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What does a Change Manager do ?

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Who are Change Managers?

This is the summary of my recent presentation at the Project Challenge expo in Birmingham. The subject was the role of the Change Manager.

Who are Change Managers?

I began by explaining that Change Manager is a developing role, with a wide interpretation. A quick search of the members list of the Change Management Institute UK came up with the following job titles that our members, all change professionals, are known by at work:

- Communications Manager
- Director of People
- Employee Engagement Manager
- Relationship Manager
- Project Manager
- Line Manager
- Programme Manager
- Customer Experience Lead
- Business Analyst
- Business Transformation Manager
- Team Leader
- Head of PMO

I am lucky because I was given my favourite ever job title recently – Chief Persuasion Officer – which I think sums up the role beautifully!

Role confusion

At CMI's London conference, one of the discussion threads was what should change management professionals be called because there is so much confusion over the role. Perhaps not surprising as we are a young industry.

I remember when project management was going through its growth spurt in the early 2000s. In the late 1990s organisations viewed project management as the way to achieve their goals. They started appointing people to formally lead pieces of work that had not previously been called projects but as project management was becoming fashionable, nearly everything became a project so we had to have more project managers. As we hired more project managers the number of people becoming qualified in project management grew exponentially.



I see many parallels between then and now, the only difference is that we accept the role of Project Manager as the norm now, and have a good understanding of what it means. We are not there yet with the Change Manager role, but that day is coming.

So as the Co-Chair of the Change Management Institute UK I represent a very broad church. The Change Management Institute doesn't have a singular definition of the role of Change Manager. This is in common with the market place where there is wide range of interpretations of the role which are worth understanding:

1. Strategic perception of the role – in this case there is an expectation that the Change Manager will build the internal capability for managing change, so there are strong links to the world of best practice and methodologies and training and development of staff
2. Transformation perception of the role – the role of Change Manager is wider than a single change. This interpretation of the role is closer to Programme Manager and involves identifying and managing multiple strands of change together to achieve a significant shift in the business model
3. Change perception of the role – this is about managing a single change, perhaps as the result of a project, or managing change for a defined group of staff or customers

Instead of the definition of the Change Manager role the CMI has a really useful competency model that outlines the skills and abilities that someone able to define, plan and lead change should have https://www.change-management-institute.com/sites/default/files/CMMasterLevelCompetencyModel_2012%20V2.3.pdf It's a great help if you are reviewing your own CV or are trying to write a job description for a role you are hiring as it provides useful descriptions of what is required by the role.

Why everyone is talking about Change Managers?

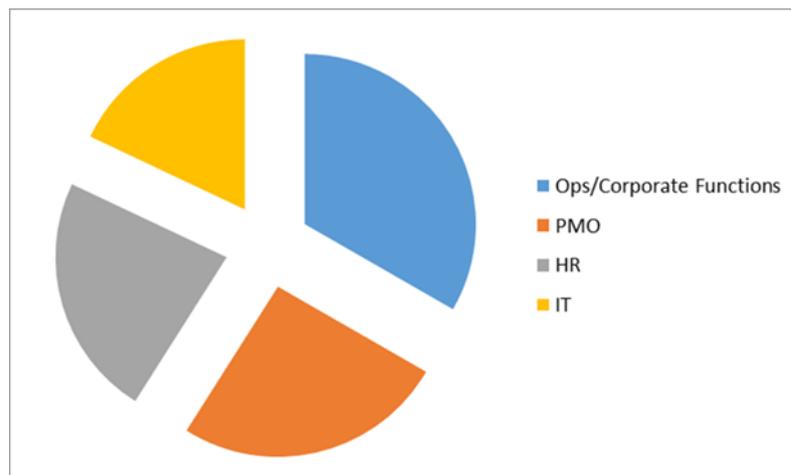
Change Management is a growing professional discipline. Organisations are coming to the realisation that they cannot leave things to chance. A project that delivers, even on time and on budget and to the right level of quality does not realise the benefits promised in its Business Case unless all those that are supposed to actually adopt the project deliverables. Change is about persuading people that they should abandon their old ways of working and put in the effort to learn and apply a new way of doing things. This doesn't happen spontaneously. It needs encouragement and it is the role of the Change Manager to provide that encouragement.



Failure to do so has three immediate costs:

1. The direct cost of the project, where investment has been made in the project team and its creation of new products or services
2. The opportunity cost of not doing something else because resources were committed to the project
3. The reputational cost internally and externally of a failed project. Internally the cost is 'change fatigue' when yet another initiative fails to deliver what was promised, a little more cynicism creeps in and staff have a little less faith in the organisation that they work for. Externally it means that we failed, and that customers, suppliers or regulators will notice.

Larger organisations are more likely to be building this capability for change. Recent research from Prosci indicates that 29% of change roles are based in the business either in operational or corporate functions; 20% are in the PMO; 18% in HR and 14% in IT.



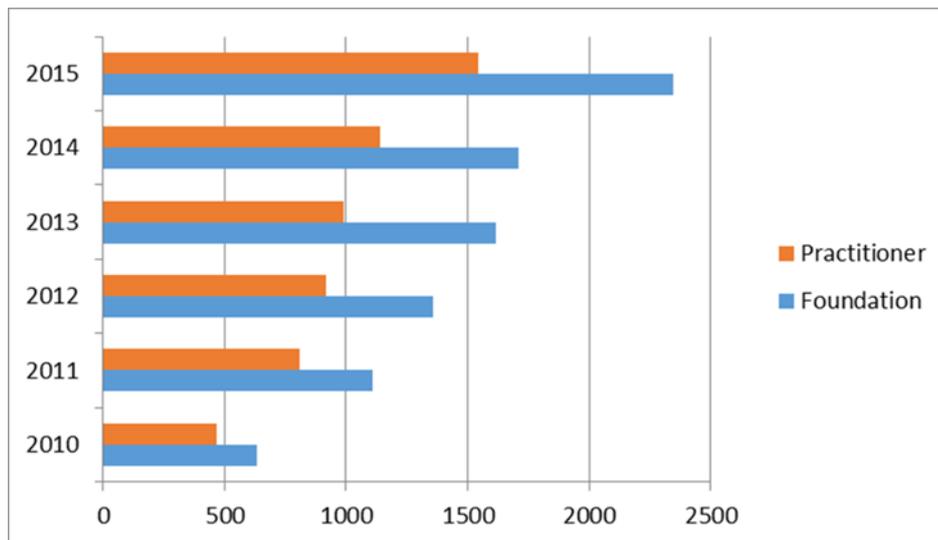
What this research indicates is that you and your colleagues are starting to find the Change Manager role more common. It is appearing in organisations structures, there are more job adverts for this role, the need for someone to manage change is mentioned in meetings. This more frequent discussion of the role is prompting more questions about it, more interest in it and as people discover what change management is about, they recognise the sense of putting people formally in charge of it. So there is a virtuous circle building, giving people an opportunity to evaluate if this is a threat or an opportunity!

This virtuous circle is borne out by the data. Every month I survey one of the largest job boards in the UK to track the number of Change Manager and Business Transformation roles that they are offering. There has been a steady increase in the

number of Change roles, but the number of transformation roles has doubled in the 2 years since February 2014.



The number of people getting qualified continues to grow so this creates its own virtuous circle. The higher the number of qualified individuals, the more common it becomes to demand a change management qualification as part of the criteria for roles involved in change, including project and programme management roles. See the continued growth in the number of applicants for the APMG Change Management Foundation and Practitioner qualification:

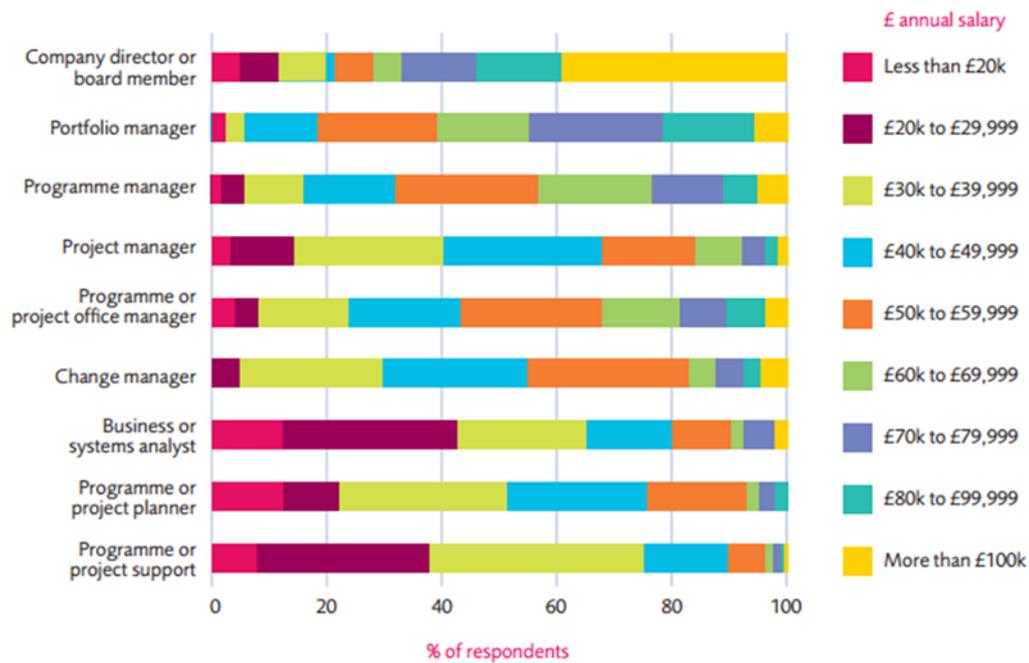


It is easy to see why qualifications are so important. If I advertise for a Project Manager, nearly every applicant is going to have a project management qualification. To sort the excellence from the average, I can ask for a qualification in change management. This will reduce the number of applications by 95% but it leaves me with those 5% of applicants that understand project success is not just



about delivery, it requires the space between delivery and the realisation of benefits to be managed as well.

The number of jobs and the number of people becoming qualified in change management is reflected in the salaries. In May 2015, the Association for Project Management in conjunction with Wellingtone undertook a salary survey for those working in project management.

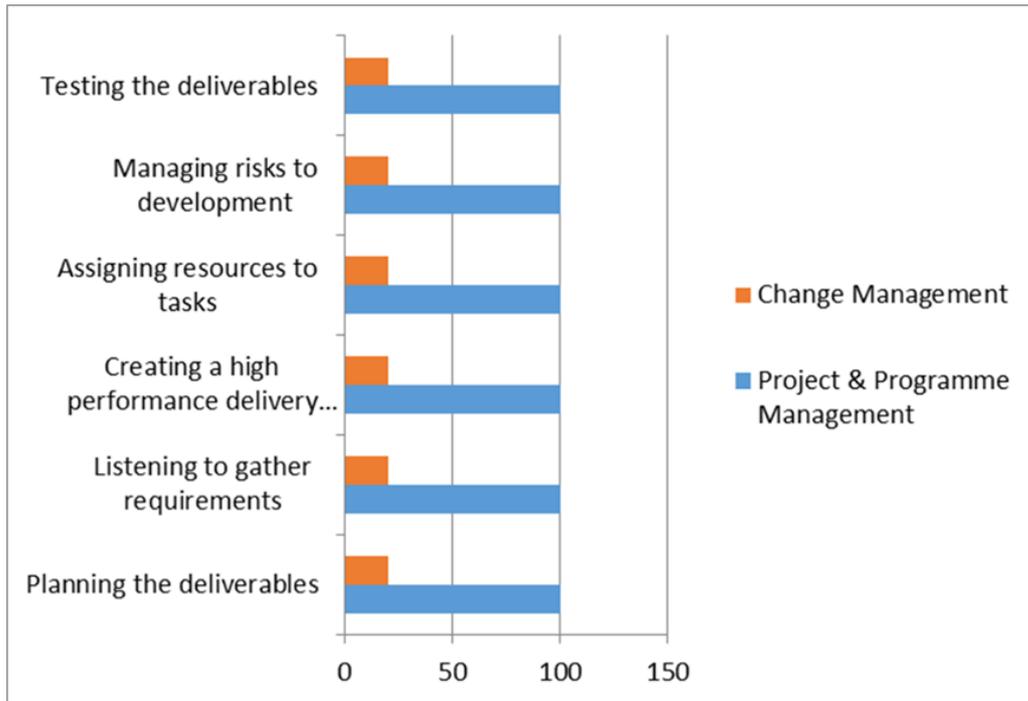


What the survey discovered is that in the UK Change Managers are enjoying nearly £5000 per annum higher salaries than their counterparts in project management. Even more importantly, Change Manager is now featuring in these salary surveys. If the role hadn't become the norm, then we would not have this data. In the US, Prosci research indicates that half of the change management roles in a recent survey are earning between \$100,000 and \$150,000.

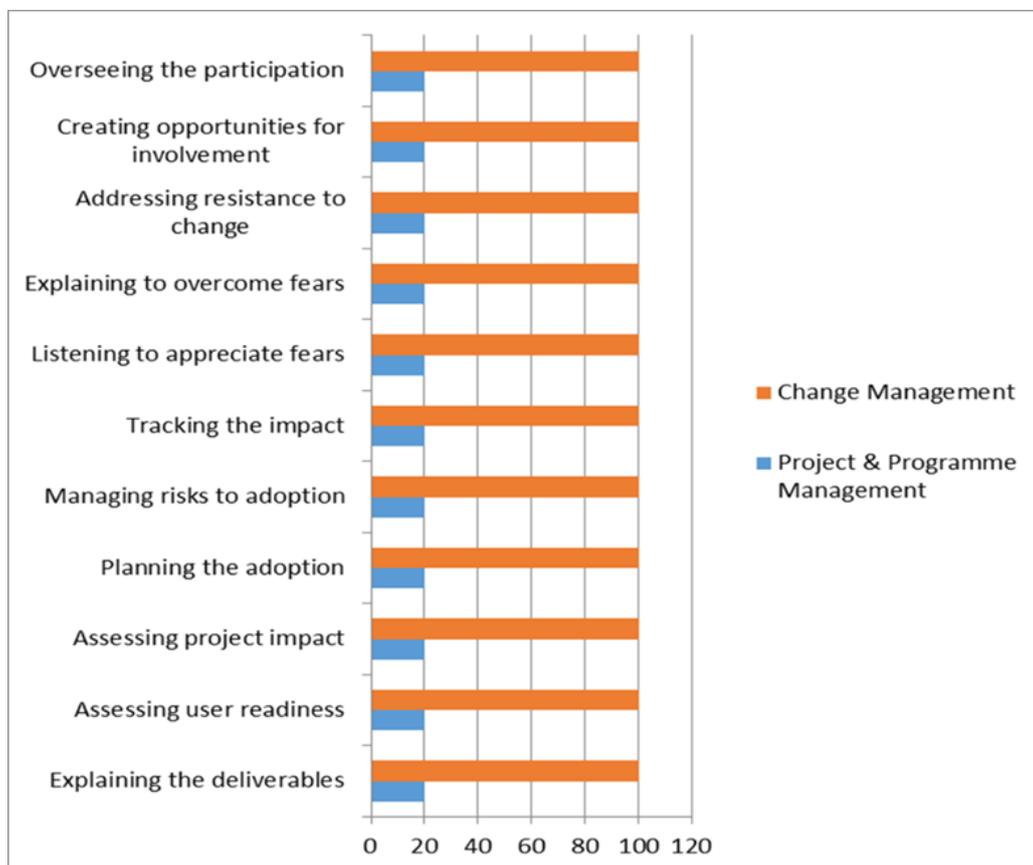
Overlap between project and change roles

Another perspective on the role of Change Manager is that a lot of the responsibilities can and I think should be undertaken as part of excellent project management. Projects are about the creation of something new. Emphasis is on the identification of requirements, the creation of plans and the management of risks that prevent delivery.

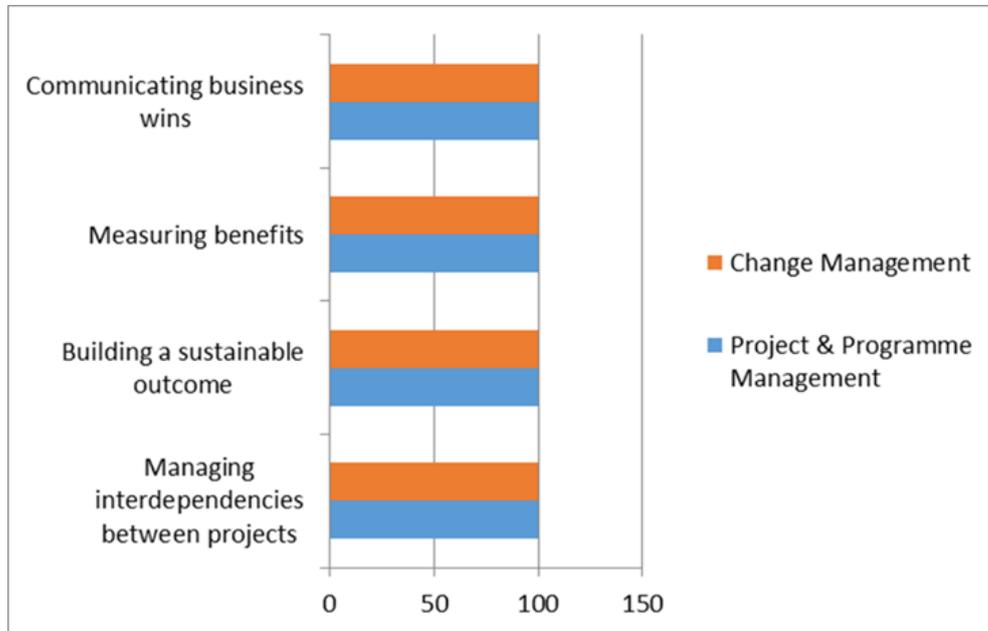




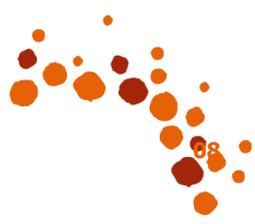
Change is about persuading those receiving what the project has created to use the new products or services or adopt the new processes or systems. This means encouraging and tracking the participation of all those affected, addressing the fears of those expected to work in new ways and working through resistance to these changes.



Where the two roles coalesce is in the promotion of what has been delivered and the measurement of the benefits that are being achieved.



This is a very exciting time for our industry as the value of what many of us having been doing for years under the guise of effective project and programme management is now being brought out as a distinct management discipline. Project management and change management are complementary disciplines and we each have a lot to learn from each other. So make your mission to learn the other side! If you are a project or programme manager, maybe its time to put yourself on a change management training course. If you are an experienced change professional, now is the time to acquire a project management qualification.



Melanie Franklin has a track record of excellence in project, programme and portfolio planning and delivery. In recent years she has focused on helping organisations move from waterfall to agile project management approaches in response to the increasing need to deliver projects on a shorter timescale.

Creating agile environments has grown in importance in recent years, and many executives are driving this adoption as they become aware of the benefits of agile thinking in responding to fast moving changes in the international business environment.

She is a respected author of 8 text books about project and change management. Her most recent book, 'Agile Change Management' proposed an approach to managing change initiatives that applies the principles of agile project management. This ensures that the exact deliverables from a change initiative can evolve in response to customer, regulator and market demand, project deadlines are still respected.

Melanie believes in authentic leadership, therefore, as well as using her training skills to develop the skills and knowledge of attendees on her courses, she also ensures she attends training to build her own skill set. Melanie is an accredited trainer in AgilePM and is a Certified Scrum Master and LeanKanban Practitioner. She is also an accredited trainer in Change Management, an examiner for the APMG Change Management Foundation and Practitioner qualifications and the Co-Chair of the Change Management Institute UK.

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