take control

YOU'VE met them haven't you? Those hapless project managers — project administrators really — who watch, and sometimes dutifully document their project as it spirals into chaos — literally out of control. Or perhaps worse, those who, confusing command with control, hold grimly to their preset course, dashing their project against reality.

Then there are projects that are under control. The deft hand of a good project manager, who, not fighting against the buffeting of 'things happening', but taking just the right amount of correct action brings the project back to its destination.

expensive lesson

What's the difference? The proper exercise of appropriate control! Yet control techniques are rarely taught and usually combined with monitoring, which is covered in detail. When it comes to taking control the manuals fall silent on what a project manager can do to bring about the desired state when it is off-plan. It is left to experience to teach what can be an expensive lesson, and one which is sometimes never learned.

Yet there are excellent sources on good approaches to control. One of the best can be found in UK military doctrines — freely available on the web at www.citi.co.uk/military

This covers the differences between procedural and positive control, the role of command in control, and the fundamentals of a systems-based approach to control. All are

by **Christopher Worsley**

CEO: CITI Group

perfectly translatable from the military to the project context. The fog of war affects many a project.

To build confidence and capability in the controlling of projects, CITI has developed a simulation in which the nine fundamental control techniques available to project managers are exercised.

By cleverly combining real and virtual time and realistically modelling behaviours of people and processes, the effect of applying controls can be assessed by running the project forwards and observing the impacts.

One of the hardest aspects of gaining control is dealing with latency. This is the time it takes for an effect of a control input to become detectable as a desired change in performance. So many inexperienced project managers are caught out by this and they end up being either too 'hands-off' or over controlling. Over control sends confusing, often contradictory and almost always, unnecessary directives into the project team as they desperately try to correct a problem they had already solved. Anyone who has flown with an inexperienced pilot will know what it feels like as the plane lurches across the sky — and that is caused where the latency period is a matter of fractions of seconds, not days and weeks.

Gaining control is a matter of judgement and experience. It takes practice. It's a good feeling — give it a go — take control.

The sky's the limit when you are in control of the situation.
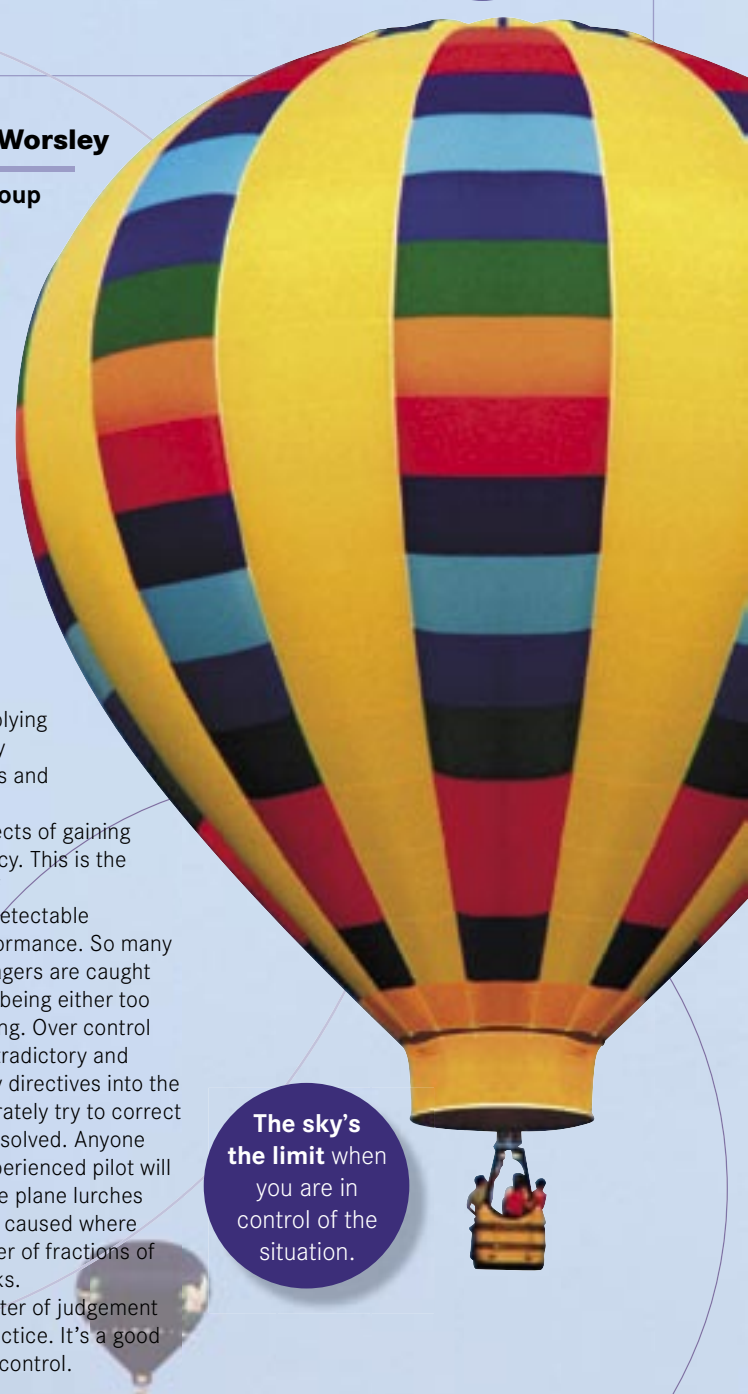
show is full of fresh ideas

PACKED full of fresh ideas and highly effective solutions, the Project Challenge spring show aims to unite 50 of the UK's leading project and programme providers for managers to network with on a face-to-face basis. But that's not all....

The spring show also offers a diverse range of content led seminars. Authoritative and practical advice from leading industry experts delivered via a blend of case study experience and expertise. These high-quality seminars are a perfect opportunity to learn new approaches and develop your skills. They also count towards CPD points awarded by the APM. So you have a lot to gain by attending.

Dr Christopher Worsley, CEO of CITI Group, will be launching this year's show with a seminar on the subject of command and control — what does it really mean to control a project? There will also be lots of action at the CITI stand: our team will be running live demonstrations of our revolutionary virtual learning experience, which forms part of our advanced project management development programmes, and will be available to discuss how we can support your projects and programmes.

Further details of Christopher's seminar, CITI's virtual learning simulation and how to register can be found within the Project Challenge flyer enclosed or at www.citi.co.uk

an innov
comb

CONSTRUCTION and capital programmes giant Atkins is working in partnership with CITI to create a fresh approach to supporting major projects and programmes.

Support offices — known by various names — are often seen as the Cinderella of the project management world. Sometimes they are used simply for administrative work; but a good PPSO can do a great deal more, ensuring that best practices and procedures are followed, and providing effective guidance for project managers. A PPSO can be the place where experienced project and process experts reside, providing advice and support to all project managers, and helping to

raise the game of the whole organisation.

The PPSO can also set organisation-wide standards. This ensures that all projects report in a consistent format, allowing senior managers to identify the key issues, and make effective decisions on priorities, resource allocation and strategic goals. A good PPSO can make the critical difference by providing senior management with visibility and control over their key projects and programmes. It can also act as the organisation's long-term memory and repository of learning, and provide a link to sources of best practice knowledge and experience that keep the whole organisation up to the mark in programme and project delivery.

opportunity

CITI and Atkins are working together to professionalise the PPSO, liaising with leading professional bodies to

let our tools

CITI adds PPSO profiling to form a comprehensive portfolio of project and programme management tools.

Building on 15 years' experience in profiling project managers, along with expertise in profiling programme management staff built up over the last five years, CITI has now extended its offering to include the assessment of PPSOs and the profiling of PPSO staff.

Our own research and observation, coupled with a review of industry writings and best practice, has led us to construct a model that describes four types of PPSO, which are characterised as:

Administration: Handles data, reports statistics, performs administration activities.

Control: Monitors and may enforce various aspects

change starts here

ative

ination

provide career paths that will establish the PPSO — just as much as project management itself — as a career with recognised standards of excellence, and not just a short-term job. This opportunity is available to any organisation that is truly serious about its project and programme capability.

alliance

First fruit of this alliance is the recently announced five-year contract to provide a Programme and Project Support Office (PPSO) for Government Communication Headquarters (GCHQ). The service will combine Atkins' experience in running project support services with CITI's state-of-the-art expertise in programme and project management.
Article produced by Geoff Vincent, CITI Principal Consultant.

The right formula: CITI and Atkins seek to deliver world-class services.

guide you to your fortune

of project management behaviour.
Guidance: Provides advice and coaching to the project management community.
Partnership: Effectively communicates with the highest levels of management to improve strategic performance.

PPSO profiling focuses on both the nature of PPSO required by the stakeholders (senior management, PPSO staff, project managers) and the profile of PPSO staff members, including the overall composition of the PPSO.
PPSO type: The three stakeholder groups are canvassed to establish the current and aspirational PPSO type. There may be

divergence of opinion as to actual current and desired future states.

Stakeholder management/negotiation will be required to settle agreed start and target positions for the PPSO. An appropriate strategy and timetable for any change in type will also be established.
PPSO staff profiling: PPSO staff members are profiled to establish relevant KASEN (Knowledge, Attitudes and behaviours, Skills, Experience and Networking). This is achieved using a combination of online questionnaires, written work and face-to-face interviews.

Once profiling is complete, the development

strategy for the PPSO can be established. This will generally include:
➤ Personal development paths for PPSO staff based on the overall staff profile and the desired end PPSO type. This is agreed in personalised development interviews.
➤ Profiles and numbers of staff that should be brought into the PPSO to assist in the delivery of new capability.
➤ Communications and stakeholder management plans to ensure that all stakeholders are able to take advantage of revised capability.
Article produced by Hilary Small, CITI Principal Consultant.

citi *the project professionals*

leadership beyond management

HOW do we successfully bring about change in the public and private sectors? With continuous demands upon organisations to adapt and transform, the question is both urgent and important.

One step already taken to address the question has been to introduce structures called programmes and projects as vehicles of change. These focus on an outcome or objective, define what needs to be delivered, marshal resources, organise activities and control progress. There are now methodologies (e.g. PRINCE2™, MSP) available that can standardise common management processes around programmes and projects. These management methods can be useful, but they are no substitute for leadership.

A 'leadership gap' occurs when programmes and projects are efficiently managed 'by the book', but not effectively led. The inevitable result is programme and project delivery without lasting benefit or valuable change.

The Government services and Criminal Justice IT, in particular, have recognised the issue, as reflected in their thinking on the development of programme and project capabilities. A recent progress report on professional development by the Civil Service Management Board [1] places leadership at the centre of their Professional Skills for Government (PSG) model, in which, incidentally, programme and project management are prominent core skills. Ian Magee, Chief Executive of Operations at the Department of Constitutional Affairs, in a recent interview [2] asserts that delivering successful transformation requires strong leadership alongside the right management skills. The message is clear: we need both skilled management and leadership to bring about change. The implications of this are enormous. The first is that programmes and projects should be understood as complex political entities that must be fully aligned to the business, and therefore programme and project managers cannot lead change on their own. A host of other people must be engaged to lead and influence the desired outcomes. Key among these is the sponsor.

Other leaders must also play their parts, including change champions from within the organisation who can ensure that change is accepted, not just inflicted. Additionally, further leaders must emerge who will not just uphold but develop the organisation's standards within the changing environment.

education

The second implication flows from the first: it is not sufficient to train programme and project professionals in a method-based approach alone. They require education that enables them to engage stakeholders, understand what successful outcomes are expected, and exert judgements in the execution of programmes and projects to ensure that the right outcomes are realised. This includes all leaders involved in change, not just project managers. CITI have long advocated and supported this approach.

Bringing about successful change is a complex issue with no single answer. Recognition that programmes and projects must be infused with leadership is a crucial next step in finding the answers to your challenges.

Article produced by Bernard Murray-Gates, CITI Principal Consultant.

[1] 'Professional Skills For Government', May 2005 www.civilservice.gov.uk.
[2] Jane Pickard "Order in the Court", People Management magazine, 7 April 2005.

spring start your development

SPRING is nearly upon us and for many of you it's the time of year when you submit your development requirements for the next 12 months. To help you plan your development schedule, detailed below are dates for some of our most popular courses over the next three months:

100% PASS RATE

PRINCE2 — module 1: 27—30 March and module 2: 7 April
For project managers who need to achieve the PRINCE2 Foundation and Practitioner accreditations. **View the course description at www.citi.co.uk/open/prince2**

Making Projects Work — module 1: 6—7 March and module 2: 6—7 April
For project managers who need to confidently deliver projects. As a result of attending the programme, project managers can plan more effectively; focus more on project achievement, and use techniques such as estimating and monitoring that are appropriate to their project. **Book dates at www.citi.co.uk/schedule**

Certificate in Managing Major Projects — induction day: 3 April
For experienced project managers seeking to gain professional status with practical skills backed by academic qualifications. To join this course you must have substantial hands-on experience of project management. **Check your eligibility — complete the online questionnaire at www.citi.co.uk/cmmp**

Delivering Programmes — module 1: 23—24 February and module 2: 6—7 April
For those who need to know how to deliver programmes. Complete with a set of tools to structure, manage and control your programme the course provides the processes, the practical techniques and, crucially, the mindset that underpin programme management. **View the course description at www.citi.co.uk/open/mgpg**

For further details call Anna Havard, CITI Open Course Manager, on 01908 283600.