

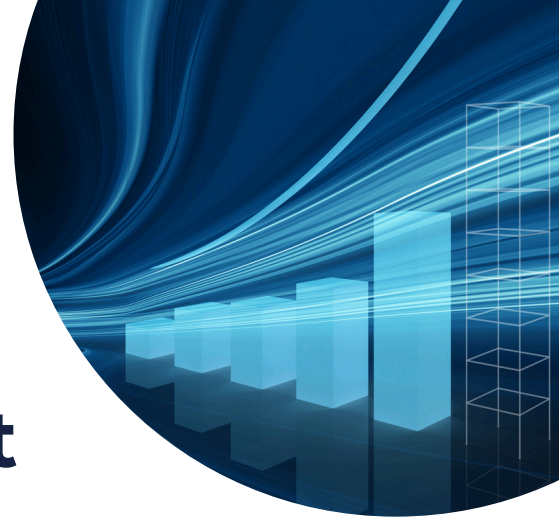


How to Assess Your Organization's PPM Maturity Level?

A Step-by-Step Guide to Determining Your Organization's PPM Maturity Across 5 Levels

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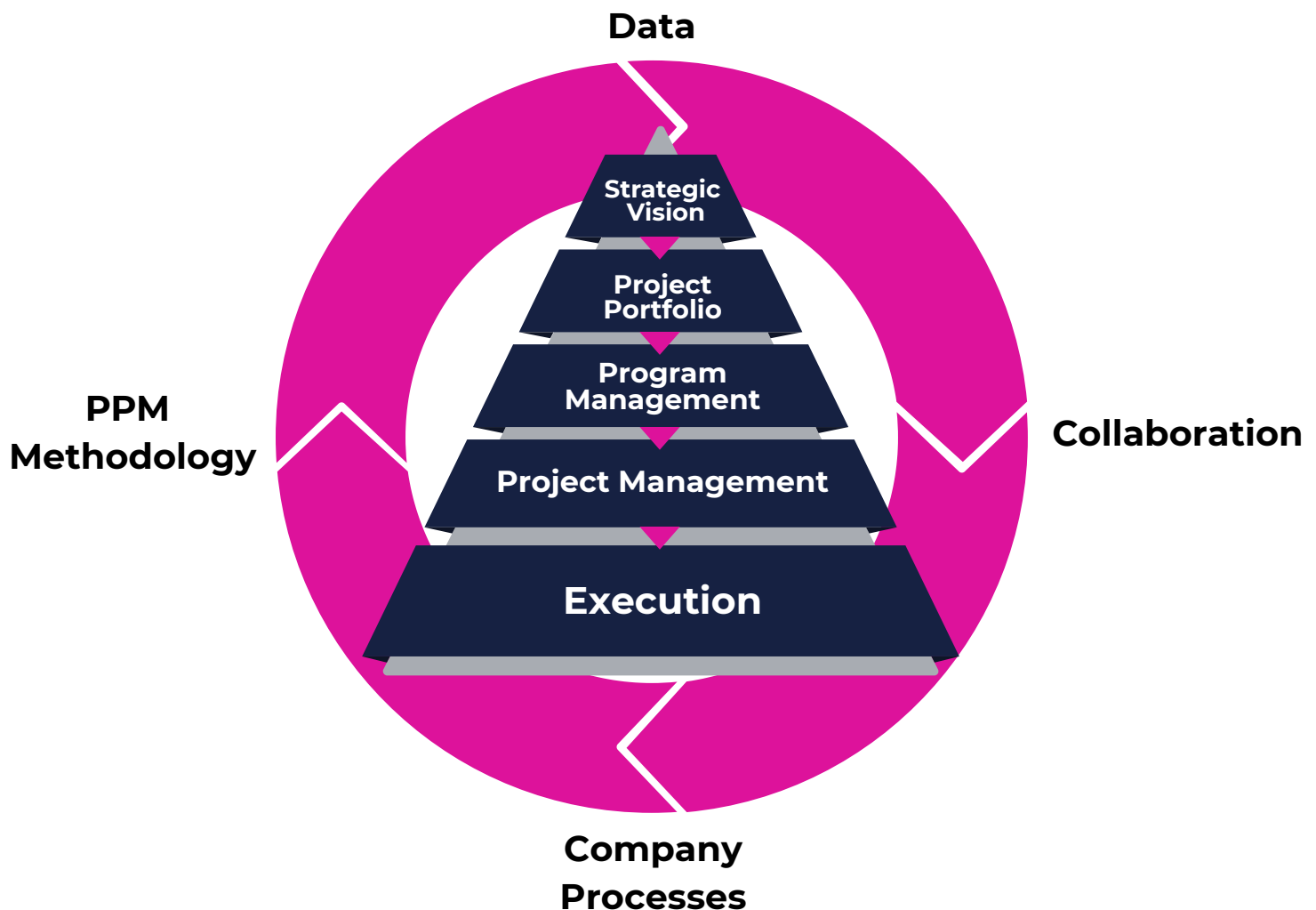
What is Project Portfolio Management (PPM) Maturity?

Maturity in Project Portfolio Management consists of assessing an organization's ability to manage its business by achieving set objectives and adapting to change while managing growth according to the organization's strategic vision. To do this successfully organizations must have access to reliable and relevant data to make good decisions resulting in optimal execution of tasks.

This means that high level maturity is only achieved when an organization manages all operational activities with ease. Organizations with high level maturity are proactive, resilient, and able to easily manage and adapt to change. They have a deep understanding of how their operations work including current and new activities.

What is Project Portfolio Management (PPM) Maturity?

So how does one assess their maturity level? Assessing the maturity of an organization is done by taking a snapshot of operations at a specific point in time, determining iterative areas for improvement and measuring progress over time. This provides a clear vision of how far an organization have come and what remains to be done to reach the preferred level of maturity in terms of performance and innovation.





How to Assess Your Project Portfolio Management (PPM) Maturity?

We outline 4 key factors you need to consider to successfully assess your PPM maturity.

GOVERNANCE

A framework needs to be in place to structure each portfolio, program, project and stakeholder need. This defines what needs to be done, and also how it should be done, to ensure proper implementation of operational practices. The establishment of standardized criteria, including indicators, milestones and centralization of information is key to successfully achieving objectives. Once a framework has been established management can prioritize activities, measure performance regularly, and maintain strategic direction.

PLANNING & RESOURCE ALLOCATION

Project Portfolio Management Maturity is a collective result of transversal practices and methods, across an organization, so that it works in harmony to create optimal flow. To achieve maturity everyone must work towards a common goal and there should be harmonization of processes between all teams: functional departments, geographical sectors etc. This helps to keep everyone on the same page and avoids work and/or information silos which impact operational efficiency.

INTERNAL PPM COMPETENCES

The goal of these processes should be to identify which activities are successful and focus on building best practice based on these. Conversely by focusing on these activities the time spent on tasks that do not bring value to the organization will be reduced thus resulting in better Project Portfolio Management. Collaboration and good communication play a central role in establishing best practice processes and both top-down and bottom-up communication should be encouraged to ensure a smooth flow of information.

DECISION MAKING & FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

Each stakeholder should be actively and regularly involved in the reporting and exchange of key information. This data will make it possible to make informed decisions, prioritize investments, identify overruns (costs and deadlines), validate new budgets, and assign a new team when needed. The measurement of data quality, to assess PPM Maturity, is based on 4 criteria: homogeneity, clarity, integrity, and timely data. The data should also reflect the implementation of processes and methodologies.



The Different Levels of Project Portfolio Management (PPM) Maturity

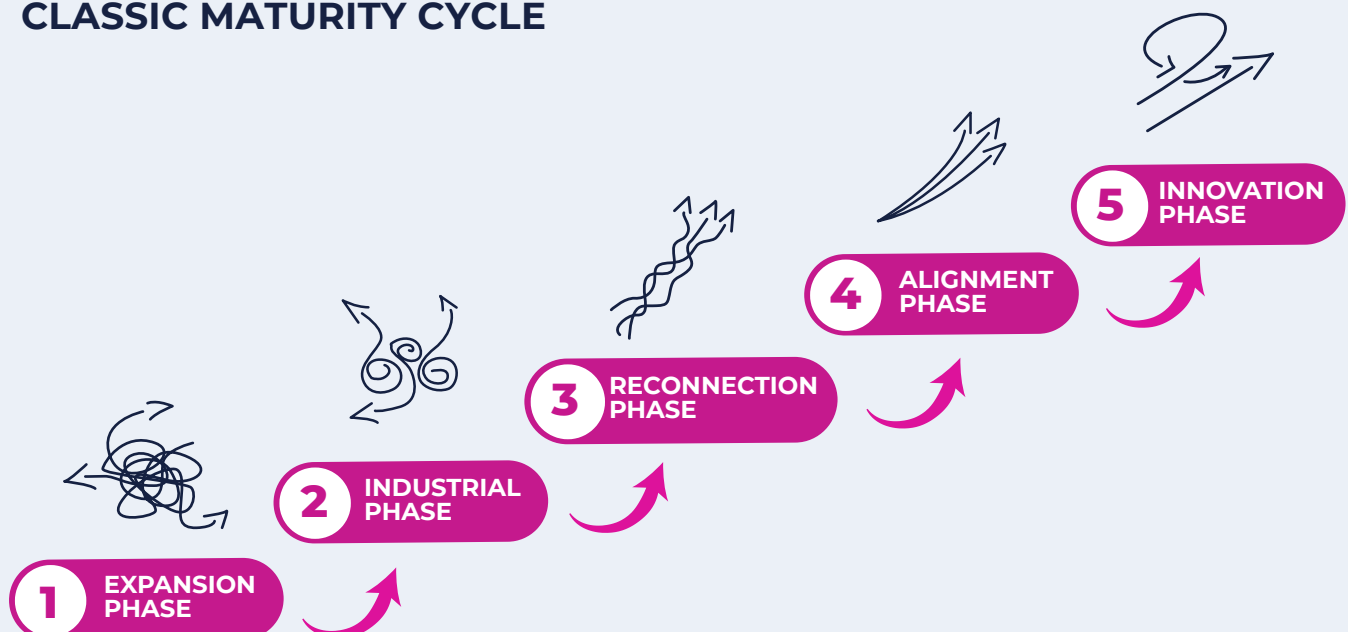
The PPM maturity scale we suggest is based on the Gartner and Forrester frameworks. Each level of maturity corresponds to typical modes of operation and associated issues, and the recommendations are based on these common situations.

Note: There are several intermediate levels to those outlined here, so it is likely that an organization does not fully correspond to a single level.

The PPM maturity of an organization has 5 different levels:

- Level 1** Expansion Phase: Getting started and moving forward.
- Level 2** Industrial Phase: Making achievements more reliable.
- Level 3** Reconnection Phase: Uniting to achieve results.
- Level 4** Alignment Phase: Improving and delivering value.
- Level 5** Innovation Phase: Anticipatory and resilient.

CLASSIC MATURITY CYCLE

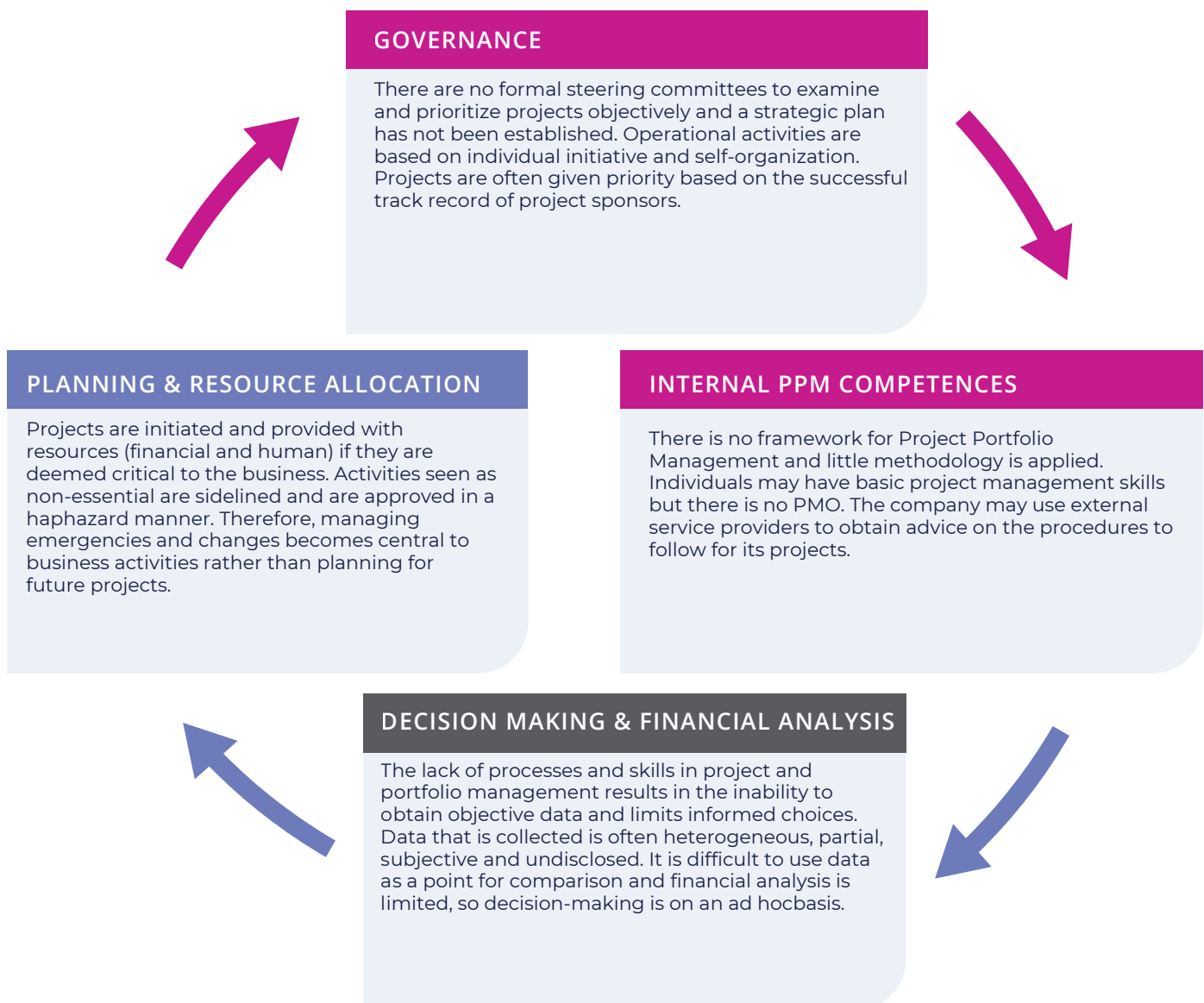




| Level 1

Expansion Phase

The first level of maturity is fairly reactive in nature and organizations often work “on instinct”. We regularly find ourselves in this situation when we start a new activity, launch a new product / service, experience a period of strong growth or when there is no real need to create structural processes. The first level also often occurs in start-up activities, creation of subsidiaries, mergers & acquisitions as organizations are often working in a form of disarray.





| Level 1

Expansion Phase

What are the main weak points of the expansion phase?

- Lack of cohesion: Objectives, decisions, priorities, communication
- Lack of stable structure: Skills, processes, tools
- Lack of reliable data: Dispersed, partial, heterogeneous, subjective

Common Pain Points & Concerns

Expansion	
Pain Point Theme	Level 1 Expansion
Visibility & Control	✗ Poor visibility
Strategic Alignment	✗ No prioritization
Financial Governance	✗ No profit forecasts
Resource Management	✗ Overloaded experts
Delivery Performance	✗ Shifting scopes
Risk & Benefits	✗ No risk consideration
Market Responsiveness	✗ Missed trends
Strategic Planning	✗ Weak planning

Objectives to Reach Level 2 Maturity

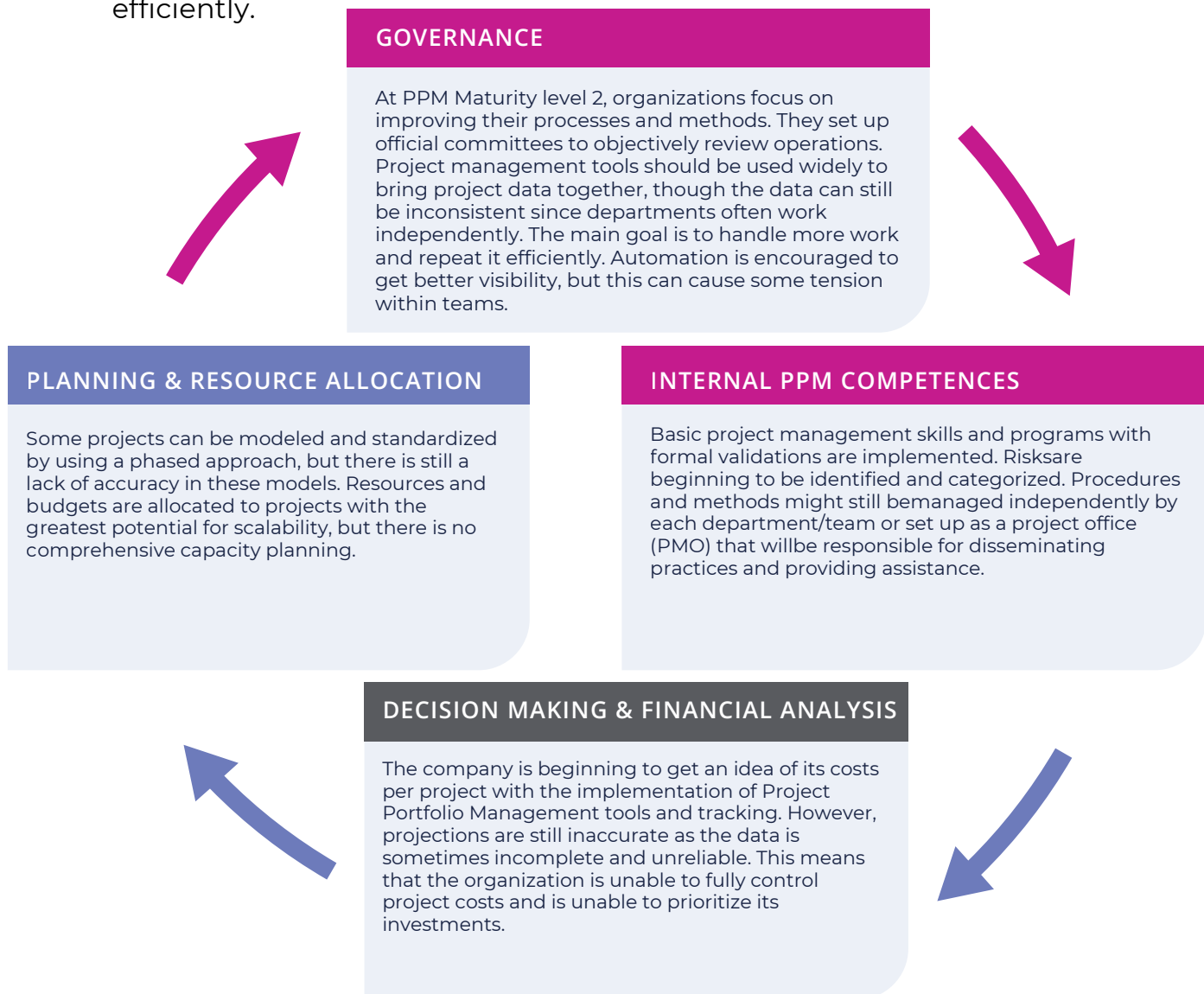
- Raise awareness of the benefits of PPM in your teams and organization
- Analyze current workflow and take the time to restructure and reorganize projects as necessary to stabilize the current workflow
- Identify and consolidate what works successfully to optimize the activities in run mode (automation, repeatability, industrialization).
- Implement a pilot initiative to prepare for change with a department or program.



| Level 2

Industrial Phase

The second level of maturity is when an organization becomes aware that they need to formalize and regularize operations. They have also identified that operations need to be based on what works and strategic decisions need to be made using objective and up-to-date data. However, this change must be done in a measured way to be successful, so it is best to identify a pilot project within a program or service. This means that in the short term there will be a maturity lag as activities must slow down to implement processes and procedures. In the long term the organization will manage projects more efficiently.





| Level 2 Industrial Phase



What are the main weak points of the industrialization phase?

- Silos exist: decisions, information, skills and teams
- Change management: poor efforts at adaptation, tension of relationships, lack of listening, Favoritism/neglect of certain teams
- Information Disparities: silos, partial, heterogeneous

Common Pain Points & Concerns

	Expansion	Industrialization	Reconnection
Pain Point Theme	Level 1 Expansion	Level 2 Industrialization	
Visibility & Control	✗ Poor visibility	✗ Limited tracking	
Strategic Alignment	✗ No prioritization	✗ Misaligned execution	
Financial Governance	✗ No profit forecasts	✗ Budget overruns	
Resource Management	✗ Overloaded experts	✗ Resource mismanagement	
Delivery Performance	✗ Shifting scopes	✗ Missed deadlines	
Risk & Benefits	✗ No risk consideration	⚠ Unclear benefit expectations	
Market Responsiveness	✗ Missed trends	✗ Slow to change	
Strategic Planning	✗ Weak planning	⚠ Tactical decision making	

Objectives to Reach Level 3 Maturity

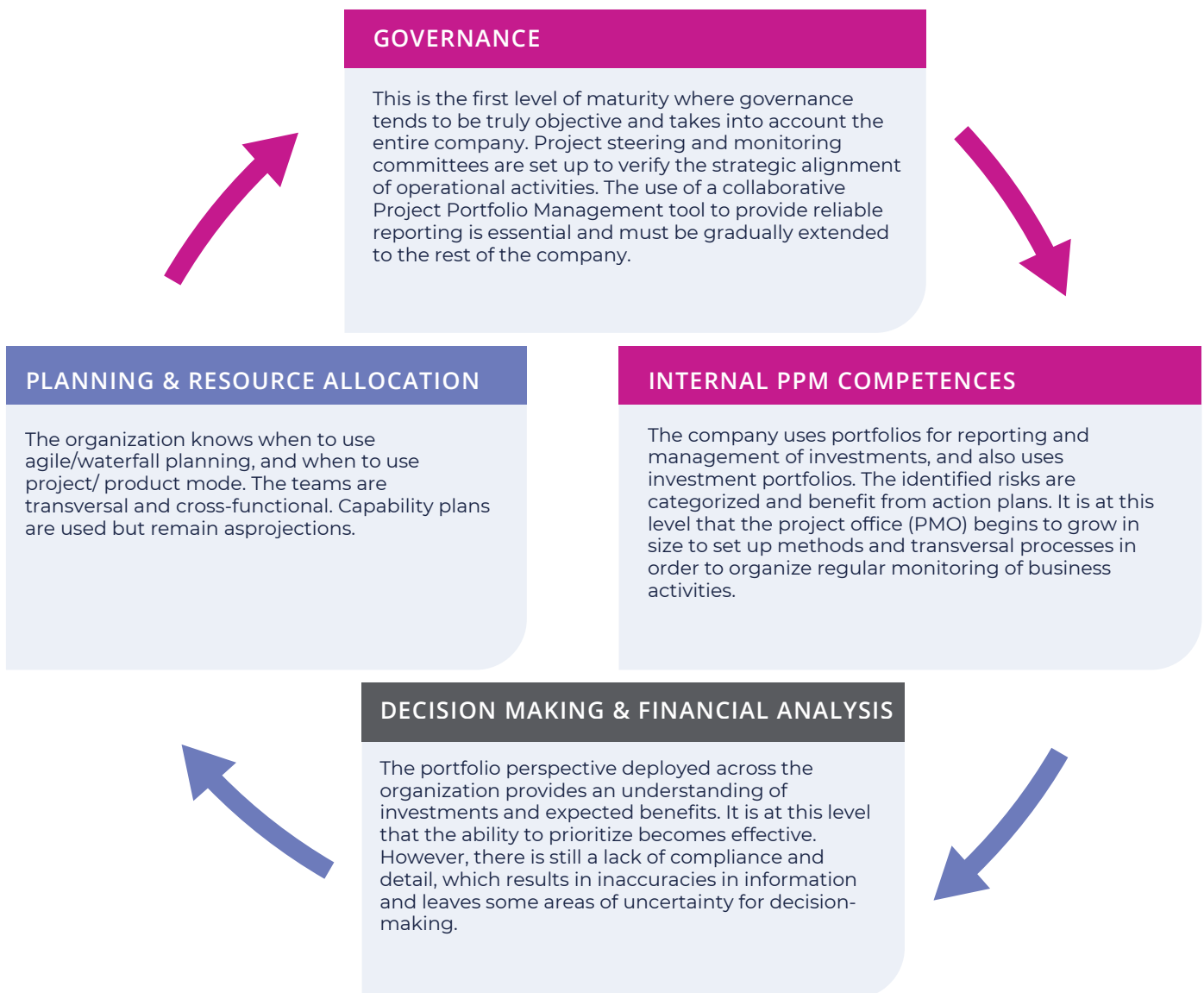
- Establish a strong corporate culture to eliminate departmentalized visions.
- Set up processes and committees to ensure strategic alignment of business activities.
- Extend the pilot program to the entire organization to structure business activities.



| Level 3

Reconnection Phase

Some departments and/or projects have implemented Project Portfolio Management processes and methods. The maturity of practices is still uneven, and teams still work as silos. The lack of cohesion and harmonization makes it difficult to fully align activities, as there is no common reference framework at the organizational level. The main challenge is to extend the methods to the rest of the organization.





| Level 3

Reconnection Phase

What are the main weak points of the reconnection phase?

- Non-compliance: data, tools and/or methods,
- The maturity gap: is reduced but still exists between departments/projects. This results in differences in analysis criteria and data reported,
- Persistent inaccuracies in data, methods, processes or decisions.

Common Pain Points & Concerns

	Expansion	Industrialization	Reconnection
Pain Point Theme	Level 1 Expansion	Level 2 Industrialization	Level 3 Reconnection
Visibility & Control	✗ Poor visibility	✗ Limited tracking	⚠ Partial tracking
Strategic Alignment	✗ No prioritization	✗ Misaligned execution	⚠ Partial alignment
Financial Governance	✗ No profit forecasts	✗ Budget overruns	⚠ Investment tracking gaps
Resource Management	✗ Overloaded experts	✗ Resource mismanagement	⚠ Capacity gaps
Delivery Performance	✗ Shifting scopes	✗ Missed deadlines	⚠ Quality issues
Risk & Benefits	✗ No risk consideration	⚠ Unclear benefit expectations	⚠ Limited risk visibility
Market Responsiveness	✗ Missed trends	✗ Slow to change	⚠ Poor insight
Strategic Planning	✗ Weak planning	⚠ Tactical decision making	⚠ Misaligned projects

Objectives to Reach Level 4 Maturity

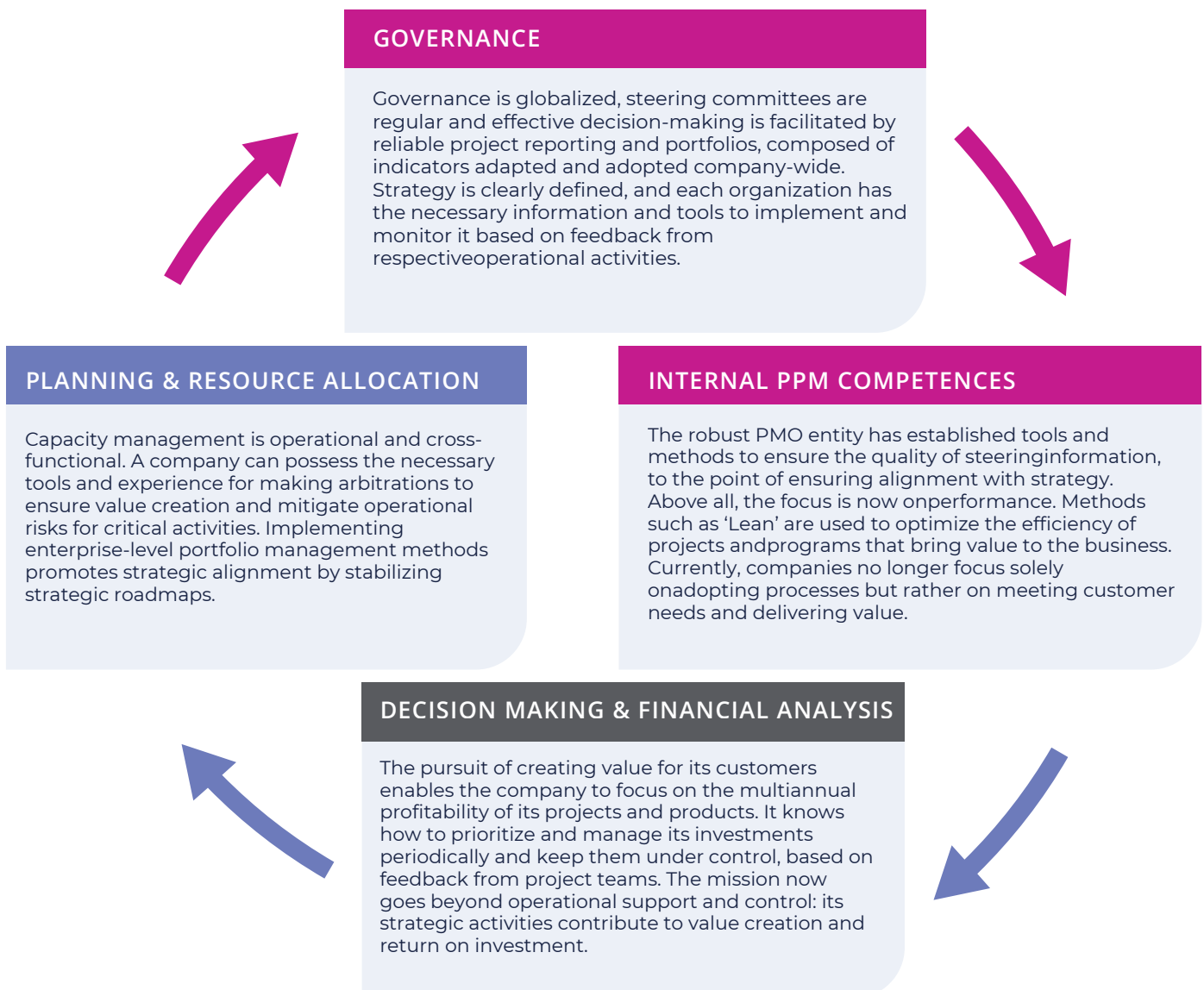
- Raise awareness of the benefits of PPM in your teams and organization
- Analyze current workflow and take the time to restructure and reorganize projects as necessary to stabilize the current workflow
- Identify and consolidate what works successfully to optimize the activities in run mode (automation, repeatability, industrialization).
- Implement a pilot initiative to prepare for change with a department or program.



| Level 4

Alignment Phase

Each organization within a company has successfully implemented and fully adopted the methods and processes specific to each business unit at level four maturity. The "verticality structure" is mastered, and organizations have developed methods to align, communicate, and collaborate cross-functionally. Managing inter-dependencies supports the common foundation for project and portfolio management, ensuring smooth matrix functioning. At this level of excellence, a company tends to view the project approach as the solution to all challenges.





| Level 4

Alignment Phase

What are the main weak points of the alignment phase?

- Complex structure and centralized decision-making.
- Lack of autonomy and empowerment for teams.
- Rigid processes that are sometimes unsuited to certain innovation goals.
- Instability of customer needs and prioritization.
- Limited market listening and difficulty in quickly responding to trends.
- Resistance to change when faced with processes that must continue to evolve and that took enormous effort to establish.
- Insufficient integration of PPM with other essential areas (HR, billing, support, etc.).

Common Pain Points & Concerns

	Expansion	Industrialization	Reconnection	Alignment
Pain Point Theme	Level 1 Expansion	Level 2 Industrialization	Level 3 Reconnection	Level 4 Alignment
Visibility & Control	✗ Poor visibility	✗ Limited tracking	⚠ Partial tracking	● Dashboards improving
Strategic Alignment	✗ No prioritization	✗ Misaligned execution	⚠ Partial alignment	● Strategy is embedded
Financial Governance	✗ No profit forecasts	✗ Budget overruns	⚠ Investment tracking gaps	● Forecasts becoming accurate
Resource Management	✗ Overloaded experts	✗ Resource mismanagement	⚠ Capacity gaps	● Staffing is mostly balanced
Delivery Performance	✗ Shifting scopes	✗ Missed deadlines	⚠ Quality issues	● Delivery performance improving
Risk & Benefits	✗ No risk consideration	⚠ Unclear benefit expectations	⚠ Limited risk visibility	● Risk-based prioritization emerging
Market Responsiveness	✗ Missed trends	✗ Slow to change	⚠ Poor insight	● Some proactive adaptation
Strategic Planning	✗ Weak planning	⚠ Tactical decision making	⚠ Misaligned projects	● Governance in place

Objectives to Reach Level 5 Maturity

- Develop or strengthen innovation management based on market monitoring mechanisms.
- Establish a methodological and organizational framework conducive to innovation.
- Enhance change management processes to integrate innovation practices into existing PPM processes.
- Adapt value-added indicators to the innovation process.



| Level 5

Innovation Phase



Once your company has reached level 4, PPM practices, both strategic and operational, will be fully understood, deployed, adopted and used, both at an enterprise level and within each organization according to its particularities. However, to evolve to level 5, you will need to develop practices and methods for driving innovation, as well as continuous improvement approaches.

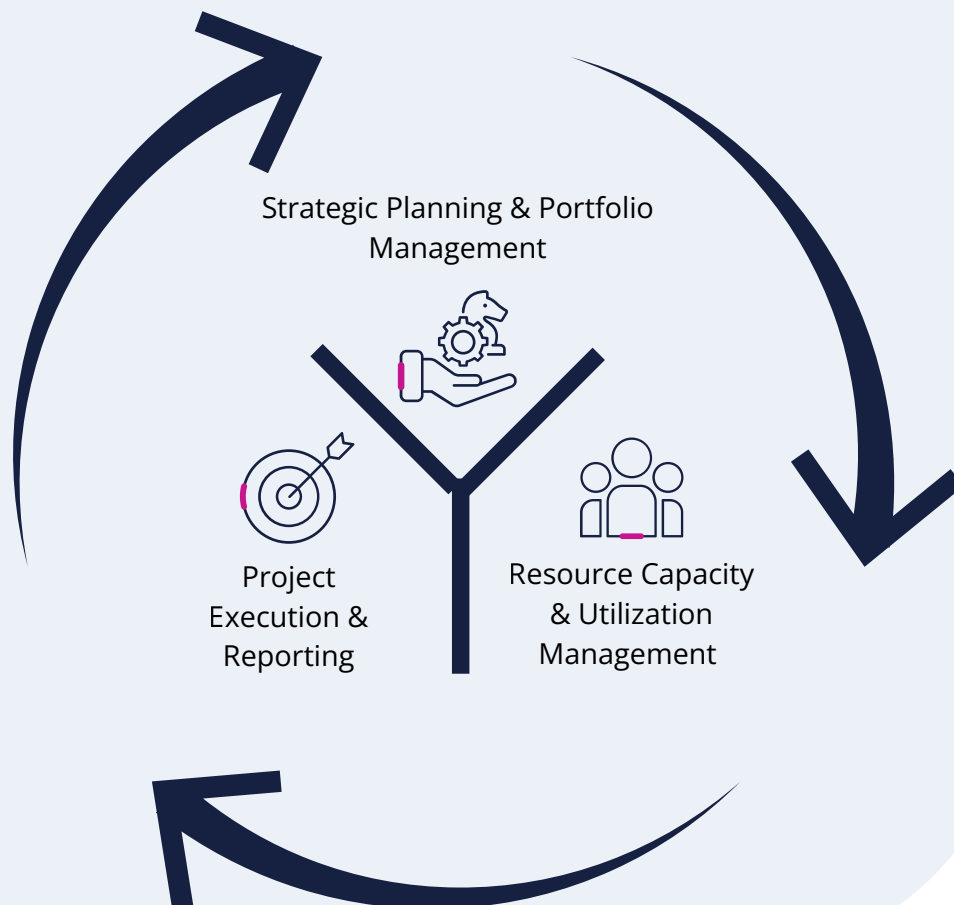
To achieve this, it will be essential to adapt the company's organizational structure and culture to encourage the emergence and integration of innovative practices into existing PPM processes. A crucial first step will be to collectively define a common notion of innovation, clarifying what counts as innovation versus traditional PPM approaches such as ideation.

At this stage, you'll see a split in the teams: one part will be dedicated to day-to-day activities, while the other will be involved in exploratory activities related to innovation. A strong connection and constant communication between these different branches is essential. For instance, the team dedicated to innovation will need to integrate feedback from the traditional team, since the latter is in direct contact with the direct needs of customers and the market. Similarly, the traditional team will need to be receptive to the ideas and proposals of the exploratory team, and be ready to put them into practice, for example by using beta testers from among the customers of the traditional projects. If there is a lack of effective integration, there is a risk that the efforts made by the innovation team will never lead to a concrete production launch.



| Level 5 Innovation Phase

The PMO will play a key role in this process, helping to integrate innovation-specific value-added indicators into existing PPM processes. Following arbitration, innovative projects can then be integrated into roadmaps. Capacity analysis and allocation of resources and budgets will be essential for checking feasibility and establishing priorities. This is why reaching maturity level 4, which marks the effective appropriation of PPM methods on a company-wide scale, is an essential prerequisite for successfully reaching maturity level 5.



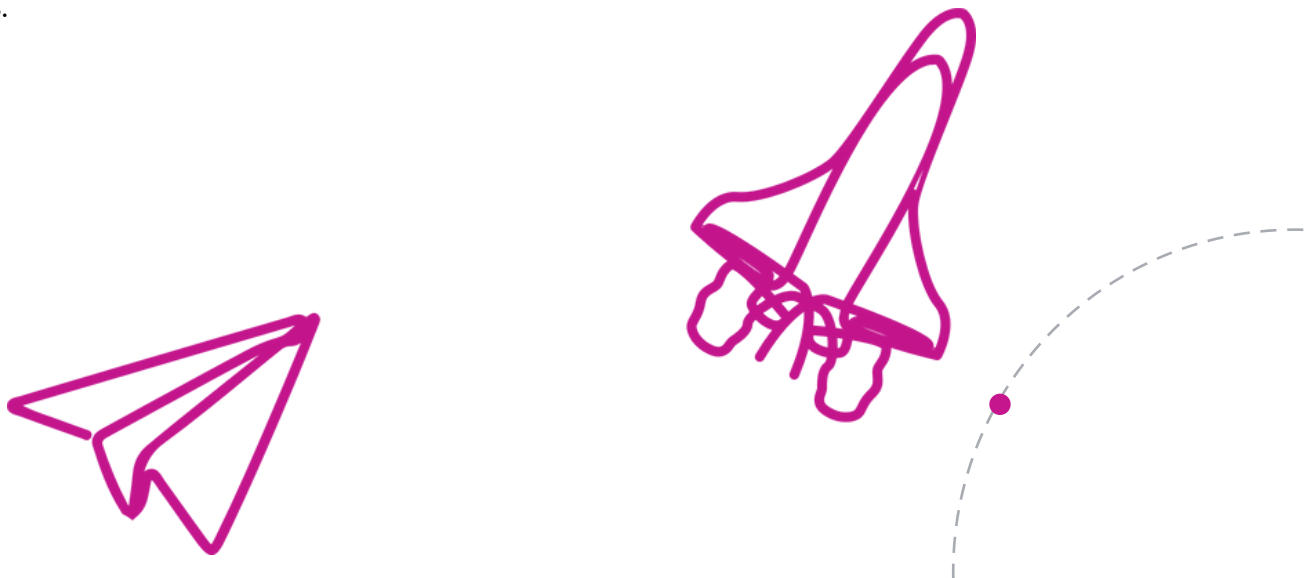


Conclusion

Achieving high maturity in Project Portfolio Management is a progressive journey—one that requires continuous improvement, cross-functional collaboration, and a strategic mindset. As this guide outlines, each stage of maturity brings new capabilities, challenges, and opportunities for transformation.

Organizations at the early stages must focus on establishing foundational processes, governance structures, and reliable data flows. As maturity grows, the emphasis shifts toward alignment, performance, and ultimately, innovation. The transition from tactical execution to strategic portfolio oversight empowers businesses to anticipate change, manage complexity, and deliver greater value to stakeholders.

Whether you're just starting out or working toward innovation-led maturity, the key lies in embracing a unified vision, fostering organizational agility, and cultivating a culture of learning and adaptation. By following the tailored recommendations provided throughout this guide, your organization will be well-equipped to unlock the full potential of Project Portfolio Management and drive sustainable success.





About Planisware

Planisware is a leading business-to-business (“B2B”) provider of Software-as-a-Service (“SaaS”) in the rapidly growing Project Economy.

Planisware is public company (PLNW) with around 750 employees across 16 offices as of December 2023, Planisware operates at significant scale serving around 600 customers in a wide range of verticals and functions across more than 35 countries worldwide. Planisware’s clients include large, global blue-chip companies, as well as medium-sized businesses and public sector entities.

Planisware's integrated platform fosters cross-departmental collaboration and achieves strategic alignment across diverse project specialties:

- IT Governance & Digital Transformation
- Product Development & Innovation
- Project Business Automation / Professional Services Automation (PSA)
- Project Controls & Engineering (PC&E)

Leveraging an AI-powered platform, Planisware empowers organizations to make data-driven decisions, optimize resources, and drive project success with unprecedented efficiency and accuracy.

For more information, visit: www.planisware.com or **get in touch with us here.**



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