5. THE PROJECT MANAGER

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Project management 101 *by Zavanak*

5.1 What is project management?

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Defining 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 carried out against an approved plan.

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How project management differs from operations management

Operations management	Project management
Repeat process or product	New process or product
Several objectives	One objective
Ongoing	One chance – limited life
Roles are stable	Roles vary over the course of the project
Well established systems to coordinate efforts	Systems must be created to coordinate efforts
Greater certainty of performance, cost, schedule	Greater uncertainty of performance, cost, schedule
Part of the line organisation	Outside the line organisation
Pillar of established practice	Challenges established ways
Supports status quo	Upsets status quo

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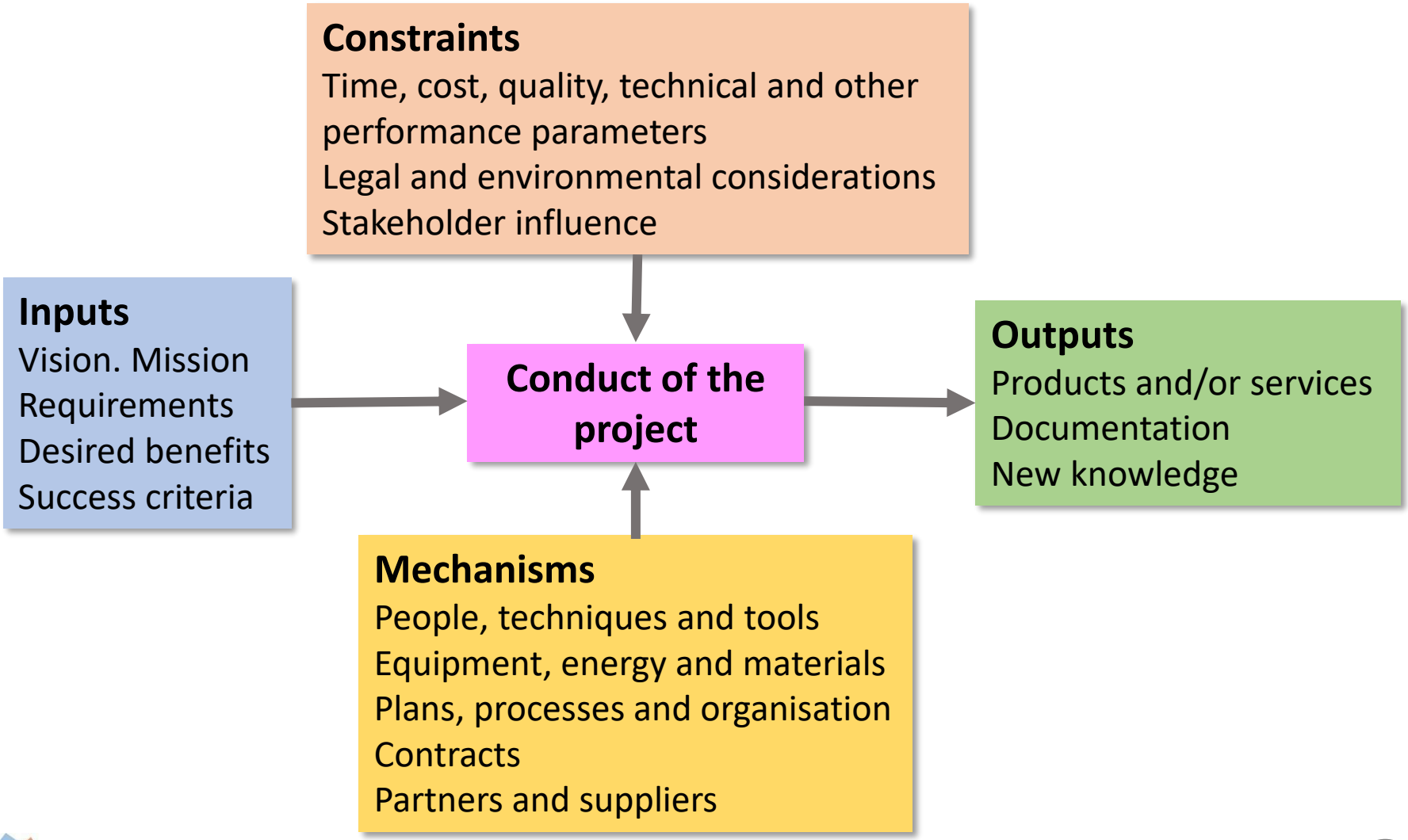
Integrating the components



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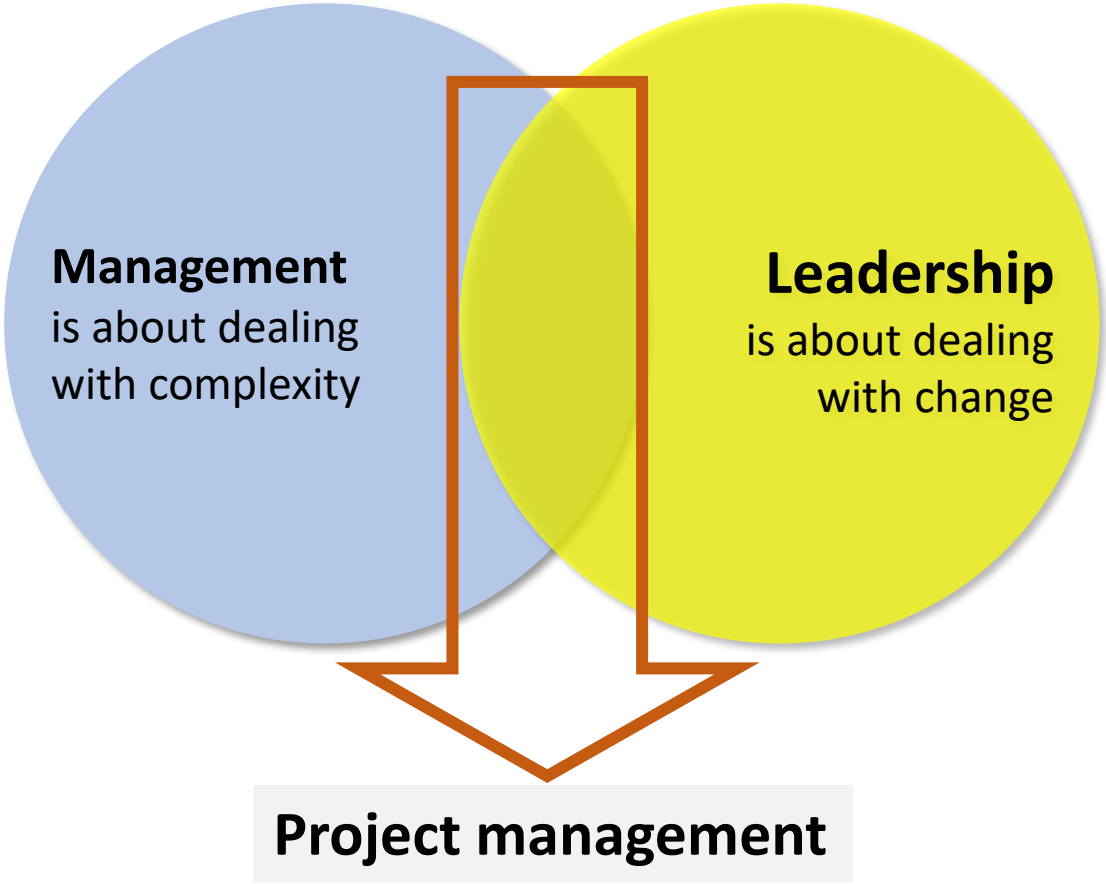
Managing and leading



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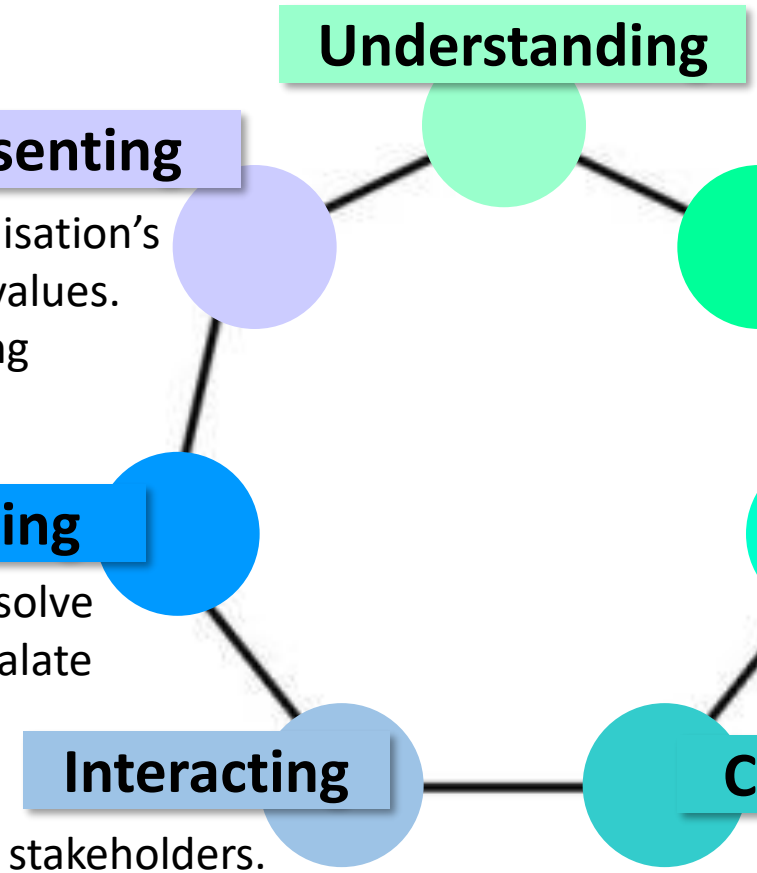
7 facets of project management



Understanding

Knowing what is going on in and around the project as a basis for action

Planning

Plotting and re-plotting the course of the project in response to events

Directing

Assigning actions for people to complete

Coordinating

Keeping internal teams, partners and suppliers working collaboratively and creatively

Interacting

Communicating with stakeholders. Building useful networks and alliances. Negotiating necessary changes to the project

Intervening

Getting involved to solve problems which escalate from work teams

Representing

Standing for the organisation's strategy, policies and values. Embodying the working culture

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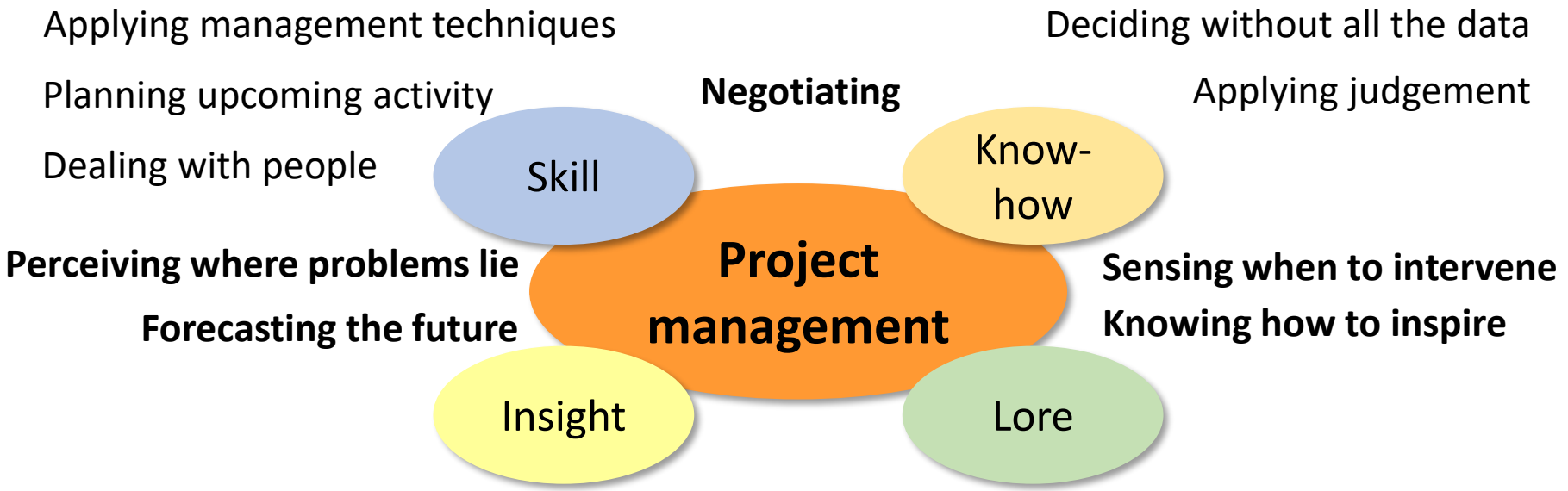
The nature of project management



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Project management pressures

What is approved at the start	What may occur during the project
Estimates and assumptions which are sensible and robust	Estimates turn out to be based on flawed assumptions and forecasts
Adequate timescale, budget and resources	**The deadline is brought forward, the budget is cut, resources are reassigned elsewhere**
An output specification which is clear and achievable	The specification changes in an uncontrolled way, costs and timescales escalate
Availability of people with the necessary skills and experience when needed	**The right people are unavailable, good people leave for better prospects, there is high reliance on contractors**
Partners and suppliers who promise full co-operation and working to contract	Partners or suppliers prove inadequate, fail, or renege on their contractual obligations
The sponsor and project board are well-engaged and supportive	**The sponsor and project board don't take the project seriously and allow others to control what happens**
Project fundamentals (like accountability, reporting, risk management and change control) are in place and will be applied	Processes are not operated consistently, leading to a lack of awareness and control of what is happening – accountability for performance is unclear

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Project management is a substantial, necessary, overhead

Directing people

Planning activity

Marshalling resources

Monitoring progress

Organising work

Dealing with stakeholders

Handling the unexpected

How much?

It depends:

- How complex?
- How novel?
- How extensive?

15% to 20% of total project budget

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