

Projects in half the time
with double the impact

HALF DOUBLE

METHODOLOGY HANDBOOK



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HALF DOUBLE METHODOLOGY HANDBOOK

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HALF DOUBLE METHODOLOGY HANDBOOK

Projects in half the time with double the impact

Half Double Institute



Colophon

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Preface

This is a book about project leadership. A book written for passionate leaders and practitioners, finding themselves in roles as project owners and sponsors, project leaders, or project management officers. For people who would like to lead projects to impact faster and with a higher level of engagement. People who dream of making the business world radically more innovative and agile.

In 2013, three such passionate project practitioners met up at a café in Copenhagen. All in different positions at the time: one leading a management consulting firm, one heading a project management office in a large international organization, and one researching nationwide success factors for project work. However, they shared one common denominator; a deeply rooted frustration regarding the low success rate of projects and a burning notion that something wasn't right in the field of project management.

The aspiration to solve this problem led to the initiation of a small brain trust of 21 high-caliber project practitioners. 21 people who together wrote an article, “12 leading stars for project

management”. The article became the foundation for a consortium consisting of the Danish Industry Foundation, a leading project management consultancy, three universities, 17 pilot project partners, and a community of over a thousand passionate practitioners.

The article and the consortium also functioned as the basis for the application to the Danish Industry Foundation which was brave enough to fund Project Half Double. A funding offered on the basis of a promise: to develop an agile hybrid methodology in and with practice and academia. A new approach to projects that could enhance our ability to innovate, develop, and deliver new solutions to the world. An agile methodology freely available to all that could be applied across project types, industries, and national barriers.

This book was written to share the learnings, results, and impact of this promise. The methodology has been developed and tested in practice. We have seen it prove itself out there, and we're ready to share it with the world. To inspire more practitioners to enhance the focus

on impact, flow, and leadership in their projects. To fight the low success rate of projects. To help drastically enhance productivity. Productivity being more impact with fewer resources.

Meaning more innovation and improvements for less. At our core, we believe this to be the single greatest opportunity for business and for society in the Western world today. The trend is clear. More and more of the work we do will be conducted through projects by white collar workers paid high salaries to conduct one-off tasks. The change in the Western workforce has been a remarkable reflection of this. Even minor improvements can have a massive impact on a large scale. And we dare to hope that this can help change the world for the better.

As you start experimenting with the ideas of Half Double, you might find yourself asking more questions than you did initially. Simply because in many ways, it introduces a paradigm shift compared to the way many of us are used to running our projects. But hopefully, you will find the answer to many of these questions here. The book elaborates on the core ideas of the Half Double methodology and shares stories

from the pilot projects where this methodology was developed. Stories that highlight how companies such as VELUX, SAS, GN Audio, Siemens Wind Power, and Lantmännen Unibake translated the mindset and toolset into their world – their local culture, practices, and language. It also highlights some of the challenges they encountered, and how they overcame them.

Across all pilots, however, there was one dominating success factor: leadership. More specifically, the active involvement of the project owner and the project leader's ability to lead a complex system of people all the way through the project journey. Therefore, leadership is both at the very core of Half Double, as well as the enabler to creating impact with the rest of the methods and tools. Which means that you, regardless of the role you have in the project, will need to focus on the leadership of people, rather than the management of systems in order to gain any impact from the Half Double methodology.

The journey to capturing the potential of project-based work has only just started. And we continue to experiment and learn as we encounter new projects, organizations, and passionate practitioners. So, if you have insights and experiences to share on how to reduce the time to impact in your projects, we would love to hear them. And we dare to hope that you will find inspiration in this book to help you on your journey.

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PER SVEJVIG

Associate Professor, Head of Project Management Research Group, PhD at Aarhus University

The Half Double methodology

– in short

Before we dive into the background and details of the book, let's establish a shared understanding of the concept it is all built on.

The starting point for working with Half Double is to be aware that it is a methodology, not a method. In other words, we reject the notion that you can apply one method in the same way in all situations. Instead, it is a set of principles that must be translated to suit your particular needs. Principles that must be adapted to the situation at hand, to the project you are currently working on, and within your organizational context.

The model to the right summarizes these principles - with connected methods and tools.

At the very core of the methodology, we have the three core elements: Impact, Flow, and Leadership. Each core element puts forward a principle for how to lead projects.



IMPACT

WE IMPLEMENT PROJECTS TO CREATE IMPACT, AND WE WANT TO REDUCE THE TIME TO IMPACT. WE VALUE IMPACT ABOVE SCOPE, COST, AND TIME



FLOW

PROJECT MANAGEMENT SHOULD FOCUS ON CREATING A FAST FLOW OF IDEAS, LEARNING, RESULTS, AND IMPACT. WE VALUE FLOW AND PROGRESS OVER MULTITASKING



LEADERSHIP

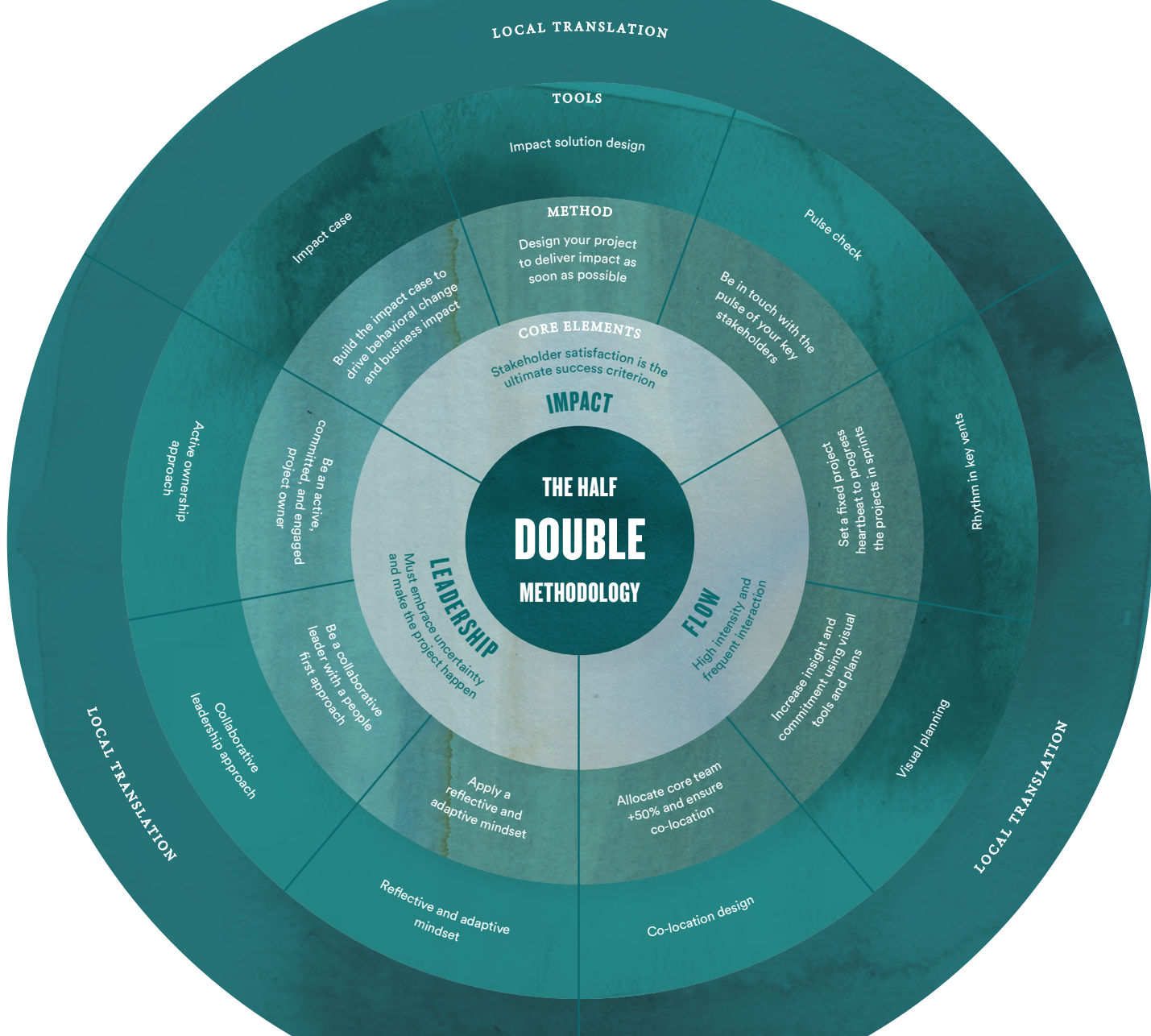
RESULTS ARE CREATED BY PEOPLE. WE PUT PEOPLE BEFORE SYSTEMS

Each principle is directly linked to a method – a proposed approach, procedure, or process for bringing the principles to life in practice.

And each method is supported by a tool – a specific instrument aimed at promoting implementation.

In the outer circle, we have local translation. Here, we propose three methods for adapting Impact, Flow, and Leadership to suit local cultures and practices. The farther we move out from the core elements toward the outer circles, the more flexible we can be regarding which approach and tools to employ. Get further insight into the three core elements in chapter 2.

INTRO



How to read this book with minimum effort and maximum impact

This book is organized according to the structure of the Half Double methodology. In chapter 1, we provide some background and a brief review of developments in management and project management.

Chapter 2 describes the center of the circle, the core elements of the approach, and what they entail.

In chapters 3, 4, and 5, we explore each element in-depth, describing the specific methods and tools designed to bring the focus areas to life in practice. Each chapter is structured with a section for each method and the associated tool followed by a relevant case story. This makes the book easy to navigate and lets you focus on exactly what you need to read in your given situation.

Chapter 6, “Local Translation”, is organized in the same way and covers how to handle the transition from your current project approach to implementation of the Half Double approach.

Finally, chapter 7 focuses on how to scale Half Double to the entire organization to ensure an effective project portfolio containing projects with intensive resource allocation and short duration — we call them “short and fat projects”.

Remember that you can read more and download the tools for free at www.projecthalfdouble.com — it’s all open source!

Find your way
around the book

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Is this book for you?

TRY TO SEE IF YOU CAN CHECK OFF ONE OR MORE OF THESE BOXES

YOU ARE A PASSIONATE PROJECT PRACTITIONER AT HEART

YOU ARE DRIVEN BY THE NEED TO CREATE REAL IMPACT AND ARE WILLING TO TAKE UNTRADITIONAL MEASURES

YOU ARE ALWAYS THINKING THAT THERE MUST BE BETTER WAYS TO LEAD PROJECTS

IF YOU CAN, THEN YOU'RE PART OF A MOVEMENT SPREADING ACROSS THE GLOBE.

A MOVEMENT THAT IS WILLING TO QUESTION THE DOMINANT PROJECT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND IS EAGER TO IDENTIFY NEW WAYS TO ENHANCE IMPACT

INTRO



Know you've never been more important as a project leader than you are right now

Project management is rapidly becoming more and more important. Most of the development work we do today is executed through projects, and up to 40% of an industrialized country's GNP derives from this work form.⁽¹⁾

As an attempt to accommodate for this, a tsunami of concepts has been launched for project management, program management, portfolio management, and project maturity. Still, only 35% of projects are considered to be successful.⁽²⁾ Within academia, we also seem to have missed the mark. Out of 1,279 articles published in the field of project management since 1983, there are only 74 articles set out to rethink project management, and only seven articles describe ways to actually do it.⁽³⁾

So where do we go from here? Research shows that methodology alone accounts for only about 6% of project successes.⁽⁴⁾ Lack of leadership, on the other hand, is considered to account for 74% of the projects that fail.⁽⁵⁾

What we conclude from this is that our profession needs change. Not just a change of tools and techniques, but a complete change of mindset and approach to leadership. We need people who dare to think differently, who dare to take the lead. We need more people like you. Our hope is that with your experience, energy, and courage, you can change the way project management is conducted. More than 1,400 practitioners have developed the ideas behind the Half Double approach, and we invite you to join us on this exciting journey – with this handbook as your guide.

Chapter


THE FUTURE CALLS FOR INNOVATION AND AGILITY



DON'T LOOK BACK

YOU'RE NOT GOING THAT WAY!

**THROUGHOUT HUMAN HISTORY,
GREAT PROGRESS HAS BEEN
MADE EVERY TIME WE
QUESTIONED OUR BASIC
ASSUMPTIONS ...**



... WHO SAYS WE CAN'T FLY
TO THE MOON?

... WHO SAYS WE CAN'T
CURE CANCER?

... WHO SAYS WE CAN'T PRODUCE
ENERGY FROM ATOMS?

This triggered our curiosity, and we asked ourselves the following questions in our quest for radically improving the way we work:

**WHAT ASSUMPTIONS HAVE
LED TO OUR INCREASE IN
PROSPERITY?**

**DO THESE ASSUMPTIONS STILL
HOLD IN TODAY'S FAST-PACED
SOCIETY?**

**COULD NEW PRINCIPLES
ACCELERATE PROGRESS AND
GROWTH GOING FORWARD?**

The past was built on efficiency, optimization, and perfection in operations

For thousands of years, the human race lived as hunter-gatherers, and the simple notion of agriculture didn't dawn on anyone. It was a giant leap when we stopped living like nomads and started staying put. We went from short-sighted thinking and eating everything here and now to gathering reserves, sowing and cultivating, and keeping and breeding animals. This "stage change" multiplied our production by the hundreds. Today, a relatively small percentage of the world's population feeds the rest.

Henry Ford's transformation of car manufacturing from workmanship to industry marked the beginning of the efficiency-driven era. Industrialization was founded on four simple principles: Standardization, reproducibility, specialization,

and the division of labor. Throughout the 60s, quick changeovers became increasingly important because multiple suppliers offered similar products.

During this period, Toyota factories developed what is now known as Lean. Lean was based on five principles: 1. Identify the value, 2. Map the value stream, 3. Create flow, 4. Establish pull, and 5. Seek perfection. Once again, the principles were very simple, but throughout the 80s, they formed the basis for the superiority of the Japanese automakers, which outmatched their American colleagues. It took the US factories 240 days to produce one car, whereas it only took the Japanese 24 hours!⁽¹⁾

The Japanese production costs were half of those of the US, and the quality was better. Today, these principles of focusing on value-adding time, cycle time, lead time, and waste reduction through continuous improvements are well-known best practices in all areas of production management. The Japanese mantras of small batch sizes and flow struck a responsive chord all over the world. The procedure is clear: Sense the situation, categorize the problems, analyze possible improvements, and respond – which is referred to as the efficiency paradigm.⁽²⁾ This worked wonders in the past. But how is further optimization possible when product lifecycles have already been drastically reduced and the problems are not only complicated but have also become complex and chaotic?

**IN THE LAST 50 YEARS, WE HAVE
SEEN A 2-3% INCREASE IN
PRODUCTIVITY IN OPERATIONS
EACH YEAR. NOW, THE CURVE
IS FLATTENING IN THE
WESTERN WORLD⁽³⁾**



What does the future look like?

BACKGROUND

Strategies that were once needed and that worked in the past won't accommodate the needs of tomorrow's fast-paced environment. We're headed for a world with no speed limits. A life where new products, technologies, and needs wash over us like a tsunami. In an effort to optimize our products and processes, all these changes can feel like a never-ending sea of interruptions. This is what is referred to as the innovation paradigm, where the preferred methods are act, probe, sense, and respond.⁽²⁾

We're in a position where optimization and perfection are growing increasingly desperate as service life is continually declining. Creation is outpacing optimization. We need to understand that the efficiency paradigm is water under the bridge and that we now live in an innovation-driven reality where a transformation of organization, processes, and behavior produces greater benefits than perfection. It's essential that we learn

to exploit the accelerating flow of opportunities rather than viewing them as interruptions. We cannot make the necessary adjustments solely with continuous perfection; we must master real transformations at a high pace. These transformations include organization, products, processes, competences, and new behavior.

In the US, Japan, and Canada, highly educated employees represent 42%, 45%, and 51% of the workforce, respectively.⁽⁴⁾ This suggests a shift from a workforce based primarily on blue-collar workers to a workforce comprising mainly white-collar workers. In other words, many of us today find ourselves working with more complex problems and developments than in the past. And this work is often carried out as one-off assignments: projects. But while the number of projects is drastically increasing, our efficiency within this workform has stagnated.

“
**QUICK CUSTOMIZATION OF WORKFLOWS,
PROCESSES, PRODUCTS, AND SERVICES IS ESSENTIAL
FOR SURVIVAL. IT IS VITAL THAT WE LEARN TO EXPLOIT
THE ACCELERATING FLOW OF OPPORTUNITIES RATHER
THAN VIEWING THEM AS INTERRUPTIONS, WE MUST
LEAD REAL TRANSFORMATIONS AND NOT JUST
PERSISTENT PERFECTION.**
”

SNOWDEN



GOING FORWARD, THE NUMBER OF PRODUCTS AND TECHNOLOGIES INCREASES VERTICALLY, WHILE LIFETIME DECREASES DRASTICALLY

In 1982, 33% of revenue and 22% of profits came from new products. Just ten years later, these figures had risen to 50% and 40%, respectively.⁽⁵⁾ The majority of HP's profits today come from products that didn't exist a year ago. Cell phones generally have a commercial lifetime of just three months, and new software updates are released on nearly a monthly basis.⁽⁶⁾

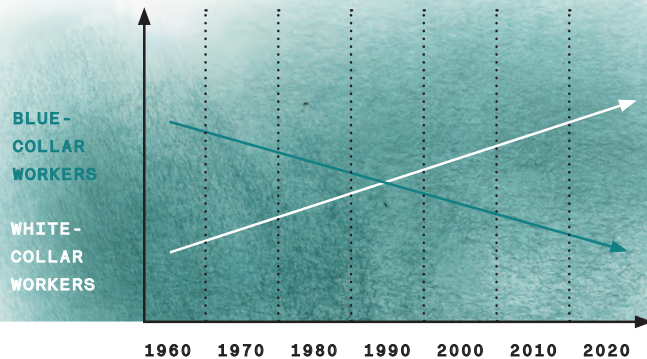
THE LIFETIME OF NEEDS, TECHNOLOGIES, PRODUCTS, AND PROCESSES DECREASES

THE TECHNOLOGICAL POSSIBILITIES INCREASE. THE AMOUNT AND THE DEGREE OF NOVELTY WILL CONTINUE TO ACCELERATE

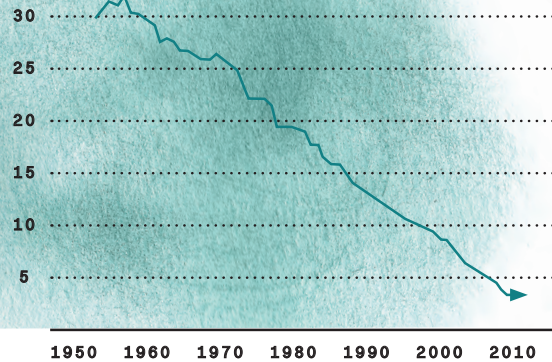


BACKGROUND

EVOLUTION OF THE WORKFORCE



PERCENTAGE OF AMERICAN WORKERS ENGAGED IN PRODUCTION⁽⁷⁾



**MICRO-MULTINATIONAL
COMPANIES**

are gaining ground with
few or no employees

**THE LIFETIME OF A
MULTINATIONAL
COMPANY IS
40-50 YEARS⁽⁶⁾**

**THE WORLD IS CHANGING
VERY FAST**

Big will not beat small anymore. It
will be the fast beating the slow

- RUPERT MURDOCH

**THE BEST WAY TO
PREDICT THE FUTURE IS
TO INVENT IT**

- ALAN KAY

**COMPANIES ARE EVOLVING
INTO SMALLER UNITS WITH
HIGHER SALES**

In the US, the average company
has gone from 25 to 10 employees
in the last 25 years⁽⁶⁾

**HALF OF ALL S&P 500
COMPANIES
DISAPPEAR EVERY 20
YEARS⁽⁶⁾**

INFINITE KNOWLEDGE

Our knowledge doubles in volume
every 8-9 years⁽⁶⁾

EASY ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE

The value of your network
increases exponentially with the
number of users

- METCALFE'S LAW

**THE COMPANY LIFE
EXPECTANCY IN JAPAN AND
EUROPE IS 12.5 YEARS⁽⁶⁾**

**TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOP-
MENT IS EXPONENTIAL**

Information technology doubles its
performance every 18 months

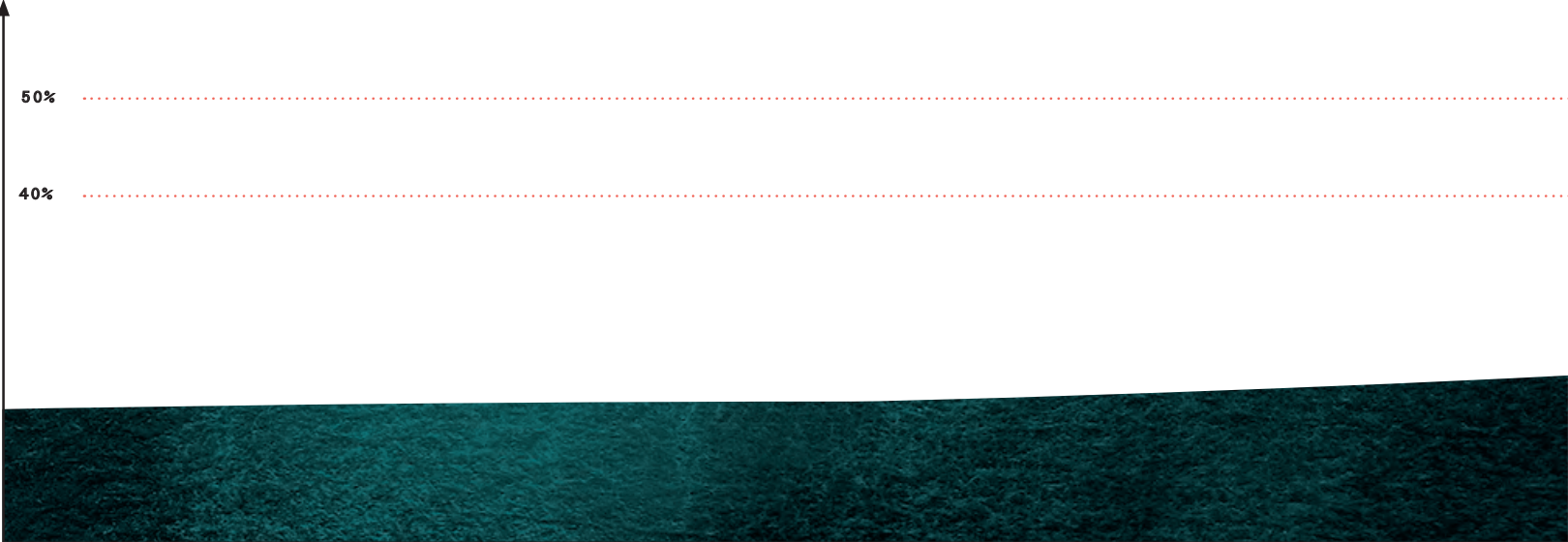
- MOORE'S LAW

The project society

IN LINE WITH THE INCREASED FOCUS ON INNOVATION, COLLABORATION, AND AGILITY, MORE AND MORE WORK IS BEING EXECUTED AS PROJECTS

BACKGROUND

% OF A COUNTRY'S GNP INVESTED IN PROJECTS^(*)



1960

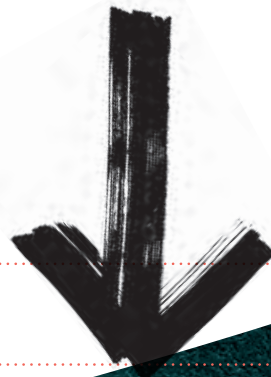
1970

1980

1990

Every year, USD 48 trillion is invested in projects. Only 1/3 of all projects are successful – a mind-boggling waste! Imagine if we could improve our project performance by just 10%. We could save hundreds of trillions of dollars in 20 years – exactly the amount Wharton School of Management predicts it will cost to convert the whole global energy system into wind, solar, and water!

PROJECTS USED TO BE TEMPORARY TASKS, WHILE OPERATIONS WERE PERMANENT. NOW, CHANGES ARE PERMANENT, AND OPERATIONS ARE TEMPORARY TASKS UNTIL THE NEXT CHANGE. AND THERE ARE NO INDICATIONS THAT THIS TREND WILL CHANGE ANYTIME SOON.



IN OTHER WORDS:

CONGRATULATIONS!

YOU'RE IN THE RIGHT PLACE!

2000

2010

2020

2030