PM101: Lecture 6

The sponsor and the project manager

Photos: NASA; RMP Archive

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Creative tension

Project Manager

Sponsor

Is the focus of delivery of the project output

Orchestrates the resources to deliver the project

Keeps the project under control

Delivers the project output

Acts as the customer for the project output

Represents the organisation to the project

Represents the project to the organisation

Photos: Fauxels, Pexel.com

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The role of the sponsor

Defines business benefit or requirements

Agrees project definition and objectives

Sets project strategy and priorities

Sets parameters for time, cost and quality

Specifies constraints

Monitors project's external environment

Monitors project performance

Monitors benefits realisation

Champions the project, frees resources

Can redefine or cancel the project

Takes delivery at project completion

Supports the Project Manager in their role

Acts as the customer for the project output

Represents the organisation to the project

Represents the project to the organisation

Photo: Fauxels, Pexel.com

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What makes an effective sponsor?

- **The sponsor is passionate about the project.**
- They have the right power and influence to support the project.
- **They take a close personal interest in the failures as well as the successes.**
- They see their personal success as linked to the success of the project.

Sir Richard Branson, Virgin Galactic

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What undermines effective sponsorship?

- **The sponsor is not senior enough to be able to take major decisions, or stand up to key stakeholders.**
- The sponsor is appointed for convenience, not because they have the right skills or commitment.
- **The sponsor does not devote enough time to be effective.**
- There is a succession of sponsors throughout the project.

UK FiReControl project – abandoned after over £450 million was wasted.

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The role of the project manager

Is the focus of delivery of the project output

Orchestrates the resources to deliver the project

Keeps the project under control

Delivers the project output

Designs the project and builds the team

Monitors and controls project progress

Keeps the Sponsor informed of progress and problems

Recommends changes or cancellation

Delivers the project to time, cost and quality goals

Meets defined project success criteria

Hands project over to the Sponsor at completion

Manages the Sponsor's and stakeholders' expectations

Works with the Sponsor, helping them in their role

Photo: Fauxels, Pexel.com

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The sponsor and the project manager

Top management

Governance structure

Sponsor

Defines business benefit or requirements

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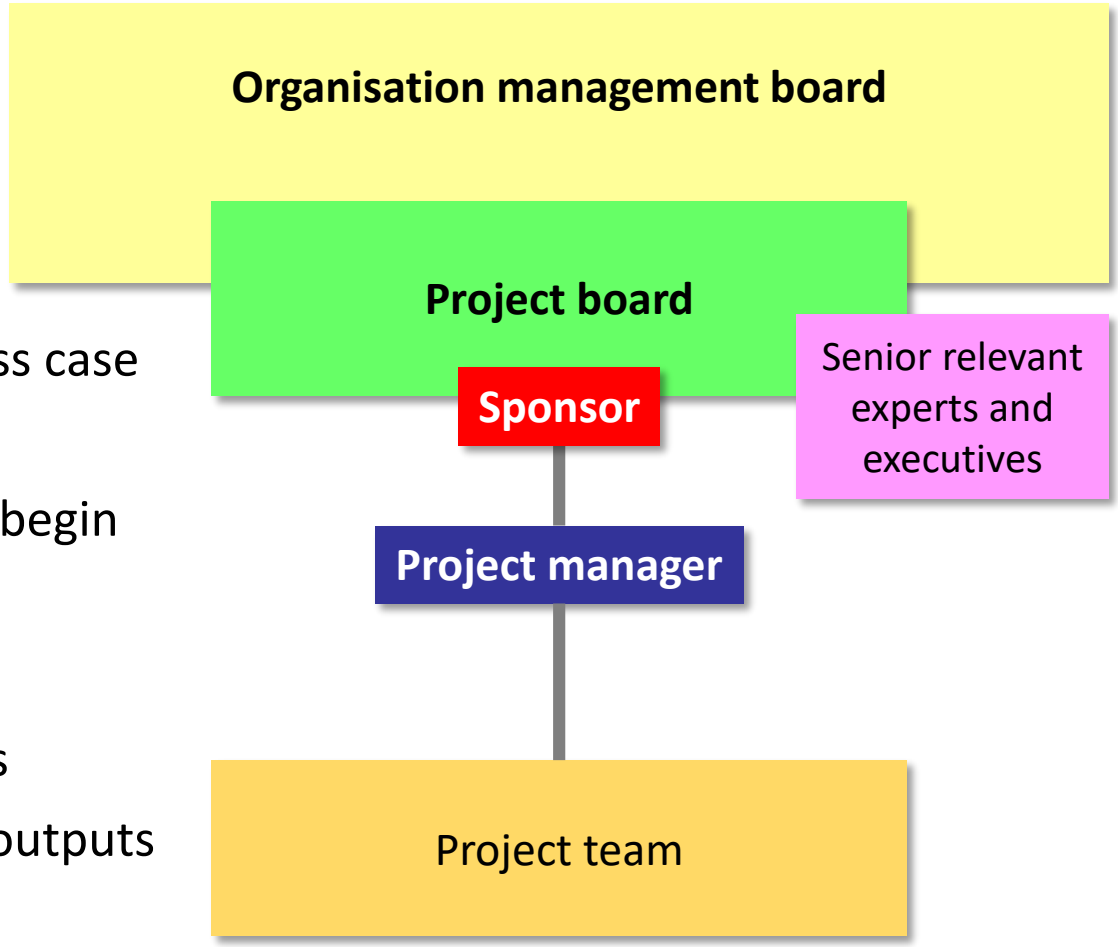
Project governance

The project board:

- approves the business case
- starts the project
- allows each stage to begin
- approves payments
- approves changes
- resolves major issues
- signs off completed outputs
- closes the project



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What is project management?

Project management is the set of management activities that leads a team of people with defined roles and responsibilities to meet a strategic goal by means of a successful project.

Management is about dealing with complexity

Leadership is about dealing with change

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The practical skills of a project manager

Skills in project management methods and tools

Organising skills

Technical and specialised discipline skills

Creative problem-solving skills

Project manager

Knowledge of project sponsor role

Knowledge and awareness of project environment

Professional training

Team and people skills

Interpersonal skills

Basic business and management skills

Skills in communicating with a range of stakeholders

Morris, P. (1997). *The Management of Projects*, London: Thomas Telford, p304 and www.syntelinc.com.

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The character of a project manager

Credibility

Takes ownership of the project and responsibility for its success

Demonstrates integrity and trustworthiness

Respects people and is respected

Confident leadership

Keeps everyone focussed on the output and the outcome

Stands up to unreasonable demands

Motivates and inspires

Tolerance for ambiguity

Copes well with complex and ambiguous situations

Is able to make decisions with incomplete information

Shows creativity in handling challenges and issues

High and low level focus

Encourages innovation – maintains stability

Behaves flexibly – but is firm when necessary

Sees the big picture – understands the details

Gray, C. & Larson, E. (2008). *Project Management, The Managerial Process*, New York: McGraw-Hill; Newton, R. (2009). *The project manager*. Harlow: Pearson.; Pinto, J. (2007). *Project Management*, Upper Saddle River, NJ, US: Pearson, p125. Picture: fauxels from Pexels.com

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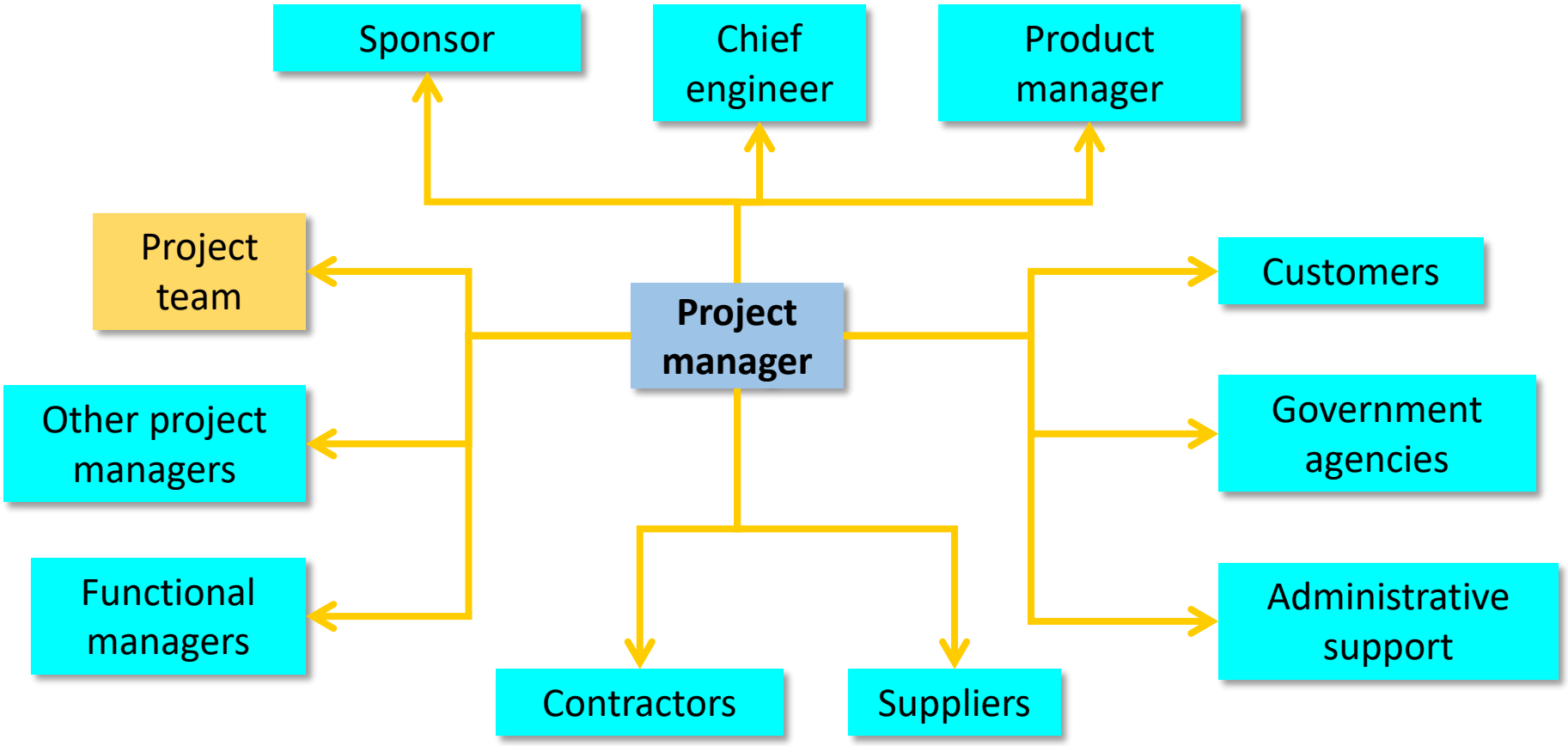
Working with project stakeholders



Gray, C. & Larson, E. (2008), *Project Management, The Managerial Process*, New York: McGraw-Hill. * New product development

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Why project stakeholders matter

"The old-fashioned view of managing projects emphasized directing and controlling subordinates; the new perspective emphasizes managing project stakeholders and anticipating change as the most important jobs."

"All too often project managers have been derailed because they were blindsided by someone whose position or power they had not anticipated."

Gray, C. & Larson, E. (2008), *Project Management, The Managerial Process*, New York: McGraw-Hill. Picture: Negative Space from Pexels.com

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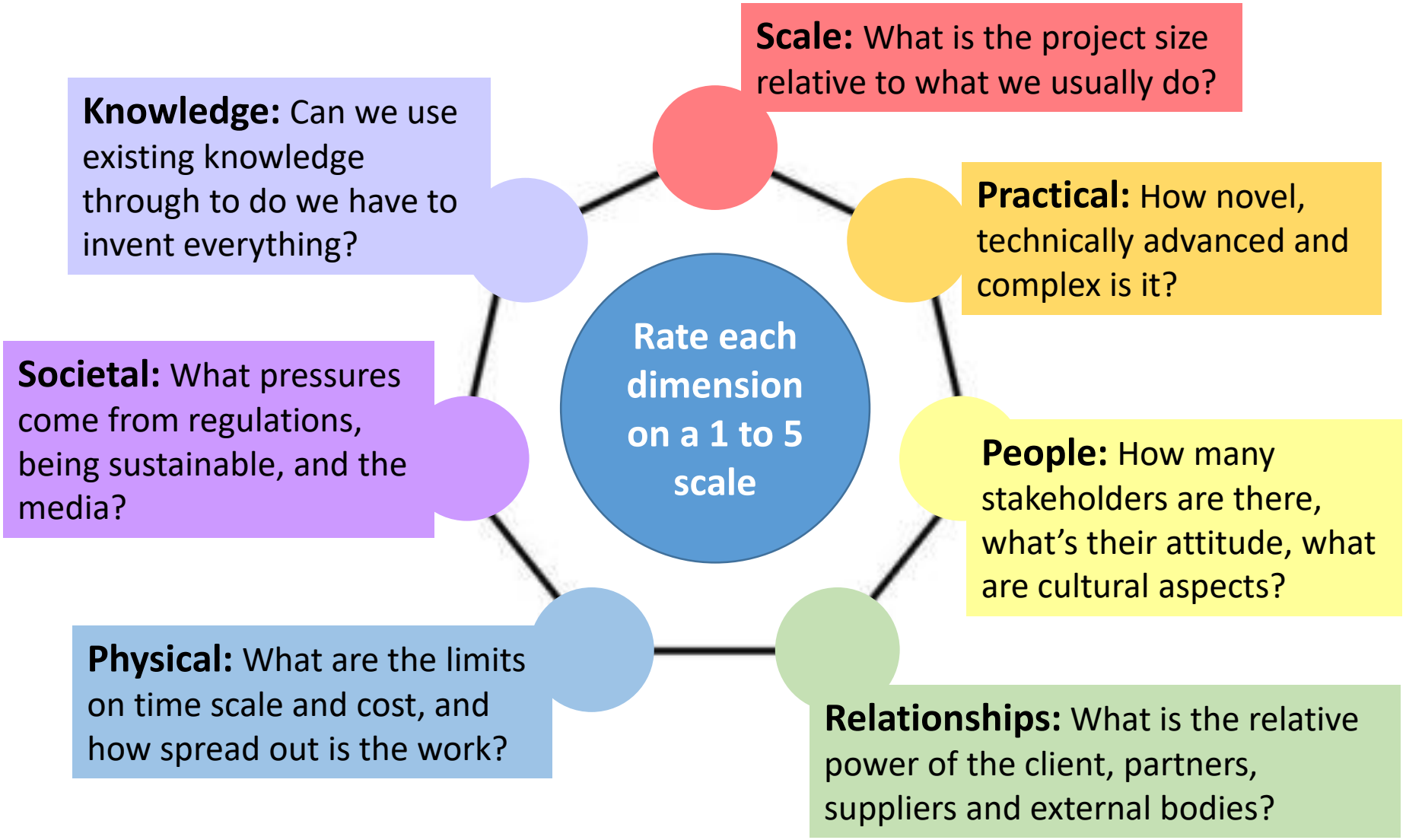
A more comprehensive challenges model



Shenhar, A. & Dvir, D. (2007). *Reinventing project management*, Boston, US: Harvard Business School Press

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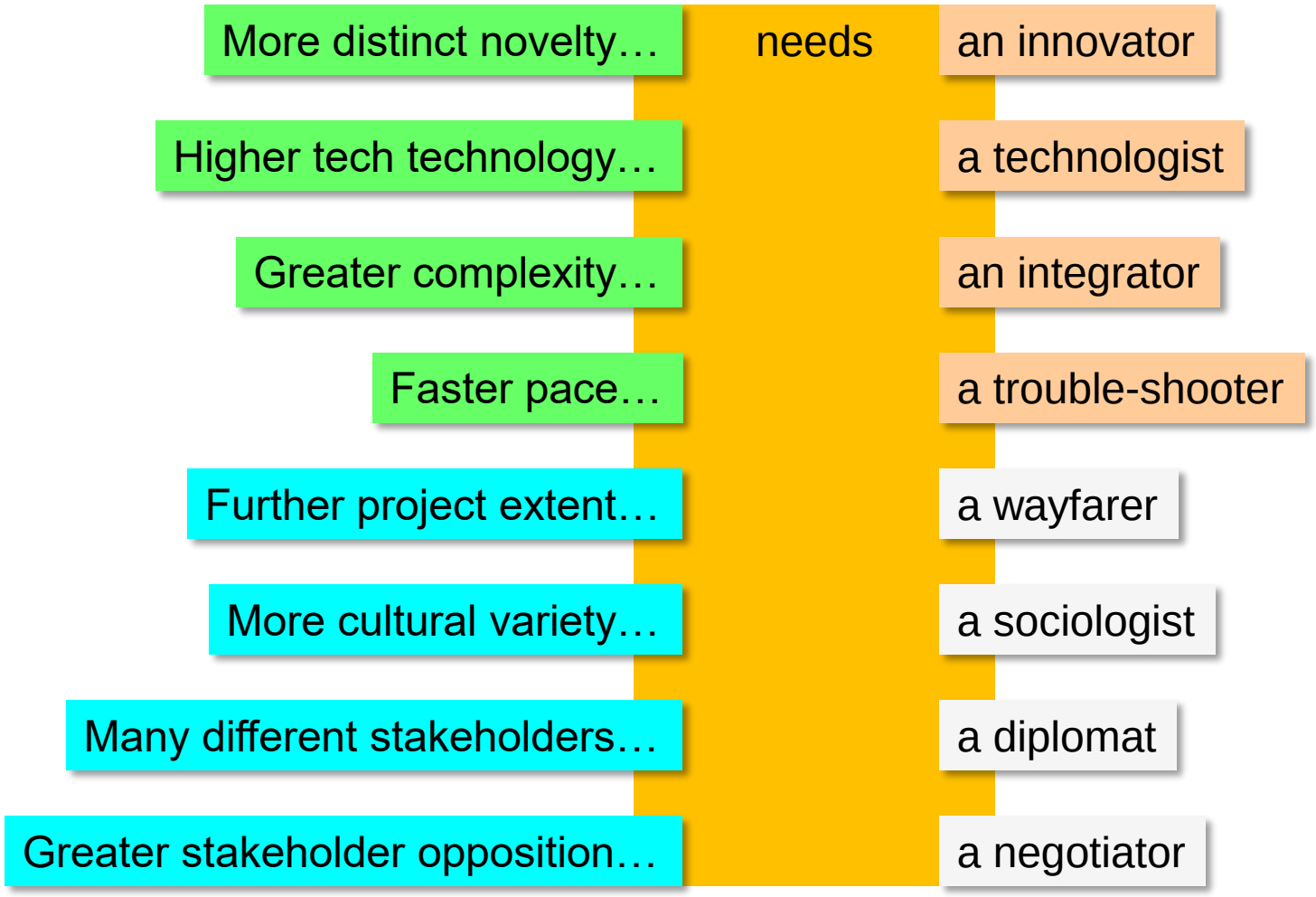
The right project manager for the project



Koster, K. (2010). *International project manager*. London: Sage; Shenhar, A. & Dvir, D. (2007). *Reinventing project management*. Boston, US: Harvard Business School Press

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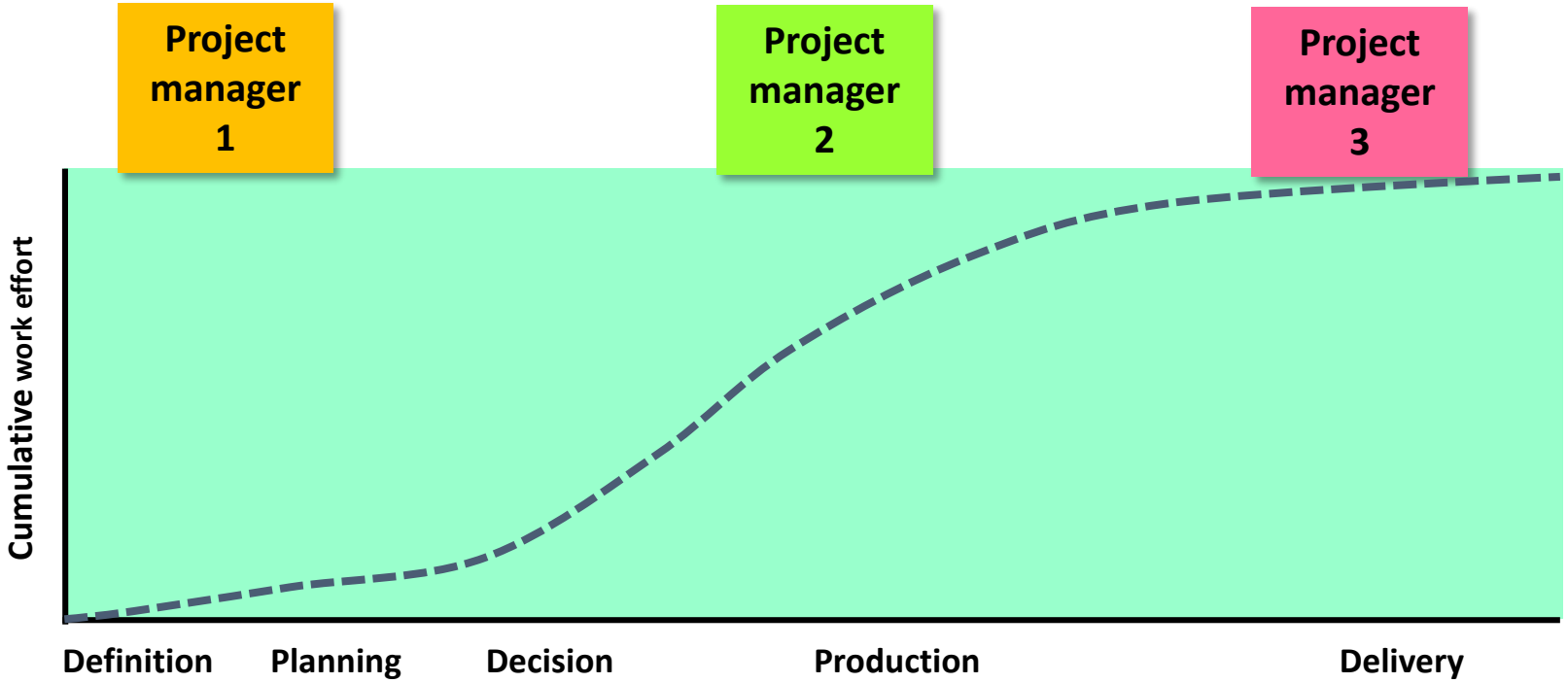
The project manager may change:

Projects may start in one form and continue in another



Early tasks are **preparatory**:
- Project strategy
- Budgeting and scheduling
- Project design
- Negotiating

Middle tasks are **progressive**:
- Solution design
- Solution development
- Solution delivery
- Management within plan

Later tasks are **conclusive**:
- Achieve delivery
- Resolve issues
- Get finished
- Get paid

From Morris, P. (1997), *The Management of Projects*, London: Thomas Telford, p250

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The project manager and sponsor: core ideas

An effective sponsor is passionate about the project and has the means to secure the money and resources it needs.

Ineffective sponsorship threatens the viability of the project.

A project governance structure ensures the sponsor and project manager conduct the project in the interests of the organisation – usually through a project board.

The project manager needs a broad range of practical skills.

They must demonstrate credibility, confident leadership, a high and low level focus and a tolerance for ambiguity.

The challenges facing the project will indicate the best traits to have in its project manager.

The project manager may change during the course of the project to ensure it has the right leadership for the stage it is at.

See Zavanak pages *The project sponsor, The project manager* and *Project governance*.

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