



AQRO

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get things done

How to combine Project Management with Operations

 **APMG** International

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BACKGROUND

We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them. *(Einstein)*

“I want my people to work 12 hours a day: they need to work 8 hours on operations and then to spend another 4 hours on project work”

In matrix organizations, employees are put under competing pressures: they are expected to work in operations and at the same time fulfill their project duties. Unfortunately, those directions are usually not divided by time or space. One needs to work on operations, but project managers can jump in with project questions or tasks at any time.

Different priorities and multitasking decrease the efficiency of employees. Einstein said *“We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them”* and making employees spend more time at work will not help. We need a method to combine operations and project management and to decrease losses of efficiency of employees due to multitasking.

This is where AQRO comes in.

The objectives of this whitepaper include the following:

- Gain an understanding of the AQRO© essentials
- Appreciate the value of AQRO for your operations
- Learn about how your project team members benefit from using AQRO©



WHAT IS AQRO® ?

AQRO® (an acronym for **Active Qualified Human Resource Organization**) was created by Dr Consuela Utsch based on more than 25 years of training and consulting.

AQRO® acknowledges 2 types of activities: operations and project management, but separates them in time e.g. one employee can work either on operations or on project management but never work on both at the same time. The work needs to be planned at the department level because employees do not necessarily have the freedom to plan their time independently. The Service Plan created at the department level allocates to employees 4 hour slots of time dedicated to operations or project management. 3 types of roles are allocated to team members: Project role, Daily business (operations) and Contact person. The first two roles have already been mentioned but it's the Contact person role which really makes the difference. This role is given to people who are responsible for protecting team members from interruptions. They take the incoming communication to the department and transfer the information to a certain person at the end of the day. The roles are given based on the MBTI Type (Myers-Briggs Type Indicator) which is widely known. It is, therefore, the most efficient way of allocating work to the most appropriate individual.

“I want my people to work 12 hours a day: they need to work 8 hours on operations and then to spend another 4 hours on project work”

WHY DO WE NEED AQRO® ?

Humans are expected by the organization to multitask. It's unfortunately not the way the human brain works. It can't work on two things at the same time, but it can switch from one task to another and comes back to the previous task in milliseconds. However, it comes at a cost to the worker because it slows down the work and decreases their efficiency. The second aspect is: we need to concentrate in order to do something. When interruption comes (phone calls, e-mails, questions from colleague, sms, chat messages) we lose the focus. It's estimated we need 10 to 20 minutes to get back to the level of attention we had. The number of interruptions experienced by an employee is hard to measure, but we know from studies that workers can only focus on a task for three minutes at a time before being interrupted.



Employees working in open office spaces rarely have the possibility of concentrating on the activities they do, as many interruptions happen and everyone is easily accessible (at least physically). A home office does not create a better environment as modern communication technologies are present including mobile phones, e-mails, teleconferencing software and chat applications.

The implementation of AQRO can therefore help to save ¼ of a day per employee per week, which with 10 employees makes 60 hours per week. This time can be used to deliver more but with a lower level of stress for the employee. AQRO creates also the platform which can combine and support operations and project management in one department, or in a whole organization.

HOW DOES AQRO® SUPPORT PROJECT MANAGEMENT?

AQRO® helps identifying the availability of the resources to fulfill the roles needed for projects

AQRO® does firmly allocate the time of employees for project work and should therefore increase the project's success rate. It can also be very well aligned with project management standards.

How does AQRO support PRINCE2®?

Project management with PRINCE2® puts projects into the organizational context where they are not isolated but managed within programs, portfolios or within operational structures. AQRO® combines operations and project environments into one picture and helps the programs and portfolios to plan and manage resource availability to change management activities.

The basic principle "Defined roles and responsibilities" stresses the importance of having clearly identified and differentiated project roles representing the major project's stakeholders including business, user and suppliers, who are identified and appointed from operations. That's where AQRO® can help identify the major stakeholders e.g. department heads to fulfill the roles of Executive, Senior User and Senior Supplier.

The organization theme identifies the roles to be fulfilled within the project and the responsibilities and competencies required. That's where AQRO® helps identify the availability of the resources to fulfill the roles. PRINCE2® on the other hand, can help to decompose AQRO's generic "The Project Role" into: Executive, Senior user(-s), Senior supplier, Project manager, Business, user and supplier project assurance, Change authority, Team manager(s), Project support.

AQRO supports PRINCE2® projects but additional benefits can also be realized while using it on the program level (combining it within MSP®), portfolio level (combining with MoP®), or in offices supporting projects, programs or portfolios (using within P3O®).



How does AQRO support the PMBOK®Guide?

The PMBOK®Guide as the project management standard offers the freedom to create a custom project management method based on the best project management practices and techniques identified in the manual. It identifies the project management processes which can be decomposed into 5 Process groups: Initiating, Planning, Execution, Monitoring&Control, Closing.

AQRO® shows initial availability of resources necessary to deliver the project and thus helps to take rational decision making in Initiating. It also provides the information about the resources for planning as well as their MBTI profiles which help in assigning tasks to certain individuals. AQRO can provide the value by managing the workloads of employees based on their availability as well as on their efficiency. AQRO® feedback about resource availability provides the valuable information in estimation for future projects.

The PMBOK®Guide's processes can also be divided into 10 Knowledge areas (Integration Management, Scope Management, Schedule Management, Cost Management, Quality Management, Resource Management, Communications Management, Risk Management, Procurement Management, Stakeholder Management) and AQRO® helps where the human resources are included, which is in all of them.

HOW DOES AQRO® SUPPORT AGILE METHODS ?

In today's business environments where the expectations are often unclear and changing, the delays of projects are non-acceptable, agile methods provide the solution. Some of them offer the method for delivery of the solution (SCRUM), others describe how the project should be managed in an agile way (AgilePM®).

How does AQRO support SCRUM?

SCRUM (<https://www.scrum.org/>) "is a framework within which people can address complex adaptive problems, while productively and creatively delivering products of the highest possible value." SCRUM identifies roles, events, artifacts, and the rules.

The SCRUM events are: Sprint, Sprint Planning, Daily Scrum, Sprint Review, Sprint Retrospective.



These events are time-boxed events (i.e. the time spent on them can't be exceeded) and require the resources to be available. That's where AQRO's ability to plan resources in advance and to secure them for certain events is helpful.

AQRO® uses agile principles for assigning work to employees with different MBTI profiles



How does AQRO support Agile PM®?

AgilePM® has been created as a result of co-operation between Agile Business Consortium and APMG. It defines the project management method consisting of philosophy, principles, process, roles and responsibilities, products and practices.

The philosophy is greatly supported by AQRO's Service Plan allowing the empowered and motivated individual to deliver of products without external interruptions.

Principles: "Deliver on time", "Work together", "Communicate continuously and clearly", and "Demonstrate control" are supported by AQRO, which helps to assign the work to employees with different MBTI profiles and take into consideration their availability.

One of the Instrumental Success Factors (ISFs) of AgilePM is "Business Engagement – Active and Ongoing" consisting of "Commitment of business time throughout" and "Active involvement of the business roles". It's AQRO's Service Plan which can help to assure the business resources will be available when necessary.

AgilePM identifies the roles which represent Project (Business Sponsor, Business Visionary, Technical Coordinator, Project Manager, Business Analyst) and Solution Development Team (Business Analyst, Team Leader, Solution Developer, Solution Tester, Business Ambassador) as well as Supporting roles (Business Advisor, Technical Advisor, Workshop Facilitator, DSDM Coach). It's where the generic AQRO role (e.g. the Project role) can be decomposed into detailed role descriptions and properly assigned based on AgilePM's role descriptions.

AgilePM practices of Prioritization, Timeboxing, and Facilitated workshops are supported by AQRO's ability to plan and secure the resources for the time when these techniques should be used.

AQRO reduces one of the major risks in agile projects that individuals from business and solution development will not be able to work together at an appropriate and consistent level. AQRO offers a Service Plan and agreed calendars at business and solution/technical departments level.



HOW DOES AQRO® SUPPORT OPERATIONS ?



AQRO® can support major management methods which a “servant leader” can choose in managing his employees:

- MBO (Management by Objectives) is supported by AQRO, as it allows to set the goals for employees and dedicate attention and time to achieve them.
- MBE (Management by Exceptions) identifies the responsibilities of superiors and manages them by exceptions, where the role of AQRO is again to create the space and increase efficiency.
- Coaching works through the coaching talks for which employee needs time and undisturbed attention. AQRO with service plan and defined roles helps to identify this time and enable coaching discussions.
- Facilitation works through the facilitators. For facilitation to happen, there's a need to coordinate the group's calendars and keep undisturbed attention. AQRO with a Service Plan and Myers-Briggs type indicator help to plan and carry out the workshop successfully.

CONCLUSION

There are 24 hours a day and we spend about 1/3 of these working. It's not the amount of the time we can increase per day. It's the efficiency and effectiveness of how we use this time, which is important. AQRO helps to plan how we use the time at the department level and assign proper roles to employees. It increases the efficiency of how we use the resources but it can also help to bring together operations and project management into one picture. These crucial areas usually compete for resources and AQRO can bring win-win situations where both sides get the resources and increased efficiency helps to achieve more.

Operations management Change management





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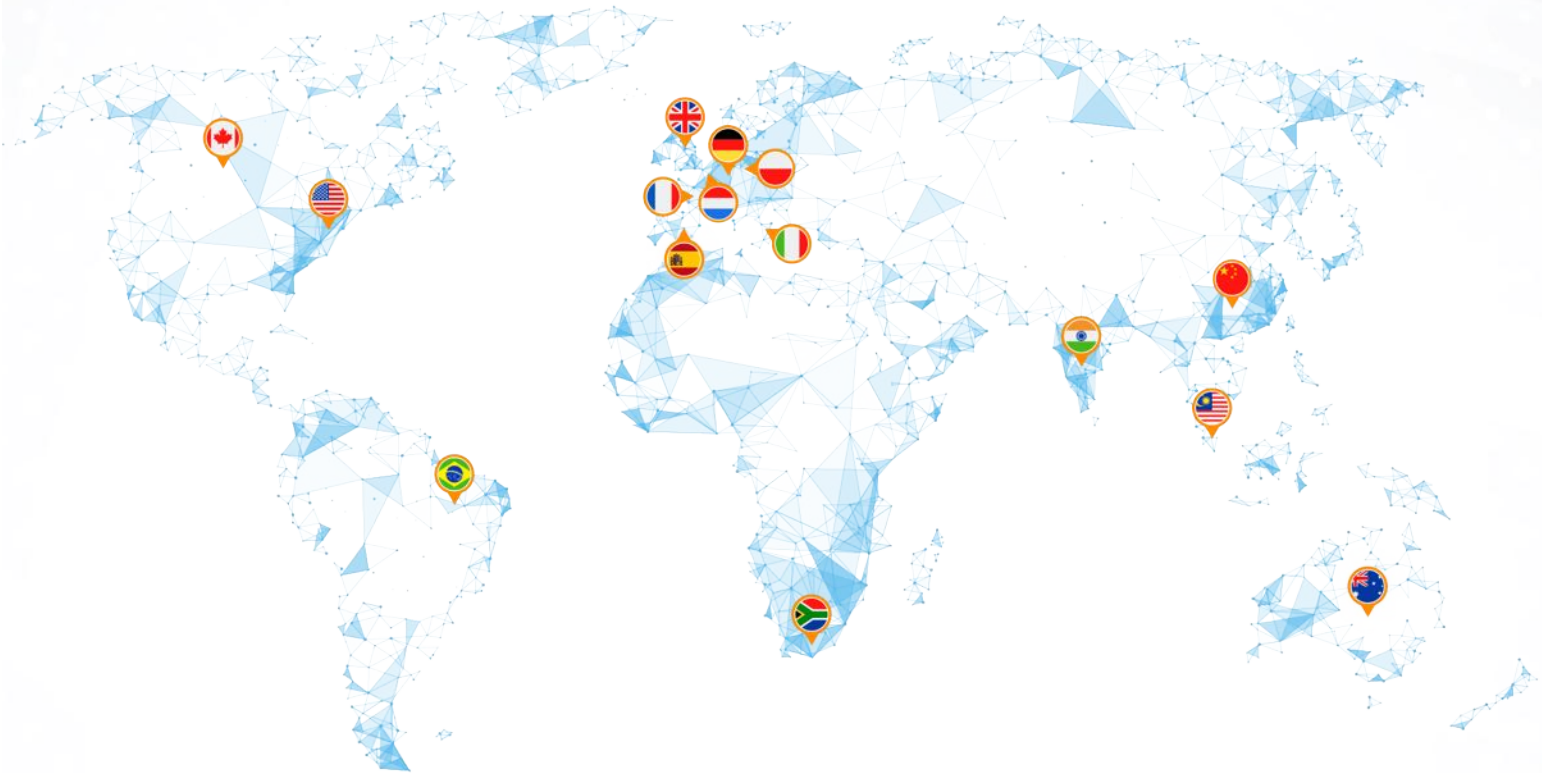


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Tomasz Nędzi is a top qualified trainer, coach and consultant for a variety of management methods.

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