

Software Project Management

Lesson 7 – Project Culture

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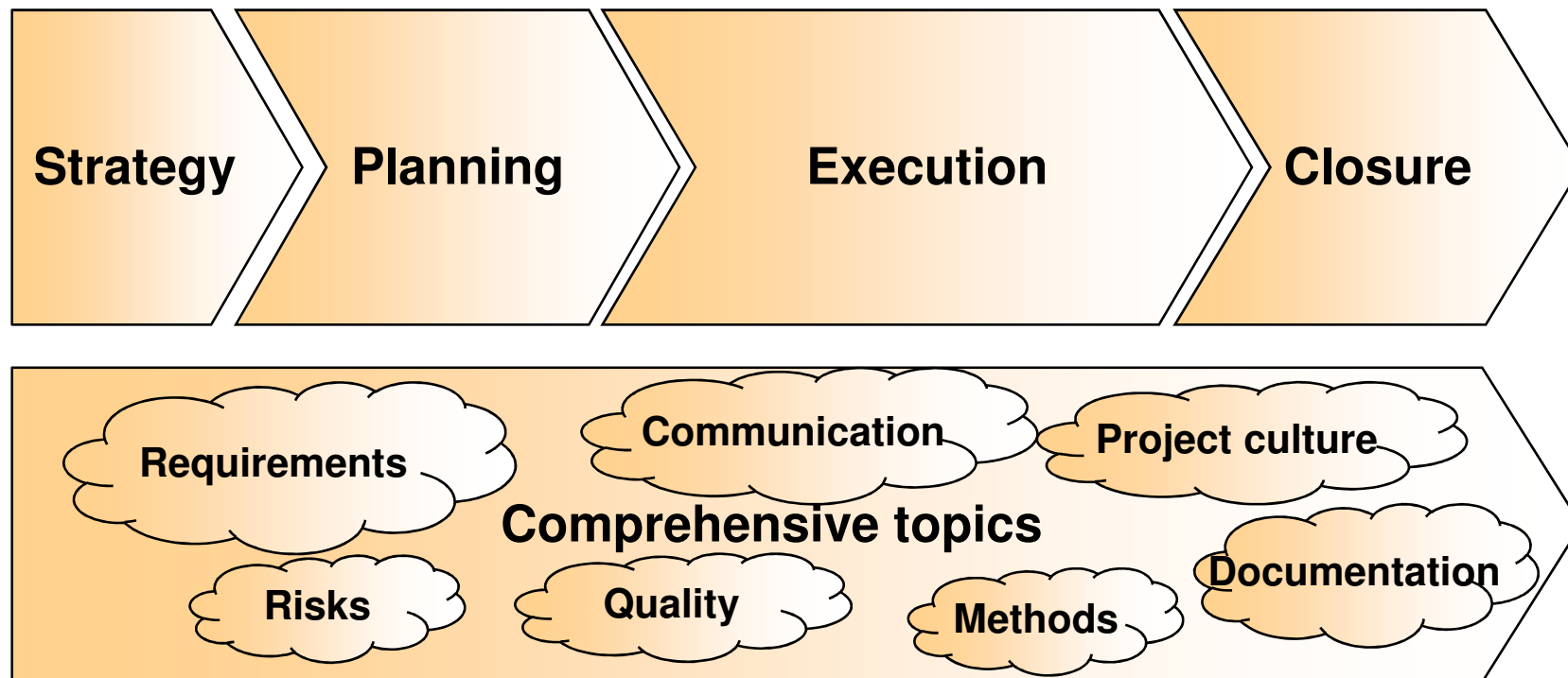


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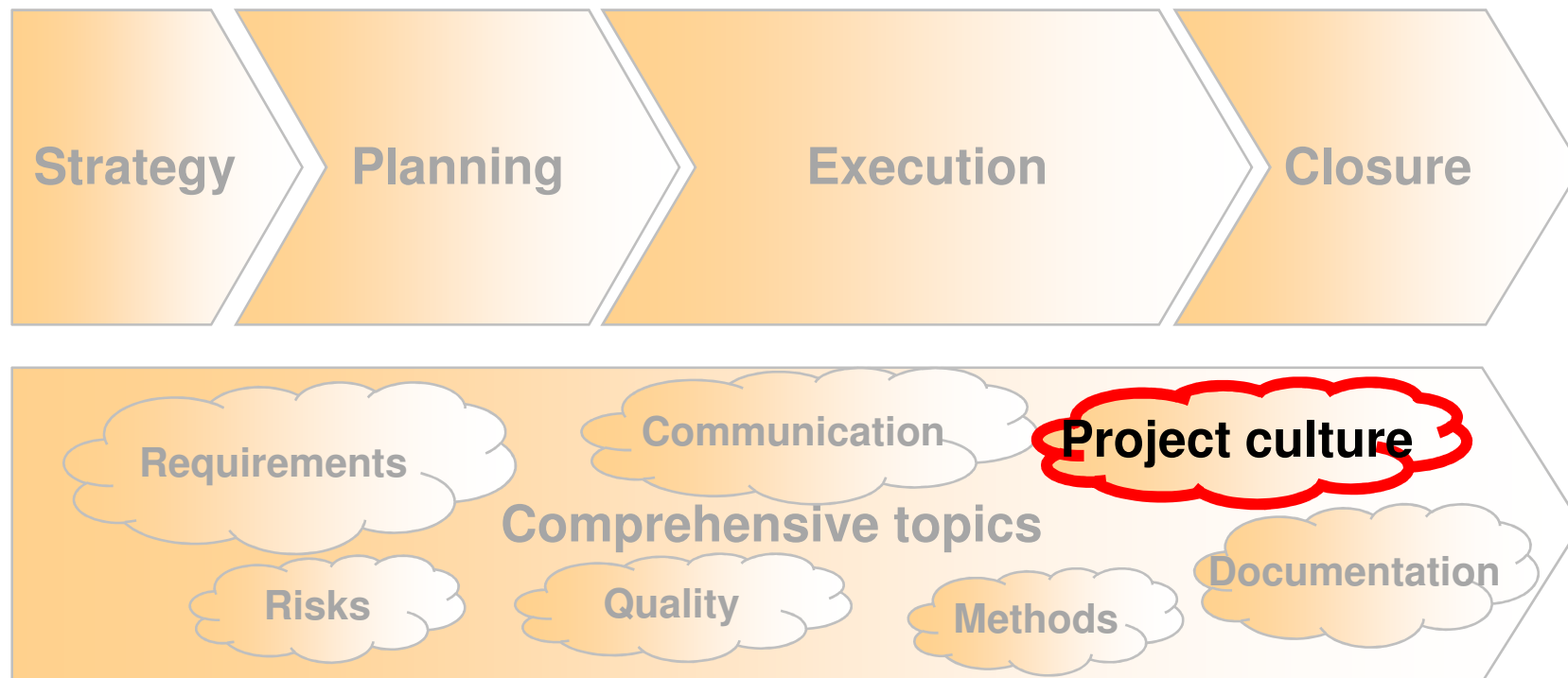


Introduction





Introduction





Introduction

- Project culture
The project culture of a project could be understood as “unwritten laws” of a project.

Simple examples:

- How do the project members greet each other?
- Do project members name each other by first name?
- Do the project members eat lunch together?
- Are there common activities beside project work?



Definition

Project culture covers the soft skills in a project, like

- Fairness and respect
- Ability to communicate
- Reliability
- Will to work together in the team and out of the team
- Conflict handling skills
- Activity level for the project
- Frankness
- Identification with the project



Good project culture

- There is a close relationship to the topic communication
 - Meaningful project name
 - Project logo
 - Project vision
 - Project glossary
 - Arranging a good working atmosphere, e. g. with common project events
- Value people
- Integrative approach: Make people concerned (passive) to people involved (active)



Good project culture

- Working on one's own authority
- Clear responsibilities
- Measurable goals
- NOT: Until when you are done?
 BUT: What will you do until dd.mm.yy?
- Prioritization
- Common rules (of the game)
- Regulation of the communication
- Be authentic and honest: Accept own weaknesses;
 do not blandish your project



Learning

- Establishing a failure culture
 - Failing is okay, as we could improve
 - We work with humans in the project – those who work make mistakes
 - Deal positive with mistakes
- Every error we fix now, saves subsequent costs and ensures the success of the project
- No apportioning of blame – no finger pointing
Working goal oriented:
How could we fix together mistakes?



Learning

- Learning attitude
- Use your and your fellows experience:
People know already – ask and transfer
- Involve people, e.g. end-user of a product, operation
- Feedback / Retrospective / Lessons learned
 - Use experience out of project team
 - Regular
 - With measures



Decisions

- Successful project managers are decisive
- The issue concerning decisions are not wrong decisions, but missing decisions

Example

- A required program change is not approved by business
- Tests could start, when program is ready – with or without change
- The project manager will not order the program change without approval of the business, but will not forego the changes – he is waiting
- So, tests are blocked



Decisions

- Proposal: Establishing a decision culture
 - Empowerment
Transfer of the right to decide to lower levels in the project like sub projects and work packages
→ Increasing personal responsibility
 - No discussion of decisions already taken
Exception: New facts
 - Automatic acceptance
Veto principle: If there is no objective until a specific date of decision making body, a decision is taken
=> Proceeding to be agreed in advance



Sources

- [AG16] Daud Alam, Uwe Gühl:
Projektmanagement für die Praxis, Springer
Vieweg Berlin Heidelberg, 2016 (in German)