



# **INTERNATIONAL PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

**Training material**

**Part 4**

**INCONEXT PROJECT**

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THE LEONARDO DA VINCI PROGRAMME**

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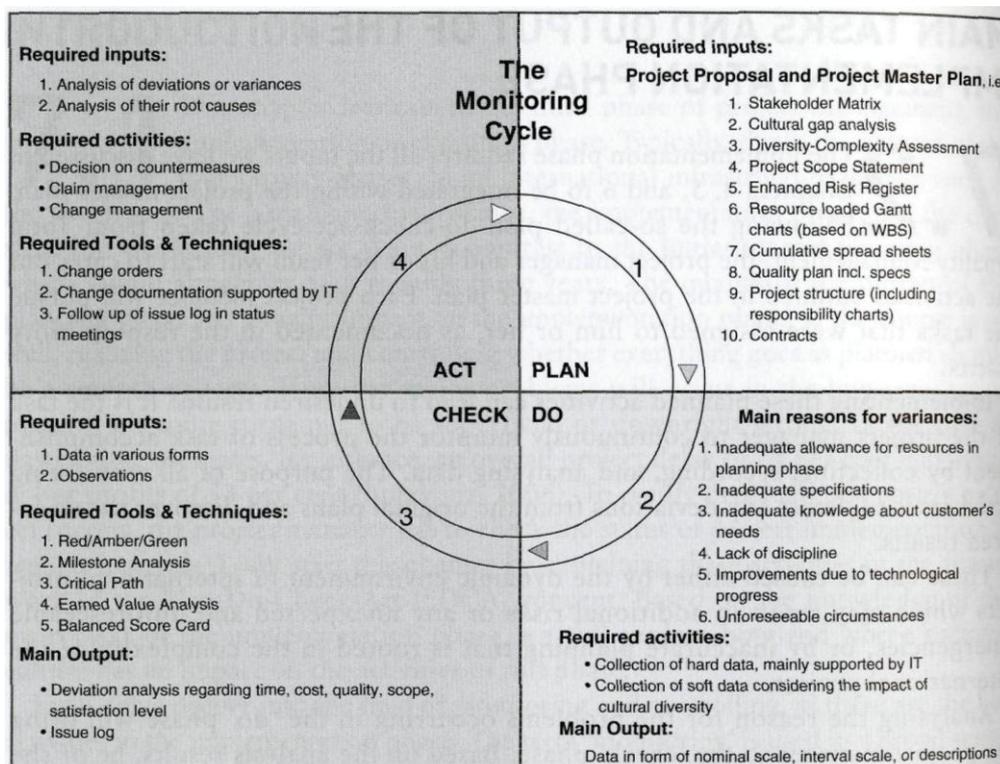


## VII. Project Implementation, Monitoring and Controlling, Closure

Project implementation is the third phase of project management. Good implementation or execution is of great importance for the project success. No goods, services and results planned for the project can be materialised without it. Project implementation is the execution of the project while project monitoring is about collecting sufficient data to ensure that the project team implements the plan correctly. It also helps to make sure that the project delivers everything it is supposed to – physical products and assets, quality products, documentation and deliverables so that there is complete assurance on delivery integrity.

Execution outputs related to integration management include deliverables, implemented solutions to problems, work performance information, and requested changes. Executing outputs related to quality management include recommended corrective actions and project plan updates. Executing outputs related to human resource management include staffing updates and team performance assessment. Execution outputs related to communication management consists of business process updates.

Project implementation is the execution of the project plan while project monitoring is about collecting sufficient data to make sure the project team implements plan correctly. Figure 5 provides an overview of all the relevant activities in the implementation phase.



**Figure 5. The monitoring cycle**  
(source: Köster, K. 2010. International Project Management, p.192)

International projects operate with great complexity in a fast changing environment. As a result, the project manager needs to constantly monitor deviations from the original project

master plan and observe the unwanted results, and report that is important to the project manager and other project stakeholders who are involved. The project manager has to collect reliable hard and soft data, record and analyse them, and take rational decisions. Data collection in monitoring system involves elements like telephone logs, tracing documents, records of significant changes, or documentation processes for formal and informal communications. Data which might not be available through the information system might be collected via the organisation of interviews and questionnaires. These should be paid particular attention to especially in international projects. Collected data have no value if they are not analysed. After project data have been collected and analysed, the found information needs to be passed on to the relevant shareholders, usually the customer and senior management, as well as to the project management team or all project members. This can be done in several forms:

- routine reports, which are issues on a regular schedule;
- special analysis reports;
- exception reports that are intended for special decisions related to unexpected situations.

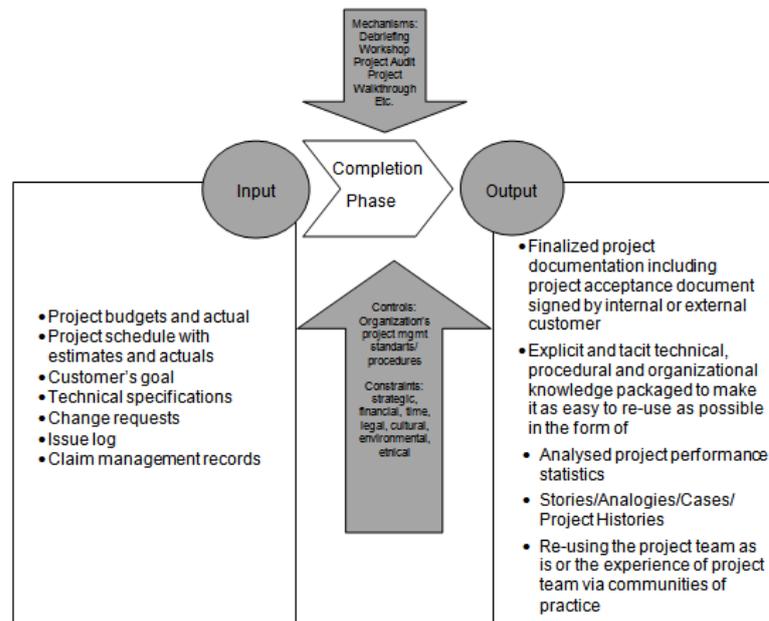
Cultural differences in the attitudes towards reporting, communication, and measurement should be taken into consideration so that the project would be monitored effectively.

Project control is the process of ensuring that the project delivers everything it is supposed to – physical products, services, quality products, documentation and deliverables such that there is complete assurance on delivery integrity. Project control systems compare actual cost and progress to planned cost and progress. There are different tools to control the progress of the project, such as the **Traffic Light Approach**, the **Milestone Analysis**, the **Earned Value Analysis (EVA)**, and the **Balanced Score Card**.

Traffic Light Approach which is often used in international projects for controlling purposes is a simple colour coding. It is very suitable for international projects as it is fairly straightforward and self-explanatory. However, it is more of a visualization method rather than a generic control tool. As it was mentioned before milestones build the basis of a rough time and cost estimate and that is the reason why this analysis is so important. Earned Value Analysis is a widely used cost and schedule control system which compares the value of actual work completed (known as the earned value) with planned progress. The main variables used in EVA relate to planned cost and schedule, actual cost and real progress. The Balanced Score Card can be used not only for the comparison of different projects and programs, but it can also be used to drive the whole strategic management process in the organization. As a controlling tool, the Balanced Score Card looks not only at past activities, but at the same time also uses the feedback gathered from different areas for the improvement of the performance of the international project. As for the financial side of the Balanced Score Card, the project manager can use tools like EVA.

The effectiveness of a project control system is measured by its average response time and its ability to identify the source of any problems. Based on the results of continuous control activities, the project manager needs to take right actions. These are embedded in effective change management in order to ensure project completion and customer satisfaction.

The fourth and final stage of the projects is defined as its closure. It consists of all activities consistent with closing of the project. Figure 6 gives an overview of the main inputs and outputs of the completion phase.



**Figure 6. Inputes and outputs of the project completion phase**  
(source: Köster, K. 2010. International Project Management, p. 329)

It is a process that provides for acceptance of the project by the project's stakeholders, completion of various records, final revision and issue of documentation to reflect its final condition, and the retention of essential project documentation. It includes verifying that all of the deliverables are complete. The final report should be prepared. There are several important components of a final project report, including evaluations of project performance, administrative performance, organizational structure, team performance, techniques of project management, and benefits to the organization, stakeholder and the customer.

- At the end of the project it is important to capture and distribute the experience, skills and knowledge that have been developed during a project, both with respect to personal development of staff, evolution of the project management methodology, and also to reward and recognize everyone for their efforts.
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## VIII. Leading and Communication in International Projects

Leadership is the quality of getting results from others through personal influence. It is categorized by the hopefully positive influence of the individual on people, by the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute for the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members.

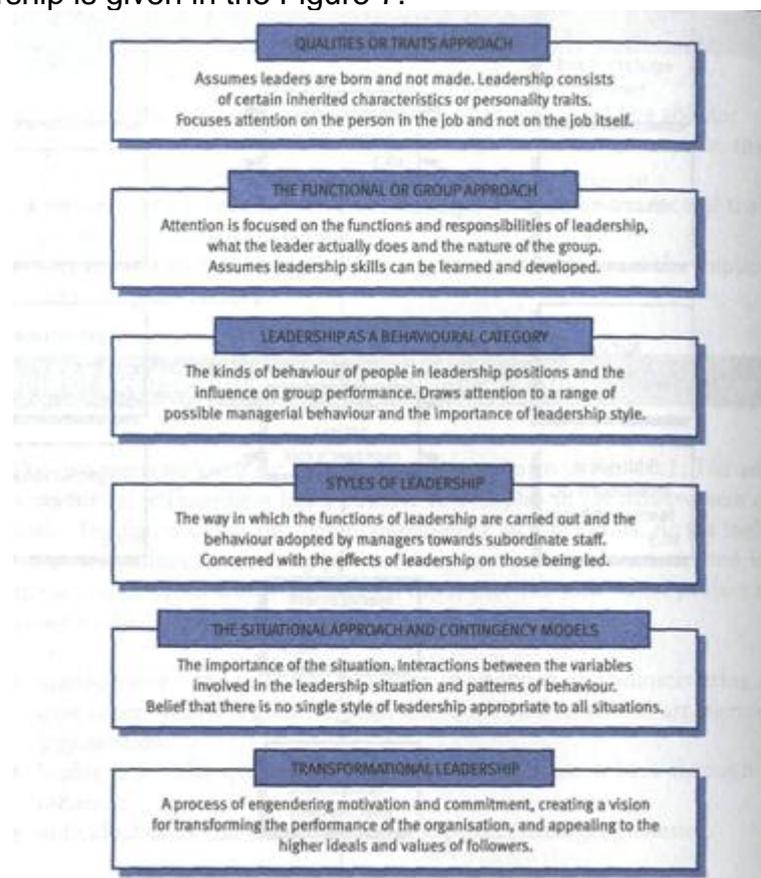
The following are the main characteristics of a leader:

- ability to solve problems;
- ability to cope in multiple cultures;
- tenacity and capability of pursuing issues;
- ability to communicate;
- sense of humor;
- familiarity and knowledge of the business;
- prior experience in projects.

The key responsibilities for project leaders are definition of the project, project organization, dealing with the routine work, addressing issues and crises, doing real work in the project, and administrative coordination. The key traits are the following: sensitivity to the people in the project, interface to the project.

What kinds of knowledge and skills are crucial for leading international projects? For a successful lead of an international project there are several skill areas that are crucial for an international project: global organizing expertise, technical skills, cross-cultural skills, and global communication literacy.

Leadership involves the influencing of others through the personality or actions of the individual. The definition is therefore people-related. A framework for the study of managerial leadership is given in the Figure 7.



**Figure 7. A Framework for the Study of Managerial Leadership**

(source: Maylor, H. Project Management, 2005, p. 248)

An international project manager needs to lead project in a context of geographical, temporal, cultural, and organizational dispersion. He also has to lead heterogeneous stakeholders in a sensitive and creative way so that the accomplishment of challenging objectives would be ensured. This is all related to the people management.

The international project manager is responsible for a number of things such as staffing the project, involving all stakeholders at an early stage, conducting team-building sessions, assessing training needs, providing context, organising for success, continuously clarifying the project mission and scope, fostering a culture of open-mindedness and improvement, building and maintaining commitment and ensuring effective communication.

Communication is the key for increasing value in all types of the projects. It is usually modelled as a process where an idea travels through a channel from a sender to receiver. There is a wide range of modes which can be used to get a message across, for example face-to-face communication, chats or databases.

Communication models are very different. Communication can be verbal or in writing, personal or virtual, aimed at mainly informing people or at interacting with them and leading a dialogue. Verbal communication is per se synchronous which means that all the parties involved are engaged in the communication simultaneously. Due to technological advances, even written communication can be synchronous.

Communication and negotiation are processes that are vastly influenced by language and culture. Consequently, language diversity has an impact on the international project. One of the means to overcome the language barrier is visualisation.

Project managers routinely have to negotiate with a wide variety of organizational stakeholders for resources, contractual considerations, terms and conditions and so on. Effective project managers are often those individuals who approach negotiations in a systematic manner, taking their time to carefully analyze the nature of the negotiation, what they hope to achieve, and how much they are willing to offer so that their impact goal would be achieved. In principled negotiation, the primary objective is to seek win-win alternatives that allow both parties to negotiate and gain their goals.

## **Conclusion and Q&A**

### **Questions (V)**

- What do you think, how much planning is needed in international projects?
- Why is it difficult to develop good plans?
- What are the main planning tasks performed as part of project time and resources management?
- What does the project's organization structure define?
- What are the specifics in planning the time, costs, and quality of an international project?
- What is important for the efficient internal and external co-ordination of an international project?

### **Questions (VI)**

- How would you structure risks?
- What are the key stages of the risk management cycle?

### **Questions (VII)**

- What is involved in monitoring and controlling projects?
- What is control in the context of project management?

Show the activities that must be completed during the final phases of the project.

### **Questions (VIII)**

- In your opinion, what kind of competence is the most important for an international project manager in order to successfully deliver an international project?
- How does language diversity affect international projects?
- Why do communication styles differ from each other?