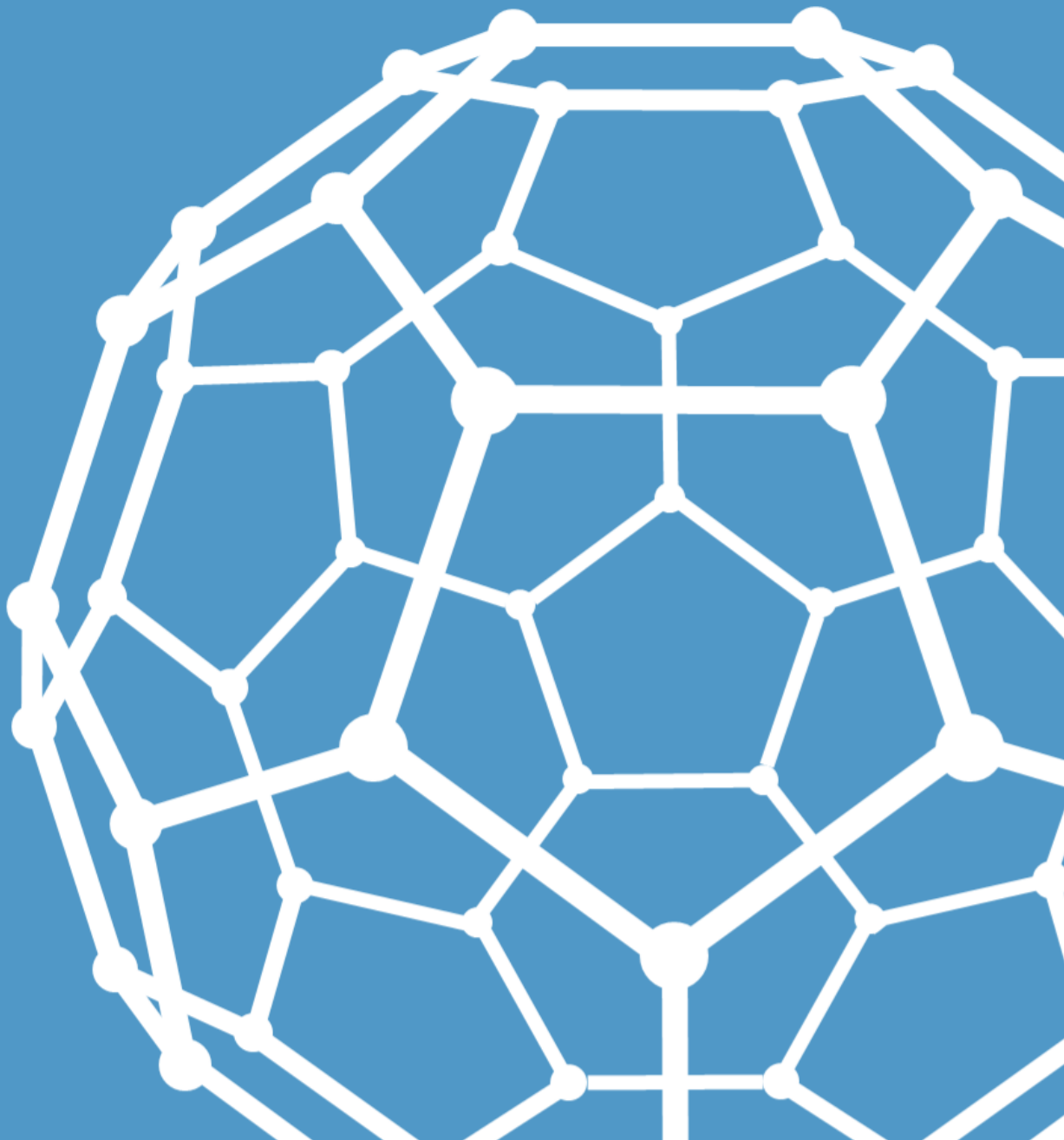




Praxis Pathway

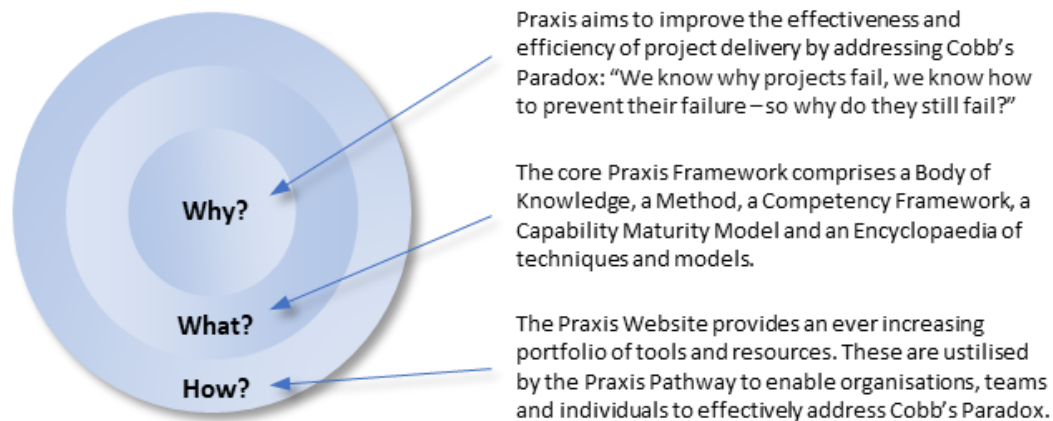
The route to effective management of projects, programmes and portfolios.



Introduction

The world of project, programme and portfolio management is well served with guides, standards and models. The variety can be confusing, especially when trying to combine different publications to create an integrated model for project delivery¹ as a whole.

This document introduces the Praxis Framework and describes how the Praxis Pathway utilises it to help organisations improve the effectiveness and efficiency of their project delivery by increasing individual performance, team effectiveness and organisational maturity.



Why?

When Martin Cobb was CIO for the Secretariat of the Treasury Board of Canada in 1995, he asked the question that has become known as Cobb's Paradox: "We know why projects fail, we know how to prevent their failure – so why do they still fail?"

At Praxis we believe this is primarily because organisations train people in good practice but do not provide them with the means to apply and embed that practice so that it becomes the natural way of doing things.

What?

In order to create a project delivery framework, organisations have to combine different guides, standards and resources. This involves harmonising terminology, removing overlaps and filling in gaps. It is a time consuming and expensive process, especially if the bespoke solution is not well maintained.

The Praxis Framework solves this problem by integrating an extensive [Body of Knowledge](#)² with an established [Methodical](#)³ approach. It also provides a [Competency Framework](#)⁴ and [Capability Maturity Model](#)⁵ that are based on proven approaches and seamlessly integrated with the Knowledge and Method sections.

As with all Bodies of Knowledge and Methods, the framework makes frequent references to techniques and models that are regularly used in project delivery. These are all described in the Praxis [Encyclopaedia](#).

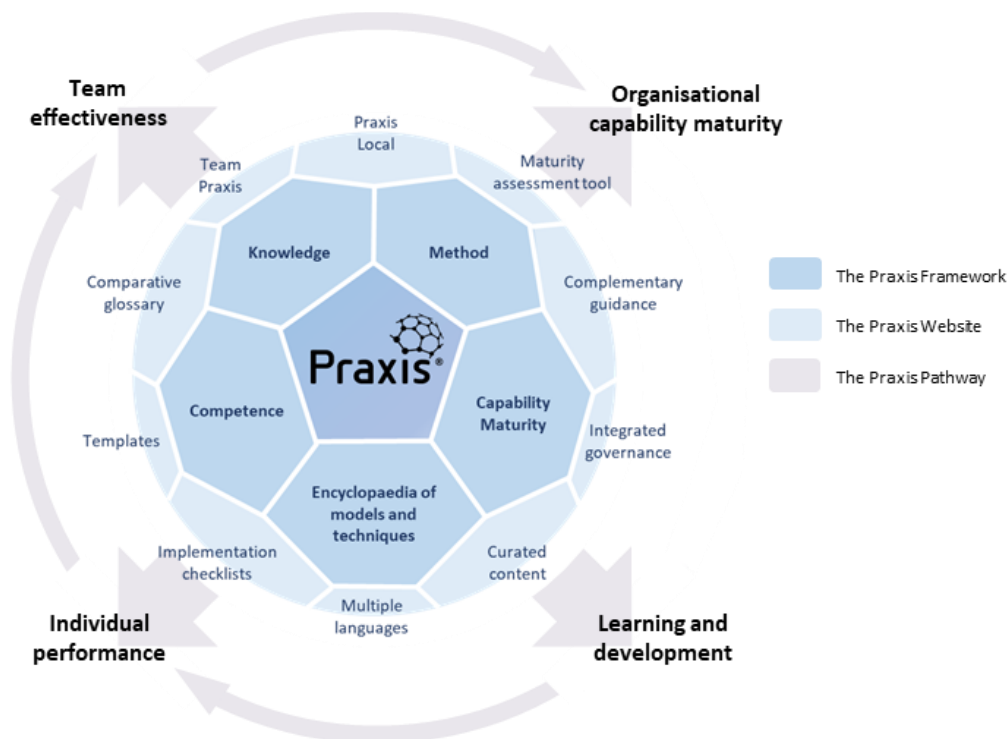
How?

In order to promote and encourage the uptake and application of good practice, it must be readily accessible, comprehensive, regularly updated and simple to use. This is the purpose of the Praxis Website.

Individuals and organisations need processes and tools not only to gain knowledge and develop good practice but, more importantly, to support its adaptation and integration with organisational culture. The use of these processes and tools is what makes up the Praxis Pathway.

The Praxis Website

The Praxis Website is on-line and free at www.praxisframework.org. At its heart lies the framework of knowledge, method, competence and capability maturity - supported by the encyclopaedia of models and techniques. It also contains an ever increasing portfolio of resources provided by contributors from around the world.



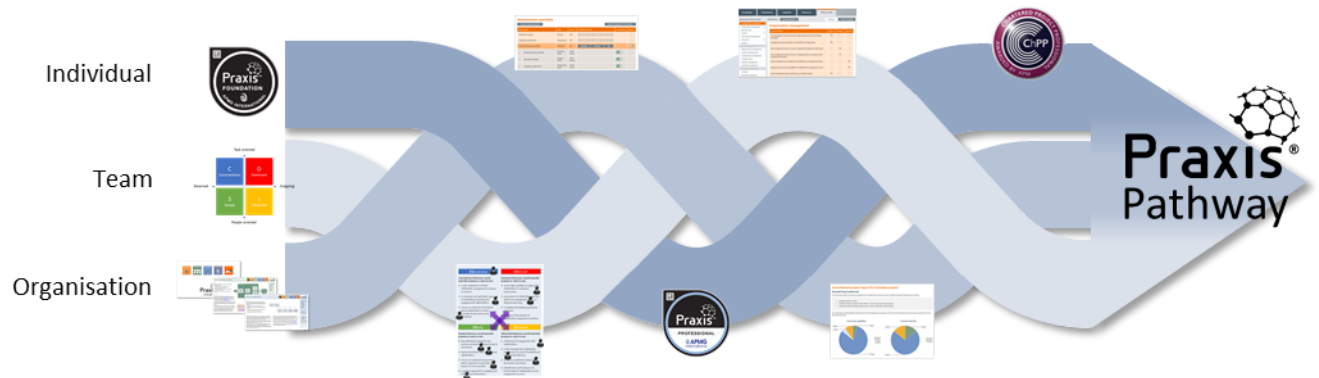
Other guides to project delivery provide information but then leave individuals and organisations with no support in implementing good practice. This is another area where Praxis is different.

The Praxis Pathway uses the contents of the Website and the Framework in particular, to demonstrate a means for an organisation to implement and embed good practice. Improvement is achieved organically and incrementally, making it easier and less expensive to achieve, more robust and less prone to failure.

The Praxis Pathway

Overview

The Praxis Pathway has three component paths: individual, team and organisation. These paths are interwoven and collectively designed to achieve the central goal of improving the effectiveness and efficiency of project delivery.



The Individual Path

The Individual path provides a clear developmental route from basic knowledge to demonstrable competency and underpins the Team and Organisational paths to more effective project delivery.

Checklists embed knowledge to change behaviour



Individuals may learn about the Praxis Framework simply by visiting the web site. Praxis is completely free, community driven and continuously updated. Users of the framework can suggest updates, which will be peer reviewed and can be incorporated with great agility.

The first three certifications are managed by [APMG-International](#). Training courses are available through accredited training organisations (ATOs). These certifications provide structured learning and development that guides an individual from basic foundational understanding of the framework through to the award of [Chartered Status by the Association for Project Management \(APM\)](#), which is at the peak of the profession.



The entry level certification is the Praxis Foundation. At this level you need to know facts, including terms, context, processes, functional procedures, techniques, roles and responsibilities.

You also need to understand how the context, processes, functional framework, organizational factors and roles are applied to a project delivery environment.

The second level is the Praxis Practitioner. At this level you must be able to apply key concepts to a given scenario, including being able to:

- Use the functions appropriately;
- Create the documents;
- Tailor the processes appropriately; for a given scenario.



This is a crucial point in the Pathway. All too often organisations and individuals invest in training only to see that investment wasted. As soon as the training is complete the knowledge starts to fade. If the knowledge is not used to change behaviours, it fails to build a culture of good practice.

Organisation management	Stakeholder management	On this Project:	Agree	Disagree	Neither
Business case	Control	the views and attitudes of stakeholders are understood	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information management	Assurance	stakeholders are influenced to be supportive of the work wherever possible	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support	Scope management	the influence of supportive stakeholders is utilised	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Requirements management	Solutions development	the impact of unsupportive stakeholders is mitigated	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Configuration management	Change control	team members are competent in stakeholder management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Benefits management	Schedule management	adequate resources are available to manage stakeholders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Financial management	Investment appraisal	stakeholders interests and influence are assessed and documented	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Funding	Budgeting and cost control	the communications plan is regularly reviewed and updated	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Risk management	Change management	stakeholder management is performed in accordance with organisational policy	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Resource management	Resource management	all appropriate channels of communication are used	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Procurement	Contract management	organisational standards for stakeholder management have been adapted for this project	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mobilisation		supportive stakeholders assist with promotion of the project	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

< Previous topic View results Next topic >

Our [research](#) indicates that one of the biggest causes of project failure is simply the lack of application of basic good practice and it has been demonstrably shown that following checklists can improve performance⁶ by making a habit of the right behaviours. The Praxis checklists are a catalyst for ensuring that knowledge is applied in practice and competence is developed. These are also used in the team and organisational paths and are based on the Capability Maturity Model.

Developing the competency required to achieve Praxis Framework Professional and finally Chartered Project Professional (ChPP) requires consistent application of knowledge. The checklists are not simply actions that need to be performed. They are attributes of an effective and efficient organisation. Routinely using them as part of continuous improvement demonstrates that the management team understand how to apply the techniques, models and processes of good practice.



The third level of certification is the Praxis Framework Professional. At this level you need to demonstrate experience of adapting and applying PPM functions and processes on projects or programmes that exhibit characteristics of [complexity](#).

You must have the required breadth of experience to meet the competency requirements, have an advanced technical knowledge and be able to confidently evaluate and analyse the theory of current practices and methods.

Praxis Framework Professional is a '[Recognised Assessment](#)' and provides the necessary exemptions for Route 2 to the Chartered Project Professional (ChPP) designation from the UK's Association for Project Management (APM).

The ChPP assessment process is administered by the APM. In addition to the Praxis Framework Professional certification applicants for ChPP must provide or demonstrate:

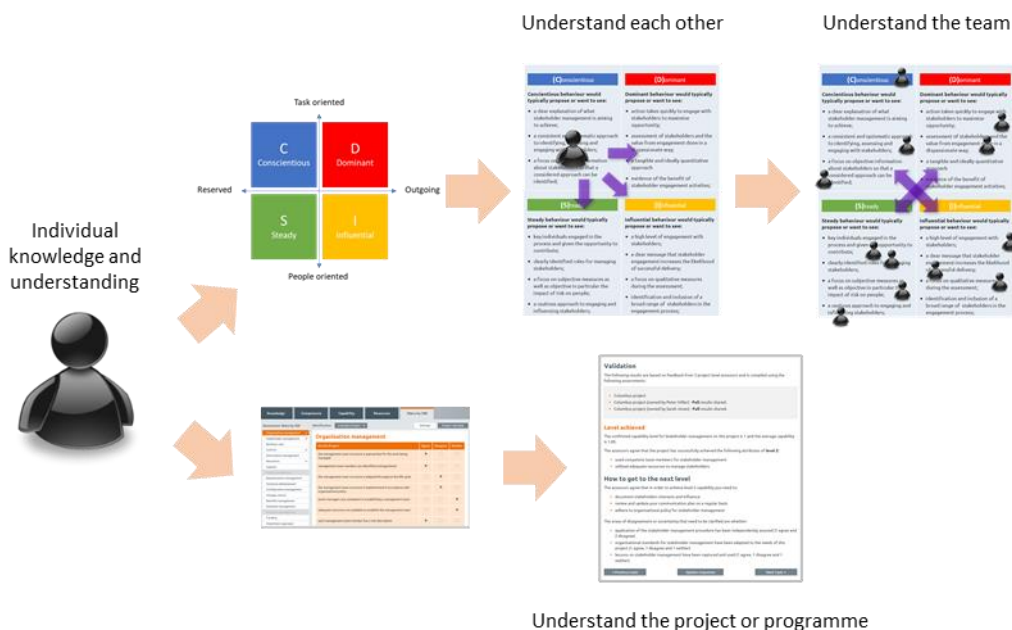
- Two referees;
- Commitment to professional ethics;
- Currency of practice
- Commitment to continuing professional development (CPD) with evidence of 35 hours of CPD in the last 12 months



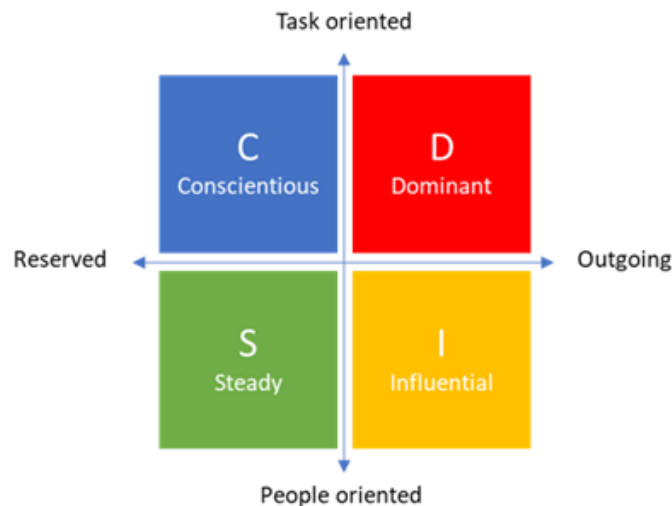
The ChPP interview lasts up to 30 minutes.

The Team Path

The team path has two branches. For a team to be effective its members need to understand each other's diverse perceptions of the functions and processes that make up the discipline of project delivery. Also, once a project or programme is underway, a team also needs to achieve a common understanding of how these functions and processes apply to their shared projects and programmes.



The Praxis Website contains descriptions of how the components of project delivery are typically interpreted and applied according to personal preferences. This is called [Team Praxis](#) and it uses the [DISC](#)⁷ model of personality to enable team members to see good project delivery practices from different perspectives. Praxis is the only project delivery framework that includes this feature.



This model is widespread and large numbers of people will already know their DISC profile. Additionally, there are numerous free, on-line assessment tools for those that are new to the model.

From a personal perspective, establishing your DISC profile will give you an insight into your particular way of perceiving and applying various functions and processes.

From a team perspective, if all members of the team know their DISC type they can work more effectively by understanding different attitudes to the job in hand. Individual strengths can be utilised and frustrations with different ways of working reduced.



The second branch of the Team Path is concerned with reaching agreement on how good practice is being applied on the team's project or programme. For this, we go back to the checklists and use their 360° capability.

Each member of the team completes an assessment using the on-line tool on the Praxis Website. The resulting consolidated report highlights where the team agrees and disagrees about the health of the project or programme. It also indicates the capability maturity level achieved and lists what needs to be done to get to the next level.

Inevitably, there will be differences but the assessment process provides a catalyst for conversations that seek to establish mutual understanding between the manager, sponsor, team members and stakeholders. Actions and decisions needed to improve effectiveness and efficiency can be discussed and agreed.

The result of the Team Path is a mutual understanding of different personal approaches to project and programme management, a consensus view on how the project or programme is being managed and how it can be improved.

Validation

The following results are based on feedback from 3 project level assessors and is compiled using the following assessments:

- Columbus project
- Columbus project (owned by Peter Miller) - **Full** results shared.
- Columbus project (owned by Sarah Jones) - **Full** results shared.

Level achieved

The confirmed capability level for Stakeholder management on this project is 1 and the average capability is 1.00.

The assessors agree that the project has successfully achieved the following attributes of **level 2**:

- used competent team members for stakeholder management
- utilised adequate resources to manage stakeholders

How to get to the next level

The assessors agree that in order to achieve level 2 capability you need to:

- document stakeholders interests and influence
- review and update your communication plan on a regular basis
- adhere to organisational policy for stakeholder management

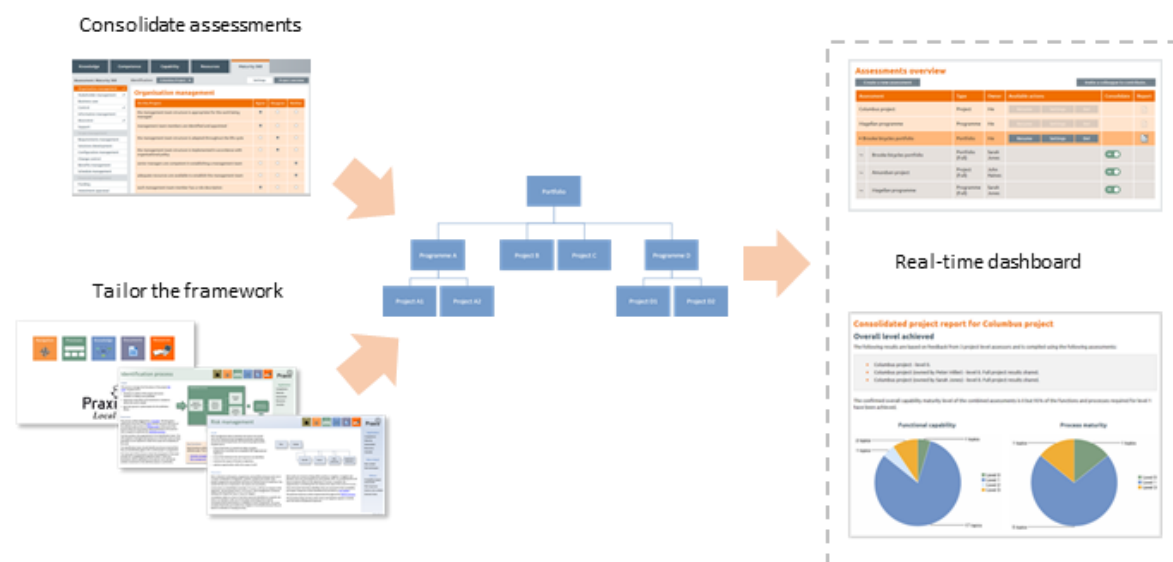
The areas of disagreement or uncertainty that need to be clarified are whether:

- application of the stakeholder management procedure has been independently assured (1 agree and 2 disagree)
- organisational standards for stakeholder management have been adapted to the needs of this project (1 agree, 1 disagree and 1 neither)
- lessons on stakeholder management have been captured and used (1 agree, 1 disagree and 1 neither)

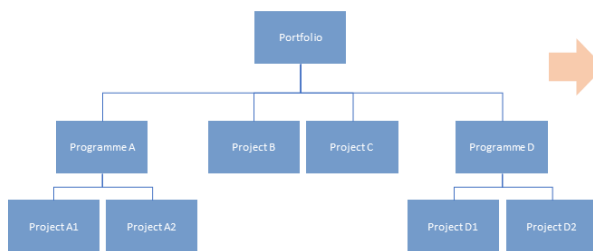
[< Previous topic](#)
[Update responses](#)
[Next topic >](#)

The Organisation Path

This path is concerned with improving an organisation's capability maturity in project delivery by building on the Individual and Team Paths. It achieves this in an incremental and iterative way and results can be seen in a real-time dashboard of continual improvement.



The conventional approach to [capability maturity](#) is to perform an initial assessment, follow this with an improvement programme and conclude with another assessment that hopefully quantifies the improvement. This is usually expensive, time consuming and is subject to all the problems associated with programmes of behavioural change.



Assessments overview

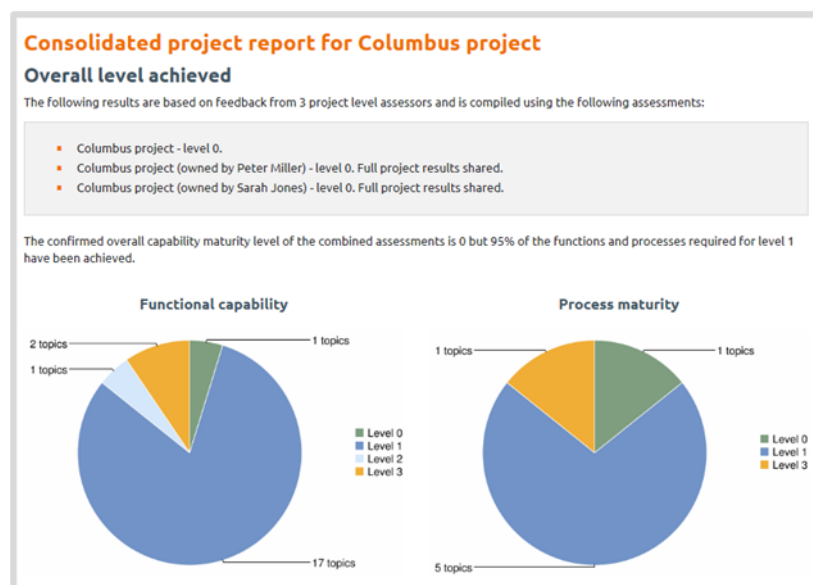
This page shows all of your personal assessments as well as those shared to you.
The last assessment you worked on is indicated with a ► icon in the list below.

[Create a new assessment](#) [Invite a colleague to contribute...](#)

Assessment	Type	Owner	Available actions	Consolidate	Report
► Portfolio	Portfolio	Me	Resume Settings		
Programme A	Programme	Me	Resume Settings	OK	
Project A1	Project	Me	Resume Settings	OK	
Project A2	Project	Me	Resume Settings	OK	
Programme D	Programme	Me	Resume Settings	OK	
Project D1	Project	Me	Resume Settings	OK	
Project D2	Project	Me	Resume Settings	OK	
Project B	Project	Me	Resume Settings	OK	
Project C	Project	Me	Resume Settings	OK	

The Praxis approach is much simpler. By implementing the Individual and Team paths, organisational maturity starts to improve from 'Day 1' and develops iteratively and incrementally. Any checklist assessments completed as part of the Individual and Team Paths can, at any time, be consolidated into a portfolio structure. Changes at any point in the structure will immediately be reflected upwards to create a real-time dashboard of continual improvement.

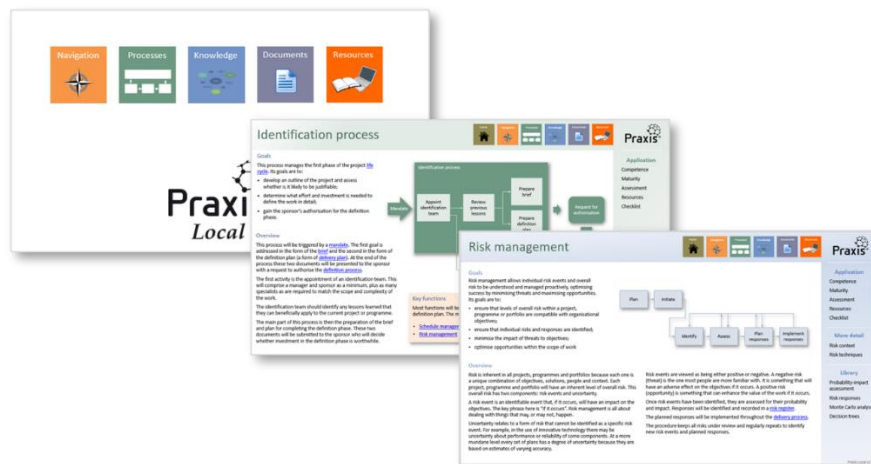
The dashboard highlights areas of excellence and areas in need of improvement. The beneficial results of improvement actions can easily be seen both locally and organisationally. New ideas for improvement can be tested without waiting for the next organisational maturity assessment.



An important aspect of capability maturity is the adaptation of a framework to match the specific organisational context.

The Praxis website provides an extensive range of resources in addition to the core framework. Most of this content is covered by a [Creative Commons](#)⁸ licence that enables organisations to freely copy and adapt the material. In addition, organisations that have their own repository of explicit knowledge can integrate this with the generic framework.

[Praxis Local](#) is a dynamic PowerPoint based document that summarises the contents of the framework and provides links to the detail contained on the web site. It can be adapted and expanded with additional, organisation specific content either within the PowerPoint file or via links to organisation assets.



This is typically then saved as a pdf file that can be used locally on PCs and tablets to act as a simplified 'front end' to a large repository of knowledge. The generic files are free to download from the Praxis web site.

Where the tailoring includes the exclusion of topics that are not applicable in a given context, these topics can also be excluded from the assessment checklists so that the capability maturity process is aligned to the organisation.

Conclusion

There are numerous guides and standards available for project, programme and portfolio management. They all include elements of well tested approaches but go no further than provide good practice in a limited area.

Praxis is unique in its comprehensive scope and full integration of all the elements of project delivery, including projects, programmes and portfolios. It is the only framework that provides a pathway for individuals, teams and organisations to develop effectiveness and efficiency in project delivery.

For more detail visit www.praxisframework.org.

-
1. 'Project delivery' is becoming an accepted term to collectively describe the management of projects, programmes and portfolios.
 2. The content of Praxis Body of Knowledge will be very familiar to users of the APM and PMI's equivalent documents.
 3. All guides and standards follow the same fundamental governance life cycle. Praxis is no exception and users of methods such as PRINCE2 will quickly be able to identify with the Praxis approach, with the added benefit that the Praxis approach is applicable to both projects and programmes.
 4. The structure of the Praxis competency descriptions is based on the UK National Occupational Standards with both knowledge and performance elements.
 5. Carnegie Mellon University developed the definitive approach to Capability Maturity and the Praxis approach is based on the CMMI-Dev model.
 6. The Checklist Manifesto, Atul Gawande, 2011, Profile Books, London
 7. DISC stands for the four primary personality profiles in the model: (D)ominance; (I)nfluence; (S)teadiness; (C)onscientiousness.
 8. Creative Commons is a copyright licencing system for sharing free content (www.creativecommons.org). The Praxis Framework, Praxis Pathway, Praxis 360 and Team Praxis are all free to use under a CC-BY-SA licence. This means that if you reproduce Praxis content, you simply need to recognise the source. Articles and blogs provided by our contributors remain the copyright of the authors and are the only materials not covered by the Creative Commons Licence.

Published by Praxis Framework Ltd.

www.praxisframework.org

info@praxisframework.org