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- ▲ [How to build project integrity and certainty in your projects](#)
- ▲ [Advertising for a job - expertise or experience?](#)
- ▲ [Recent Successful Assignments](#)
- ▲ [The Importance of People](#)
- ▲ [Meet Barry Sacks](#)
- ▲ [In the news...](#)

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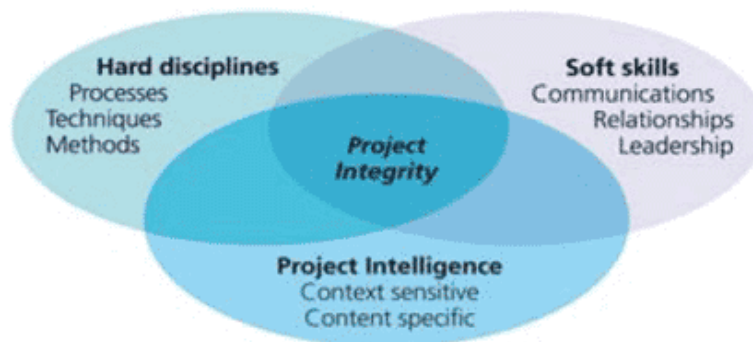


## How to build project integrity and certainty in your projects

Peter Mayer, Managing Partner

The search for the holy grail of consistently achieving project certainty continues. And it is surprising the places people are looking. It is understandable that we may ask the question - 'what are the top 10 project failures' – and seek to identify and concentrate on the resolution of these issues. Pursuing such an approach, it follows there will be an improvement in an organisations performance but the effort is typically unfocused, inefficient and has a large opportunity cost.

For instance, ask most Heads of Change, Projects and Programmes the question and they will cite organisational culture and relationships, stakeholder management/governance and objective definition of benefit as being included in their key challenges. What are the top three generic project delivery challenges in your organisation? How effective will a change programme be that directly seeks to address them?



Whilst going through this exercise may improve your project performance to some extent, we believe it is over simplistic. In order to understand more of a sufficient level of granularity, if we look at some of our own internal rules within Pelicam it is evident there are some fundamentals at a micro level that need to be understood and explored:

### 1. Recognise no two projects are the same. No two organisations are the same.

Projects have many different characteristics. Organisations (and divisions within organisations) have different qualities. Recognise the complexity of what you are trying to achieve and act accordingly. If project and organisational complexity is not understood, find someone who can define them. If appropriate define a system that enforces the investigative/research process for all projects and include it in your generic project methods/toolset.

## 2. Ensure projects are set up for success and integrity is maintained.

Four fifths of our Project Intelligence workshops look at how a project is set up. That gives a good indication as to how important we think it is. Practically all organisations now have a defined method and template for project initiation – many organisations still struggle to achieve the level of granularity and precision to build a view of the project that “guarantees” success. How often do you look at a project definition document that through its articulation of the complexity, approach and planning, it convinces you/gives you the confidence that it will be delivered within the time cost quality parameters?

## 3. Don't focus on what's going wrong, but on what needs to go right.

A little like the opening point above, there is some value in focusing on what is wrong with a project, but a lot of it is noise and will only cloud the issue for resolution. How effective it is to receive an audit that shows 47 items in Red or Amber? Which should you focus on? Get to the point where you understand what needs to go right in a project (and we're not just talking about defining a critical path), ensure these are focussed on.

## 4. Recognise the strengths in the project teams and build expertise within.

It is all too easy to point the finger at the project manager and say he is not doing all he should to deliver the programme of work. We all need support, encouragement and occasionally advice!

## 5. No limits - report on any issue or risk that impacts project success.

There are often organisational or environmental constraints that although perhaps recognised within a project team are not addressed because they are too difficult. If these are significant, find someone to help you.

## 6. Identifying a problem isn't enough - agree the priority, how it will be remedied and action.

Too often we find a problem is raised within and the recipients believe that by hearing the problem and an outline of the potential resolution, the problem will go away! In order to effectively manage-out critical issues a persistent remediation exercise is needed. Often because the issue has not been identified by the project team, it's often not too well understood, and therefore cannot easily be resolved. Find someone that understands the problems and can assist with the clean up.

These are just six of our own internal rules. There's plenty more given the complexity of what we are trying to do – assure the success of your projects. If you want to learn more please talk to your Managing Practitioner or email Iain Roberts on [iain.roberts@pelicam.com](mailto:iain.roberts@pelicam.com)

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## Advertising for a job - expertise or experience?

Neil Richardson, Managing Practitioner

Project (IT Delivery) Manager required to join a large government organisation. We need:

- ▲ SCRUM development methodology, Certified PRINCE 2, AGILE
- ▲ JAVA, Oracle, Weblogic
- ▲ Lead direction setting, overall planning, dependency management and risk mitigation the development cycle
- ▲ Integration issues: including RLR, MDS, Release 11, ESB and Infrastructure changes
- ▲ MS Project; MS Office; Pivotal Tracker.
- ▲ Extensive project management experience.
- ▲ Ideally you will be security cleared.



Specific job advertisements for project managers such as this are not unusual. But are the specifics helping or hindering a client find a top-quality PM? What parts do these specific criteria actually play in the likely successful delivery of a project as compared to core project (intelligent) management skills?

Indeed from my own experience, when organisations get into difficulties and call in top-tier consultant PMs,

these specifics are regularly discarded in favour of intelligent, experienced project managers who rarely meet these specifics.

So which view should we take? We asked our own project management community about their views.

### The pros and cons of experience

Prior experience of a sector and/or technology provides the potential for project managers to become more productive sooner than those without that knowledge, though not always. Familiar challenges and risks are more readily identified; solution options may be repeated more quickly from past experience. However, familiarity can create complacency; and possibly generating a previous solution, inappropriate for the current problem.

At an organisational level, familiarity with stakeholders could be an asset as relationships are renewed much quicker, but only if there is professional respect between the parties; and that the stakeholder roles are similar to previous occasions. Knowing and understanding the culture of an organisation also provides accelerated progress towards productive project management, provided things haven't changed over the intervening period.

In summary there are a number of advantages; however each of them have certain limitations precluding a wholly compelling argument.

### The pros and cons of expertise

The first challenge of arriving 'cold' into an organisation is how to get up-to-speed quickly. In theory this could take time; in practice, high calibre project managers learn quickly and adapt accordingly. New challenges and risks have to be identified. However, the newness of the environment prevents any complacency.

Building new relationships with stakeholders takes time and although there is no short cut, the way in which an individual conducts their business can rapidly engender confidence in lieu of a strong relationship. Understanding the culture of an organisation has an advantage limited to the time taken to understand that culture – typically not very long.

In summary there are few disadvantages; only specific knowledge of 'particular' stakeholders (and even that on the assumption that their roles have remained constant) stands out as having any potential significance.

### Experience or expertise?

Are there any significant differentiators that provide a compelling proposition to spend too much time finding, and then hiring project, managers with specific sector and/or technological experience.

On the contrary, agility in hiring project managers appears to be based around core project (intelligent) management expertise with an ability and desire to learn quickly. If you can find sector and/or technological experience as well – then that's a bonus but it's not a driving criterion for hiring...

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## The Importance of People

Debra Revens, Managing Practitioner

It is a given that Pelicam practitioners bring extensive experience in programme and project methodologies. However, our clients tell us that what makes us special is our expertise in how to manage change intelligently and sensitively within increasingly complex businesses and cultures.



Research shows that there are ten or eleven main reasons why change programmes fail. These include failure to commit the right resource with the right expertise; management support; the "what's in it for me" being unclear; poor communications and a low profile of the people issues. In fact, the vast majority of the reasons why change programmes fail relate to people rather than process or technology issues.



If businesses were run by robots then introducing change would be easy.

We could just reprogramme our robotic colleagues and cut to tracking business



benefits! However, most people don't think like machines!

We have found that ongoing investment within the programme in understanding who and how individuals and groups will be impacted by the change (and their feelings about it) is key. This understanding can drive decision making about key elements of how the programme is delivered in regard to governance, resourcing, investment in communications, training and risk.

Our change methodologies and tools have been created to help us to ensure that we manage programmes that reflect the importance of people and culture to programme success. If you are interested in discussing change management methodologies and tools or taking part in one of our specialist breakfast briefings on the challenges of change then please do not hesitate to contact us at [info@pelicam.com](mailto:info@pelicam.com) or contact Debra on 07977 496655



## Meet Barry Sacks

Barry is a Pelicam Managing Practitioner and has been working with Pelicam for two years. Barry has led a variety of interesting programmes, typically assisting clients to be successful by overcoming the challenges of delivering through multi-sourced partners.

He recently completed a challenging assurance assignment for a large insurance organisation where through the implementation of the Pelicam Health Check recommendations the programme will be brought back on track.

“Being independent to the organisation and by using the tools and techniques provided by Pelicam's unique Health Check toolset I was able to interview over forty stakeholders in just a couple of weeks asking them the difficult questions necessary to really understand the cause of their issues. This would be extremely difficult to achieve as an employee”.

“I very much enjoy working with Pelicam. I appreciate having such a strong peer network of like minded and experienced individuals providing a forum to contribute to and learn from. The Pelicam Practitioners really do demonstrate excellence in Programme and Project Management and it is amazing what can be achieved, and the value you can add to your clients, when you work within a team of such people. I also enjoy contributing to Pelicam's special interest groups and supporting Pelicam to raise awareness of Project Intelligence such as at the recent Best Practice Showcase event in London where I facilitated two very lively sessions.”

Other recent assignments that Barry has been responsible for include:

- ▲ The insight, analysis and recommendation for global resource optimisation on behalf of a blue chip client supporting all service delivery capabilities including insource, nearshore/offshore captive, and outsource partners (identified \$34m of additional optimisation benefit)
- ▲ Delivering the portfolio of Web-based business & consumer facing programmes for a major FS provider integrating their back-office systems to online financial services and insurance solutions globally (reducing contract acquisition and approval duration from days to real-time)
- ▲ Programme definition for an innovative online “self-serve” strategy for a global insurance business supporting their strategic business transformation from primary channel (call centre) to online channels.

Barry is married to Tracy and lives in Hampshire. They both enjoy travelling, recently completing an unforgettable trip to the South American rain forest and Galapagos Islands, as well as the occasional mad moment such as jumping out of a plane strapped to a skydiver for charity.

## Recent Successful Assignments

- ▲ Assured the delivery of a technology programme to implement a disaster recovery / switch over processes for key online web mortgage application processes at UK retail bank.
- ▲ Verified the technology and management choices open to a financial client with respect to non delivery of a technical integration programme.
- ▲ Customised a business case engagement and governance process for a leading UK



underwriting business.

- ▲ Provided programme assurance around an organisational change strategy and major technology refresh programme.

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## In the news...

We are delighted to report the successful implementation of a highly complex £50M billing replacement programme at one of our mobile and fixed telecoms clients. The new billing system replaces a large number of legacy systems and now manages more than one million customers and 40 regional stores.



Pelicam initially executed a series of health checks over an 18 month period throughout the set up and design stages of the programme. The client ensured our critical recommendations were implemented. Where more help was needed, Pelicam was able to provide key individuals to supplement the client teams to ensure the necessary levels of granularity, precision and quality were attained, and the programme was set up for success.

The following key change management positions were all provided by Pelicam - working closely with the client's teams - Programme Director, Head of Business Engagement, Head of Architecture, Head of Testing and Quality, Communications Management and Cutover Management.

The Pelicam team of Tracy Barnett, Ian Brazier, Ross Catley, Chris Quintin, Vince Rawle, James Rosewell, Nick Sanderson and Francesca Valli worked extremely hard to deliver success – our congratulations and thanks to all involved.



## Giving kids with limited life unlimited possibilities

We were pleased to announce in our Summer Newsletter that Pelicam have become a fundraising partner for [Lifelites](#). We are now planning a number of adventure activities and events to help raise funds for Lifelites so they can continue to make a world of difference to the lives of terminally ill children in hospices all around the UK by providing a fully maintained technology package.

Lifelites are currently offering us charity passes for a full day of paintballing action and for the more adventurous, the opportunity to experience a thrill of a lifetime by taking part in a fundraising parachute jump from 10,000 feet.



### Paintballing

Fancy a day of paintballing action with your friends or colleagues? Lifelites has charity passes for a full day of paintballing fun at 35 participating paintball centres across the country, see [www.charitypaintball.org.uk](http://www.charitypaintball.org.uk) for further details. Each pass comprises a total of 8 individual tickets, including entrance and equipment for all players. The suggested donation for a pass is £50, which is considerably less than the standard price for 8 people playing. The passes are valid until the 28 February 2010 and you must book at least 2 weeks in advance.

To arrange for your pass please contact Lifelites on 0207 440 4200 quoting reference to Pelicam.

### Parachuting

If you have always wanted to do a parachute jump, now's your chance.

There are three types of jump available – an "Accelerated FreeFall" jump where you can experience the thrill of skydiving solo from up to 12,000 feet, a "Tandem Skydive" from 10,000 feet attached to a professional instructor; and a "Static Line" jump which is performed solo from up to 3,000 feet. You can jump from any one of over twenty British Parachute Association approved airfields across the UK. No experience is necessary as all training is given and if you raise from £360 (depending on the type of jump you choose), you will

receive your jump for FREE. You can go on your own or get together with a group of colleagues to share this experience of a lifetime.

Please contact the Lifelites office on 0207 440 4200 quoting reference to Pelicam and they will send you a full information pack.

We will provide details of further events and activities here.

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