THE FOCUSED LEADER AND ENERGIZING THE PROJECT ECONOMY

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2020 Project Management Symposium
Agenda

• Context
• Agility in the Project Economy
• The Case for the Focused Leader
• Implementation Practices & the Glue
• Closing Remarks
Context
Today’s Realities

1. Disruption will continue at a high pace
2. The VUCA Environment requires Project Economy
3. Project Managers Capabilities are a Must
VUCA and the Focused Leader

Volutility  Uncertainty  Complexity  Ambiguity
Leaders need to become Really Curious!

• Could we have a program manager for a global pandemic?
• How could we have fluidity in governing using smart decision making?
• How do we ensure the learning is understood, captured, and widely implemented?
• Would we use such a life altering event for positive global transformation?
Agility in the Project Economy
How did we get here?

50 Years Span

Appreciation of Projects

Principal Familiarity

Mature Processes

Project Economy
Activity: Critical Discussions

Thinking about interactions with your PMO leadership:
- What signs of commitments were you getting?
- Were projects viewed as strategic vehicles to value?
Activity: Polling Moment

Thinking about interactions with your PMO leadership:

• You are getting proper signs of commitment
  A. Disagree
  B. Neutral
  C. Agree
  D. Strongly Agree
Activity: Polling Moment

Thinking about interactions with your PMO leadership:

- Projects were viewed as strategic vehicles
  A. Disagree
  B. Neutral
  C. Agree
  D. Strongly Agree
Innovation = Energy

Innovation = Ideas + Execution + Adoption
— Jag Randhawa

We could consider this as a definition for what success would look like in projects within the Project Economy
Agility Attributes

• Experiment or else
• Massive learning appetite
• Transparency
• Fear is not an option
• Methodical risk taking
• Expedient decision-making
• Team matters more than the individual
• Continuously adjust the ways of working in alignment with context
The Case for the Focused Leader
The Focused Leader continuously challenges Assumptions
Focus Lesson from the Archery Range

A simple concept with profound implications:
What happens if an archer doesn’t aim at the
target?
Defining the Focused Leader

• Possesses the courage to innovate
• Masters the art of creating a diverse and inclusive environment
• Knows the specific links to the business/strategy
• Creates a culture of aligned action
• Energizes performance around the mission
• Intentional communicator
Focus thrives on decision-making muscle building

- Interactions with senior teams confirm:
  - Focus happens when the organizational culture tilts fast
  - Safe spaces exist across organizational layers
  - Focused leaders allow experimenting
  - Vivid project stories are critical for excellence
Implementation Practices & the Glue
The Secrets of Focus in Action

The foundation of every great team is a direction that energizes, orients, and engages its members.

Having the right support is a key condition that enables team effectiveness.

High-performing teams include members with a balance of skills.

…developing a shared mindset among team members—something team leaders can do by fostering a common identity …

https://hbr.org/2016/06/the-secrets-of-great-teamwork
Activity: Polling Moment

What contributes the most to the design of a successful Project Economy Roadmap?

A. Anchoring it in analysis and data
B. Involvement of the Team
C. Adaptability of Approach
D. Creating early Outcomes Testing Opportunities
Excellent organizations should use a model that balances three critical Attributes

1) Digital Appetite
2) Smart Decision-Making
3) Refreshed Sponsorship Model

These 3 Critical Attributes require rethinking our operational approach
The Project-Centered Excellence Attributes

**Digital Appetite**
- Digital Layer of the Talent Triangle
- Understanding the fine points between digital and people
- Intentional Collaboration

**Smart Decision-Making**
- Seamless use of Data Analytics
- Objective and crucial conversation
- Recognize and overcome unconscious biases

**Refreshed Sponsorship Model**
- Much less steering and much more delivery focused
- Getting to know team members individually
- Developmental feedback
Closing Remarks
Tailor Your Way of Working (WoW) to Meet Your Organizational Context’s Demands

- Tailoring the project approach to its dynamic context, increases outcomes' value
- Intentionality in stakeholders’ engagement
- “Measure twice, cut once”
The Focused Leader commits to Excellence

- Emphasizes a learning & safe culture
- Ensures cross organizational visibility
- Revisits the WoW to ensure projects achieve value
Questions?

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