Danish University Colleges

Limits to the Project Framework

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Limits to the Project Framework?

Research the last 20 years have shown a development of the project format and atemps to rethink the project as a management tool. There are indications from research of pros and cons for using projects for business change in organizations.
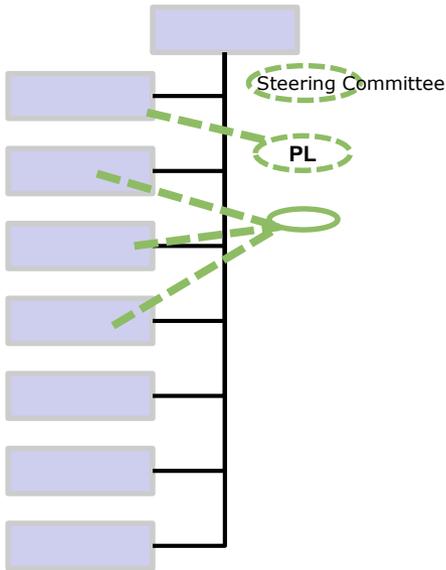
The introduction of dedicated, stable groups working in time boxes for specific deliverables may be the future for business change. Or at least hybrid solutions with both scaled agile and traditional projects should be considered.

1990ies　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　2000s

Individual projects in the functional hierarchy

"A project is a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result" (PMI, 2014).

Steering Committee

PL

Programs and portfolios

"A program as "a portfolio of projects and activities that are coordinated and managed as a unit such that they achieve outcomes and realize benefits" (OGC, 2003, p. 126).

PMO

(Steering Committees)

PL PL
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PL

Dedicated, stable groups working in timeboxes (Ie. Scaled Agile, Large Scale Scrum)

"A set of organization and workflow patterns intended to guide enterprises in scaling lean and agile practices.(Scaled Agile Framwork 2010)

1 2 3 4 5

Timebox 5-9 weeks

1 2 3 4 5

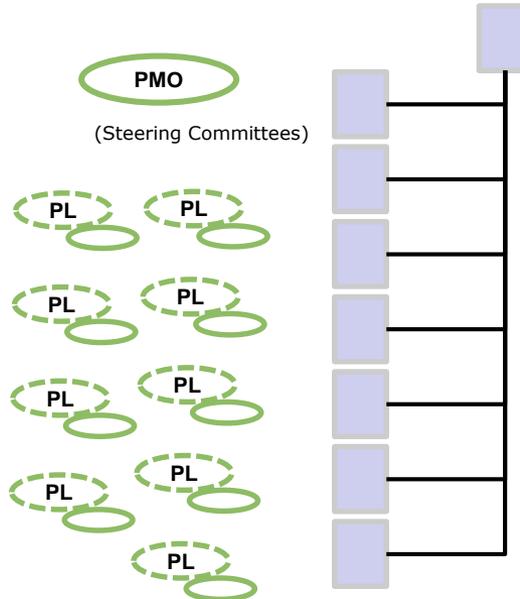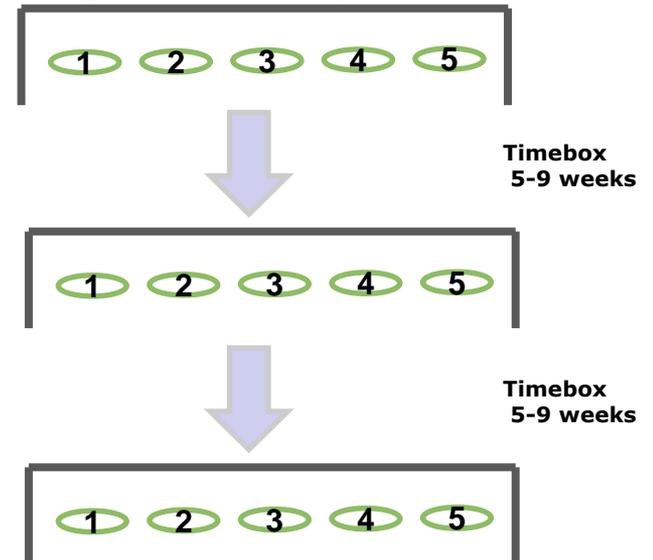**Timebox 5-9 weeks**

1 2 3 4 5

Pros
Svejvig and Andersen (2015) describe the classical project management with qualities such as executability, simplicity, temporality, linearity, controllability and instrumentality and the school of Rethinking Project Management with qualities such as learnability, multiplicity, temporality, complexity, uncertainty and socialibilityndability.

Cons
Cicmil et al (2016) in a meta-study showed that the project managers and participants experience exhaustion and vulnerability in projectified organizations.
The promise from the dominant project discourse (well planned adventures) is often very different in reality (over-optimistic, overloaded and lacking organizatrional relevance.

Cons
Engvall and Jerbrandt (2003) observed that project coordination in multi-project organizations becomes difficult because of projects interdependencies. More than 20% of projects are delayed due to resource-constraints and project managers agree on resource alocations "below the board" – ie. outside the program managers' plan.
Eskerodand and Blichfeldt(2006) observed that line managers often ran their own projects outside the portefolio plan and that this meant that important competences and resources were unavailable for the projects in the portfolio

Pros
Several case studies among them Brenner and Wunder 2014 show that large software development undertakings are productive and well structured. Interdependencies are handled proactively and planning is transparent

Cons
Theobald and Diebold (2018) found that preparation, planning and coordination of sprints in scaled agile software development environments demanded considerable resources. And the interfaces with the line organization was also demanding.