

Project Management Development – Practice and Perspectives

Report on the Sixth International Scientific Conference on Project Management in the Baltic Countries

Emīls Pūlmanis

PhD.cand., MSc.proj.mgmt.

The Sixth International Scientific Conference on Project Management in the Baltic Countries was held during 27-28 April 2017 at the University of Latvia in Riga. The theme of the conference was “Project Management Development – Practice and Perspectives”. Organizers of the event included the Research Institute of the Project Management of the Faculty of Business, Management and Economics, University of Latvia and the Professional Association of Project Managers, Latvia.

The aim of the conference was to discuss results of scientific research in project management issues, to establish new contacts and networking between professionals involved in project management, and to enhance the capacity of project managers.

The conference programme included opening plenary session, and 4 parallel streams of papers and presentations. All papers were reviewed by two reviewers and papers included in the conference proceedings were double blind reviewed. Detailed conference program you can find [here](#).

Conference keynote speakers for 2017 were **Dr. Michael J. Littman** (USA), **Dr. Csiszárík-Kocsir Ágnes** and **Dr. Varga János** (Hungary) and **M.S, PMP Raji Sivaraman** (Singapore/USA).



The work of the conference was organized in the 4 parallel sessions:

1. Education, Social Aspects and Personnel in Project Management

Session chairs: Prof. Michael J. Littman, Prof. Andrejs Cekuls

2. New Directions in Project Management

Session chairs: Prof. Arvi Kuura, Prof. Signe Bāliņa

3. Project Risk Management

Session chairs: Prof. Wolfgang Tysak, Prof. Daina Šķiltere

4. Practical Project Management

Session chairs: Prof. Carsten Wolff, Prof. (emer.) Dr. Žaneta Ilmete



Raji Sivaraman, M.S, PMP, Principal of ASBA LLC, helps companies in the USA and Singapore in their strategic planning/overseas startups. Speaks several languages, has worked in Singapore, Thailand, India, and USA. She helps fortune 50/500 companies in their CSR/BSR projects. Director/Advisor for non-profit organizations. Raji is also a consultant, who has worked in IT, publishing, financial, and logistics industries. She is an adjunct Professor, Montclair University in the USA. Author/contributor to PM books/articles/white papers, global facilitator, speaker/panelist. She holds a Master of Science degree in Project Management and is PMP certified. Ms. Sivaraman is a certified Project Management Professional with 20 years of project management experience. She is a citizen of Singapore and is the Principal of ASBA LLC helping companies in the USA and Singapore in their strategic planning. She speaks several languages

and has worked in many countries including Singapore, Thailand, India, and USA. She helps fortune 500 companies in their Corporate and Social Responsibility projects. She has taken several advisory assignments for nonprofit organizations. She is a frequent facilitator, speaker and panelist at global conferences. She is an active member of the Project Management Institute from year 2000.

Currently, she is a member of the Chapter Member Advisory Group of PMI Global. As a Consultant, she has worked in many industries such as IT, publishing, billing solutions, financial services, education, and logistics. She is also a visiting specialist and an Adjunct Professor at the Montclair State University, NJ, USA teaching Project Management to MBA and PhD students. She has exhaustive knowledge of music and is a trained Indian classical musician.

Co-author **Michal Raczka**, MBA, PMI-ACP, PMP, CISA, IT Strategy Vice Director at mBank S.A., Warsaw, Poland



Michal is certified expert in PMP, PMI-ACP, PRINCE2 Foundation, Certified

Scrum Master, Certified Scrum Product Owner, AgilePM, Professional Scrum Master (PSM), Professional Scrum Product Owner I (PSPO I) Highly organized leader and expert in IT & project management field. Always keeps Team in the center. Value and results focused with lean and agile approach. Individual with proven achievements in project & business management, process improvement and team leadership. Experienced in managing geographically distributed, multi-disciplinary projects and customer teams. Capable of leading and motivating individuals to build cohesive teams. Project management mentor. Conference speaker. Volunteer.

Ms. Sivaraman Raji presented her co-authored article "**A PROJECT MANAGER'S PERSONAL AGILITY SIGHTINGS**". Ms.Sivaram discussed about the nuances of different aspects of agility on a personal level of Project Managers honing business/professional agility through Personal Agility (PA) self-assessment. Their presented paper highlights the different flavours of PA that projects and project oriented organization frames need for successful project implementation, whether it is a small/medium/large project in any industry. Agility brings personal value, leadership, navigation, managing the tides of knowledge and putting on the captain's hat of resilience. The lighthouse of their presentation and paper guides you to the safe shores by guiding you through several colours of agility such as emotional, outcome, cerebral, flexibility, adaptability and preparedness. Our PA lighthouse guides you to the secure shores of your personal vision, prepare you to tread the long roads of mergers/acquisitions, use Individual and Collective PA Assessment, which is a vital requisite for

managing successful projects in the present fast changing environment. Influencing with PA to work on personal visions (long-term plans) and development sets a Project Manager's directions be it right or wrong. Many strong pillars of PA steers you to your goal alignment, paving the way to project agility, getting ready for opportunities and changes when and where all your stakeholders need it. The problem statement is - "why are projects less than 100% successful?". The aim of Ms.Sivaraman and Mr.Raczka research is to instil in PMs that using their PA methods results in projects reaching the desired outcomes. The findings of their paper are 7 main PA subtleties that are the guiding light to avoiding turbulences.



Prof. Michael J. Littman (SUNY: Buffalo State, USA. University of Haifa, Israel).

Michael J. Littman, chair and associate professor of business, is recognized for his consistently superior, student-focused, and innovative teaching skills, sound scholarship, and exceptional level of service to Buffalo State students. His

strong commitment to students' starts with advisement, extends into the classroom, and stretches to their post-graduate careers.

Littman has a long record of positive impact on student growth and performance through a variety of offerings, including freshman seminars, senior seminars, honors sections, and graduate-level courses, plus courses cross-listed in history and communications. He has taught 42 different undergraduate and graduate courses at Buffalo State. The focus of his teaching has been to instill and develop the positive personal and professional skills students need for a rewarding role as ethical leaders in their profession and community.

He has also mentored international faculty through the Fulbright program and African Regional International Scholar Development Internship program.

Littman also has a strong record of scholarship that supports his excellence in the classroom. He is an internationally recognized scholar and consultant who is often requested to collaborate with a European network of partners. He has participated in projects in the Netherlands, Latvia, and Germany. He has a long history of being a requested reviewer by journals and textbooks in a variety of business areas. He also has served his community as a two-term

president of the Williamsville Central School District Board of Education and has served as a member of the Buffalo's Superintendent Advisory Council on Occupational Education.

Prof. Littman during the conference presented a report "**SIX ETHICAL LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES FOR PROJECT MANAGEMENT SUCCESS**". He concluded that the success of any project is a team oriented, goal focused activity under the direction/guidance of a highly competent, ethical leader. Project management success is enhanced by the positive guidance, influence, and integrity of a team leader who sets high personal standards in their actions and in making ethical decisions that are followed by all others. These standards lead to trust and stronger decision making in the best interest of all stakeholder groups. This will enhance the chance of project success and reduces the risk of project failure. Adhering to the Project Management Institute's (PMI) Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct will enhance the strength of the process and lead to successful project outcomes.

Prof. Littman mentioned that six ethical strategies are articulated to assist leaders in project success. These include strategies in respect, responsibility, fairness, honesty, courage, and kindness.

Dr. Csiszárík-Kocsir Ágnes and Dr. Varga János, Óbuda University, Budapest, Hungary.



Dr. Csiszárík-Kocsir and Dr. Varga János both are assistant professors at the Óbuda University, Budapest, Hungary. They presented 4 papers during the conference. During the plenary session Dr. Csiszárík-Kocsir and Dr. Varga János presented their article and empirical research “**WOMEN IN THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT**”. Authors mentioned that there are significant differences between the management of the companies because the female leadership is often different

than the leadership style of men. The successful project and efficient project management depend on the quality of leadership, the characters of project manager and the interaction of project manager and his/her team. This study tries to answer one of the most important questions in the context of leading projects. Who is a most suitable person for this position (project manager) and how to characterize the best project manager? Are the women or men leaders better by managing projects? Is there any significant relationship between the management by projects philosophy and the gender roles? In order to prove this the project practices of the companies, the quality of their leadership and the commitment of the employees to participate in the projects have all been analysed based on a questionnaire research in Hungary. The international organization that analyses project management (PMI) also emphasized in another study that women undertake the leadership of projects in an increasingly lower rate typically after the age of 35. From that age there are more significant differences in favor of men. On the other hand, we have to mention that in the industries with high project intensity the share of female project managers has grown, but we cannot find a single sector where it exceeds 50%. Women do not manage projects in a greater proportion than man in any of the industries. As we could see in connection with the participation in politics, we can make the same general observation regarding project management: the role of female project leaders has become somewhat stronger, but we cannot talk about equality yet at all.

In the conference was represented more than 16 countries in total, including Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Singapore, Austria, Spain, United Kingdom, USA, Palestine, Italy, Poland, Czech Republic, Ukraine and Brazil.

The International Scientific Project Management Conference organized by the Professional Association of Project Managers of Latvia in co-operation with the Research Institute of the Project Management of the Faculty of Business, Management and Economics, University of Latvia has now become a proven value. Its international recognition has considerably grown and similarly has the quality of the submitted articles. The proceedings hereby are the fourth in turn and present articles of both scientific and practical significance. We are particularly pleased to announce that the articles published in the proceedings are now available indexed internationally via EBSCOhost research database.

The articles in the proceedings are aimed at both theory and practice. They present extensive depiction of the contemporary situation in project management by covering the internationally applied methods and tools, the standards project management methodology is currently based on and developments expected in the field in the nearest future. This year for the first time also paper on project management in Defense sector were presented.

In the articles professionals set forecasts for the future project practice. The forecasts underline the importance of project managers' social competences. The project manager's role as a project work organizer, leader and competent implementer cannot be overestimated. Project success definitely depends on project team. Several articles of the proceedings deal with such project management part as human resource management and competencies in project management.

In project management processes it's important to have appropriate stakeholder management what was topical for several authors' studies presented in the conference.

For the last decade we can see a significant increase in IT project management practice development. Recent studies have paid attention also to practical and theoretical aspects for application of *Agile* methods in IT project management as well as in e-gov projects for the public sector.

Project management is closely connected with the risks influencing the project time-span, costs and quality. The issue of coping with project risks, implementation of risk planning and supervision of the subsequent process is discussed based on the experience of constructing a football field.

Project management applies not only for business environment. In the global context those tools and methods have been implemented also in public administration. Several research results for project management in the public sector have been presented also in the conference.

Prof. (emer.) Dr. oec. Žaneta Ilmete (chair of the conference and professional association of project managers) also concludes that project management is closely

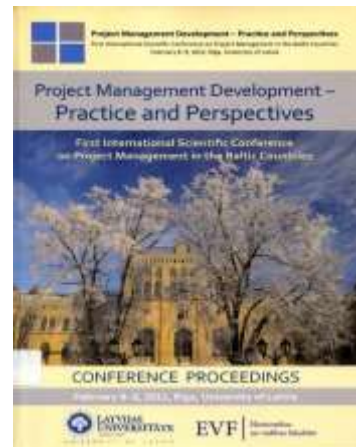
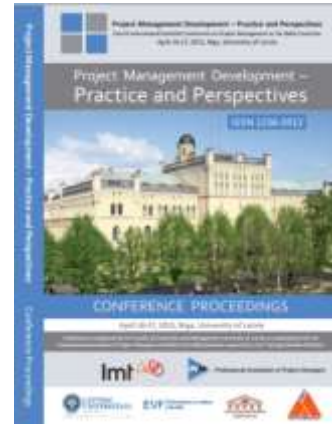
connected with the risks influencing the project time-span, costs and quality. The issue of coping with project risks, implementation of risk planning and supervision of the subsequent process is discussed based on the experience of different construction projects all over the world. For this reason the research dedicated to this topic might be interesting to all project implementers.

There are articles devoted to the project manager's personality and opportunities to acquire education and pursue a career. Several articles concern the experience of project management education in higher education institutions of various countries and can be worth the interest of project management professionals.

Conference organizing committee also wants to say many thanks for support and contributions to this conference and papers submitted by the PM World Journal international authors' community.



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About the Author



Emils Pulmanis

Riga, Latvia



Emils Pulmanis is a member of the board of the Professional Association of Project Managers in Latvia and development project manager at State Audit Office of the Republic of Latvia. He has gained a BSc. in engineer economics, a professional master's degree in project management (MSc.proj.mgmt) and currently is a PhD candidate with a specialization in project management. He has elaborated and directed a number of domestic and foreign financial instruments co-financed projects. He was a National coordinator for a European Commission-funded program – the European Union's financial instruments PHARE program in Latvia. Over the past seven years he has worked in the public administration project control and monitoring field. He was a financial instrument expert for the Ministry of Welfare and the European Economic Area and Norwegian Financial Mechanism implementation authority as well as an expert for the Swiss – Latvian cooperation program as a NGO grant scheme project evaluation expert. He has gained international and professional project management experience in Germany, the United States and Taiwan. In addition to his professional work, he is also a lecturer at the University of Latvia for the professional master study program in Project management. He has authored more than 45 scientific publications and is actively involved in social activities as a member of various NGO's.

Emils can be contacted at emils.pulmanis@gmail.com.