



APMG-International
Accrediting Professionals

APMG Maturity Index: Service Overview

Right Practice ⇨ Best Performance



Introduction

The rate of project failure is still unacceptably high across all industries - as many as 90% of high complexity projects fail, while 50% of all projects fail to deliver on time, within budget, or expected benefits.

Over time organizations usually develop project controls and governance mechanisms to a level of maturity that can cope with the complexity of projects they routinely undertake. However, in the absence of a systematic understanding of organizational maturity and project complexity, these controls are often sub-optimal, sometimes due to excessive bureaucracy or blind spots.

Higher maturity scores result in better performance by delivering more projects on time and within budget - thus creating more value. In Australia, the government has mandated the use of the APMG P3M3® maturity assessment tool delivered by an Accredited Consulting Organization (ACO) as it recognises its value in enabling organizations to understand where their strengths and weaknesses lie. Throughout the world, maturity is seen as key to improved project success rates and business results. For example at London Underground, rising two maturity levels in three and a half years resulted in savings of £422 million.

But understanding your maturity level is just the beginning. The most significant project failures usually occur when organizations unwittingly undertake projects of a much higher or different type of complexity than normal. Without knowing it, they have fallen over the “complexity cliff.”

Organizations that have undergone maturity assessments are now asking more challenging questions:

- How does my maturity compare with similar organizations in my industry and geography?
- What is the right level of maturity for my organization to handle the challenges it faces without unnecessary investment?
- What are the priority areas for improvements where investment should provide the greatest return and value for money without increasing bureaucracy and costs?
- How can we identify projects outside the norm that require different levels of controls?

The joint venture between APMG-International and Helmsman Institute has created a global database and tools – the APMG Maturity Index - which will answer these questions. APMG ACOs have access to the database and tools, for a fee, meaning that they will be able to utilize even wider sources of data to enhance the value of client maturity assessments. The database will also provide evidence-based research insights to support their recommendations for improvement.



APMG Maturity Index Reports – a route map to higher maturity

The APMG Maturity Index services are used to determine the optimum level of organizational maturity and project control. ACOs have the unique ability to assess the inherent complexity of an organization's projects. These complexity profiles determine the type and level of controls / maturity that should be in place – ACOs create a bespoke controls / maturity baseline for each project or across all projects. ACOs then compare the actual types of controls that are in place to identify any gaps with the baseline. The results of client assessments carried out by ACOs are input to the system and the following reports can be produced from it:

- **Right Practice Predictor Report** – a report which, based on specific project characteristics, indicates the detailed maturity profile required to optimise improvements in project management and deliver best performance for the organization as a whole. The report shows the recommended maturity profile, the current maturity profile and highlights specific actions to be undertaken. Also, reports for a representative sample of projects will show the controls needed for those projects which have exceptional characteristics either side of the norm. The underlying IPR is based on extensive international research and analytical rigour
- **Project Complexity Assessment Report** – a report which highlights the drivers of complexity or inherent risk across both hard and soft factors. This measurement allows “apples-to-apples” comparisons within and across organizations and sectors.
- **Project Controls Assessment Report** – calibrated to each project, the maturity index project assurance approach establishes the required controls based on the characteristics of the project under review. The report shows the specific controls you would expect to see across a wide range of project factors in addition to those measures that are actually in place.

The package of assessments and reports can be customised to the specific needs of each organization by the ACOs who are experienced in the use of the product.

Example Reports:

Full example reports for all Maturity Index services are available in the ACO section of the APMG network for download.



Right Practice Predictor Report

PjM3 maturity profile

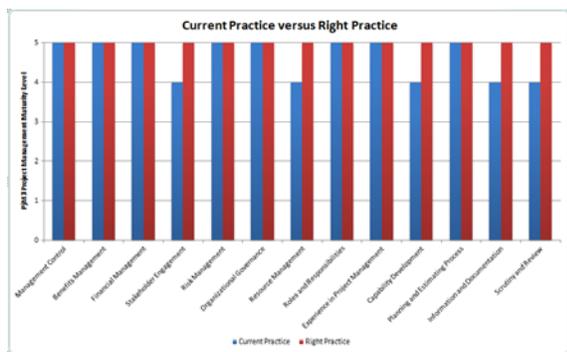
Reports show the ACO's detailed assessment scores for each of the perspectives as well as the client's current P3M3 maturity assessment profile .

Benefits Management	Never	Occasionally	Yes Sometimes	Yes Always
Level 1				✓
Level 2			✓	
Level 3		✓		
Level 4	✓			
Level 5	✓			

Financial Management	Never	Occasionally	Yes Sometimes	Yes Always
Level 1				✓
Level 2			✓	
Level 3			✓	
Level 4		✓		
Level 5	✓			

Recommended 'right practice' PjM3 maturity profile

Reports show the gaps between current maturity levels and recommended 'right practice' maturity levels.





Recommended areas for improvement - Overview

Reports indicate where improvements are required to achieve right practice maturity levels.

Process Perspective or Generic Attribute	Current Practice versus Right Practice		Recommendation	
Management Control	Current ≈ Right	●	Maintain at	Level 3
Benefits Management	Current < Right	●	Improve to	Level 3
Financial Management	Current > Right	●	Maintain at	Level 3
Stakeholder Engagement	Current < Right	●	Improve to	Level 3
Risk Management	Current ≈ Right	●	Maintain at	Level 3
Organisational Governance	Current ≈ Right	●	Maintain at	Level 3
Resource Management	Current < Right	●	Improve to	Level 3
Roles and Responsibilities	Current ≈ Right	●	Maintain at	Level 2
Experience in Project Management	Current ≈ Right	●	Maintain at	Level 3
Capability Development	Current < Right	●	Improve to	Level 3
Planning and Estimating Process	Current < Right	●	Improve to	Level 3
Information and Documentation	Current > Right	●	Maintain at	Level 3
Scrutiny and Review	Current < Right	●	Improve to	Level 3

Recommended areas for improvement – Detailed Attributes

The reports also describe the attributes that must be developed to achieve the recommended improvement target levels given the unique project(s) characteristics.

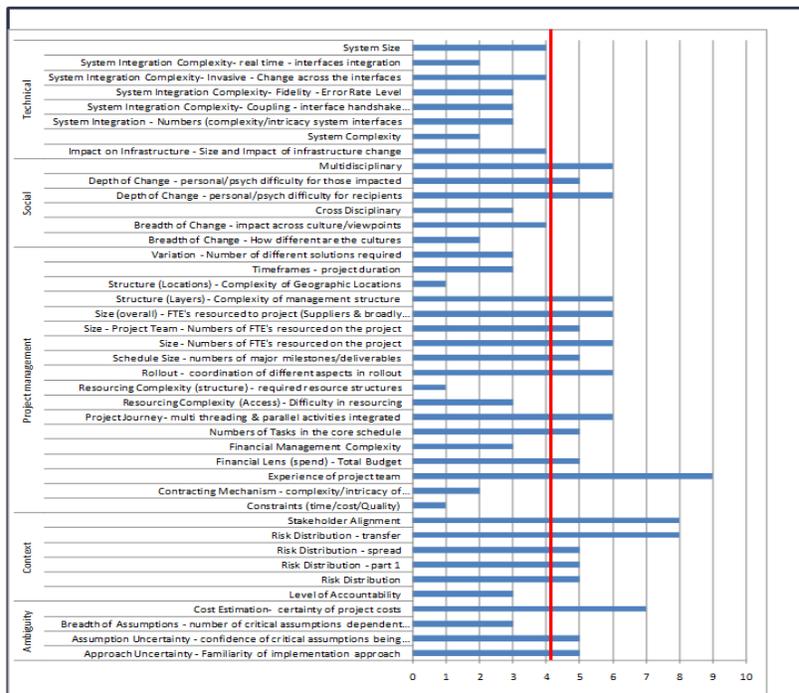
Benefits Management		Level 3
Steering committee	How is the steering committee managed?	SC standing agenda, clear terms of reference
Stage gates usage	How does the organisation use stage gates?	Full stages across the project with project hindsight and risk focus
Project Closure stage gate management	How is the Project Closure stage managed?	Closure with benefits reconciliation
Approval type	What is the mechanism for approval through a gate?	Full governance review, documentation and presentation
Post project audits	How does the PMO Conduct reviews at the end of a project to apply any learning to other projects or the overall methods?	PMO oversees or conducts as standard PIR
Structure of the Steering Committee	How are members of the Steering Committee selected?	Steering Committee selection based on ability to provide resources and direction
Scope management	What approach is used to manage Project scope?	Formal governance over scope with scope change requests
Approval mechanisms for Project decisions	What mechanism does the organisation use for making Project delivery decisions?	Change control mechanisms in Project Team with Business Owner oversight



Project Complexity Assessment Report

Complexity profile

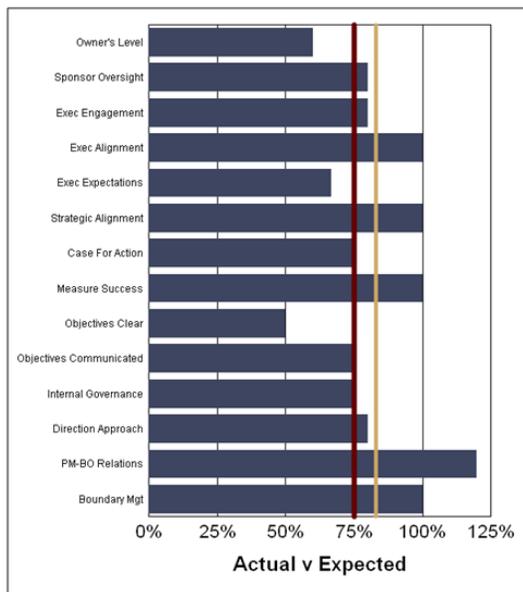
Reports show the inherent risk or complexity drivers for an individual project or representative sample of projects.



Project Controls Assessment Report

Recommended project controls profile

Conventional project assurance approaches focus on the “hard” technical and compliance factors and neglect the “soft” non-technical and contextual project factors that research has shown are equally important to project success. In contrast, the APMG approach covers a comprehensive range of “hard” and “soft” research-based project performance factors to provide greater insight and rigour. Reports provide a detailed assessment of the actual and required control level for over 200 project controls.





Quality and confidentiality of data and reports

Clients may have two major concerns about using databases of this type:

Consistency - The database is a repository for data provided from different data feeds. The independence and rigour of assessments has an impact on the consistency of maturity levels and therefore the quality of comparisons made within the database. The Index is comprised of maturity assessment level scores from three different categories: APMG verified, accredited data feeds from Registered Consultants and self-assessment. Categories are only compared on a like for like basis. Therefore the scores from self-assessments can only be compared with other self-assessments within the database and the reports produced will indicate the potential inadequacies of this method.

Confidentiality - The confidentiality of data is protected by anonymizing it on entry to the database and only providing reports against a minimum of five other organisations.

Data mapping

The mapping between the Helmsman project control factors and the P3M3 framework has been undertaken by technical experts from APMG-International, Van Dam Orenda (a major ACO) and Helmsman. They have worked through an iterative process of assessing the fit between each of the control factors and the process perspectives or generic attributes, and then aligning the scoring levels between the two systems.

This work has been completed for PjM3 Project Management Maturity. The extensive range of Helmsman control factors provided coverage across the Process Perspectives and Generic Attributes in a granular mapping that APMG, Van Dam Orenda and Helmsman fully endorse as being robust and accurate. The system will be periodically updated and extended as more data is collected and additional control factors are developed.

Technical experts:

Graham Bosman, Assessor, APMG

Frank van Dam, CEO and senior consultant, Van Dam Orenda

Brett Nan Tie, Head of Product Development, Helmsman International Pty Ltd

Project complexity and control framework origin

The overarching models, structures and detailed factors are based on ten years of field observation in the USA, Europe, Australasia and Asia, mostly in Western oriented organisations and more recently research conducted by the Helmsman Institute in cooperation with the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) and the University of Newcastle, Australia.

The initial research phase was to identify which business practices organisations used to manage initiatives. The research consisted of extensive field work using Helmsman and academic staff across large public and private sector organisations in a number of countries. More than thirty large organisations had deep evaluations conducted to establish a library of business practices for evaluation. This library was extended through literature reviews to identify additional common business practices.

The result of this initial phase of research was the identification of approximately 300 initiative practices that participants identified as potentially contributing to initiative success. The deep analyses conducted between 2005 and 2010 identified a smaller set of practices which had consistently high correlation with initiative success. The Helmsman Institute and research partners are in the final stage of validating that these practices are statistically significant in terms of creating initiative success.



About APMG-International

APMG-International is a global Examination Institute accredited by the APM Group, the Official Accreditor of the The Cabinet Office. Through our international network of Accredited Consulting and Training Organizations we help end users develop their professional skills and organizations improve their processes through the adoption of worldwide best practice.



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