

PROJECT AND PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Traditional and Structured Methods

PMI · PRINCE2 · Turner · the waterfall origins

PAPER 01 / 03

A Furtherance reference compendium on the intellectual traditions behind organisational design, leadership, execution, and culture.

IN THIS PAPER

This paper opens the Project and Program Management series in Furtherance's reference library. It covers the traditional, plan-driven tradition – the standards and structured methods that professionalised delivery. The question it answers: how did organisations learn to deliver defined work predictably, and where do the classic methods fit?

The structured tradition descends from the sequential “waterfall” model of the 1970s. PMI codified a global body of knowledge; PRINCE2 built a governed, stage-gated method; Turner gave the field its scholarship, framing the project as a temporary organisation.

Project Management Institute PMBOK Guide, 1996–

The professional standard · body of knowledge

CORE THESIS

Project management is a **profession** with a shared body of knowledge. Classic practice centres on the **iron triangle** – balancing scope, time and cost to deliver quality – managed through defined process groups. (The waterfall lineage traces to Winston Royce's 1970 sequential model, ironically offered as a flawed baseline.)

FRAMEWORK

Element	What it covers
The iron triangle	Scope, time and cost constrain quality
Process groups	Initiate, plan, execute, monitor and control, close
Knowledge areas	Scope, schedule, cost, risk, quality, stakeholders, and more
Recent shift (PMBOK 7)	From processes to principles, performance domains and tailoring

METHODOLOGY

A consensus professional standard maintained by a global institute, backed by certification.

SIGNIFICANCE AND CRITIQUE

The dominant global standard, and the reason project management is a recognised profession. The critique: it can be heavy and process-bound, better suited to well-defined projects than to novel or fast-changing ones.

PRINCE2 Projects in Controlled Environments, 1996–

Structured method · governance and control

CORE THESIS

A structured, **process-based method** emphasising governance, continued business justification, and control through defined stages and clear roles. It manages by **stages** and by **exception**, escalating only when tolerances are breached.

FRAMEWORK

Component	Examples
Principles	Business justification; learn from experience; manage by stages
Themes	Business case, organisation, quality, risk, change, progress
Processes	Directing, initiating, controlling stages, closing
Product-based planning	Define the products before the activities

METHODOLOGY

A government-origin method, now widely adopted across the public and private sectors.

SIGNIFICANCE AND CRITIQUE

Strong on governance, business justification and control, and widely used in the UK and Europe. The critique: it can be bureaucratic, and possessing the method is not the same as the competence to run projects well.

Rodney Turner *The Handbook of Project-Based Management, 1993*

Project scholarship · the temporary organisation

CORE THESIS

A project is best understood as a **temporary organisation** created to deliver beneficial change. The right management approach depends on how well the **goals** and the **methods** are defined – which yields distinct types of project.

FRAMEWORK

Goals / methods defined?	Project type and approach
Goals yes, methods yes	Engineering-like – plan and execute
Goals yes, methods no	Product development – milestone-driven
Goals no, methods yes	Systems / IT – clarify goals as you go
Goals no, methods no	Research / change – exploratory, emergent

METHODOLOGY

Academic synthesis bridging project-management practice and organisation theory.

SIGNIFICANCE AND CRITIQUE

Gave the field intellectual rigour and the temporary-organisation lens, and the goals-and-methods matrix usefully warns against one-size delivery. The critique: it is more academic than the practitioner standards.

A NOTE ON EVIDENCE

A note on fit: the structured methods excel where goals and methods are well defined, and strain where they are not. A method is not a competence – heavy process applied to novel, uncertain work adds cost without control. Match the weight of the method to the clarity of the work; that mismatch is exactly what the agile reaction, in the next paper, set out to fix.

Synthesis

Contribution	Nature	Key idea	Best for
PMI / PMBOK	Body of knowledge	Iron triangle; process groups	Defined projects; profession
PRINCE2	Structured method	Governance; manage by stages	Controlled, justified delivery
Turner	Scholarship	Temporary organisation; project types	Matching approach to project

FOR THE OPERATOR

Traditional project management professionalised delivery – a standardised body of knowledge and the iron triangle (PMI), a governed, stage-gated method (PRINCE2), and the project as a temporary organisation whose management should fit its type (Turner). For the operator: structured methods shine when goals and methods are well defined, and strain when they are not – the strain that produced the agile reaction, which the next paper takes up.