

Research News

Invitation to Participate in global “Project Managers as Senior Executives” Research Project

Participants are needed for a major project management research project now underway to compare the roles and responsibilities of top level executives of large organizations with those of managers of large, complex programs and projects. The research project, co-sponsored and financed by the Project Management Institute (PMI®) and ESC-Lille University, is under the direction of Professor Jean-



Pierre Debourse (pictured) at the International Centre for Analysis and Project Management (CIMAP) at ESC Lille in France, with researchers and subjects worldwide.

Background – The Questions

Little research has been conducted to compare the roles and responsibilities of these two groups of managers and to answer the following questions:

“Does experience as a successful program and project manager prepare the person for top level executive positions?”

“What experience exists that demonstrates that program and project managers progress to higher level executive positions?”

“What are the typical career paths followed by top level executives in reaching their senior positions?”

“Do program managers typically hold broader strategic decision-making responsibilities than project managers, and if so does this improve their chances for moving into higher level executive positions compared to project managers?”

“How can a program or project manager better design their career development path to improve their chances of moving into top management positions?”

“Are the leadership, communication, and interpersonal skills needed by top managers similar to those needed by successful program and project managers?”

“What, if any, ‘best practices’ can be identified in developing and promoting program and project managers to corporate leaders?”

“Are there different answers to these questions for different industries and categories of programs and projects, and for project-driven versus project dependent organizations?”

“What lessons are available from current research in human resources management as related to the career development of top executives that can be applied to the career development of project managers who wish to move up to senior more manager positions?”

The Research Project

The Research Project will provide empirical evidence regarding the similarities and produce documented answers to the above and related questions. The primary sources of this evidence will be personal interviews with CEOs and other senior executives and with program and project managers in a number of industrial and governmental sectors, in a number of countries around the world.

The project is therefore to substantiate or refute these three underlying hypotheses:

Project Managers
as
Senior Executives?

1. Program and project managers face greater difficulties in reaching top executive positions – at least in some industrial sectors – compared to more traditional, well-established functional positions (finance, sales, marketing, engineering, manufacturing, and others). If this hypothesis holds true then special emphasis will be needed to train project and program managers in recognizing and overcoming these difficulties.
2. Those project management positions that usually report more closely to top executive levels, such as Director of Project Management, Senior Project Sponsors, and Program Managers, are more likely to lead to top executive positions compared to the lower level project manager positions. If this premise is valid then career paths that include these positions will prove to be advantageous.
3. And yet there are significant similarities between the integrative and other functions, roles and responsibilities of project and program managers and those of senior managers and executives in all complex organizations. If this can be shown to be a valid hypothesis then it readily follows that successful experience as a project or program manager is excellent preparation to become a successful senior executive.

The Research Process

Face-to-face (perhaps on-line with voice) interviews will be conducted first with a number of CEOs, senior executives, and also with a number of program and project managers, using tested interview guidelines and questionnaires.

Subsequently, other CEOs, senior executives, and program and project managers will be interviewed via on-line, e-mail or mail using written questionnaires. A wide range of business, industrial, and governmental companies and agencies in a number of countries will be invited to participate in the research. An extensive literature search will also be conducted. The results of the interviews and the literature search will be analyzed and summarized in a final research report that will be published by PMI in 2008.

Participation Invited

You cordially are invited to participate actively in this research project in one or more of the following ways:

- As an interviewer of CEOs, other seniors executives, or program and project managers in or near your city;
- By encouraging fellow members of your PMI Chapter, SIG, College or professional organization to conduct interviews for the research project;
- By submitting to the Principal Researchers the names and contact information of CEOs, senior executives, and program and project managers with whom you have made contact and who have indicated a willingness to be interviewed for this project, either face-to-face or on-line;
- By acting as a coordinator for the interviews being conducted in your geographic area, or within your PM professional organization;

Answers to the questions developed in the guidelines and questionnaires based on experience in Project Management will also be welcome.

What you should do

Your participation will require:

1. Your acceptance of an agreement of participation in our research project.
2. Your sending us (preferably via e-mail) a list of people within your PMI Chapter or other Component or other PM professional organization (together with their contact information) who wish to participate in the research project, with an indication of their level of participation, either as an interviewer or as an interviewee.
3. Your sending us the list of one or more program/ project managers (or more) and one or more CEOs or senior executives (or more) that you plan to interview or recommend to be interviewed for this project, with their names, titles, and appropriate organizational information.
4. Your conducting the interviews using the guidelines and instructions that we will provide to you, and your returning the completed interview documentation to us expeditiously. This will include a recording of the face-to-face or on-line interviews, which are generally expected to be of 1 or 2 hour duration.
5. For those coordinating the interviews within a PMI Chapter or other Component, your providing guidance to the others within your PMI Component to assure proper adherence to the interview guidelines.

We realize that the CEOs and senior executives (SEs) to be interviewed aren't necessarily members of PMI or any other professional project management organization. We believe that it is important to obtain the opinions and experience

of these executives related to our research topic and objectives. The interview guidelines for SEs are slightly different from those for the program/project managers. For this reason their interviews begin with their own experience related to project management and with the benefits derived from conducting projects during their own careers and their path to reach the top.

The interview results will be held in strict confidence and the results will not be identified with any specific individuals or organizations. The Research Team will provide all possible assistance in interpreting and improving the interview guidelines and our research protocols. We hope this will provide interesting involvement for you in a new and important venture of research and development for the profession of project management.

Benefits of Participation

Those assisting with this research project will have an opportunity to:

1. Make a strong contribution to the PM profession.
2. Help facilitate project managers in reaching the top: linking your aims with ours, which are strongly devoted to the development of program and project managers.
3. Participate in the formulation of the ways and means for the development of program and project managers.
4. Participate in a new and very promising research field for PM. We strongly believe that for the future state of project managers and the discipline of Project Management in companies and agencies it is necessary to open new fields such as relationships between project managers and senior executives; project managers and Strategic Management; and the role of Project Management in the development of the career of senior executives.
5. Earn **1 PDU for each hour** you spend arranging, conducting, and reporting on the CEO and program/project manager interviews (maximum of 15 PDUs can be earned for this work per reporting period.) Source: Ed Andrews, PMI Director of Research. This can be very helpful to you in renewing your PMP certification.
6. Have your name and contributions, and those of your interviewers and of your interviewees, integrated into the main results and publications. Your personal visibility to the CEOs and SEs who you are able to interview should also be a significant benefit to you.

Project Managers as Senior Executives Award
to be given to the PMI Chapter, SIG or other PM organization **having conducted 5 or more interviews.**

The Principle Researchers

Pr Dr Jean-Pierre DEBOURSE PhD. Director of International Centre for Analysis and Project Management : CIMAP-ESC Lille. Former Dean and director of ESC Lille (Lille School of Management). Emeritus Professor at the University of Lille. Professor DEBOURSE has more than 30 years of experience in Project Management and Project Management Education. With Roger P. DECLERCK, he founded one of the first MS in Project Management in Europe in 1978 and also the same year the CIMAP. He launched also the Program in Morocco for top executives of ministries and large companies. He was one of the founders of the Regional Development Agency of the North-Pas de Calais Region and its Director during seven years (Business Creation, International Development of Companies, Innovation, Management of Companies in difficulties etc). He was the analyst for the Regional Council of the Northern France of the five projects competing for the Channel Tunnel. Jean-Pierre DEBOURSE was also counselor of the French Ministry of Higher Education for Education and Research in Management and he is presently chairman and CEO of the Regional Fund of Guarantee. Member of the PMI®, the IPMA and the Major Projects Association. jp.debourse@esc-lille.fr.

Dr Russell D. ARCHIBALD, PMP, PhD (Hon), MSc, PMP, Fellow PMI and APM/IPMA, is a globally-recognized author, consultant and educator on project management. With a career spanning more than 50 years, Russ has broad international experience in engineering, operations, program and project management. He has experienced three project management related careers: Management Consultant, Corporate Executive, and Military/Aerospace. Russ has consulted to a variety of large and small organizations in many industries in 16 countries on 4 continents. He is PMI member N° 6, one of the five original trustees, and is listed in Who's Who in the World. Russ is the author of **Managing High Technology Programs and Projects** (1st edition 1976, 3rd edition 2003 published in Italian, Russian, and Chinese) and co-author of **Network Based Management Information Systems (PERT/CPM)** (1967). Russ has presented many articles and papers at PMI® and International Project Management Association (IPMA) conferences in North America, South America, Europe and Asia. He holds Bachelor of Science (University of Missouri) and Master of Science (University of Texas, Austin) degrees in Mechanical Engineering. As a pioneer in the field, Russ received an honorary Ph.D. in strategy, program, and project management from the Ecole Supérieure de Commerce de Lille in Lille, France in August 2005. He received the Jim O'Brien Lifetime Achievement Award from the PMI College of Scheduling in 2006. www.russarchibald.com.





Pr Christophe BREDILLET, PhD, PMP, Editor, Project Management Journal (PMI®). Member of Editorial Board, PM4Success (APM Group). Professor of Strategic Management and Programme / Project Management at ESC Lille and at University of Technology, Sidney. Co-Director of the CIMAP and Director of ISGI (Institute of Industrial Management), the Education Department in Programme / Project Management of ESC Lille. Christophe co-leads two research and standards

development projects for PMI (Projects Managers Competences and Organizational Project Management Maturity Model). He is founder and president of the PMI Chapter «Hauts-de-France». c.bredillet@esc-lille.fr

Pr J. Rodney TURNER, PhD, MA, MSc, Dphil (Oxon), BE (Auck), CEng, FIMechE, FAPM, MinstD. Editor of The International Journal of Project Management. Professor of Project Management at ESC Lille, and at the Kemmy Business School of the University of Limerick. Visiting Professor at Henley Management College, for the spring of 2007 he has been a visiting scholar at George Washington University. Rodney Turner is the author or editor of ten books, including The Handbook of Project-based Management and the Gower Handbook of Project Management. Former Chairman of the International Project Management Association, he is also a Fellow of the Association for Project Management. rodneyturner@europrojex.co.uk.



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Pr Jean-Marie HAZEBROUCQ, PhD, HDR. Professor at the «University du Littoral» (Dunkirk, Boulogne, F). PhD in Project Management (Lille). Former CEO of different seaside and other resorts. Member of the CIMAP since its foundation. Expert for the European Union.

Dr Laurence LECOEUVRE, PhD. PhD in Project Management (Lille). Professor at ESC Lille and member of the CIMAP. Deputy Director of the laboratory LGSI (joint venture between ESC Lille and the Engineer School Centrale Lille). Former International Marketing Director.

Dr Corinne POROLI, PhD in Management Science (ESSEC and Aix-Marseille University). Professor at ESC Lille and member of the CIMAP.

Pr Henrik LUTZEN, PhD in Science and Degree in Economics and in engineering (avionics). Professor at ESC Lille and Associate Dean. He taught economics and

quantitative methods in Sweden, the US and Canada. Former manager in the airline industry.

Dr Philippe PAILOT, PhD, HDR. Professor at the University of Lille in Human Resources Management. PhD in Management. Member of the CIMAP.

The CIMAP (International Centre for Analysis and Project Management) is the Research Centre of the Project Management Department of ESC Lille. Its main research areas concern the relations between Project Management and Senior Executives, the Roles and Behaviour of Project and Program Managers, People in Project Management; Principles and Theories of Programme/Project Management, Knowledge Management, Bodies of Knowledge, Standards, Maturity Models, Business Dynamics. The CIMAP is directed by Jean-Pierre DEBOURSE and Christophe BREDILLET. The Education Centre of Project Management of ESC Lille is the ISGI (Institute for Industrial Management) directed by Christophe BREDILLET. The main programs are a PhD in Strategy and Project Management, an Executive MBA in Strategy and Project and Program Management, MS in Project and Program Management (in French and in English in Lille and Paris) and in-company programs in France and abroad. To access the research brochure, go here http://www.pmforum.org/library/research/PROJECT_Managers.pdf

To offer your assistance or for more information regarding the Project Managers as Senior Executives Research project, please contact one of the Project Leaders: Pr Dr Jean-Pierre DEBOURSE – CIMAP, ESC Lille: jp.debourse@esc-lille.fr. Dr Russell ARCHIBALD: russell_archibald@yahoo.com.