PM101: Lecture 7

Project teams

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Projects need a different approach

Think project	Inputs, outputs, outcomes
Act project	Motivation, co-operation, goal focus
Drive project	Plan, monitor, measure, adjust
Learn project	Reflect, improve, embed

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What's the difference?

*A **group** is a number of people located, gathered or classed together*

*A **team** is a number of people brought together to achieve a common objective*

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The basic challenges of project teams

Always a compromise

People may be imposed

Need to be kept focused

Personalities and politics can play a big part

People can be tempted away

Always a range of skills

ZAVANAK.com

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Stages of team development

Forming Team members come together – high dependence on leader

Storming They **test** areas of disagreement and focus on the goal

Norming They **establish** how to co-operate, and have clear roles

Re-forming They **consolidate** on what they achieved so far

Performing They **achieve the task** effectively – shared vision, high autonomy

Adjourning They **learn lessons** and disperse

Tuckman, B. and Jensen, M. (1977) "Stages in small group development revisited ", *Group and Organisational Studies*, 2, p419, cited in Pinto (2007, p191).

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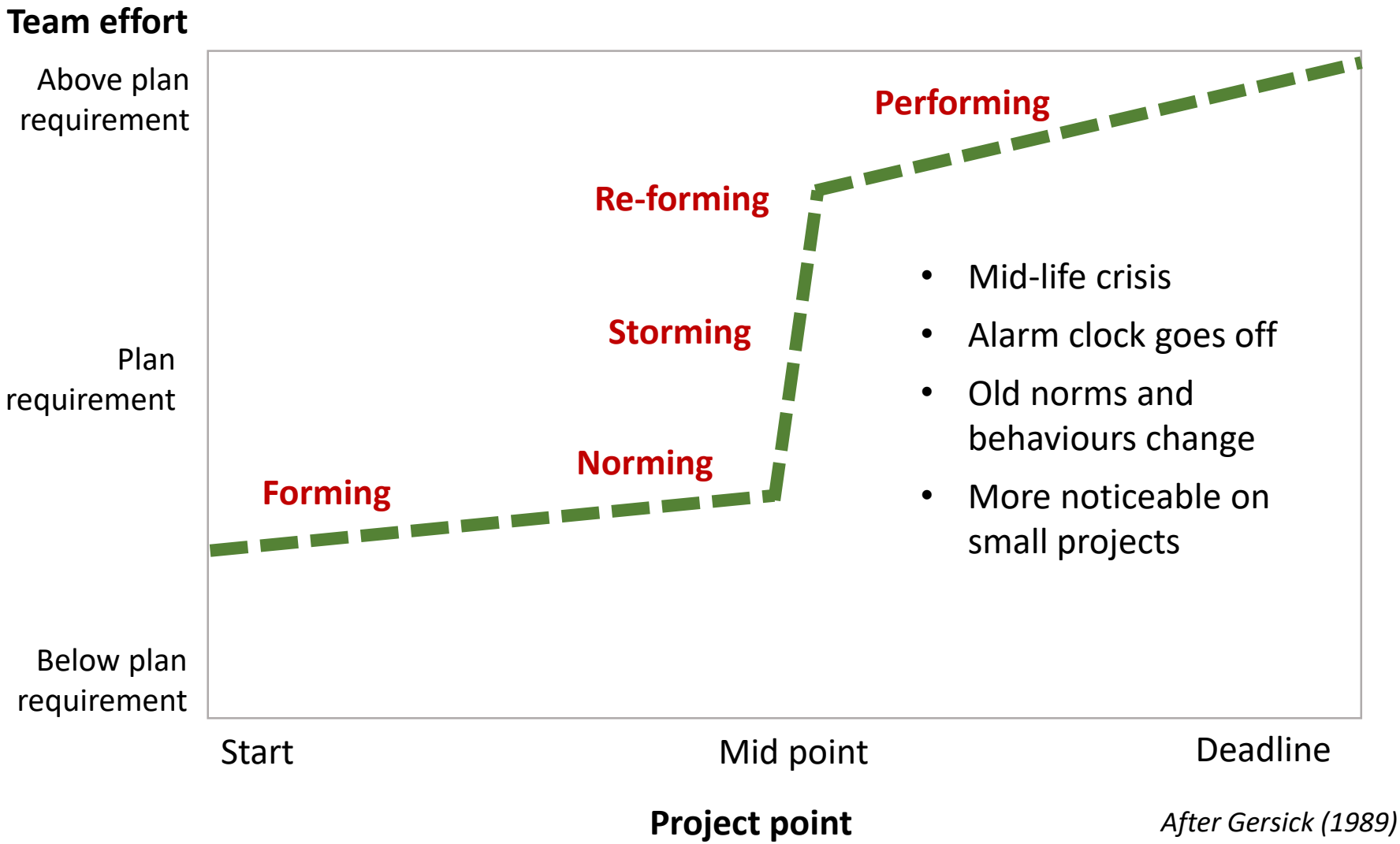
Punctuated equilibrium



After Gersick (1989)

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

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Belbin team roles

"A tendency to behave, contribute and interrelate with others in a particular way." *Dr Meredith Belbin*

Each role has positive qualities ***BUT*** **Allowable weaknesses**

Photo: Public domain (Congressman Dan Lungren, Col. Mike Wehr with Folsom Dam Joint Federal Project team members, 2014)

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Belbin team roles

Implementer - energetic and well organised

Shaper – gets things done

Completer-finisher – thorough and highly focussed

Doing / acting

Taken from belbin.com, team roles © Belbin Associates; Leading Edge 1996;
Morris, P. (1997). *The Management of Projects*, London: Thomas Telford, p260

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Belbin team roles

Thinking / problem solving

Specialist – holds rare and precious knowledge

Plant – full of novel ideas

Monitor-evaluator – makes sensible judgments

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Belbin team roles

People / feelings

Co-ordinator – helps the team work co-operatively

Teamworker – dependable and conscientious

Resource investigator – finds information and resources

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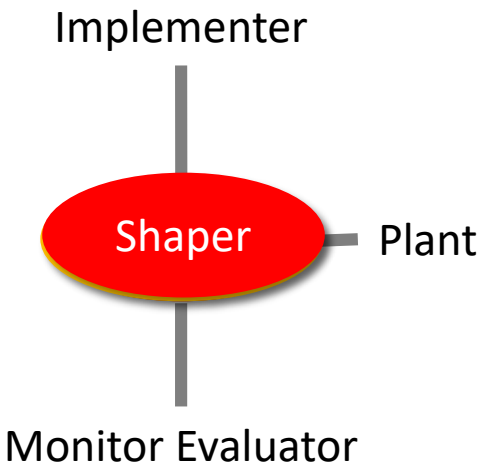
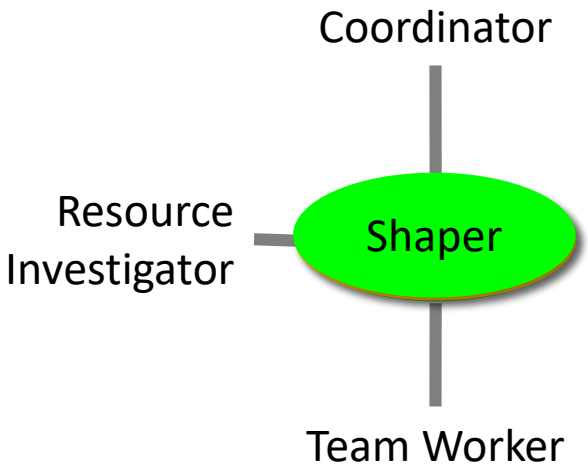
Getting the right team combinations



Manager

Colleague

Subordinate



- Constrained by their boss
- Infuriated by their colleague
- Frustrated by their subordinate

- Given freedom by their boss
- Helped by their colleague
- Supported by their subordinate

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Finding your Belbin team role

- **Fill in a multiple-choice assessment, showing how much you agree with various statements**
- Each statement is associated with a team role, but you don't know which
- **Depending on the scores the assessment produces, you will find which roles you are best and least suited for.**

- **Natural role** – You should find few difficulties working in this role
- **Manageable role** – You can work in this role reasonably comfortably
- **Role best avoided** – You will find working this way difficult and stressful

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What creates high performance teams?

Everyone shares a sense of common purpose

Members recognise each others skills and use them cooperatively

Roles are balanced and shared to facilitate tasks and build morale

The focus is on solving problems not power struggles

Differences of opinion are encouraged for open discussion

Mistakes are seen as opportunities, to encourage creativity and risk taking

Everyone sets high personal standards and focuses on the project objective

Members strongly identify with the team for professional and personal growth

Gray, C. & Larson, E. (2008), *Project Management, The Managerial Process*, New York: McGraw-Hill; Quinn, R. et al (2010), *Becoming a master manager*, John Wiley. Photo: Faulex, Pexels.com.

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What about culture?

Culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another... Culture should be distinguished from human nature on one side, and from the individual's personality on the other.
Hofstede (1997)

Collective programming

Values – Cultural priorities
(keep face)

+

Attitudes – A learned tendency to act in a certain way, based on values
(show respect)

=

Behaviours – Actions based on values and attitudes
(never disagree with a superior)

Koster, K. (2010). *International Project Management*. London: Sage Publications, p78.

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Components of your culture

Koster, K. (2010). *International Project Management*. London: Sage Publications, p78.
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Being sensitive to culture in projects

Monitoring and controlling approaches need to understand team cultures

Some cultures accept remote monitoring; others expect personal presence

Many ‘soft’ aspects need to be tracked

- **Commitment of the project team to the goal**
- How clear and effective the communication is
- **Efficient data and information sharing**
- Respect for different cultures
- **Effective conflict resolution**

Koster, K. (2010). *International Project Management*. London: Sage Publications, p193.

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The modern project team

Project manager

Contractors

Key users

Core project team

Advisors

Suppliers

Partners

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Project teams: core ideas

Putting a project team together and keeping then together is not straightforward.

Teams go through stages of development.

A crucial stage is so-called 'storming' where team members resolve their doubts and can then focus on the goal.

People behave in different ways in a team context, as explained by Belbin team roles.

Getting people working in the right team role combinations is important for their well-being and project performance.

Individual and team behaviour is strongly influenced by culture.

Many project teams involve various parties working together, as in partnerships and joint ventures.

See Zavanak page *Project teams*.

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