

**NAME**

Types of Projects

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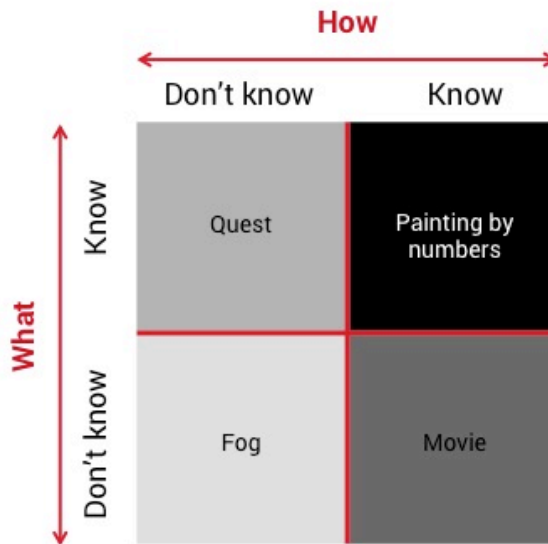
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## INTRODUCTION

Different types of projects require different types of approaches. This model, also known as the fog model, is based on knowing what to do and how to do it. Eddie Obeng categorises projects or activities based on four categories: paint by numbers, making a movie, going on a quest, or being lost in the fog. Each requires a different approach, team make up and management and will yield a different outcome.



## NOTES

**Walking in the Fog**

If you don't know **what** you want nor **how** to achieve it you are likely to have a walking in the fog type of project. Typically, the organisation is attempting to do something different. Something that hasn't been attempted before. These projects are started because of a change in circumstances.

For instance, introducing a new business strategy in response to political, legislative or socio-economic organisational change. As such, this type of change project calls for certain leadership styles – tight control, strong communication and innovation and creativity.

These projects require teamwork and a desire to work and learn together. **Walking in the fog** projects should proceed cautiously. If not, you risk delivering nothing of benefit to the organisation.

**Making a Movie**

If you know how but not what you need to do you have a making a movie type of project.

In this situation your stakeholders are very certain about how the project should proceed but not what needs to be done.

Your organisation has built up significant expertise and capability in the area the project will tackle and has many people committed to the methods needed to deliver the change.

During the early stages of this type of project you need to focus your attention on solving the what – preparing a robust business case – not the how. Making a movie type of project evokes positive emotions and a sense of purpose and openness. That is, mobilise problem solvers from within your organisation or using external sources to develop and generate ideas. Once you have your script the movie will make itself.

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### Going On a Quest

In contrast, the going on a quest type of project is where you and most of your stakeholders are very sure of what should be done.

However, you are unsure how you will achieve it. If you are involved in this type of project you will no doubt feel challenged, excited or single-minded. Projects involving information technology tend to fall into this category and are often criticised for cost overruns, being late, or not delivering the expected benefits.

Consequently, your leadership style needs to balance strict control of time and cost with the freedom to innovate and solve problems.

Above all you need a team of self-motivated people – “knights” – who work tirelessly to seek and then deliver the solution.

### Painting By Numbers

The painting by numbers type of project is where you always want to be by the time you start investing lot of time and money in the change project.

You and most of your stakeholders are sure of what to do and how it is to be done. These change projects tend to have clear goals plus a clearly defined set of activities needed to complete the project.

What’s more, this type of project is characterised by the organisation’s project management maturity – written methods, procedures, and systems describing what and how things are done is evident.

By the time you start a painting by numbers project you will feel confident. You will probably want to demonstrate your competence by delivering the project early or under budget.

If you reach this stage of your project and your gut feeling tells you something different take note. You really don’t want to commit serious resources to until you are very clear about the what and how.

### Summary

On a final note, recognise that the level of risk varies depending on the types of projects you embark. It should be your objective to eliminate risk as the change project proceeds.

Also, projects can change from quest, movie or fog to painting by numbers as they progress through the project life-cycle. Use your head to interpret how well things are doing and adapt your leadership styles to best suit the type of project you’re leading.

## USEFUL LINKS

[www.leadershipthoughts.com](http://www.leadershipthoughts.com)

[www.pentaclethevbs.com](http://www.pentaclethevbs.com)