

Integrated process and project management in entrepreneurial service organizations

Abstract

Purpose – The existence and usefulness of business processes and projects (including programmes and project portfolios), as well as entrepreneurial behaviour in service organizations is commonly recognized, both by practitioners and researchers. However, in practical management, as well as in academic literature, the named fields appear still quite separated, both managers and researchers tend to encapsulate in their professional specialist ‘silos’. This has caused separation of both practice and research communities and injurious fragmentation of knowledge, debarring potential synergies. This paper intends to explore the existing and potential linkages between the ostensibly separated fields of practice and research, and to suggest alternatives, how to overcome detrimental separation. It is assumed that in practice these fields are better (yet still insufficiently) linked; thus linking on the research side needs acceleration.

Methodology/Approach – The paper is based on narrative reviews of the existing bodies of academic literature, using a loosely structured method, attempting to discover existing and potential linkages across multiple fields. The approach is inter- or cross-disciplinary – combining different theoretical grounds, it deals with people’s roles in permanent and temporary settings in service organisations.

Findings – At some points, primarily in practice, the examined fields have already come quite close and the trend of continuous rapprochement can be observed. Nevertheless, especially in academic knowledge building, there are still large unused possibilities to create useful synergies between the academic fields. This paper proposes some steps that could be taken in the (near) future – for one, integrated used of several management systems and/or standards, notably in service organizations.

Originality/Value – This paper illustrates, how combining of various research streams – what is not very common so far – can unfold possibilities for synergies in practice and particularly in research and development. Also, it outlines an idea – to develop a methodology for integrated process and project management for entrepreneurial (including small and medium-sized) service organizations. Following further developments may lead to the formation of a common body of knowledge for the examined fields, and even for related fields, such as business analysis.

Keywords: business processes, projects, entrepreneurial organizations, service organizations