

## **From Science to Art: A parable on Practioners**

Eddie Obeng

*You've been listening to the radio. It seemed like a done deal. You've followed the story for a month both parties had been squaring up to each other they had agreed the transfer fees, the players seemed happy, the agents had made statements to the press, the fans had even endorsed the deal and now the big news was that the deal was off! All that agreement, and going along and now it seemed over-night, a change of minds, a change of hearts.*

*The story on the radio feels familiar but in a different context. You pause thinking bitterly about last week, all that agreement, and going along and now it seemed over-night, a change of minds, a change of hearts. That was the problem with human beings you spoke to them one day they were on the same page. You came back the following morning and you had no idea where they would be in their thinking. And yet your PMBOK treated them as resources, human resources. But they aren't just resources, they are agents, actors, blockers collaborators. They have as much power to drive the project on or off track as you do. It's almost as if the logic of planning, risk removals and deliverables are easy compared to the complex intricacies of people, politics and power.*

*You knew how to plan and 'read' the project tasks, but what if you couldn't read the people or plan ahead for the things they would do to push you off track? I mean last week the struggle wasn't between you, the sponsor and the head of HR, no it was just between the two of them. Any damage to your project was just collateral damage.*

*There must be a way to more realistically include the impact of the aspect of the project which took up most of your emotional strength and time.*

In a world where every project succeeds we need to develop the more insightful and people-based, softer aspects of project management. These, in practice, actually have a much bigger impact on overall success.

**If learning more about this is of interest to you join us for Conference: ZERO on the 17<sup>th</sup> of October and look out for the sessions on Practioner Insight**

