earlier gates. Gate 0 has already been added as a review of the over-arching program.

Phasing of projects, and use of Stage–Gate processes, is now endemic across most industries, from oil and gas exploration to manufacturing, with some organisations introducing up to 10 review gates.

Scenario analysis was introduced from the oil and gas industry. To manage strategic risk one had to bear in mind that the context for the organisation, let alone the project, could change dramatically, especially as more than a decade can...
elapse from seed to germination. Given the increasing rate of change in the world, and the macro-changes to all aspects of life over recent years, scenario analysis will be increasingly used to test different sets of (project) assumptions. NLP offers great techniques to recognise and bring together different world-views.

So, other than a greater focus on scenario planning and portfolio management, much of which may happen over the head of the PM at project director level, what is different about project management of R&D? My answer to that is ‘not much’, though there should be a greater emphasis on resource management (across the portfolio), and capability management (across the portfolio). Risk management needs to explicitly include ‘opportunity management’, though it is in the best organisations anyway. (In Part 3 we look at those motivated by meta-program for risk and opportunity.)

I was cheered in support of these views by an article appearing in Project magazine in 2010 where a PM from the construction sector moved to the pharmaceutical industry, where the focus is on managing multiple R&D projects for the next generation of drugs, after completing an MSc in project management. On being asked what the key differences were between construction projects and research projects he replied, ‘There aren’t any.’

One aspect of R&D that did turn out to be quite different was the need to encourage a culture of innovation. Up to that point, there had been a drive to push R&D into the operational business units to ‘keep it real’. The result was that
long term R&D gave way to short term operational support, and the organisation developed a shortfall in its new product development pipeline. Fortunately, good leadership established a strong identity and culture and the numbers of patents produced rapidly multiplied.\textsuperscript{38}

Earlier this year, more than 15 years later, I was asked to participate in a study group for ‘portfolio management of R&D’, and a new ‘best practice group’ for portfolio management was formed in 2010.\textsuperscript{39} Similarly, last year I saw my first presentation on scenario planning at a project management conference – something that we were doing for R&D portfolios decades ago. As with many things, life cycles are not just for projects.

1.2.13 Trends in projects
On the face of it, project management doesn’t seem to be getting any better in that reports into rates of failure do not show an improving trend. Balancing this, however, we should recognise that projects themselves are becoming more complicated, as what was cutting edge becomes the expected. For IT projects, users have much higher expectations of functionality and availability based on what they can experience in top end leisure applications. Linking masses of data with web availability and still expecting total security clearly poses challenges.

Not so long ago, all functions of a project may have been conducted in-house, but today there are complex supply chains giving the integrator the job of not only making sure that all the pieces of the jigsaw arrive on time, but that they also work together as intended. Methods of contracting out the supply chain are slowly moving towards contracting for benefits, which forces the focus on understanding end user benefits and benefits realisation planning.\textsuperscript{40}

Looking higher up the organisation, the boardroom is now seeking to get a grip on the overall portfolio of projects, and the link to delivering the organisational strategy. Above it all sits governance.\textsuperscript{41} Not simply the rules that should be applied, but the complex human interactions that mean that they are followed, or not.\textsuperscript{42}

The role of the PM is being forced further from the work-face towards the boardroom, and this demands a higher calibre of professional with a wider range of business skills. Those business skills include the competences described and developed in this book. I expect these to be tested more thoroughly in the next generation of qualifications for PMs.

1.2.14 Putting it all together
The element that I want to emphasise here, in relation to the objectives of this book, is that we first need to understand the challenges of the project objectives, context and organisation, before we even start to think about delivery of the project itself. Such factors will determine the seniority, skill-set and capability of the PM most likely to successfully deliver the project. These aspects are unlikely to be met solely by the formal processes of project management, although there are tools that can help, but it has everything to do with the competences being developed in Part 3.
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Method and process are important in project management, but knowing how to use them is even more so. As a project manager you can best increase your effectiveness by developing your soft skills, recognising that finesse can be more effective than force. Once developed, you will find that these skills are transferable across project types and whole industry sectors. This book illustrates the application of NLP to develop competencies — better equipping you to communicate across cultures, reframe problems, manage stakeholder groups, resolve conflicts, motivate teams and become an even better leader.

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