

ABSTRACT AND BIOGRAPHY

Complexity, Systems and Project Management

Over the past decade or so, there has been an increasing tendency to draw attention to the problems caused by complex projects or by complexity in projects. The discussion, however, has been somewhat hampered because the issue of theoretical foundations in project management research has been a central point of debate among both practitioners and scholarly communities for quite some time.

This presentation will show the common roots of both complexity theory and project management in systems theory, trace the very different paths that have been taken by the practice of project management and the studies of systems in the worlds of the natural sciences and of management, show how each has developed its own response to understanding “complex systems”, and through practical examples show the benefits that can be enjoyed through once again reconnecting the practice of managing projects with the hard-won insights into the behavior of complex systems and the practice of managing in complexity.

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Terry has been a practitioner of both general and project management since the end of the 1960s and a consultant to blue-chip organizations for over twenty years. He is the founder and Executive Chairman of Human Systems International, which exists to help organizations improve their management of projects and programs.

With a PhD in Project Management, a bachelor's degree in Theology, and qualifications in electrical engineering, management accounting and counseling, Terry has worked alongside senior leaders and managers in both the public and the private sectors, to ensure the delivery of business critical change programs and enhance the quality of leadership. He is a Visiting Professor at ESC, Lille, a Visiting Fellow at Cranfield University, and co-author with Paul C. Dinsmore of “The Right Projects, Done Right”, published by Jossey-Bass in October 2005.

In October 2006, the Association for Project Management awarded Terry its premier Award, the Sir Monty Finneston Award, for his outstanding contribution to the development of project management as a vehicle for effective change, and in 2009 it appointed him an Honorary Fellow.