A CASE STUDY ON PROGRAM MANAGEMENT OFFICE IMPLEMENTATION IN A GLOBAL ORGANIZATION

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ABSTRACT

With change happening at a rapid pace, one common practice that organizations use is project management to improve internal processes and introduce innovation. However, research shows that the success rate of projects remains low. How can organizations best prepare themselves to increase project success?

The purpose of this research is to understand factors that causes the need for organizational change and how Program Management Office (PMO) practices can increase the success of projects. It is also important to explore how change was managed through Kotter's 8-Step Change Model and Bridge's Managing Transitions Concept. A case study of how a global organization implemented the PMO will be analysed through a qualitative research approach with semi-structured interviews.

Findings from this research shows that change agents are essential in helping lead change, the PMO is essential in providing support at a strategic project portfolio level, executive management support are essential to PMO success, and program managers require technical and sociocultural aspects of project management.

KEY WORDS: Program Management / Organizational Change / Kotter's 8-Step Change Model / Bridges' Managing Transitions

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Rupert Murdoch, an Australian businessman best known as the CEO of the conglomerate News Corporation, once said, “The world is changing very fast. Big will not beat small anymore. It will be the fast beating the slow.” (Crane, 2004) In today’s global business environment, technology continues to evolve where information, knowledge, services, and products are readily available. In addition, with intense competition combined with the emergence of social media where consumer expectations can shift overnight, organizations must constantly adapt to the number of changing factors. Better products and services must be produced faster and cheaper in order to remain competitive. In these markets, manufacturers tend to operate under pressure to accelerate product development and reduce time to market in order to meet customers' changing needs and demand for cutting-edge technologies (Lieberman and Montgomery, 1988; Calantone and Benedetto, 2000). Whether the changes are internal or external, organizations must be agile and commit to continuous innovation to stay ahead of the competition.

With change happening at a rapid pace, one common practice that organizations use is project management as an efficient way to improve internal processes and introduce innovation. Business leaders and experts agree that project management is essential to organizations in meeting their strategic goals. One indicator on the popularity of project management is seen in the rapid expansion of the Project Management Institute (PMI), a professional organization for project managers. The number of members went from 93,000 in 2002 to more than 270,000 in 2011 (Larson, Gray, 2011).

However, research shows that despite advances in the project management field and standards set by PMI, the success rate of projects that meet all of their intended goals remains low. According to a study in Information Technology (IT) projects conducted by The Standish Group, only 32% of IT projects succeeded in

meeting their intended goals (Hunte, 2007). Although these projects typically have project managers on a single project, they do not finish on time, miss fulfilling their requirements, lack quality standards, or go above their set budget. One question that arises from the research in project success is what the situation is like for project managers that handle multiple projects at the same time? According to a Global IT project management survey conducted by the auditing company KPMG (Klynveld Peat Marwick-Main Goerdeler), not all projects are equal in their expected return on investment (ROI) and it is unlikely that an enterprise could perform all desired projects. In addition, "with multiple overlapping projects, the availability of funding and resources constantly changes as projects progress through their life cycle." (Zarrella, Tims, Carr, Palk, 2005). With constant change, more complexity in overlapping projects, and limited resources, how can organizations best prepare themselves to increase project success?

One possible solution is the implementation of a Program Management Office, or PMO in a multi-project environment. The purpose of PMOs is to provide more governance and procedures so overlapping projects are managed together to deliver maximum benefits. With more oversight and opportunity to find synergies between cross-functional teams, the collected group of projects can be designed and executed according to the organization's strategic goals. However, like any significant organizational change, the scope and implementation needs be managed carefully to ensure it can be adopted by the organization's culture and their most important asset, the employees.

The goal of this research is to use a case study of a global organization, SONY Computer Entertainment (SCE), as an example of how implementing a Program Management Office can help gain additional benefits from governing, aligning and managing projects. Furthermore, it is also important to analyze how the PMO was implemented and supported by the management team to ensure the organizational change does not negatively impact the existing culture and employees.

1.1 Case study background

SONY Computer Entertainment (SCE) manufactures and sells the popular *PlayStation* family of video game consoles, peripherals and software. Established in 1993 in Tokyo, Japan, SCE enjoyed critical and commercial success having sold more than 462 million consoles worldwide as of August 31st, 2015 (VG Game Chartz, 2015). Sales and operations of the company are operated in three regional headquarters located in North America, Europe , and Japan-Asia.

Despite their enormous success as market leader with the *PlayStation* selling over 102 million units and *PlayStation 2* selling over 155 million units (Crave Online, 2015), the company not only faced increased competition in the latest generation of video game consoles, but decreased consumer buying power due to the impacts of the Global Financial Crisis from 2008-2012. With their latest console at the time, the *PlayStation 3* was at a higher price point and lagged behind their competitors in sales, the *Nintendo Wii* and *Xbox 360* respectively. As a result, SCE looked to set new strategic goals in order to launch new and engaging products while reducing operating costs. In response to these new goals, the SCE division looked to make changes in their product offering by providing more value to the consumer as well as create a holistic brand communication to improve how products were merchandised in the retail environment. To reduce costs, the supply chain of how products were greenlit, procured, assembled, and launched needed to be re-engineered. To govern these activities, an Executive Steering Committee was formed to create cross-functional teams and implement program management to ensure that projects delivered on expected results and improved internal efficiency to reduce costs.

1.2 Research question

How can organizations benefit from and implement Program Management Office practices to help achieve their strategic goals?

1.3 Research purpose and objectives

The purpose of this research is to use literature reviews and a case study of an organization to understand various concepts regarding factors that causes the need for organizational change, the reasons for high failure rate in a multi-project environment, and how Program Management Office (PMO) practices can increase the success rate of projects and drive change. It is also important to explore how the organizational change process and the transition for the people affected were managed to ensure a positive impact for the organization. The research objectives includes:

- To understand PMO concepts and how they can increase the success of complex overlapping projects
- To understand how John Kotter's 8-Step Change Model can be applied to implementing this organizational change
- To understand how William Bridges' Managing Transitions Concept can be applied to analyze the impact of employees affected by the transition to a new process

1.4 Research framework

The case study used is focused on a global organization that went through an organizational change with the implementation of a Program Management Office. This research will apply concepts from Project Management and Program Management Office as defined by the Project Management Institution. In regards to organizational change and implementation, various concepts will be applied including John Kotter's 8-Step Change Model and William Bridges' Managing Transitions Concept.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

The focus of this paper is how organizations can implement program management practices to help achieve their strategic goals. This chapter will use various literature reviews within five main conceptual areas including: 1) Project management and program management concepts, 2) The increased complexity of a multi-project environment and the importance of increasing project success, 3) The benefits of a Program Management Office, 4) The importance of managing change by looking at John P. Kotter's 8-Step Change Model, and 5) examining employees' views and difficulties on transitioning to a new process using William Bridges' Managing Transitions Concept.

2.1 Differences between project management, program management, and Program Management Office

Organizations have various maturity levels in how projects are organized and completed so it is important to understand the differences between the terms that are commonly used synonymously. According to the leading authority on project management, the Project Management Institute (PMI) defines a p*roject* as a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product service, or result. The major characteristics include an established objective; a defined begin and end date; the involvement of several departments and professionals, typically something unique; and has specific time, cost, and performance requirements (PMI, 2004). Traditionally, a *project* consists of five process groups within its life cycle including:

In contrast, a p*rogram* according to PMI "is a group of related projects managed in a coordinated manner to obtain benefits and control NOT available from managing them individually. *Programs* may include elements of related work outside of the scope of the individual projects in the program. Some *projects* within a *program* can deliver useful incremental benefits to the organization before the program itself has been completed." (PMI, 2004) More specifically, while *projects* focus on a unique deliverable set by the project scope and must be completed within a finite amount of time and within a budget, *program management* overseas a collection of projects that can be ongoing depending on the organizations strategic goals. When overlapping *projects* are managed together and aligned with organization goals, they can improve a company's performance in both the short and long-term. *Program* success is also measured in terms of incremental benefits such as reduced operational costs, more efficient processes and systems, increased revenue and market share, or the increase of satisfied customers. The scope of responsibility for *program managers* is also more strategic and cross-functional compared to a *project manager*. According to PMI, "Program managers maintain continuous alignment of program scope with strategic business objectives, and make recommendations to modify the program to enhance effectiveness toward the business result or strategic intent. In addition, the program manager should have advanced skills in finance, cross-cultural awareness, leadership, communication, influence, negotiation and conflict resolution." (PMI, 2015)

For organizations that look to further align projects and set standards to their program management process by creating a governing entity, a *Program Management Office (PMO)* can be implemented. As defined by PMI, "The Project Management Office is an organizational unit which centralizes and coordinates project management under its domain. The PMO can be called also by *Program Management Office, Program Office* or *Project Office*. The PMO governs the project management processes, as well as the program management or the combination of programs and projects, called portfolio management". (PMI, 2004) Their responsibilities can range from strategic planning and oversight, to providing guidance and support to project managers, and working on individual projects as project managers.

As organizations add more complex projects and the project manager's resources are strained, the success rate of projects drop drastically. This results in

wasted efforts, resources, and employee morale when projects do not deliver on their intended goals. It is important to analyze the challenges seen in these types of environments.

2.2 The challenges of a multi-project environment

As organizations increase the number of projects to adapt to changing factors, it is often times that project managers must manage multiple projects and in some cases, have a separate role with individual routine work. When project success measured by time, cost, and performance are already challenged, what are the effects of managing multiple projects? Existing studies suggest that projects unfolding in multi-project environments under schedule pressure are frequently delayed, a phenomenon which tends to negatively impact on the firm's overall business performance (Griffin, 1997). According to the journal, *Impact of Parallel Projects Management*, authors Saryar Wani and Mutasim Elsadig Adam looked at various research focused on challenges of managing multiple projects. One research conducted by Scott E. on engineering projects found that the main problems with managing multiple projects was short staff and limited resources. Many engineers were responsible for leading two or three projects at one time in addition to contributing to one or two smaller projects (Scott, 2002). In a separate study, the challenges of a multi-project environment are within three major areas including organizational culture, resource allocation and competencies of project manager. L.Dooley conducted a study on managing multiple projects and suggests these projects need to be viewed as integrated portfolio rather than a disjoint collection or projects (Dooley, 2005). Other challenges associated with meeting the intended goals of multiple projects are frequently found in alignment management, control and communication, and learning or knowledge management (Wani, Adam, 2012).

In the journal, *Project Management Office (PMO) – Principles in Practice*, authors Jose Valle, Wainer Silvia, and Carlos Soares also support these problems typically found in a multi-project environment where failure in time and cost is associated with the project scope being poorly defined. This leads to lost or badly used resources, increased conflicts among project members, the lack of or no

standardized documentation, unknown risks, no planning, no control, lack of communication and lack of integration between projects (Valle, Silvia, Soares 2008). At a strategic level, there are also problem areas that leads to project failure including; lack of senior management support can lead to unresolved conflicts among project members; lack of strategic objectives results in undefined plans in both the medium and long-term; lack of project identification, selection, and prioritization results in projects that do not align with organizational goals.

It is important to note that projects can fail if the *project manager* and/or *program manager* does not possess the two dimensions of *project management.* The first dimension is the technical side, which consists of the logical, systems, theories, and processes of project management as shown in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1 Technical and sociocultural dimensions of project management (Larson, 2011)

A successful project manager is well trained in the technical side to perform all the tasks of planning, scheduling, and controlling projects to ensure they meet the time, cost, and performance requirements. However, the second and equally, but opposite dimension is the sociocultural aspect. This requires the manager to be able to stimulate teamwork, lead the group, and navigate through the politics of an organization (Larson, 2011). For *program managers*, they will need to possess even greater sociocultural skills since they will likely manage multiple *project managers*, project stakeholders, and communicate with executive management to ensure projects align with organization goals. The technical aspect also requires the *program manager* to be more experienced in standard project management practices as well as additional tools and standards recommended by the Project Management Institute.

A common theme found in research regarding project success is that organizations continue to increase the number of projects in hopes of getting benefits across various areas of the organization. However, they tend to lack overarching strategic goals to benchmark against or create alignment between overlapping projects. Furthermore, organizations frequently use existing staff as project managers to work on multiple projects, instead of adding resources based on the needs of individual projects or programs.

2.3 The need to increase project alignment and success rates

Organizations pursue projects as a way to adapt to changes and create innovation. As a result, significant resources including money and personnel are invested in projects with an expected return on investment. However, a surprising number of statistics show that project failure results in significant losses that can be detrimental to the company. Capterra, a successful web service B2B company, created a post that compiles 2014 project management statistics. According to the Gallop business journal focused on a research conducted on the failure rate of IT projects, the United States loses between $50 – 150 billion per year due to failed projects. Harvard Business Review states that one in six IT projects will have a cost overrun of 200% and schedule overrun of 70%. A study conducted by the University of Ottawa found that 33% of projects fail due to lack of involvement from senior management (Capterra, 2014). Despite having project management practices in place, companies need to do more to ensure their projects fulfill the intended expectations or it can become detrimental to the organization's well-being.

A key learning from these statistics is that projects need to be aligned with clear organization goals, synergies from overlapping projects must be exploited to maximize benefits, and projects need to be prioritized and sometimes eliminated when it is determined unnecessary. In a study by the University of Berlin, *The Art of Project Portfolio Management,* researchers looked at 200 German companies across various industries and found an alarming result. The failed projects added up to $14.3 billion in loses with 67% of companies failing to terminate unsuccessful projects. 34% of these companies also undertook projects that did not align with the corporate strategy

(Meskendahl, 2011). With these project failures, organizations lose significant opportunity costs and valuable resources that could have been used to generate more revenue or profits. This leads us to the next question of what can companies do to align projects and increase project success rate to create competitive advantages instead of additional burden?

2.4 A possible solution – Program Management Office (PMO)

Various research covered in earlier sections attribute project failure to lack of management support, lack of standards or processes, limited resources, and project goals not aligned to strategic goals. The implementation of a Program Management Office can help resolve some of these common issues as a special governing entity to all projects. According to Parviz, "the PMO has become one of the most important topics in current years." He further elaborates that the benefits of a PMO not only increases the awareness and professionalism to project management, but it will pay for itself through increased project performance in cost control and better risk management. (Parviz, 2000) Based on the PMBOK Guide from PMI, some of the main key features of a PMO include:

- Shared and coordinated resources across all projects;
- Development of methodology, best practices and standards;
- Centralized repository and management for shared and unique risks for all projects;
- Central coordination of communications for all projects;
- Central monitoring for all PMO project timelines and budgets, usually at the enterprise level; and
- Coordination of overall project quality standards between the project manager and any internal or external personnel (PMI, 2004)

To ensure the PMO gets management support, it should also be led by a process champion or sponsor that will support the implementation, support project managers to resolve any issues, and bring PMO awareness to the organization. Project sponsors can also form or report directly to executive management typically known as Executive

Steering Committee or Director Committee that can decide on project priorities and further align project and strategic goals.

2.5 The value of PMO

With the concept of PMO defined and understanding the need for organizations to increase their project success, the following section will highlight the value PMO brings to multi-project environments. According to Brian Hobbs and Monique Aubry's research into PMOs, one of the key benefits is the opportunity to maximize the use of finite resources across parallel efforts in a multi-project environment. (Hobbs, Aubry, 2007) This is possible since the PMO will have a wider view of projects and direct communication with senior management to implement and enforce governing procedures. This is further supported with re-engineered processes, templates, documentation, and training for all project management activities. Not only does this standardize a process for project management, but the best practices can be exploited and repeated for other activities. In some cases, process improvements will be done that enhances how the organization operates in specific areas that is further supported by the PMO. In addition, with more data mining through tracking various projects and it's life cycle, different departments can improve the decision making process and gain knowledge from how projects are managed, look at the results from project reporting and benchmarks, replicate process flow charts, checklists, audits, procurement, governance, and create collaborative environments.

The PMO establishes change control processes and risk management processes to ensure the best business decision is made on projects, by the right people, and at the right time. According to George Hunte, an expert in PMO, he explains in his white paper for *Getting Started with a Project Management Office,* that consistent governance processes enable greater visibility and accountability of the project operations. "Without proper visibility, organizations are unable to see what is needed six months, three months, or even two months down the road, resulting in poorly constructed project plans that do not capture critical dependencies, including assigning project resources and key milestones". (Hunte, 2007) Standards on essential information and effective communication channels can be set in order to achieve

project goals and align with the overarching strategic goals of the organization. In *How to Get Value Out of a PMO*, the authors further elaborate on how organizations' can gain competitive advantage in the marketplace by accelerating projects that can shorten the time to market; controlling costs; cancelling unsuitable and troubled projects in suitable time; selecting and prioritizing or changing projects at its relevant level to strategic goals; optimizing and repositioning internal resources, external parties, human resources, equipment and materials; and identifying problems early on and finding proper solutions. (Kendall, Rollins, 2002)

Although much of the literature reviewed promotes the value of a PMO within the IT field, it can be presumed that many organizations face these challenges when dealing with the increasing number of projects and limited amount of resources. However, there are no standards to measure the direct impacts on project success or return on investment. Gerald Kendall and Steve Rollins estimates that the PMO can provide a minimum economic return of 10% of the total investment in the portfolio of projects in the organization. As a result, the authors see the PMO as a trigger mechanism for profit and financial return. (Kendall, Rollins, 2002) As with any organizational change, the identification of overall strategic goals and readiness needs to be weighed against the cost and efforts of PMO implementation.

2.6 How to prepare for PMO implementation

Every organization is different, so it is important for each one to match the right management office structure to ensure implementation is successful and improves project success. The Project Management Institute has developed a PMO planning framework, which includes guidelines for project documentation and organization structure based on 92 different processes. The framework is available in their publication, *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge*, 3rd Ed. (PMI, 2004). Part of this framework starts with looking at the organization's project management maturity level as a baseline for determining what value the PMO implementation may create. Project teams can use historical data of previous projects to benchmark against so the PMO can retain executive management support to effectively align projects and influence new processes. With sponsors in place and

performance indicators to measure the PMO, Haute suggests three steps to effectively roll out the new process. The first step is implement the PMO staff and determine the reporting structure that can be done with a written charter. The charter may include the scope and area of responsibility of the PMO, specific short-term and long-term goals, expectations and responsibilities, reporting structure, and stakeholders. (Haute, 2007) As suggested by the Association of Project Management, documenting the roles and responsibilities of the PMO helps to prevent common causes of project failure including lack of a clear link with key strategic priorities; lack of clear senior management ownership and leadership; lack of effective engagement with stakeholders; lack of skills and proven approach to project and risk management; and evaluating proposals based on initial costs rather than the time-value of money. (APM, 2004)

The second step is to develop tools, templates, process flows, projects plans, and other types of documentation as a PMO repository for knowledge management. This is then followed by selecting technology to help automate and enforce new PMO processes to effectively track projects. This is an important process to any governance initiative since the performance of projects must be tracked and measured in order to justify the PMO. Other features may include portfolio management, planning tools, resource management and timekeeping, cost tracking, and project dashboards with status reports. (Haute, 2007)

Since the PMO can drastically affect how an organization conducts its projects especially with internal change, it is important to anticipate the potential problems. According to Parviz's journal on *Implementing a PMO*, he found that trying to implement the enhanced governance brought on by a PMO can be a daunting task. Disruptions to the existing culture should be anticipated as part of the planning process, so that potential threats to the status quo can be ameliorated before implementing the PMO (Parviz 2000). The next section of the literature review will focus on management of organizational change using Kotter's 8-Step Change Model.

2.7 Organizational change using John Kotter's 8-Step Change Model

With organizations needing to adapt to the evolving business environment

with projects driving change, the report of failed projects continue to increase. John Kotter, one of the leading figures in organization change, studied hundreds of companies and identified the reasons for failure when implementing change in an organization:

- Cost too high, quality too low, requirements not addressed
- Inward-focused culture, bureaucracy, politics, arrogance
- Lack of leadership, lack of trust and teamwork
- General human fear of the unknown

He further lists the errors in the management of change:

- Allowing too much complacency
- Failure to create a powerful guiding coalition
- Under-estimating and under-communicating the power of vision
- Permitting obstacles to block the new version
- Failing to create short-term wins
- Declaring victory too soon
- Neglecting to anchor changes firmly in corporate culture (Kotter 1996)

To help address these areas, Kotter published a book, *Leading Change*, which features the 8-Step Change Model. For nearly 20 years, organization leaders often followed these steps. As quoted from John Kotter, "You can lead change. Here is how to do it." (Kotter, 2014)

Step 1: Create a Sense of Urgency. Kotter suggests that the first step is to look for the big opportunity that will have wide appeal to a number of employees. The vision and goal must be communicated quickly to raise a group of volunteers with a sense of urgency before the window of opportunity is missed. This step should also reduce individual's complacency and fear that prevented the change from happening in the first place.

Step 2: Build a Powerful Guiding Coalition. Assemble a powerful group of the "right people" to lead the change effort. The coalition should include engaged individuals from across the organization to help institute the right kind of attitudes and practices to implement, drive and sustain change.

Step 3: Form a Strategic Vision and Initiatives. Kotter defines strategic initiatives as targeted activities that, if designed and executed fast enough and well enough, will make your vision a reality. If the people know where they are going, they can focus on specific tasks that will help make the vision a reality. These strategic initiatives also need to be prioritized and properly staffed to ensure success.

Step 4: Enlist a Volunteer Army. Big changes in an organization can only occur when employees gather together under a big opportunity where they all work towards the same goal. In order to do gather as many change agents as possible, excitement must be built around the opportunity where it can be evangelized and develop a feeling that one "wants to" contribute.

Step 5: Enable Action by Removing Barriers. Inefficient processes and hierarchies are barriers to change and undermines the vision. These barriers must be removed for employees to work cross-functionally and across boundaries to create real impact. The group should be encouraged to take risks and non-traditional actions.

Step 6: Generate Short-Term Wins. A change vision can take a long time to achieve so it is essential for the guiding coalition to generate and celebrate wins along the way. These accomplishments should be collected, categorized, and communicated often to track the change progress and energize the employees involved.

Step 7: Sustain Acceleration. Change leaders cannot celebrate too early with initial wins. Change will continue to occur during implementation so leaders cannot let up and must adapt quickly to keep the momentum. This may include looking for new talent or removing unnecessary processes to stay the course towards the vision. Kotter also suggest careful balance between management and leadership to avoid micro-managing and keep opportunities open for people in the organization to behave more like leaders.

Step 8: Institute Change. The final step ensures that the good behavior can be repeated and sustainable in the long-term. It is also essential that the connection between the behavior and the organization's success is communicated and celebrated.

One success story using this model is highlighted by consulting company, Training Management Corporation (TMC), which partnered with PepsiCo to build a globally inclusive organization to leverage the "power of one". (TMC, 2009) It was

PepsiCo's goal that every employee treats others with respect and fairness to create an inclusive environment. With the large scope, TMC adopted Kotter's 8-Step Change Model to manage the change. The model was executed in four phases:

- *Local Ownership and Relevance* that utilized steps 1, 2, and 3 to create the vision and get executive management buy-in.
- *Individual awareness and acceptance of requirements for* change that utilized step 4 in enlisting volunteers with training sessions.
- *Capability* that focused on steps 5 and 6 and provided workshops in developing skills that enabled leaders at every level.
- *Sustainment* that focused on steps 7 and 8 to implement tools to help leaders further to their practice and institute change.

The successful implementation resulted in growth in six key competencies related to inclusiveness and employee awareness of biases, increased women representation at executive levels, increased cross-functional teams and innovation initiatives, and allowed the worldwide organization to have a shared vocabulary and reference points from the same training components. (TMC, 2009)

Recently, Kotter International, expanded on the scope of the 8-Step Change Model to provide additional capabilities. Known as *Accelerate*, the following table highlights the differences between the original model and the accelerated variation of the model.

Table 2.1 Accelerate's 8-Step Process (Kotter 2014)

Leading Change's **8-Step Change Model (1996)**	***Accelerate's*** **8-Step Process (2014)**
Respond to or affect episodic change in finite and sequential ways.	Run the steps concurrently and continuously.
Drive change with powerful core group.	Form a large volunteer army from up, down, and across the organization
Function within a traditional hierarchy.	Be flexible and agile, but function in conjunction with a traditional hierarchy.
Focus on doing one thing very well in a linear fashion over time.	Constantly seek opportunities, identify initiatives to capitalize on them, and complete them quickly.

2.8 William Bridges' Managing Transitions Concept

In many organizations, it is common for the change to be focused on processes and tools, but not the people who will have to transition into the new and unknown. According to William Bridges, companies "managed the change - and forgot the transition". According to his book, *Managing Transitions*, Bridges defines change as "situational" such as moving into a new office, a department reorganization, or revisions to a plan. Change happens to people even if they do not agree with it and can occur very quickly. On the other hand, transition is internal and psychological; it is a three-phase process that people go through as they internalize and come to terms with the details of the new situation that the change brings about (Bridges, 2003). Because of this, transition occurs more slowly over a longer period of time. The Managing Transitions Concept includes three stages that people go through:

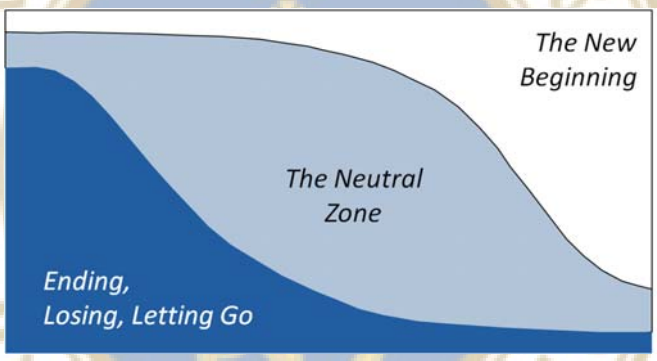


Figure 2.2 The Three Phases of Transition (Bridges, 2003)

Stage 1: Ending, losing, and Letting Go. The first phase is an "ending" when the change is first presented to them. They may resist and go through an emotional and psychological process including fear, denial, anger, sadness, frustration, and uncertainty. Leaders must acknowledge these emotions and help people deal with them or there will likely be resistance throughout the entire change process. Empathy and communication is also important in this phase where people get an understanding about what is going to happen to ease their fears. The more information they have about a better future and how their contributions are essential to meeting the new vision, the more likely they are to move onto the next stage. (Bridges, 2003)

Stage 2: The Neutral Zone. This phase is the in-between time where the old way is gone, but the new way is not fully operational. People may still feel resentment towards the change, low morale and low productivity may occur due to the

in-between point, and anxiety about their role or identity in the future. Leadership is important since the “neutral zone” is where the critical psychological realignments take place. (Bridges, 2003)

Stage 3: The New Beginning. The last transition stage is where people accept and embrace the change initiative. They are building the skills necessary to be successful in the new way and starting to see the wins from their efforts. People likely experience more energy and motivation, openness to new ideas, and more commitment to their team with a new sense of purpose. (Bridges, 2003)

Understanding the transition process that people go through is a must for leaders to ensure the change is successful, but it is important to recognize that they themselves are also transitioning. In the article, *Leading Transition A New Model for Change*, authors William Bridges and Susan Mitchell notes that many leaders may be experts in technical, financial, or operational skills, but far removed from the day-to-day work and lack expertise when it comes to leading people through transition. This is where a coach or consultant can offer valuable guidance. Leaders need assistance to explore their own approaches in managing transitions and work with their own goals and limitations to create a development plan that prepares them for the future. (Hesselbein, Johnston, Bridges, Mitchell, 2000)

When dealing with organizational change, it is important to focus on multiple aspects of both change and transition. By combining different theories such as Kotter’s 8-Step Change Model and Bridges’ Managing Transitions Concept, organizations can proactively apply tactics to their next change initiative and improve their chances of success. Furthermore, leaders also need to prepare themselves in learning how to manage transitions since challenges are inevitable. William Bridges stress that, “In today’s organizations, without experiencing and successfully managing a difficult transition, no leader can be effective for very long. That suggests reinventing most models of leadership development.” (Hesselbein, Johnston, Bridges, Mitchell, 2000)

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Case study

This research will use a case study to discuss the benefits of a Program Management Office and how the change and transition was managed. According to Robert Yin in his book, *Case study research: Design and methods*, a case study design should be considered when: (a) the focus of the study is to answer "how" and "why" questions; (b) you cannot manipulate the behavior of those involved in the study; (c) you want to cover contextual conditions because they are relevant to the phenomenon under study. (Yin, 2003) By looking at examples from SONY Computer Entertainment's process before and after a change implementation, the case study format will help us find out how and why the change was implemented. This will allow us to understand the challenges of a multi-project environment, and how effective project management with program management practices may or may not increase the success rate of projects for SCEA. Additional knowledge can also be gained from looking at how the change implementation was conducted by comparing it to Kotter's 8-Step Change Model and the experiences that people went through during the transition with Bridges' Managing Transition Concept.

The case study findings will also follow a narrative story-telling format from the beginning of what factors influenced the initial change, the development of the organization change as a solution to various internal and external problems, the implementation of Program Management Office, and the end results of the change with visual examples of the outputs. However, all product examples featured in the case study will be past projects available on their official website to protect the sensitive nature and confidentiality of SCEA's product plans. The study will conclude with questions surrounding the current state of the Program Management Office.

3.2 Sample selection

In order to understand the details of the case study, the interviewees were selected based on their involvement and how they were affected with the organizational change implementation. The sample will include various representatives at different levels in the organization.

Implementation of Program Management Office:

- Inventory Manager
- Procurement Manager
- Production Planning Manager
- Program Manager (past)
- Program Manager (current)

Perspectives on Program Management Office:

- Channel Marketing Manager
- Creative Services Manager
- Marketing Product Manager
- Latin America Product Manager
- Compliance Analyst

3.3 Interview questions framework

The following section includes a list of questions adapted from various literature reviews regarding Program Management Office. The semi-structured in depth interview will follow these initial questions as a discussion point to chronicle the PMO implementation from the beginning to the latest status up until the day of the interview. Since there are a number of interviewees and limited time, selected questions will be removed depending on their level of involvement.

3.3.1 Questions regarding Program Management Office

The following section includes a mixture of questions designed to get answers regarding the impact seen in the organization as well as qualitative survey questions from various journals used in the literature review of this paper.

1. What kinds of internal and/or external factors triggered the implementation of a Project Management Office? (Babaeianpour, Zohrevandi 2011)

2. How long did it take to implement the PMO?

3. What was the vision and initial scope or responsibilities for the PMO? How has it changed?

4. What were the metrics and measurements used to track the PMO? (ESI, 2015)

5. How was the PMO organized in terms of structure, size, authority, and personnel? (ESI, 2015)

6. What was the level of management support for the PMO?

7. What is the level of influence and how are projects aligned with strategic goals? (ESI, 2015)

8. What were the immediate benefits from the PMO?

9. What are the long-term benefits from the PMO?

10. What are some of the criticisms and challenges of the PMO? (ESI, 2015)

11. Based on your opinion, what is the current PMO maturity stage in the organization? (Hill, 2004)

a. Project Office – Achieve project objectives and deliverables

b. Basic PMO – Standard and repeatable PM methodology

c. Standard PMO – Established capability and infrastructure

d. Advanced PMO – Integrated and comprehensive PM capability

e. Center of Excellence – Continuous Improvement and cross department collaboration to achieve strategic goals

12. What was the level of experience of Project Managers and Program Managers? (ESI, 2015)

13. How has the PMO evolved since it was first implemented?

14. What are some of the knowledge management practices for the PMO?

15. Did the PMO provide training in project and program management practices? (ESI, 2015)

3.3.2 Questions regarding organizational change

For the organizational change implementation and management throughout the process, the following questions are specific to Kotter's 8-Step Change Model and Bridges' Managing Transition Concept. Since we're interested in how the change and transition process was managed, these questions will be grouped together and split between the change agent's point of view as well as the employees affected:

1. How was the sense of urgency for the organization change communicated to various stakeholders?
    a. Change Agent – How do you think employees felt about the change to implement a PMO and the urgency to do so?
    b. Employees - How did you feel about the change? How were you impacted by the change?
2. Was there a guiding team to champion and push the PMO change forward?
    a. Change Agent – How did you choose the guiding team members?
    b. Employees – How did you feel about the responsibility of leading this change?
3. What was the vision for the PMO change and how was it communicated to stakeholders?
    a. Change Agent – What was the employees' reaction to the new vision? How do you think they felt?
    b. Employees – How did you feel about the new process?
4. How were people involved in the PMO empowered to after the change was implemented?
    a. Change Agent – Do you think employees' felt more empowered than before?
    b. Employees – With more or different responsibilities and empowerment to do the work, did you feel like the new vision was better than before?
5. Was there a plan to generate short-term wins/accomplishments after the PMO was implemented?
    a. Change Agent - How important were these accomplishments?

b. Employees – How did it feel to complete projects under the new PMO process?

6. Once the PMO was fully implemented, what was the plan to establish continued success and impact to the organization?

7. How was the PMO process incorporated into the company culture to ensure that it was a long-term strategy?

a. Change Agent – Once employees were familiar with the new process, how did you reinforce the employees' commitment to the new process and keep them from being complacent?

b. Employees – After seeing results from the new process, did you feel more motivated and empowered to make changes and deliver results? Did you feel more committed to the team?

3.4 Qualitative research data collection

Qualitative research through in-depth interview was selected as the method to collect data from various members of the organization. As described by researcher Saša Baškarada in her article on *Qualitative Case Study Guidelines*, qualitative research allows the researcher to "gain a deep holistic view of the research problem, and may facilitate describing, understanding and explaining a research problem or situation." (Baškarada, 2014) The qualitative research method will allow the author to understand the nature of the research question concerning PMO benefits and implementation through an intensive study rather than the quantity of characteristics. Since the implementation of the PMO first occurred in 2011, the interviewees will include both past and present employees. The primary objective of the qualitative research is to get detailed insights of the people who led the change of implementing program management, the benefits as viewed from various stakeholders, and understand what the employees went through the transition to the new process. Due to time zone differences, the questions will be semi-structured and will be sent to the interviewee first to review the topics, followed by a Skype Video Call for an in-depth interview.

3.5 Data analysis

Once data is collected from the interviewees, the transcripts will be analyzed using Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA) methods. As defined by *Online QDA*, authors Ann Lewins, Celia Taylor and Graham R. Gibbs defines Qualitative Data Analysis as the range of processes and procedures to translate qualitative data collected into an explanation or interpretation of the people and situations that are being investigated from the case study. The idea is to examine the meaningful and important themes of the qualitative data. (Lewins, A., Taylor, C., & R. Gibbs, G. 2011) More specifically, a narrative analysis will be used to reformulate the story as told from the interviewees in a chronological order with a focus on key events. As defined by Robert Schutt, a narrative analysis focuses on how the interviewees impose order on the flow of the experience and thus make sense of events and actions that they participated in. (Schutt, R. 2001) The narrative will cover the case study from the beginning of what triggered the organizational change, the process of implementing the change, the overall effect on project success, and the influence the change had on the organization. This narrative analysis method will also provide a big picture overview of the PMO through series of events as the interviewees understand them and aims to answer the research question of how organizations can benefit from and implement PMO practices. Authors of *Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis*, Hsiu-Fang Hsieh and Sarah E. Shannon also states that the development of a good coding method is essential to the trustworthiness in research using content analysis. (Hsieh, Shannon, 2005) There are three types of content analysis including conventional, directed, and summative approaches. The data will be coded using conventional content analysis where common categories are derived from data during data analysis. This method was chosen to be able to gain a richer understanding of a phenomenon after the interviews are complete. (Hsieh, Shannon, 2005)

CHAPTER 4
FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

This chapter will present the case study findings based on the research framework focused on program management concepts, Kotter's 8-Step Change Model, Bridges' Managing Transitions Concept, and data collected from interviewees. The findings will be explained in a chronological narrative beginning with factors that influenced the organizational change, Program Management Office (PMO) as a solution, and the evolution of the PMO as told from both change agents and stakeholders.

4.1 Factors that triggered the organizational change

Fred Lunenburg states that "Organizational change is the movement of an organization away from its present state and toward some desired future state to increase its effectiveness." (Lunenburg, 2010) In 2011, SCE faced increased competition in and changes in consumer behavior, which required the organization to adapt and recapture lost market share in the video game industry. The major factors for change can be categorized into the following external and internal factors.

4.1.1 External forces for change

Economic. According to the Product Manager, the economic recovery of the Global Financial Crisis was a challenge that all organizations faced. How could SCE stimulate sales of entertainment products when consumer purchasing power remained low after one of the worst economic crises in recent times? From a Marketing and Sales standpoint, price drops or more sales promotions were not options since it further reduced profit margins in an already competitive environment. The parent company wanted all regional headquarters to reduce inventory levels and cut costs, yet implement SONY Green Environmental initiatives. These new strategic

goals weighed heavily on the Operations department that needed to execute on these projects.

Marketplace. (Lunenburg, 2010) The second external force were the competitors in the marketplace that offered lower priced products, more value, and exclusive content with other game publishers. Consumers started to shift to brands that offered the best value for their money, which is a trend that still continues to this day. Another marketplace change was official distribution to new territories. SCE saw opportunities to increase revenue in developing markets like Latin America and Brazil. The Compliance Analyst recalls,

"…massive effort and resources were needed to localize hardware packaging and software packaging, develop region specific products, and ensure all products were compliant so we could officially distribute to those countries."

4.1.2 Internal forces for change

Internal processes. (Lunenburg, 2010) *PlayStation* was extremely successful in previous generations and operated with a turnkey supply chain. The Operations Production Planning Manager states,

"I missed the simple times when finished goods arrived from the factory to various warehouses and was shipped to the retailer without any rework or modification."

The company never had to plan and produce special configurations or product bundles that retail partners now demanded since it became the normal product offering from competitors. Launching products in new territories added another layer of complexity for many employees that had no experience in this area. The internal organization processes were not flexible enough to keep up with new product requests. The problems included the lack of Information Technology (IT) and Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system modules to plan new products; the lack of efficient communication process between departments; the lack of a procurement team and management of vendors; and no official approval process to ensure these were the right decisions to meet the organization's strategic goals.

4.2 Challenges in a multi-project environment

The external and internal factors significantly increased the number of projects within the company. Although SCE had project managers, they reported to a specific department with their own goals. Projects were rarely cross functional, resources were not shared, and project management standards were not in place.

4.2.1 Department challenges

The following section highlights the main problems that each department faced with the sharp increase of projects.

Operations. The Operations department was largely affected by the shift to produce bundle products since they were responsible for getting the mix of products compliant, procuring the components, assembling the product, and shipping it to the retailer within a very short window. The Production Planning Manager recalls,

"There was a huge increase in special product bundles that started with 15 in one year and then increased to 45 product bundles planned by the end of next year. As a department, we were not staffed to deal with that increase in new product bundles."

Without a dedicated project manager, each employee within the Operations department took on multiple roles of designing boxes, managing print vendors, develop quality checks, and project manage the new products while maintaining their routine work.

Compliance. The Compliance Department also saw their project work load increase with initiatives to launch special configurations as well as officially entering into new territories. According to the Compliance Analyst,

"…the biggest challenge was trying to manage the number of products since there was no road map or a single source of information containing launch dates and development milestones to help us prioritize projects."

Business Development. In order to introduce new products with better profit margins and specific to the region, new peripheral projects were managed by a team of dedicated project managers from the Business Development department. However, they operated independently of other departments and introduced peripherals products based on their own goals. With an increase of new products, they

were not able to get support from other departments to ensure a successful launch. Various department support was essential for new products including compliance approval; product development support for compatible software; marketing support to advertise, cross-sell and create messaging; and operations support to issue purchase orders and manage the logistics of shipping the final product to meet a committed street date.

Marketing and Creative Services. The Product Marketing Manager recalls how new products were being initiated by other departments without any marketing research or support,

"It seems like these new products starts with a 'water cooler' conversation and the next thing you know everyone is reacting and scrambling to get it done without any consideration for why we are doing it."

There was no process to introduce a new product or find out the key contact person from other departments to determine lead times, cost information, and if the product is even feasible. For the Creative Services team responsible for packaging design and artwork, it was difficult to gauge the work load without having a roadmap with deadlines, or visibility on the overall product strategy. The group was responsible for maintaining the brand and packaging templates for a consistent look, but there was no time to solidify the creative design since they were the last group to hear about these projects. In addition, many projects got cancelled while in progress, which resulted in lost effort and resources.

Sales. The Sales group felt that they had good insight from their retail partners on what consumers were expecting and wanted to secure exclusive products for their largest customers. The organization was not flexible enough to react to the changing marketplace and competitors' strategy in adding more value to their products. The Channel Marketing Manager recalls,

"The bundle configurations lacked a holistic brand and communication. It seemed like it was a few products quickly thrown in a box as a quick solution instead of creating a new product line that made sense and offered a good consumer experience".

4.2.2 Project failure with increase in projects

Due to these challenges, project failure when measured against time, cost, and performance often failed. Since the number of projects increased at a high rate and within a short period, costs often exceeded budgets without formal tracking. The added costs included scrapping excess packaging material, increased labor for packing products, or expedited shipping to retail stores. Inventory of all these new components were not properly tracked and warehouses struggled to figure out how all components fit together to accurately pack them into a new product. As a result, some new products did not meet the initial performance requirements. The lack of a coherent project management team and processes for new products significantly affected the organization's ability to meet its strategic goals.

Some interviewees felt that project failures were a result of inefficient processes, short staff, and limited resources. A number of them had to balance multiple projects in addition to their routine work and lacked resources or tools to properly manage projects. In addition, for individual contributors to be designated as the lead contact person with no experience in project management concepts, these factors led to increased project failure. The Production Planning manager comments,

"I like to work on spreadsheets and plan our supply, but now I had to work on packaging design, gather artwork, and instruct the warehouse on how to put the products come together by a very tight deadline. There was one time where I made an over sleeve to go over the hardware box and it didn't even fit!"

4.3 Program management as a solution

As operations became more complex, a Senior Director was hired for the Product Planning Department within Operations. In a short period, the department was reorganized and renamed to Supply Chain Management (SCM) in order to encompass the end to end process of managing, developing, and shipping products. New and dedicated roles were created including procurement and packaging development to establish expertise in specific areas, while planning managers focused on their core competence with clear responsibilities. A project manager role was also formed where the person possessed both the technical and sociocultural dimensions of project management to help execute on projects and lead change. As projects

increased and became more complex, a PMO was determined to be a solution to help increase project success.

4.3.1 Project management to program management

Having a dedicated project manager made an immediate impact for SCM since there was one person to work with other departments, consolidate information, and provide information to internal and external stakeholders. Benchmarks such as time, cost, and budget measurements and project management tools were developed to keep track of projects. By making this change mid-year, the project manager with the assistance of various stakeholders, were able to successfully launch the 45 new product bundles.

Throughout this process, the project manager was able to build on existing relationships and establish new relationships. He mentions,

"It helps that I was in various departments before joining SCM so working on these new products helped me identify the key stakeholders and get a big picture view on their responsibilities, the approvals required from each department, and just how things (the business) work."

As products shipped and new projects were initiated, the project manager became more involved with other departments and helped where possible. This allowed him to build alliances with key stakeholders, involve other departments when necessary, make recommendations, and setup meetings to resolve problems. The other benefit to being more involved with projects outside of SCM was being able to find common ground with other departments, increase knowledge, set project standards and best practices, and find synergies between different projects and people. Individual department projects were becoming organizational projects that required more alignment, which led to Program Management. In order to make the process official, the project manager was promoted to Operations Program Manager (OPM). Since the Senior Director also had experience in program management practices, the evolution of the change process came very natural. A consultant was brought in to help identify problem areas and reengineer processes with the OPM to further increase project success.

4.3.2 New programs and IT enhancement

New Product Introduction (NPI) process. Developing new products specific to the SCE region was now a strategic goal so the NPI process was the first program to be implemented. Old processes were reengineered to ensure that both Marketing and Sales department followed guidelines for product proposals and follow specific lead times for each type. The OPM worked with the SCM department to develop process flows for software disc manufacturing, packaging artwork approvals, procurement processes, vendor management processes, compliance reviews and approvals, as well as lead cost saving initiatives. By understanding various processes for all types of products and determining the key stakeholders from each department, the OPM became the lead change agent in implementing the cross-functional NPI meeting. He comments on his roles,

"My responsibility included consolidating and aligning product projects, managing key milestones for all product releases, establishing a single source of truth for the product roadmap, determine the bill of materials, ensuring tasks are complete, and chair the weekly meeting."

The NPI meeting became a forum where ideas can be shared openly while getting feedback from experts in each department. The second half of the meeting focused on going through the list of approved products, the key tasks, and the upcoming milestones.

With the work load increasing, an Operations Director was appointed as the Champion for the NPI process to provide more management support as well communicate with executive management on making sure that these new initiatives were being implemented and followed. Additional support staff was also provided to the OPM to help facilitate the meeting and create documentation to properly track all projects.

IT projects – ERP enhancement. As business processes become more complex and organizational goals focused on cost reductions, selected IT projects were started. Among many small system projects, the main IT change for the organization was the ERP system update and enhancement. This provided opportunity to incorporate new system modules to increase efficiency. Program management practices were required to ensure the system enhancement projects led to one cohesive

solution. The ERP enhancement was driven by individual business requirements so the OPM worked closely with business analysts and IT project managers to ensure project alignment and project success. After 8 months of analysis and testing, new systems were implemented including:

- Procurement processes and automated 3-way match for invoice payment
- Bill of Materials for all products with system links to warehouses
- Back flush inventory after work-in-process transactions
- Inventory tracking and reporting enhancements
- Master Items List to include all product components
- Product Information Management (PIM) system implementation

Although a number of projects were successful, a few major ERP enhancements were cancelled due to business process conflicts, which were considered as project failures.

- Materials Requirements Planning
- Product Planning Forecast Loading

However, having an OPM help manage these type of projects led to faster implementation and improved project success.

4.3.3 PMO and Executive Steering Committee

As reducing inventory levels became a top priority, a Sales and Operations (S&OP) process was initiated. S&OP is an integrated business process that determines the level of manufacturing output (production plan) to best satisfy the current planned level of sales (forecast), while meeting general business objectives of profitability, productivity, and competitive lead times. (Barnes, 2014) Some of the primary objectives of S&OP is to get a consensus demand between Marketing and Sales to balance with the available supply of products. Since the NPI process was essential to new product proposals and tracked all approved products, it was essential to include program management initiatives into the S&OP process. With proven success, a PMO was formed to further align projects with strategic goals and solidify how product proposals were submitted, greenlit, and executed. An Executive Steering Committee was formed to oversee the S&OP processes, which included a Greenlight Process in their monthly meeting to formally review proposals or initiate new programs or

projects. Approved proposals were handed off to the PMO where it was responsible for disseminating the information to respective stakeholders and manage the programs or projects.

In many organizations, the PMO reports to the IT department due to the importance of project success with its high cost, the technical nature of the projects, and alignment with organizational strategic goals. According to a study on *The Global State of the PMO* conducted by ESI International, the IT sector dominated out of 900 respondents with 16 percent coming from that industry, followed by 12 percent from financial services and nine percent from both the telecommunications and construction/engineering sectors. (ESI, 2015). However, the interesting narrative about SCE's development of the PMO is that the process was product driven to meet the evolving market conditions and not just from managing technical projects. The PMO reported to the SCM/Operations department due to the importance of building and releasing compliant products on time, and needed to be completed within the budget that were driven by profit margins.

With the PMO established and support from the S&OP Executive Steering Committee, numerous programs were implemented to lead specific projects into meeting strategic goals.

4.4 PMO implementation

Using PMO concepts to help manage and organize multiple projects is only a part of what is needed for organizational change and implementation. As some people within the organization may resist change to both their responsibilities and processes they work within, management needs to consider best practices in change management. In addition, when making a significant change in the organization, employee's feelings and attitudes needs to be considered to ensure the best transition possible. In this section, we will compare how the PMO was implemented compared to Kotter's 8-Step Change Model. We will also compare how employee's feelings were managed during the transition to a new PMO process by comparing it to Bridges' Managing Transitions Concept.

4.4.1 Kotter's 8-Step Change Model

Step 1: Create Sense of Urgency. The organization established strategic goals of reducing costs and expand to new regions, which were challenging goals. This put pressure on all departments with cascading goals from senior management down to individual contributors. Within Supply Chain Management, the Senior Director created a sense of urgency by creating a new organizational structure that would expedite the implementation of S&OP and create more efficient processes that were measured against. The Production Planning Manager mentions,

"Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were set for the first time and our yearly goals were tied to how well we can meet them."

Each function had KPIs to measure the incremental improvements that the new processes contributed to including: the reduction in inventory levels or days of supply; the percentage of cost reductions for procurement and manufacturing; and on time delivery of products.

The corporate culture of also created a sense of urgency. The Product Manager mentions,

"The culture of the organization has always been work hard and play hard. Most people here have a passion for the gaming industry and the PlayStation brand. I think with us being behind the competitors, it forced us to rethink how to do our jobs to become the market leader again. We really wanted to reinforce our PlayStation motto that this is THE BEST PLACE TO PLAY."

Step 2: Build Guiding Coalition. The implementation of the NPI process created a forum where the key contributors from different departments can propose and exchange ideas, check the status of on-going projects, and resolve current or potential issues. This was the first cross-functional meeting to occur on a routine basis that included contributors from Product Development, Marketing, Creative Services, Sales, Finance, Operations, Publisher Relations, Latin America, Canada, and Compliance. With a single source for project tracking and more transparency between departments, open communication channels and project alignment across the organization were now possible.

Step 3: Form Strategic Vision and Initiatives. From a corporate vision, *PlayStation* was fighting to become market leader again. With the implementation of

S&OP to focus on strategic decisions and the NPI process to execute on those decisions, Sales, Marketing, and Operations set initiatives to improve internal processes and increase collaboration. The Senior Director of SCM also supported the evolution of the PMO and incorporated these different initiatives into one cohesive process for how new products were planned and managed.

Step 4: Enlist Volunteer Army. Although the NPI meeting was initially criticized for establishing another meeting to employees' busy schedules, the meeting attendees quickly grew. The OPM recalls,

"The first NPI meeting started with just a few people from Marketing, Sales, and Operations. I provided our Ops lead times and just general process on developing new products. As projects got approved, I managed the roadmap that contained useful information for other departments. News about the weekly NPI meeting spread quickly had this viral effect where more and more people from each department started attending the meeting. Product information was normally withheld or spread across multiple resources, but now there was more transparency from these meetings."

The positive effect from the NPI meeting was having no shortage of volunteers, but the Marketing department was concerned about information leaks since there was no control on the meeting attendees. This eventually led to the Executive Steering Committee nominating key contributors with clearance to receive confidential information.

Step 5: Enable Action by Removing Barriers. One of the main benefits of the PMO was gaining knowledge on business processes across different departments. By working with a consultant to reengineer internal and external processes, the OPM was able to leverage the Operations Director as the process champion and get approval from the Executive Steering Committee to change existing processes. For example, the Creative Services Manager's biggest problem was getting artwork approved. He comments on the old process,

"When it comes to creative, everyone has an opinion. Marketing wants attractive packaging, Sales wants value and price messaging, Legal wants disclaimers, brand partners have guidelines, and Japan needs to approve as well."

To eliminate this problem, the PMO and Creative Services proposed a simple solution where a template is created and approved by the key stakeholders from each department and the Executive Steering Committee. With the template approved and branding fixed, most departments will not have to review the artwork again and only certain areas can be changed by Marketing and Sales. The Creative Service's Manager mentions,

"This really reduced the number of reviewers and cut our turnaround time for packaging design by half. Design costs were reduced with less rounds (of design changes) and Ops was happy to get files early for production. It was a simple change that made a huge impact!"

Step 6: Generate Short-Term Wins. Cross-functional projects within SCE were rare before the PMO implementation. One of the first small, but significant contributions that OPM made was helping the Marketing department reduce the amount of legal copy on packaging. The Product Manager recalls,

"If you look at our PlayStation 3 launch packaging, over 90% of the box is covered with legal copy, disclaimers, and tech jargon that the consumer doesn't need. We've been trying to get this reduced for years. All that space on the box should be used to promote our key features, titles, peripherals and brand."

With contacts in various departments including Legal, Compliance, Technical Writers, and Japan Production Planning, the OPM was able to meet with each department to determine the "must have" information on the box and the text that can be moved to the inner packed materials or online support website. This information was provided to Creative Services where new design concepts were created. The OPM setup cross-functional and collaborative review meetings where 50% more pace was created for marketing. This would eventually lead to moving all legal copy to the bottom of the box or to the inner packed materials for the latest console release. Figure 4.1 compares the original box with the redesigned versions with more marketing space.

2008 2011 2013

Figure 4.1 Evolution of *PlayStation* Console Packaging

Step 7: Sustain Acceleration. The NPI process was the first of many programs that the PMO managed. With more organizational awareness and executive management support, more programs and respective projects were introduced including packaging postponement, launching products in emerging markets, and creating a holistic brand for all *PlayStation* products. There were no shortage of projects or improvements for the PMO to take on.

Step 8: Institute Change. The article *PMO – Principles in Practice,* describes the PMO "as an organism, internal or external to the organization, which provides support to project management processes or directly manages the projects under its responsibility." (Valle, Silvia, Soares, 2008) In this case study, the PMO is an organism that must constantly evolves with the external and internal factors to align projects, increase project success rate, and influence the creation of more efficient internal processes. With the routine NPI meeting and executive support, it became an essential function within the organization. The communication of the organizational change and successful programs were also essential to bring awareness of the PMO. To achieve this, the PMO staff worked with the marketing media group to make a number of internal videos that highlighted project accomplishments to share it internally as well as other regions.

4.4.2 Bridges' Managing Transitions Concept

As William Bridges argues, "It isn't the changes that do you in, it's the transitions." (Bridges, 2003) This analysis will look at how the management team considered the psychological aspect of the employees affected by the PMO implementation and what it took for them to adapt the new NPI process.

Stage 1: Ending, losing, and Letting Go. The implementation of a NPI process with Executive Green Light faced intense criticism from many departments when it was first announced. This marked the end of Marketing and Sales independently introducing new product bundles, which they felt were needed in order to quickly react to market conditions. The Business Development department also opposed the idea of a NPI meeting since they felt the additional process created more bureaucracy around new peripheral products, which will result in longer approval times and disagreement between departments. The OPM recalls,

"I think people felt that having another layer of approvals slowed everything down. Also, having the milestone review with everyone in the room was difficult at first since I had to bluntly callout specific individuals to check where they are with the task and why it's late."

Some employees felt frustrated with the process and even felt like their core job responsibilities were stripped away from them while being micromanaged from executive management.

How to Manage Endings. The sociocultural qualities of the program manager within the PMO plays an important role in helping people transition to the new process. By having good leadership and negotiation skills, the change leader can help the transition process. Bridges (2003) offers advice on how to help employees to "let go" and we can compare it to how the situation was handled at SCE:

- **Identify who is losing what.** Both program managers interviewed commented on how building relationships is essential while doing cross-functional projects. By having communication channels across the organization, they can identify problem areas that employees are facing and try to come up with solutions. In this case, making new product proposals as easy as possible was essential to speed to market. Simple tools were developed with lead time charts and proposal forms so all the necessary can information can be captured during the initial exploration stage. The program managers also had to be responsive to all forms of communication to ensure they were not a bottleneck to the process.

- **Acknowledge the Losses Openly and Sympathetically.** The program managers also sympathetically listened and understood where the frustrations were coming from. The benefit of openly talking about the issues were gaining insights into how departments and certain individuals work, which gives them information on how to improve with new processes.
- **Compensate for the losses.** With a forum for different departments to meet and new communication channels, the PMO was able to add value to individual department projects. For example, they can help Marketing facilitate meetings to make changes such as reducing the legal copy. For Business Development on new peripherals, they can leverage their relationships with the Compliance department to expedite approvals and improve on old processes.
- **Give people information and do it again and again.** Transparency was one of the most important outputs from the PMO implementation. Lead times, costs, product roadmap and processes were now available to selected individuals. The Latin America Manager comments, “In the past, I was never able to get traction on creating new products since we were considered second priority or our product forecast was too low. With a MOQ (minimum order quantity), lead time information, and a process to follow, our product proposals were treated like any other new product and I now had a source of information (with the PMO).”
- **Treat the past with respect.** As with any organization, flexibility is essential in order to react to the evolving market place. To give Marketing and Sales flexibility to create new products, an out-of-cycle green light approval was developed where proposals can be submitted and approved within days instead of waiting for the monthly executive meeting. The 80/20 rule was communicated to departments where if we can have 80% of the projects follow this process and 20% of expedited products be the exception, then it can be executed successfully and keep costs low.

Stage 2: The Neutral Zone. The initial stages of the NPI process were challenging since no one really understood how their role fits into the process. Interest for the meeting was high since it was a source of information they did not have before, but the process felt like it was not designed to account for many variables. These initial meetings ran for up to two hours since there was no agenda to focus on important topics, which led to more questions than answers.

Managing "the neutral zone". The first step was to cluster several programs together so other departments understood the scope of the NPI process and the long-term benefits. This included expansion to other regions, the economies of scale for production, and new initiatives like holistic branding with new packaging. More policies and procedures were also needed to control the transition from the old process to the new and to reduce the chaotic meetings. Meeting attendees were reduced to key contributors and the operations consultant was used as a change agent to present the reengineered processes that were approved by the executive steering committee. The consultant also served as a coach to guide the group through new processes. Program managers developed a structured agenda to keep the meeting topics focused, which was sent to attendees before the meeting and followed up with minutes (notes) after the meeting.

Another interesting narrative about the PMO is how they managed both product projects and organizational change projects such as process reengineering and IT enhancements. This made them into a strategic group by aligning projects and communicating with the Executive Steering Committee as well as a project management group to execution on individual projects. For organizational changes, they served as both the change agent and what William Bridges calls a Transition Monitoring Team (TMT). (Bridges, 2003) The PMO tracked transition progress and facilitated upward communication to provide updates on how people are adjusting to the new process, decide on how to navigate office politics and be diplomatic in making changes, and used the NPI forum to correct misinformation or clear up rumors with a single source of information. The program manager recalls,

"When I left the company, people called me The Politician because of the relationships that I've built and always taking a neutral, but effective position in getting things done. That was probably the best complement I received."

Stage 3: The New Beginning. The last transition stage is where people accept and embrace the change initiative. To make a new beginning, Bridges (2003) advises leaders to think along the lines of the **Four Ps: purpose, picture, plan and part to play.** The purpose of the PMO and NPI process were clear to many employees especially the Operations group that suffered from a lack of information and communication. To properly launch these new products, a clear and consistent purpose and process were needed for approval and how they were executed. Pictures were essential in managing the transition with a number of flow charts to map processes, which were also used to help the IT department design software solutions to facilitate the process. For plan, it seems like there was no official plan for managing the transition of information, but the PMO quickly resolved people's concerns as the process evolved. Training was also lacking during the initial implementation where there were many project managers by title who did not have a background or credentials in project management concepts. Lastly, a part to play focuses on letting employees know their role in the new process. The initial design of the NPI process took into consideration the different work flows and key people involved to capture the business environment. In addition, the meeting attendee list focused on key contributors that were trusted to represent their department to communicate proposals, present ideas or problems, and disseminate information back to the people responsible for the individual projects.

4.5 PMO maturity level

This case study has covered the benefits and implementation of a PMO, but it is also important to gauge the PMO's capabilities by looking at the maturity level. ESI International, Inc. is a provider of training and consulting in project management, program management, and business analysis. They also conduct a variety of research on PMOs and defines the various stages of maturity. Author Gerard M. Hill from ESI defines five stages of PMO maturity along a competency continuum that can be examined for application in an organization. The stages in Project Office, Basic PMO, Standard PMO, Advanced PMO, and Center of Excellence.

It is important to note that the PMO is a business integration activity and depending on the organization and their needs, they may not need to evolve to the fifth stage as the Center of Excellence to achieve their organizational goals. Many organizations may only need some of these functions in their PMO so various adaptations and adjustments of these functions can be applied. (Hill, G M. 2004)

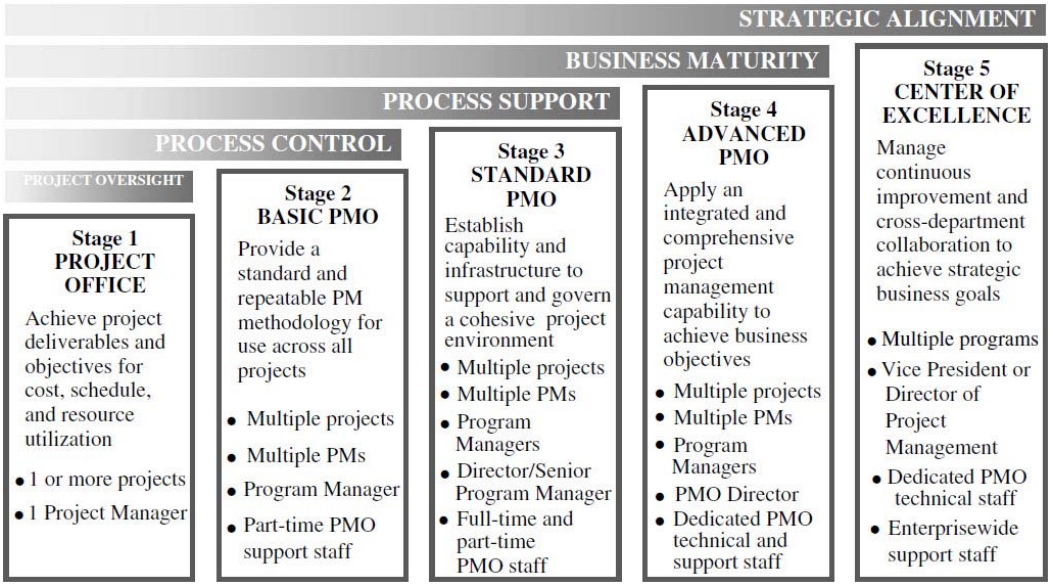


Figure 4.2 Overview of PMO Capabilities across the PMO Competency Continuum (Hill, G M. 2004)

Based on these descriptions, SCE's PMO followed similar stages when it was first implemented to where it is at the time of this study. It started as a Project Office to ensure new products were treated as unique projects and measured by time, cost, and requirements factors. Within the first year, it evolved to a basic PMO with the promotion of the Project Manager to an Operations Program Manager to align multiple projects with the help of a support staff. After two years, it reached the Process Support Stage 3 as a Standard PMO and implemented many programs including the NPI process, IT enhancement, packaging postponement, launching into new territories and more. However, the current program manager feels that maturity has since been stagnant due to people leaving the organization and the process champion moving on to other projects. The Program Manager comments,

"Early on, there was tremendous support for PMO and we gained a lot of momentum to make improvements and align projects. We still do that now, but the progression has shifted to be more executional and not as strategic."

One interesting observation is how important relationships and work culture are for the PMO. When a program manager leaves, the person replacing them must reestablish the inter-organizational relationships and communication channels to reproduce the same success as their predecessor. This shows the importance of the program manager's work style and technical and sociocultural aspects of their skill sets. The same perspective also applies to key stakeholders from other departments leaving the company. The Program Manager mentions,

"The only part that does change is the method in which the Program Management group interacts with the rest of the company. The change in personnel will present changes in workflows. The key to maintaining the core goal idea is to maintain transparency in the status of the project and demonstrate that their feedback is always heard and recognized."

Another factor that prohibited growth is the lack of knowledge management. Since the PMO implementation, many processes were designed on independent spreadsheets or mapping software, but not systematized or archived in a knowledge management system. As people leave the organization, including the consultant who was a key change agent, the useful project management tools and practices are gone as new employees with different work styles and experience use different methods. The Program Manager recalls,

"When the consultant left, we didn't do a good job of keeping all the mapped processes and recommendations. These were usually done on Microsoft PowerPoint or Excel and we have not found a good solution to integrate them into our ERP system yet."

4.6 Factors that influenced positive organizational change

Although there was initial resistance to the organizational change with the implementation of the PMI process and the evolution of the PMO, a number of

employees with positive emotions and behaviors had an impact in ensuring the success of the new process.

4.6.1 Role of mindfulness

In the research article, *Can Positive Employees Help Positive Organizational Change*?, authors James Avey, Tara Wernsing, and Fred Luthans looks at the importance of positive emotions and behaviors when making organizational change. The authors define mindfulness as "enhanced attention to and awareness of current experiences or present reality." (Avey, Wernsing, Luthans, 2008) Mindfulness is essential to organizations that require high reliability with attention to detecting failure early, reluctance to simplify interpretations, dedicate more time to observing operations, and more time developing resilience to unexpected events. (Avey, Wernsing, Luthans, 2008) The implementation of program management designated one main point of contact responsible for working with all stakeholders to improve the internal processes, align projects to increase success rate, and find and fix potential problems that may occur in the supply chain. Without positive mindfulness, the program managers are not able to lead the change process and strategic programs such as the implementation of the NPI process or launching in a new territory. One benefit of the PMO that was consistent among all the interviewees is having more transparency and accountability with one person leading the process and maintaining the single source of key information. The Creative Services Manager comments,

"Introduction of new products are always a messy one, usually no particular individual owns the whole process and decisions being made without someone in the driver's seat. Program managers are the hub of all information from the planning phase to execution and owners of all critical schedules and deadlines. They are able to make sure that the day to day business runs as smoothly as possible since they have the visibility and ownership of the process."

4.6.2 Improved communication between employees

Another key influence for positive organizational change is improved communication among departments to meet strategic goals. By having communication channels between different departments, the PMO can better align projects and

identify key stakeholders required to reengineer inefficient processes. Furthermore, the NPI process provided a forum where key stakeholders can share ideas, bring up current and potential problems and collectively come up with solutions. Since launching new products includes a number of internal and external stakeholders, constant communication lead by the PMO in the weekly meetings are essential to making sure that products launch on time and meet the project requirements.

4.6.3 Executive Steering Committee supporting the PMO

With the S&OP initiative, the PMO was formed and guided by the Executive Steering Committee to further align projects with strategic goals and solidify how product proposals were submitted, greenlit, and executed. This created a new organizational process where all new product and program proposals went through an executive green light to ensure that they were aligned with goals. Once approved, proposals were handed off to the PMO where it was responsible for disseminating the information to respective stakeholders. With executive management support, the PMO was able to successfully execute and lead a number of organizational changes and product projects. With a cross-functional guiding coalition formed by executive management and an official NPI process to serve as a forum to facilitate the processes and projects tasks, these were among the factors of the PMO that ensured positive organizational change.

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION

The intent of this paper is to highlight the challenges of a multi-project environment and investigate the role of a Program Management Office as a solution, specifically on how a PMO can align projects to meet organizational goals and increase project success. The study is framed by factors that causes change, the importance of project management in today's organizations, and managing organizational change and transitions by utilizing both Kotter's 8-Step Change Model and Bridges' Managing Transitions Concept.

These concepts are further explored through a case study of SONY Computer Entertainment by looking at how the PMO was implemented, understanding the short and long-term benefits, and how the PMO has evolved from the time it was implemented to the time of this study. The findings provides real examples of the key success factors in implementation and how a PMO can be entrenched within an organization to provide value. First, organizations need to be aware of factors that cause change and be flexible to adapt to them immediately. Whether these factors are internal or external, management needs to set the right strategic goals and use project management as an efficient way to increase efficiency or introduce innovation. Second, change agents are essential in helping the organization lead change. In this case, the PMO was a lead change agent by collaborating with various departments in reengineering processes to create efficiency and introduce programs to align projects. By establishing the NPI process to manage new products, ensuring projects are complete to expand into new territories, and institute projects to cut costs, the PMO was essential in providing support at a strategic and project portfolio level. Third, management support and organizational awareness are essential to PMO success to properly lead change. Lastly, program managers requires both technical and sociocultural aspects of project management to be successful in working through politics and conflicts that may arise from cross-functional projects.

5.1 Managerial implications

While the PMO at SCEA has been operational since 2011, there is room to continue to improve and add more value to the organization. The last section of this study will provide recommendations based on data gathered from the interviewees about the current status of the PMO.

5.1.1 Regain management support through a process champion

In a study about *The Challenges to Success for PMOs*, one of the key findings is executive management support is essential to success. The study concludes that executive management support is critical to the PMO as 35% of those surveyed stated it is a key factor for PMO success while 34% attributed lack of executive support as the main reason their PMO is not successful. (ESI UK, 2009) Since the PMO at SCEA started with a lot of momentum through a process champion and direct communication with the Executive Steering Committee, getting the same amount of support will be essential to continue aligning projects with strategic goals. This will also increase organizational awareness of the PMO for it to be leveraged and utilized in other areas.

5.1.2 Track success and failure with key performance indicators

Despite a long list of accomplishments, many programs and individual projects were not fully tracked and measured against key performance indicators that are specific to the PMO. As mentioned in the study about challenges to success conducted by ESI, more PMOs are reaching full-scale maturity as demonstrated by an increase in services which support strategy and portfolio management, but they have a long way to go in demonstrating value through considered, quantitative measurement and metrics. (ESI, 2015) Only individual projects are measured against time (ship on time), requirements (compliance approval), and costs (budget set by profit margins). However, measuring performance against specific indicators can show the incremental value that the PMO brings or areas that they need to improve on including:

- Percentage of strategic projects delivered
- Percentage of cost reductions through programs and projects
- Improve time to market or reduction in project lead time
- Increase success rates of cross functional projects

- Internal and external customer satisfaction rate through surveys

With additional organizational awareness and evidence of adding value across all projects, the PMO can gain recognition in providing real value and secure additional resources. This can help the PMO evolve to be a more strategic entity rather than just executional support.

5.1.3 Implement knowledge management to document processes

As mentioned in chapter 4.6 of this study, the PMO did not have a knowledge management process that may have contributed to the lack of growth in recent years. This was due to key employees leaving the organization with no archives of process documentation, useful tools, templates, and contacts. A knowledge management system can help them maintain key project management practices that can be duplicated across similar or reoccurring projects to improve efficiency as well as establish a center of excellence for the organization. In addition, a portfolio of past and current projects can be maintained as a benchmark for KPIs, provide a database of successful projects that can referred to or shared with other departments, and to transfer knowledge to new employees to the organization or as the PMO acquires additional resources. If the PMO hopes to continue to evolve and eventually establish a center of excellence for project management practices and alignment, then knowledge management will be an essential element to reaching that stage.

5.1.4 Create career path for PMO staff

One issue that is consistent among many PMOs is the lack of a career path for its staff. Between the two interviewees at SCEA, Operations Program Manager is the highest position available with no plans for program director or other senior level positions. In fact, according to a study on *The Global State of the PMO* conducted by ESI International, only 46% out of the 900 PMOs surveyed offered a defined career path. When broken down by title, 37% of project managers have access to a career path; the number drops to 31% for program managers and only 18% for portfolio managers. (ESI, 2015) Understanding how an organization works and making connections with key contributors from different departments can be extremely time consuming and not easily replaceable. Since maintaining inter-organizational relationships are essential to

PMO success, a career path should be implemented to retain key employees. In addition, investment in project and program management training or certifications can further increase PMO capabilities as well as motivate the current staff by providing growth opportunities. This will allow the PMO to add more value by evolving with more experienced staff and up to date tools.

5.1.5 Use change management theories on challenging projects

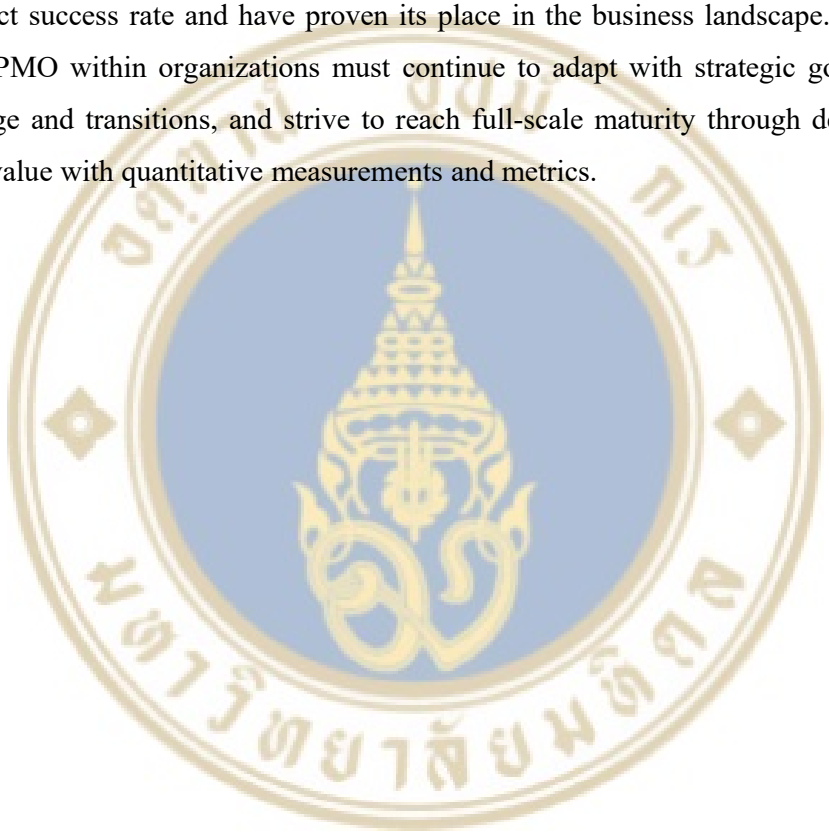
By combining different change management theories such as Kotter's 8-Step Change Model and Bridges' Managing Transitions Concept, program managers can prepare themselves to successfully influence internal processes and manage stakeholders. This is especially important if it is an organizational change project that directly affects people's job responsibilities and requires transition to something entirely new. Even the PMO itself can adapt these theories to prepare themselves to evolve to the next stage of maturity. However, it is also important that program managers are effective leaders and should developed through. William Bridges notes in his article for *Leading Transition A New Model for Change*, "The kind of leadership most effective today is similar to the kind of service that the best consultant gives a client: collaborative assistance that is both problem solving and developmental. Its target is both the situation and the professional capability of the person." (Hesselbein, Johnston, Bridges, Mitchell, 2000)

5.2 Research Limitations

Some limitations apply to this research on PMO benefits and implementation. The case study was limited to ten interviewees in middle management and lacking opinions and perspectives of executive managers. The small sample selection may not reflect a wide range of employees' perspectives compared to studies involving a larger sample size within an organization. In addition, the findings show the benefits of PMO, but only from the view of one organization and does not reflect views from that may or may not exist in other organizations or industries. Further research can be done to gather more data on the benefits or negative effects of PMO as well as how it was implemented in the organization.

Although the findings cannot be generalized, by looking at a case study of a large global organization such as SCEA and secondary data research on the status of PMOs across different industries as conducted by ESI International, discussions around the benefits of PMO and the key success factors are beneficial to see if this is a good organizational change for your company or how the current PMO can be improved.

In conclusion, as *The Global State of the PMO* research indicates, PMO funding and future are secure as a staple entity in organizations that strive to increase project success rate and have proven its place in the business landscape. (ESI, 2015) The PMO within organizations must continue to adapt with strategic goals, manage change and transitions, and strive to reach full-scale maturity through demonstrating real value with quantitative measurements and metrics.



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