Investigating practitioners’ perspectives on project success factors: How performing a Q-study could help professionals

Introduction
• Lot has been written about success criteria & factors
• Companies feel the need for professionalizing
• Learning is hampered by time pressure
• In terms of management: one size doesn’t fit all!

Research questions
• What are the perspectives of project professionals on project success factors?
• How could a Q-workshop contribute to knowledge creation?

Q-Methodology & data
• Practice-based approach to identify patterns of shared subjective viewpoints across individuals
  - Q-statements: elements to sort, main question
  - P-set: respondents
• Q-sorting: respondents rank the statements from
  - -3 (least important)
  - 0 (neutral)
  - +3 (most important)
• As part of Masterclasses on improving project management
• Two sessions (P-sets)
  - Contractor organisation in process energy sector (43 respondents)
  - Owner organisation in real estate (31 respondents)
• Positive vibes after the sorting sessions
• Factor analysis to identify perspectives
  - The number of factors has to be chosen by the researcher
  - Factors to perspectives by qualitative analysis

Success factor framework

Observations
• Contractor point at the client and goes for integrated project team
• Client (owner) points at users and at general collaboration
• Agreement amongst the importance of the team & collaboration
• Training not considered part of projects
• Sustainability not explicitly valued

Conclusion and way forward
• By participating in the Q-study awareness was created for the existence of different perspectives
• Participants experienced a positive contribution to their shared knowledge base
• Q-study as a interactive start-up activity in major projects?
• At different project stages? With different parties involved?
• Next step(s):
  - Towards fit-for-purpose: quantitative research into matching contexts, success criteria & success factors
  - Cross sectoral comparison