

PROJECT LEADERSHIP



Lessons from 40 PPM Experts on Making the Transition
from Project Management to Project Leadership

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword.....	3	No More “Winging It”: Devising a Plan to Save a Project.....	32
Introduction.....	4	Trust and Respect: The Keys to Successful Projects.....	33
Our Project Leadership Experts.....	5	Risking Your Popularity to Be a Strong Leader.....	34
Learning to Share.....	9	Connecting Sustainability to the Enterprise.....	36
Nurturing Effective Communication.....	10	Committing to an Agile Transformation.....	38
Leading from the Front.....	12	Encourage Autonomy, Collaboration, Exploration.....	39
Project Leadership, Not Project Management.....	13	Rescuing Failing Projects.....	40
Building Trust One Project at a Time.....	14	Trust: The Key to Successful Leadership.....	42
The Keys to Success: Ownership, Transparency, and Accountability.....	15	Becoming the Linchpin for Your Project.....	43
Nailing the Vision: Ensuring Project Success Through Clarity.....	17	Implementing Situational Adapted Leadership.....	44
Business-focused Leadership.....	18	Changing an Organization’s DNA.....	46
Wild Dogs and PM’s: Team Building for Successful Projects.....	19	Ensuring Success Through Face-to-Face Communication.....	47
Preparation, Visibility, Empowerment.....	20	Leading Those Who Follow.....	48
Communicating with Empathy.....	21	Starting Projects with Love and Integrity.....	49
Going from Boss to Teammate.....	22	Cultural Competence: Effective Leadership in Multicultural Environments.....	50
The Deal is in the Details.....	24	Project Leadership: The Main Ingredient in Getting Troubled Projects Back on Track.....	52
Virtual Leadership.....	25	Delegating Your Way to Project Leadership.....	53
How ‘WIFM’ Rescued a Failing Project.....	26	Consistent Project Management Without Excuses	54
Winning Stakeholder Support.....	27	Clear Communication Leads to Commitment.....	56
Lightening the Weight of the World Through Trust.....	28	Principles of Performance-Based Project Management.....	57
Moving Projects Beyond “Analysis Paralysis”.....	29	Love Your Project, and Your Team Will, Too.....	59
Getting Down to Genuine Leadership.....	31	Meet AtTask.....	60

FOREWORD

Strong project leadership can make the difference between success and failure but is surprisingly elusive to many businesses.

When it comes to project management, we tend to talk about the tactical—the assignments, the tasks, the approvals, and so on. But business is evolving, and many project teams are now being asked to lead change, instead of just timelines and milestones. This evolution is accelerating and is driven by fresh thinking and business necessity supported by advanced technologies that are highly accessible to a much broader range of contributors. Effectively managing work is no longer just the role of a few specialists.

At AtTask, we've been both witnessing and enabling this trend for many years. It's the reason our strategic focus goes beyond helping clients better manage projects. Our Enterprise Work Management solution allows them to view work in a holistic way—providing complete visibility across not just projects, but the entire lifecycle of work.

With visibility comes transparency, confidence, and ultimately, the power to lead. Decisions no longer need to be made with out-of-date and incomplete information, resources can be truly optimized, and productivity materially improved.

We hope you'll find the collective wisdom captured in this eBook to be a source of insight and best practice as you continue your own journey to be a project leader.



ERIC MORGAN

AtTask CEO

INTRODUCTION

Gartner predicted a massive sea change in the world of project management—a change that is forcing project managers into a greater leadership role and requiring them to work closely with senior executives. With the generous support of AtTask, we reached out to 40 top Project and Portfolio Management (PPM) professionals and asked them the following question:

Please share a remarkable leadership secret that had a major impact on an enterprise project you have managed. Please tell the story and the results that you achieved.

We received a range of insightful answers that paint a picture of an industry in transition. The essays in this book roughly break down into three categories. Several of the practitioners focused on the new relationship that project leaders need to forge with senior management, how to understand their concerns and communicate with them in any way that works. Many PPM experts wrote about leading change and getting teams to work together in new ways. Finally, many of our experts wrote about specific leadership techniques that have helped them clear hurdles and remove obstacles.

Making the shift from *project management* to *project leadership* isn't easy, but the rewards can be significant. We hope the collective wisdom and hard-learned lessons contained in these pages will inspire you and help you take your own teams to a higher level.

All the best,



DAVID ROGELBERG
Editor

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Share a remarkable leadership secret that had a major impact on an enterprise project you have managed.



"Many enterprises may have good data, but because they are working in silos . . . these data are not available to end users when they require it."

– Ed Wallington



"When it comes to organizational project management, communications is a critical component that, when executed properly, links all project stakeholders to a common set of goals and actions."

– Michael Kaplan



"Project leadership relates to people, relationships, and behaviors."

– Neil Walker





"Leadership is setting a new direction or vision for a group to follow, while management is controlling resources in a group according to defined standards."
– Peter Taylor



"Swift trust occurs when a diverse group is brought together in a temporary organization, such as a project office or virtual team created for an urgent project."
– Naomi Caietti



"I included stakeholders from all areas of the organization, not just IT and not just the team members, which helped elevate stakeholder interest, bring transparency, and break down silos, subsequently driving success."
– Tony Togli





"I don't begin a project until I fully understand it. This means that I will sit with project sponsors and not proceed until I have nailed down their vision."

– Michiko Diby



"What turned the project around was business-focused leadership by the sponsor and PM as well as business-focused collaboration by the team to define and pursue what mattered most."

– Cinda Voegtli



"The role of the PM is first and foremost to create an environment in which the PM's team can be successful—nothing more, nothing less."

– Chris Field

LEARNING TO SHARE

ED WALLINGTON

Project Management
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Dr. Edward Wallington is an advocate of professional project management and business analysis in the geospatial and management information sectors. Ed is a versatile and enthusiastic project manager who has a deep interest and belief in the transfer of project management theory into operational application. Ed is a member of the Association for Project Management (APM), a committee member of the APM Programme Management Specialist Interest Group, and actively contributes to the project portfolio community.



One aspect that enables an enterprise to work efficiently is the ability to access up-to-date information in a timely manner. Many enterprises may have good data, but because they are working in silos (either because of structure or culture), these data are not available to end users when they require it. There is a general recognition and emphasis on creating a “single source of the truth” that staff and stakeholders can access as appropriate. This requires an enterprise-wide change in working practice and culture—the ability to share.

Enabling change on an enterprise scale requires buy-in from a wide range of staff, from directors to operational delivery teams. The technical aspects of this type of project are relatively well known, understood, and achievable; the main effort is understanding and articulating the benefits and cultural change required and making the change happen. The project manager (PM) in this instance must not only focus on the core project deliverable—a system to enable secure data storage and sharing—but also on the organization’s buy-in and implementation, which requires the ability to articulate the long-term benefits (having a clear view on what success looks like) and using negotiation and persuasion skills to make it happen at all levels of staff.

This type of project can easily lose steam without senior executive buy-in and support. You will face a lot of push back when mobilizing cultural change, so communication is key. A PM is conformable communicating at a project delivery level, but this is not always the case when engaging senior executives. A different tack is required, one focusing not on the technical detail but reinforcing why the project is being done, what is required to effect change, and what the impact is on the executives and their teams.

There is a need to personally tailor the benefits and impact to each executive and explain it to them regularly. Go out on a limb, buy them a coffee, and have a chat. Regular personal engagement is important and effective.

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **TO WORK EFFICIENTLY, AN ENTERPRISE MUST BE ABLE TO ACCESS UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION IN A TIMELY MANNER.**
- 2 **ENABLING CHANGE ON AN ENTERPRISE SCALE REQUIRES BUY-IN FROM A WIDE RANGE OF STAFF.**
- 3 **THE PM MUST NOT ONLY FOCUS ON THE CORE PROJECT DELIVERABLE BUT ALSO ON THE ORGANIZATION’S BUY-IN AND IMPLEMENTATION.**

“Many enterprises may have good data, but because they are working in silos . . . these data are not available to end users when they require it.”

NURTURING EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

MICHAEL KAPLAN

Founder and CEO of SoftPMO

Michael Kaplan is the founder of SoftPMO, a New York-based consulting firm that specializes in improving execution and resource management. He is a recognized leader in program management and serves as an advisor and mentor to senior executives. In more than 20 years of practice, Michael has worked with several of the world's most successful organizations, including Fortune 500 companies and government agencies, helping them to achieve the full intent of their most urgent and critically important initiatives.

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When it comes to organizational project management, communications is a critical component that, when executed properly, links all project stakeholders to a common set of goals and actions. If project managers (PM's) do not effectively share these basic components or team members don't understand them, expected outcomes are jeopardized and project budgets become subject to unwanted risk.

A basic prerequisite for a smoothly functioning project team is effective communications within the team and between the team and other project stakeholders. One of the dangers of project management is the belief that all communication links are operating effectively just because people are talking to one another. One of the most common pitfalls of communication is the assumption that because a message was sent, a message must have been received.

According to Project Management Institute, all aspects of project communications can be challenging to projects, but the major areas of concern are:

- The gap in comprehending the business benefits; and
- The language used to communicate project information being frequently ambiguous and flavored with project management slang.

The responsibility for developing and nurturing real communication links belongs to the PM. Understanding that the communication requirements of projects vary greatly, the PM can focus on several areas to increase project communications:

- Remain an effective communicator.
- Be a communications expeditor.
- Encourage good communications across boundaries.
- Leverage technology effectively.
- Use a project website.
- Run effective meetings.



KEY LESSONS

- 1 **ENSURE COMMUNICATION AMONG TEAM MEMBERS AND BETWEEN THE TEAM AND PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS.**
- 2 **CREATE AND USE A COMMUNICATIONS MANAGEMENT PLAN.**
- 3 **PLAN COMMUNICATION INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL TO THE PROJECT.**

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The key to communications starts with planning and includes:

- Planning communication both external and internal to the project;
- Identifying meetings, reporting, and announcements that will occur with all stakeholders; and
- Creating a communications management plan and using it.

Communications management must include planning and delivering information related to the project to all project stakeholders, which includes the processes needed to handle timely and appropriate collection, generation, dissemination, and storage of project information and the definition of critical links among people, ideas, and information required for success.



KEY LESSONS

- 1 **ENSURE COMMUNICATION AMONG TEAM MEMBERS AND BETWEEN THE TEAM AND PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS.**
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LEADING FROM THE FRONT

NEIL WALKER

Program & Project
Practitioner at Synatus

Neil Walker is a project management professional, consultant, and author. He has more than 20 years of experience leading and delivering technology-enablement projects and business transformation programs that have aligned people, process, and technology with business strategy for blue-chip financial services, professional services, and UK government organizations. Neil has consulted across United Kingdom, Europe, Canada, and the United States in specializations such as program delivery assurance, project turnaround, strategic relationships, and collaborative working.

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The perception of project managers (PM's) has changed significantly over the past decade. I have witnessed a fundamental shift in the sectors I operate in—one that has seen a divergence from the traditional PM role to encompass leadership qualities typically reserved for executives.

Previously, PM's sat within an organization's "command-and-control" management structure. This authoritarian approach was pervasive throughout most sectors and typically limited flexibility, stifled innovation, and reduced the ability to respond rapidly to issues. Marketplace changes over the past decade have compelled senior executives to demand more from their people, compelling their people to adapt swiftly to the onslaught of change through extensive transformational change. PM's have been charged with unraveling the plethora of business requirements to deliver projects successfully.

Senior executives set the strategic objectives of the organization, but they are not experts on how the business runs at the operational level. The people engaged at that level are. This disconnect is replicated at the project level, as well. After all, no one person (or team) can do it all or know it all, and PM's are no exception. A decade ago, I discovered that successful transformation projects need effective actions by all of the people involved at every level. This certainly requires greater levels of collaboration and influence than hitherto seen, not only within the delivery team implementing the change but across the organization and even externally.

PM's face the challenge of gaining contributions and buy-in from people who don't report directly to them. Therefore, project success often depends on one's ability to influence and persuade people at every level. This, in turn, requires leadership. Project leadership relates to people, relationships, and behaviors. So, by leading from the front, steering everyone toward a common objective, and engaging them effectively en route, you'll soon see enhanced project performance.

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **COLLABORATION IS ESSENTIAL TO SUCCESSFUL TRANSFORMATION PROJECTS.**
- 2 **PROJECT SUCCESS OFTEN DEPENDS ON YOUR ABILITY TO INFLUENCE AND PERSUADE PEOPLE AT EVERY LEVEL.**
- 3 **LEAD FROM THE FRONT.**

"Project leadership relates to people, relationships, and behaviors."

PROJECT LEADERSHIP, NOT PROJECT MANAGEMENT

PETER TAYLOR

Owner / Director at The Lazy Project Manager Ltd

Peter Taylor is the author of two best-selling books on “productive laziness”: *The Lazy Winner* and *The Lazy Project Manager*. In the past four years, he has focused on writing and lecturing, chalking up more than 200 presentations around the world in more than 20 countries, and has been described as “perhaps the most entertaining and inspiring speaker in the project management world today.” Peter also acts as an independent consultant, working with some of the major organizations in the world, coaching executive sponsors, project management office leaders, and project managers.

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Leadership has been described as the art of leading others to deliberately create a result that wouldn't have happened otherwise. This is something that happens every day in project management, yet we call it just that—*project management* rather than *project leadership*.

A confusing situation, but the difference can be thought of in the following way: *Leadership* is setting a new direction or vision for a group to follow, while *management* is controlling resources in a group according to defined standards.

Using this definition, then, here is a great example of how such leadership brought about a significant change. We had a project in which, despite good plans and great people, we experienced issues resulting from the fact that neither we as the supplier organization nor the customer had addressed the issue of organizational change management (OCM) in any serious way. Yet, this was a big program of change running over a planned period of two and a half years and affecting hundreds of people.

Recognizing this gap and the risk to the overall project, the customer project manager and I agreed that we needed to do something, and that something was to lead the team in acquiring new skills while at the same time supporting the project. We did look at the use of external OCM resources, but the price tag was astonishingly high and hadn't been budgeted for, and so this idea was rejected. Instead, we embarked on researching good OCM material, inviting external experts who were willing to speak to the team in return for a good meal and some expenses and running workshops with the team to explore the OCM challenge and develop a plan for change management.

The result, although perhaps not the perfect OCM engagement, was twofold: The team learned a new skill—or at least had their awareness raised over the need to take OCM seriously—and the business change impact was relatively smooth (certainly better than had we done nothing). Had we just “managed” the situation, I'm not sure what the outcome would have been. The fact that we “led” the situation was a positive thing.

KEY LESSONS

1 BE A PROJECT LEADER, NOT A PROJECT MANAGER.

“Leadership is setting a new direction or vision for a group to follow, while management is controlling resources in a group according to defined standards.”

BUILDING TRUST ONE PROJECT AT A TIME

NAOMI CAIETTI

Project Manager /
Consultant at the State
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Naomi Caietti is founder and CEO of TheGlassBreakers and has been a consultant, a published author, and a recognized expert on personal growth and leadership development for project managers for more than 10 years. She is a global speaker and a featured subject matter expert for the ProjectManagement.com community and was recently interviewed by Samad Aidance of NeuroFrontier on Leadership for Women PM's. Naomi blogs for LiquidPlanner and is the author of a chapter in Peter Taylor's book, *The Project Manager Who Smiled*.



A current trend is to highlight increased engagement of project managers (PM's) to help drive strategic initiatives. Organizations need to be more agile, customer focused, and innovative to stay competitive in the global marketplace. A few years ago, I had the opportunity to work as a PM and systems engineer on one of the largest Medicaid data warehouse projects in the United States. The project was complex; highly visible; and had multiple stakeholders, virtual teams, and remote data centers of excellence. The U.S. Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) had an urgent need to implement and deliver a 21st century business intelligence (BI) system. Stakeholder engagement was the key to producing results and positive outcomes for this project.

What key leadership tenet did I use? Swift trust. PM's and program managers live this every day: Agility is important for developing swift trust with teams, sponsors, C-level executives, and stakeholders. Swift trust occurs when a diverse group is brought together in a temporary organization, such as a project office or virtual team created for an urgent project.

As a leader, you must earn trust quickly to influence key stakeholders. Everyone will start with little or some knowledge to gauge trust among the team. You must demonstrate that you can be trusted and trustworthy. Team members must also demonstrate their integrity and ability to be accountable, thus earning trust within the group and from the leader. Why is this skill set important? According to recent Project Management Institute research, building trust is a key trait that successful PM's and program managers share.

Results and Outcomes

The BI solution went live on March 29, 2008, and that solution for DHCS is still in production today. The project was designed to help more efficiently manage California's \$38 billion Medicaid program (known as Medi-Cal), save money for California taxpayers, and improve healthcare services for millions of California residents. It is the largest Medicaid data warehouse in the nation.

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **AGILITY IS IMPORTANT FOR DEVELOPING SWIFT TRUST WITH TEAMS, SPONSORS, C-LEVEL EXECUTIVES, AND STAKEHOLDERS.**
- 2 **YOU MUST EARN TRUST QUICKLY TO INFLUENCE KEY STAKEHOLDERS.**

"Swift trust occurs when a diverse group is brought together in a temporary organization, such as a project office or virtual team created for an urgent project."

THE KEYS TO SUCCESS: OWNERSHIP, TRANSPARENCY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

TONY TOGLIA

Director, Project Management Office at Rideout Health

Tony Toglia has been involved in healthcare technology, administration, project management, and leadership since 1987. He currently manages a project portfolio involving computerized physician order entry clinical, ancillary, and business offices at a growing regional healthcare delivery organization.



My story goes back 18 months, when my team and I kicked off an implementation for a full-blown enterprise-level healthcare system. The project involved multipoint integration and drastic changes to current business practices. There were significant risks and issues involving the design and build decisions. We also struggled to bring more ownership to the project team to facilitate the focus required for the work. We needed to tackle these challenges before they affected the critical path of the project. Therefore, I divided my approach into leveraging three related concepts: ownership, transparency, and accountability.

First, we focused on facilitating ownership. We made things easy and provided incentives. We concentrated project data into our project management information system, AtTask, for one-stop shopping. I authorized giving stakeholders direct access to AtTask, which provides one-click automated HTML email to communicate project information. It also serves as a forum for project discussion, providing context, nurturing engagement, and driving ownership.

Second, we focused on transparency. We built "late task" reports, and AtTask sent them out to the team via automated email on a weekly schedule. I included stakeholders from all areas of the organization, not just IT and not just the team members, which helped elevate stakeholder interest, bring transparency, and break down silos, subsequently driving success.



KEY LESSONS

- 1 **FACILITATE OWNERSHIP OF PROJECT ELEMENTS.**
- 2 **BUILD TRANSPARENCY INTO THE PROCESS.**
- 3 **ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY.**

"I included stakeholders from all areas of the organization, not just IT and not just the team members, which helped elevate stakeholder interest, bring transparency, and break down silos, subsequently driving success."

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Finally, we focused on accountability. We used project scorecards and dashboards to leverage the transparency into accountability. Our biggest win was creating a custom issue category called *decisions*, referring to decisions that were holding up design and build efforts.

The dashboard was grouped by senior leaders and displayed before all of them in the boardroom. That transparency drove many executive decisions forward that had been lagging to that point.

We saw a significant improvement in performance by leveraging a preexisting tool in a way that facilitated stakeholder ownership, brought transparency to the project, and displayed accountability. We brought focus and resolution to our problem areas and got back on track.

KEY LESSONS

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NAILING THE VISION: ENSURING PROJECT SUCCESS THROUGH CLARITY

MICHIKO DIBY

CEO of The SeaLight Company

Michiko Diby is probably the most no-nonsense, get-it-done project manager (PM) clients will ever come across. A process guru, Michiko is a project management professional and Design for Six Sigma certified. She can engage at all levels but has a low tolerance for obfuscation. She has led projects and programs for Fannie Mae, T. Rowe Price, and the U.S. Army, and is the author of a popular project management blog, *Kosmothink*. Michiko has been featured in the Project Management Institute's global magazine, *PM Today*, and holds a master's degree in Conflict Analysis and Resolution.

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The clarifier often gets beat up at the beginning, but the sacrifice is almost a necessity to bring project success in the end.

I don't begin a project until I fully understand it. This means that I will sit with project sponsors and not proceed until I have nailed down their vision. First, I must be able to describe the purpose of the project in two or three sentences. Second, I should be able to describe the plan for the project to anyone in a way that makes sense.

I often get beat up (figuratively speaking) on the way to getting my clarity. My favorite story was when I worked for an Army contractor at the Pentagon. I came into an enterprise application rewrite midway through and realized that the project team was dancing around the need to get clarity for fear of the reaction of a certain colonel. Unclear projects really cause stress, and on my first day, a few of my people burst into tears. Something had to be done, so over the course of the next month, I gradually developed the tools—project charter; updated, accurate project plan; risk log—and talked to the right people to get myself in front of the colonel and his team. I'll never forget that experience: Even the lieutenant colonels were nervous when the day of the meeting actually arrived.

Through the research we had done, the team realized that we needed to focus on a concept that had been lost in translation while people communicated around each other. That was the first thing on our first slide. Our colonel saw it and started to turn red. Then, he banged his fist on the table so that the whole room jumped. I must have been staring at him wide eyed when he bellowed, "Why didn't we figure this out sooner?" Then began a calm, effective conversation during which we questioned him on scope, and we left the meeting knowing that we had the clarity we needed to be successful.

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **DON'T BEGIN A PROJECT UNTIL YOU FULLY UNDERSTAND IT.**
- 2 **BE ABLE TO DESCRIBE THE PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT IN TWO OR THREE SENTENCES.**
- 3 **BE ABLE TO DESCRIBE THE PLAN FOR THE PROJECT TO ANYONE IN A WAY THAT MAKES SENSE.**

"I don't begin a project until I fully understand it. This means that I will sit with project sponsors and not proceed until I have nailed down their vision."

BUSINESS-FOCUSED LEADERSHIP

CINDA VOEGLTI

CEO of
ProjectConnections.com

Cinda Voegtli is founder and CEO of ProjectConnections.com, an online resources and support service for more than 350,000 managers and team members worldwide. She has more than 20 years of development and management experience and advises companies of all sizes on practical project processes. Her passions are achieving “just enough” project management that makes sense and gets used; building business-savvy cross-functional teams; and helping project managers bring together the skills and attitudes that make them truly great project leaders.



The news was grim. The nine-month IT project, designed to deliver a wealth of new cost data to a group of critical business users, was six months into the schedule—and still gathering requirements. Although some technical work was underway, the team was floundering in how to settle the scope and proceed. Meantime, millions of dollars in additional profit per week from better product pricing decisions the new data would enable were being lost. And finishing the technical work on time was looking like an impossible dream.

But with less than three months to go, this project recovered. It was actually recovered on one specific day, when the sponsor, project manager (PM), and team gathered with two key business users and laid out the state of the project. The PM and sponsor called the meeting, because they had realized that the team meant well—they were trying to make sure they identified all the customer requirements so that they could deliver a full tool for the pricing analysts. But therein lay the problem: They were gathering all the requirements as abstract, equally weighted items to satisfy rather than focusing on the driving business goals and what mattered most for achieving them.

That day, the group explored what mattered most to the analysts' ability to make better pricing decisions and reap the maximum amount of extra profit. By the afternoon, the group had identified the five most important metrics the pricing analysts needed from the sales and customer support data. The technical team had started reworking the remaining schedule to deliver just those five metrics. In the end, the project was delivered within two weeks of its original deadline.

This project was not saved by heroics or more resources or tighter schedule management. What turned the project around was business-focused leadership by the sponsor and PM as well as business-focused collaboration by the team to define and pursue what mattered most.

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **THE SPONSOR, PM, AND TEAM SHOULD GATHER WITH TWO KEY BUSINESS USERS TO LAY OUT THE STATE OF THE PROJECT.**
- 2 **DETERMINE WHAT MATTERS MOST TO THE PROJECT AND ITS USERS.**
- 3 **BUSINESS-FOCUSED LEADERSHIP BY THE SPONSOR AND PM CAN SAVE A PROJECT.**

“What turned the project around was business-focused leadership by the sponsor and PM as well as business-focused collaboration by the team to define and pursue what mattered most.”

WILD DOGS AND PM'S: TEAM BUILDING FOR SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS

CHRIS FIELD

Global PMO Manager at
Piksel Inc.

Chris Field joined Piksel Inc. in March 2014 to establish its Global Project Management Office (PMO). He is passionate about project management and is an active member of the UK Board of the Project Management Institute, having served as president from 2009 to 2011. Chris founded and is responsible for organizing Synergy, one of the largest project management conferences in the United Kingdom. He is also a Fellow of the British Computer Society and Member of the Association for Project Management.



We've all heard phrases like "common sense ain't that common," "the sum of the parts," and "it's people that deliver projects," and few would disagree with the sentiment behind them. Yet, it never ceases to amaze me how few people take these wise words to heart when managing projects, no matter how large or small.

I've been fortunate enough to be involved with some really successful projects as well as some remarkable failures, and the common denominator among those considered successful is typically the people involved. My "not so secret" secret reflects this.

The role of the project manager (PM) is first and foremost to create an environment in which the PM's team can be successful—nothing more, nothing less. Take, for example, team building. Everyone recognizes the importance of an effective team, yet how many of us make provision for this in our plans and take the time to understand and play to the key strengths of the team?

I was involved with a truly remarkable project in which the upfront investment in team building paid dividends. The "Wild Dogs" (a name that the team chose for themselves to reflect their determination to work effectively as a team) were able to deliver truly remarkable results in the most challenging of circumstances. Although the team's success can be attributed to several factors, including collocation, a willingness to invest in the team's development, and a real sense of passion, it was without a doubt the unconditional support for fellow team members that allowed magic to happen—a lesson we can all learn from the team's namesakes in the wilds of Africa.

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **THE TEAM IS THE KEY TO PROJECT SUCCESS.**
- 2 **THE PM'S PRINCIPLE ROLE IS TO CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH THE TEAM CAN SUCCEED.**

"The role of the PM is first and foremost to create an environment in which the PM's team can be successful—nothing more, nothing less."

PREPARATION, VISIBILITY, EMPOWERMENT

FRANK GRIPPO

Director of Web Services
at LexisNexis

Frank Grippo graduated from Purdue University with a degree in Computer Science. Starting his career as a database and web developer for Dialogic and Healthstreet, he has since been at LexisNexis for 13 years and is currently the director of Web Services. In LexisNexis' Web Visibility group, Frank is creating websites to help law firms market their businesses. He is responsible for project managers, developers, quality assurance, and support staffs.



We were hosting more than 2,000 websites on an antiquated platform when the decision was made to migrate them to a new environment. The websites had been built over several years using different standards. We did not have the staff for such a challenging task, so we hired a new team, including an offshore group. The leads were skilled but did not have large-scale project experience. The traditional approach to project management was not going to succeed. So, how did we accomplish this in nine months? Preparation, visibility, empowerment.

What was the process? We wrote a program that created each new website and entered it into our tracking software. A project coordinator was assigned to evaluate the new website, and updates to copy and design were implemented as needed. The quality assurance (QA) team then received the website for testing. Any issues found were logged and assigned to a development team. With the onsite and offshore teams working together, most websites were tested and fixed in a day. When teams came across situations they didn't know how to handle, the issues were logged and assigned to management. We had weekly training sessions with the teams, teaching them how to handle issues on their own. After a few months, the teams were functioning without upper management.

To accomplish this much work in such a short time takes preparation. We had supporting software, workflows, reports, and queues in place before we hired any staff. A large-scale initiative also requires visibility. Our reports tracked progress in real time and sent us alerts if a project were stalled. Most importantly, a busy team needs to be empowered. Instead of micromanaging routine issues, we gave our people the skills to make decisions.

So, how do you migrate 2,000 websites in nine months? Preparation, visibility, empowerment.

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **PREPARE FOR YOUR PROJECT IN ADVANCE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.**
- 2 **TRACK PROGRESS IN REAL TIME TO ENSURE VISIBILITY.**
- 3 **GIVE PEOPLE THE SKILLS THEY NEED TO MAKE DECISIONS.**

"A busy team needs to be empowered. Instead of micromanaging routine issues, we gave our people the skills to make decisions."

COMMUNICATING WITH EMPATHY

BOB HARTMAN

Certified Scrum Trainer and Coach at Agile For All, LLC

Bob Hartman, known as *Agile Bob*, has been involved in the software industry for more than 30 years. He uses his experience to help organizations, teams, and individuals all around the world. Bob is a popular conference speaker, a certified scrum trainer and certified scrum coach, and is assistant chairman of the Scrum Alliance Board of Directors.



Let me start by admitting that I am not currently a project manager; rather, I'm writing from the perspective of an Agile coach and trainer. This essay reflects what I have seen while working with clients over the past year.

The one "remarkable leadership secret" I have seen project managers and Scrum Masters alike employ is the ability to communicate with senior executives effectively. This sounds simple, but communicating with an executive requires special skills that aren't normally taught. It is not a type of communication that happens naturally. It certainly requires impeccable logic, confidence, and an ability to speak clearly, but it also requires more than the obvious: It requires empathy and an understanding of the issues executives face. This rarely considered idea is often the difference between the success and failure of a conversation or idea.

The formula for communicating with empathy begins by framing the context at the start of the conversation ("In our organization . . ." or "On this project . . .") and asking executives for their opinion ("What do you see as our biggest challenges?" or "What things do you see as risks?"). Having a conversation about what worries the executive shows your empathy and respect for his or her position. Trying to solve your problems without regard for the executive's problems will generally not produce positive results.

This leadership secret can move executives who were violently opposed to an idea to support it after they understand how it would fix their problem, too. If you have empathy for your executives and the things they are concerned about, your ability to tie their problems to yours will allow you to come up with solutions that solve both. Transform your conversations today using this leadership technique.

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **LEARN TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY WITH EXECUTIVES.**
- 2 **FRAME THE CONTEXT AT THE START OF THE CONVERSATION AND ASK EXECUTIVES FOR THEIR OPINION.**
- 3 **TIE YOUR PROBLEM TO THE EXECUTIVE'S PROBLEM.**

"If you have empathy for your executives and the things they are concerned about, your ability to tie their problems to yours will allow you to come up with solutions that solve both."

GOING FROM BOSS TO TEAMMATE

CESAR ABEID

Project Manager at Remontech, Inc.

Cesar Abeid is a certified project management professional and has a B.E.Sc. in Electrical Engineering from the University of Western Ontario. Cesar joined Remontech in 2004, and since then has successfully implemented and managed projects throughout Canada, the United States, Brazil, and Peru. He has a passion for bringing project management ideas to all. Cesar is also the host of the weekly *Project Management for the Masses* podcast and the *Construction Industry* podcast.

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I once had to manage a team of electricians on a job site in the Peruvian desert. I had never met those guys before, and they only spoke Spanish (my Spanish is passable at best). In addition, we had a tight deadline, leaving us only three days to complete all the work. In those three days, I learned a lot about leadership, and the secrets I uncovered stay with me to this day.

During our first meeting, I had to explain what needed to be done—the requirements—and why we only had three days to accomplish it all. At first, I started talking to them in English with the help of a translator. Because I understand Spanish way better than I speak it, I quickly realized that my translator was not conveying exactly what I needed to express. So, I decided to switch to my frail Spanish.

As soon as I did, I noticed that the attitude of the team completely changed. In their eyes, I went from being a Canadian who had arrived to tell them what to do to a visitor who was speaking their language. Almost immediately, they moved to a position of hosts and also realized that, though I was an engineer project manager, there was something essential to this project (the Spanish language) that they knew way better than I.

I went from boss, to someone who was in a position to learn from them. Next, I explained how absolutely important their work was going to be to make this project successful. We went over the requirements and started working.



KEY LESSONS

- 1 **TRY TO SPEAK YOUR TEAM'S LANGUAGE, EVEN IF YOU DON'T KNOW IT WELL.**
- 2 **DEMONSTRATE THAT YOU NEED PEOPLE.**
- 3 **SHOW THAT YOU'RE READY TO PITCH IN AND GET DIRTY.**

“Demonstrate that you need people. Doing so empowers your team, humanizes you as a manager, and helps all stakeholders own the project and its success.”

GOING FROM BOSS TO TEAMMATE

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Because our deadline was quickly approaching, I made another decision that turned out to be important: I decided to join them in their work. I suited up in personal protective equipment and accompanied them into the field, got dirty, and did some of the work myself. The tasks were all completed within our timeframe, and I made friends I am still in touch with to this day.

So, what were the leadership lessons here?

The answer is surprisingly simple. To lead, you need to try to speak your team's language, even if you don't know it well enough. Demonstrate that you need people. Doing so empowers your team, humanizes you as a manager, and helps all stakeholders own the project and its success.

Finally, show that you are ready to do the work yourself, if needed. Show that you are not afraid to roll up your sleeves and get dirty. This will earn you respect and help you position yourself to compel all to do what needs to be done.

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **TRY TO SPEAK YOUR TEAM'S LANGUAGE, EVEN IF YOU DON'T KNOW IT WELL.**
- 2 **DEMONSTRATE THAT YOU NEED PEOPLE.**
- 3 **SHOW THAT YOU'RE READY TO PITCH IN AND GET DIRTY.**

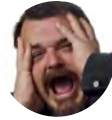
“Demonstrate that you need people. Doing so empowers your team, humanizes you as a manager, and helps all stakeholders own the project and its success.”

THE DEAL IS IN THE DETAILS

GEOFF CRANE

Doctoral Student,
Professor and Coach at
The Papercut Project
Manager

Geoff Crane is a former senior project portfolio manager who has ties to some of the world's largest banks and professional services firms. A staunch believer in the value of soft skills over hard skills, he has returned to university to pursue a doctorate in clinical psychology. Unable to stay away from the action, though, Geoff continues to help aspiring executives organize their project work and is an adjunct professor of Project Management at Durham College in Ontario, Canada.



Several years ago, I moved into a senior program management role at an Asian bank, managing a struggling steady-state enterprise resource planning (ERP) installation. Luckily, I was friends with the managing director of operations, who was able to give me the heads up: "We've had other senior people in your position who focused on technical competency and business acumen. The business tore them to shreds. Find another approach."

Somewhat unnerved, I cautiously stepped into the role. There were all kinds of functional problems on the ground. From my perspective, though, the single biggest problem was a silo-based work culture. Everyone around me was smart and talented, but those things clearly weren't enough. To be able to make this ERP system work, the organization as a whole needed to work as a single team. That's tough in a large, traditionally minded bank, and even tougher when countless fingers are already pointing with hostile intent in every direction!

I started by cleaning up my own house. Using techniques I'd learned from my father (a schoolteacher), I set weekly customer-focused challenges for my people that they had to solve in groups. For example, the risk management department was regularly missing its morning risk reports. So: "Find a solution that (1) lets us notify them in person if the report will be late (before they go looking for it) and (2) solve the late report problem." This had two effects: (1) We were finally able to get out in front of my customers' issues across the enterprise and stop the grumbling; and (2) my front-line customers went to their management (on their own) to let them know they were seeing some interesting changes in my unit.

At this point, I had an opening to invite representatives from all of my customer groups to the table to begin working on short-term capacity plans. The result? High praise from my most demanding customer: "Geoff did in six months what three VPs before him could not. He got those people to work together."

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **AVOID A SILO-BASED WORK CULTURE.**
- 2 **BEFORE IMPLEMENTING ANY OTHER CHANGES, CLEAN UP YOUR OWN HOUSE.**
- 3 **SET WEEKLY CUSTOMER-FOCUSED CHALLENGES THAT YOUR PEOPLE HAVE TO SOLVE IN GROUPS.**

"We've had other senior people in your position who focused on technical competency and business acumen. The business tore them to shreds. Find another approach."

VIRTUAL LEADERSHIP

GREGG D. RICHIE

Instructor at Project Management Academy

Gregg D. Richie, PMP, CNP, MCTS, is a full-time instructor for Project Management Academy. He also teaches for the University of Washington in the Project Management Certificate Program, has written two books on Microsoft Project, and is a 20 year veteran of the U.S. Navy SEABEES. His copyrighted signature saying is, "Goals are like underwear: You have to change them once in a while to feel better about yourself."



The most successful project managers (PM's) possess leadership abilities and employ them. As a military PM, it was a skill I learned from watching the good leaders, and it was taught to us from the beginning of our military journey. We were often required to brief much higher-ranking officers about our projects.

Once, I managed the delivery, installation, data collection, and analysis of a project to test solar photovoltaic panels as a back-up power source at remote construction sites around the western Pacific. This region included 14 sites, stretching north and south from McMurdo Sound, Antarctica, to Adak, Alaska, as well as east and west from California to Japan and Subic Bay, Philippines. The U.S. Department of Energy provided the solar systems, but the U.S. Navy SEABEES installed, tested, and collected the data. Because this was a high-level government project, it was high-visibility, watched by all levels of the chain of command.

The biggest challenge? Not only had no one on the project ever worked together before, but we couldn't see each other. We conducted all communications over ham radio gear. Today, we call this a *virtual team*, but in the early 1980s, that term did not exist. So, how do you get a team of people who had never met face to face, to get to know each other and work together? How do you conduct team-building activities? Two words: *virtual leadership*.

I asked each team member to have a head-and-shoulders picture taken, then send that picture to the 13 other sites. I implemented the policy that when they were speaking to another member of the team, they bring their picture up so that the speakers could see each other's face. I also conducted sessions in which we asked questions and discussed the issues and challenges we faced. Finally, I had an "open-door policy," where any person from the team could come to me with any issue, and we would openly and freely discuss it. The outcome was that when we all came together at a base near Los Angeles, California, the team met as if they had been working side by side the entire time. They discussed family, hobbies, and common interests, because they already knew so much about each other.



KEY LESSONS

- 1 **WHEN TEAM MEMBERS WORK VIRTUALLY, HAVING A PICTURE OF EACH TEAM MEMBER FOSTERS BETTER COMMUNICATION.**
- 2 **MAINTAIN AN OPEN-DOOR POLICY TO ENCOURAGE COMMUNICATION.**

"The most successful project managers possess leadership abilities and employ them."

HOW “WIFM” RESCUED A FAILING PROJECT

JEFF FURMAN

Project Management
Instructor / PM Book
Author at NYU

Jeff Furman, PMP, is a highly experienced IT project manager and project management instructor. He managed software projects for Fortune 100 firms in the New York City area for more than 15 years and currently teaches project management for New York University and for the U.S. Army at Fort Hood and other bases around the United States. The second edition of his book, *The Project Management Answer Book* (Management Concepts Press), will be out in August 2014.

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For many years, I worked in a fast-paced brokerage firm in Manhattan that had more than 1,000 developers working on concurrent projects. Sometimes, they had to move in code changes on the fly midday, while stocks were trading. And sometimes, these changes had bugs that had to be eliminated immediately to prevent trading with the wrong calculations. Sound chaotic?

To bring order to this “cowboy” environment, our chief information officer (CIO) issued an edict that the developers must start using a new change management system for all future software changes. This CIO was highly respected and enjoyed all the forms of power one might find on the Project Management Professional test: “formal,” “punishment,” “referent,” but the developers put up strong resistance, and the cut-over failed for more than a year.

I was put in charge of converting the developers to the system, and I created a hands-on class that I made all about the WIFM factor (What’s in It for Me?). I showed the developers that they would benefit greatly from the system, especially because of its “auto-back-out” option. This feature meant that the next time a developer would get a 3:00 a.m. call to back-out one of his or her changes, that developer would no longer need to scramble around looking for the old version of the code. If he or she had entered the change through our system, it could be backed out automatically. All the person had to do was have management key in “B” for *back-out*. The developers found this to be an appealing argument, because it would save them hours of major stress on every back-out.

The benefit?

The result was the IT department went from almost 0% to 100% compliance, bringing a huge drop in the number of defects in our production-trading environment.

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **SHOW PEOPLE HOW THEY CAN BENEFIT FROM YOUR PROJECT.**
- 2 **PEOPLE ARE MORE LIKELY TO COMPLY WITH CHANGE WHEN THEY UNDERSTAND THE BENEFIT TO THEM PERSONALLY.**

“I was put in charge of converting the developers to the system, and I created a hands-on class that I made all about the WIFM factor (What’s in It for Me?).”

WINNING STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT

JO ANN SWEENEY

Founder of Sweeney Communications Ltd

Jo Ann Sweeney is a communications consultant known for her results-focused approach, rapport and consensus building, and clarifying complex information. An FCIM and FIIC, she specializes in working with complex project teams that have focused on the technology solution rather than its delivery. Jo Ann helps them get key people committed so that the project delivers the expected business goals and wins recognition for a great job. In addition, she runs communications training for project teams and mentors leaders who have communication responsibilities.



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View more at: [Communicating Projects System](#)



Communicating projects is more than information flows among team members: It's winning the trust and support of key stakeholders outside the team.

For any project to succeed, we need to take our stakeholders on a journey. This journey starts where those stakeholders are in terms of how much they know and how they feel about our project. It ends when they are where we want them to be.

Before people act in the way we want, they have to feel positive about what we are asking them to do. Before they feel positive, they need to know the essentials that will change their attitudes from negative or neutral. Thus, communications becomes an escalator that we take our stakeholders up. First, we make them aware of our project; then, we build their understanding. Next, we win their support, then involvement. Finally, we ask them to commit to our project.

Just focusing on information flows gives people an intellectual concept of our project. They're familiar but have no emotional investment to support us and ensure that our project succeeds. That's assuming they pay attention to the information we circulate.

A few years ago, I supported four projects, together transforming a multitude of in-country systems and processes to a single European-wide system. One project manager (PM) got the concept of stakeholder journey, and together we developed a simple communications plan with stakeholder route maps at its heart. The others didn't. One said, "No need for communications; we'll just tell them and they'll do it." Another PM pulled out a door-stop document and said, "I already have a comms plan." It was just for show. The fourth project team had great fun creating entertaining videos and posters but no plan.

Only the first project won wide stakeholder support and delivered new systems that people willingly used from day one.

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **ENSURE THAT STAKEHOLDERS BUY IN TO YOUR PROJECT.**
- 2 **WIN STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT, THEN THEIR INVOLVEMENT.**
- 3 **ASK STAKEHOLDERS TO COMMIT TO THE PROJECT.**

"Communicating projects is more than information flows among team members: It's winning the trust and support of key stakeholders outside the team."

LIGHTENING THE WEIGHT OF THE WORLD THROUGH TRUST

MARGARET MELONI

President of Meloni Coaching Solutions, Inc.

Margaret Meloni, MBA, PMP, is president of Meloni Coaching Solutions, Inc., a company devoted to helping clients successfully navigate the human side of the project world. Her background in IT project management and project management office leadership enables Margaret to understand the challenges clients face when managing projects. A recipient of the University of California, Los Angeles, Extension Distinguished Instructors Award, her wish is to see her students take on tough projects and emerge strong and sought-after project managers.



//There is something wrong; the conversion does not balance. We might have to call it off." These were the words my team member blurted out as I approached. Unfortunately, not far behind me was my boss, the chief information officer. My boss was trailing me from desk to desk, because this was a large conversion involving most of our major applications. If one failed, they all failed. We had been rehearsing this for months.

I calmly asked my team member to tell me what had happened. He showed me the conversion report and the out-of-balance totals. On his face, I saw fatigue; at that moment, I could see that he thought the weight of the entire project was on his shoulders. I knew that he was smart and committed. He did not need me or my boss to jump in and start reviewing reports and issuing orders. He needed time to step back, take another look, tell me the nature of the situation, and offer a potential solution.

I looked at him and said, "Okay, go take a quick break. Walk away from your computer and your desk. After your break, come back and revisit the report. I will check back with you in one hour." Then, I walked away.

My boss trailed me; in not-so-hushed tones, he barked, "Take a break? That's how you solve a problem that could bring us to our knees? Take a break?" I looked at him and said, "Just trust us and give us an hour." In less than an hour, my team member called me over to advise me that everything was in fact fine and that in his nervousness and fatigue, he had transposed two numbers.

In this scenario, trust made all the difference. My boss grudgingly trusted me. I had to trust myself and stand firm in my approach, I had to trust that my team member could resolve the problem, and my team member had to trust in the fact that I believed in him.

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **DURING PROJECTS, TRUST MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE.**
- 2 **TRUST YOURSELF, AND STAND FIRM IN YOUR APPROACH.**

"On his face, I saw fatigue; at that moment, I could see that he thought the weight of the entire project was on his shoulders."

MOVING PROJECTS BEYOND “ANALYSIS PARALYSIS”

PAM STANTON

Author, Speaker, and Consultant at The Project Whisperer

Born and raised in New Jersey and a graduate of Yale University, Pam Stanton is an author, speaker, coach, and consultant who has 25 years of experience in transformational leadership. She specializes in the impact of group dynamics on project outcomes—or, as she puts it, “The Human Part of the Gantt Chart.” Her book, *The Project Whisperer*, chronicles two decades of insight into the human element of successful projects.

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My boss called me into her office to assign the latest mandate from corporate IT. The scope, she said, was for our business unit to deliver a major upgrade of Windows to our 10,000 end users, who were spread across several countries and dozens of sites. The deadline was 12 months.

Now, let's talk about scope. The project had many unknowns. Before we could deploy the upgrade, we would need to test all of our business applications for compatibility. Because there was no authoritative inventory of applications, we would need to gather that first.

There was some buzz about a new tool that would deploy the upgrade “automagically” over the network, but it was still in development at Microsoft. This meant that we might have to configure each of those 10,000 computers manually, one at a time.

Budget, you ask? No one knew, yet, what would be funded by corporate IT versus the local business units. Still, we would need to prepare a funding proposal and get it approved in time to submit our deployment schedule to the chief information officer within 30 days. The optics and politics of this situation were massive that failure, as they say, was not an option.

I summoned an emergency workshop of representatives from our functions and sites to build a plan for application inventory, testing, remediation, and end-user deployment. I stood at the whiteboard with an eager smile, marker in hand. That's where it got ugly.



KEY LESSONS

- 1 **DEVELOP A WHAT-IF SCENARIO TO BEGIN THE PLANNING PROCESS.**
- 2 **USE THE SCENARIO TO BUILD A PROPOSAL AND DRIVE CONSENSUS.**

“Technical people make fact-based decisions and commit to plans grounded in data. What I was asking of them violated their very core.”

MOVING PROJECTS BEYOND “ANALYSIS PARALYSIS”

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The pushback was immediate and fierce. “Too many variables to build a plan!” “How can we build a plan before we know whether the deployment will be automated or manual?” “Our plan depends on what version of Windows they will use.” “Sorry, but we can’t possibly build a plan until we have all these questions answered first!”

I was stumped. I mean, couldn’t we just throw ideas onto the whiteboard and work out some reasonable guesstimates? That’s when it hit me: Plan, plan, plan. The people around the table were hung up on the word *plan*! To this room full of highly analytical people, *plan* equaled *commitment*. Technical people make fact-based decisions and commit to plans grounded in data. What I was asking of them violated their very core.

Immediately, I dropped the word *plan*. Drawing a large timeline on the whiteboard, I wrote, “What if . . . ?” When the exercise changed from building a plan to developing a what-if scenario, the floodgates opened and ideas poured out. We captured the “what-ifs” as assumptions that would need to be met for this scenario to work. Fantastic! That’s all I ever wanted in the first place.

By the end of the workshop, we had a great plan for how this project could work, assuming that we could get certain commitments on resources, technology, funding, etc. It wasn’t a huge Gantt chart but rather a simple one-pager that included graphical boxes and stars showing major activities and decision points. I called it our *Assumption-based Scenario* and used it to build a proposal that drove consensus with leadership and articulated what decisions had to be made for us to proceed.

I’ve reused this approach dozens of times since to move project teams out of analysis paralysis. It works like a charm as long as I never utter that four-letter word.



KEY LESSONS

- 1 **DEVELOP A WHAT-IF SCENARIO TO BEGIN THE PLANNING PROCESS.**
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“Technical people make fact-based decisions and commit to plans grounded in data. What I was asking of them violated their very core.”

GETTING DOWN TO GENUINE LEADERSHIP

ROBERT KELLY

Managing Partner at
Kelly Project Solutions, LLC

Prior to starting KPS, Robert Kelly successfully led enterprise projects for 15 years, with a portfolio that spans IT, marketing, procurement, and sales initiatives and project results in more than 40 countries. Robert is a sought-after expert, with speaking and print contributions to the Project Management Institutes' PMNetwork, Fast Company's 30 Second MBA, and Triangle Technical Recruiters Association. In addition, Robert is the co-founder of #PMChat, a global community of project managers sharing best practices.

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When I hear that Gartner is predicting a major shift in the leadership role that project managers (PM) will take on over the next few months, I get excited. Although I am a fan of technology and systems, I have been tremendously frustrated by the “productization” of project management. Cloud-based portfolio management, turnkey program management office models, and magic methodologies have all been lauded as the key to success. When it comes down to it, though, for this shift to become a reality, PM's must get down to raw, genuine leadership, especially when working with executives.

I had this revelation several years ago while working on two enterprise projects whose teams consisted of multiple executives. On both engagements, I felt confident about the projects. I had executive support, firm budgets, and so on. The problem was that progress was hard fought every step of the way. Decisions weren't being made, and the team was polluted with organizational politics. This is when I learned that project leadership often required being uncomfortable. When projects are running smooth, you are managing them, and the other aspects of leadership (coaching, vision casting, etc.) are enjoyable, but calling out executives in front of their peers and subordinates is not a comfortable place to be. No methodology or tool was going to help me. I needed to dot my i's and cross my t's, then have a frank conversation with each of them about expectations and issues affecting the project. Although it was not an accusatory position—rather, collaboration on working together—it was unnerving. In the end, I was able to illustrate the issues and develop solutions to get the projects moving forward. Most gratifying was the increased confidence in my leadership abilities.

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **STRIVE TO BE A LEADER, NOT JUST A MANAGER.**
- 2 **PROJECT LEADERSHIP OFTEN REQUIRES BEING UNCOMFORTABLE.**

“When it comes down to it...PM's must get down to raw, genuine leadership, especially when working with executives.”

NO MORE “WINGING IT”: DEVISING A PLAN TO SAVE A PROJECT

SUSAN DE SOUSA

Director at Interzone Services Ltd

Susan de Sousa is MyPMExpert and runs the industry-leading website of the same name. She is internationally a recognized expert in project management theory, practice, and delivery, having successfully managed some of Europe's highest-profile programs. Many of these deliveries were “firsts” and had been deemed impossible to deliver in the designated timeframes and budgets. Susan is also a frequent media contributor and sought-after conference speaker as well as a published author. She is in the process of writing a book entitled *How to Deliver Impossible Projects Successfully*.

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“The program is going really well, probably because we have an exceptional team working on it,” said the chief executive officer (CEO).

I was more than a little confused to hear this. “So, why do you need me?” I asked. “Well, I just get this feeling I could be missing something important,” said the CEO. He wasn’t wrong.

The Global Program was in fact in total disarray. There was no plan, no budget, no requirements—in fact, no documentation at all. The three “milestones” were all more than four months late, and no one had any idea what if any work had been done on them. In fact, the only concrete documentation was the contracts the business had signed with various clients promising delivery of a new infrastructure with stringent penalty clauses for non-delivery.

Sadly, this situation is not unusual in my world. As a troubleshooter, I am invariably brought in to turn around failing programs or to ensure that the impossible is delivered. In such cases, leadership skills are paramount. But leadership doesn’t mean shouting and banging heads together. Well, not initially anyway.

In these projects, having the confidence to take a step back, calmly assess the situation, and devise a plan of action demonstrates true leadership. After all, the old adage of “If you can keep you head while all others are losing theirs” still holds true, especially in such chaotic political situations.

And that is exactly what I did. The result? I was able to determine where the real problems lay and get them fixed. I also renegotiated the client contracts with zero penalties and ensured that the new delivery dates were met. Meanwhile, the CEO and board learned a valuable lesson—namely, to bring in a project management professional from the outset rather than trying to “wing it.”

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **LEADERSHIP SKILLS ARE PARAMOUNT WHEN TRYING TO SAVE A FAILING PROJECT.**
- 2 **HAVE THE CONFIDENCE TO STEP BACK, ASSESS THE SITUATION, AND DEVISE A PLAN.**

“Meanwhile, the CEO and board learned a valuable lesson—namely, to bring in a project management professional from the outset rather than trying to “wing it.”

TRUST AND RESPECT: THE KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS

TODD C. WILLIAMS

President of
eCameron, Inc.

Todd C. Williams is an expert witness, executive consultant, published author, blogger for four sites, and president of eCameron Inc. He has spent the past 25 years rescuing failed projects and teaching companies how to turn their vision into profit by creating initiative-ready organizations. In his book, *Rescue the Problem Project, A Complete Guide to Identifying, Preventing, and Recovering from Project Failure*, he defines a people approach to rescuing and preventing project failure.

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Trust and recognition. These two actions transform a rag-tag group of individuals into a team. Trust and recognition implicitly build pride, boost morale, and increase performance. Evaluating your project team by their capabilities, not their titles or tenure, breaks down the artificial walls established in organizations and creates energy that cannot be surpassed.

About six years ago, when called into a client to rescue a project that was months behind schedule and projected to exceed its budget by more than 100%, I was challenged with a senior accounting manager who was the lead for one of the three tracks on the project—a track responsible for integrating online payment functionality from a financial institution. He was arrogant, cocky, and not a team player. One member of his team was a junior analyst new to the organization. During the project assessment interviews, the junior analyst—let's call her Michelle—showed an amazing ability to organize information and understand the complexities of third-party integration, and she had a calming demeanor that is so critical in the high-stress environment of a project turnaround. After three weeks of working with the senior manager to no avail, I turned to Michelle and asked her to be the lead of that track. Her immediate response was that she was unqualified. After 20 minutes of her justifying her position and me explaining why she was fully capable, I simply told her, "Michelle, I have more confidence in your capabilities than you do. I will check in on you daily to answer any questions, but you do not need to change anything you are doing. You have the skills." This concluded our meeting, and she apprehensively left my cubicle.

I did as I promised, checking in with her daily. After a week or so she agreed this was unnecessary, and she came to me when she needed help. Needless to say, she succeeded. The benefits, however, went far beyond her.



KEY LESSONS

- 1 **TRUST AND RECOGNITION TRANSFORM A GROUP OF INDIVIDUALS INTO A TEAM.**
- 2 **CHOOSE THE PROPER PERSON FOR THE JOB RATHER THAN THE ONE WHO HAS SENIORITY.**
- 3 **TRUSTING THE RIGHT PEOPLE GAINS YOU THE RESPECT OF YOUR EXTENDED TEAM.**

“Evaluating your project team by their capabilities, not their titles or tenure, breaks down the artificial walls established in organizations and creates energy that cannot be surpassed.”

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Most people on a team know who is capable. It was no exception with this crew. The other members watched Michelle with excitement, because they knew she would excel. Executives saw a new face in meetings and heard how she was reining in the problems on the payment-processing track. The result was contagious enthusiasm spreading within and beyond the team. The proper person was doing the job rather than the one who had seniority.

Furthermore, it was transformational for the accounting manager, who became more humble; contributed to the team; and, after four weeks of having Michelle working as the lead, apologized for his arrogance and complemented the decision to place Michelle at the helm. She had a better demeanor for working with the service provider, and he was happier providing the systems knowledge for the integration.

Trusting the right people, recognizing their skills, challenging them to question their abilities, and placing them in successful situations gains the respect of your extended team—your superiors, subordinates, and your customer.

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RISKING YOUR POPULARITY TO BE A STRONG LEADER

TRES ROEDER

President of Roeder Consulting

Tres Roeder, PMP, is a recognized global expert on project management and organizational change. He is the author of two Amazon best sellers, *A Sixth Sense for Project Management* and *Managing Project Stakeholders*. Tres has been quoted by *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *MSN Money*, and others. He holds a B.A. in Economics from the University of Illinois and an MBA from the Kellogg Graduate School of Management at Northwestern University.



I was told the chief executive officer (CEO) would be difficult to get along with. He was “old school.” He pushed too hard, had unreasonable expectations, and was relentless. He smoked and he growled. All of this I was told. A picture began to form in my head, and it was not a pretty one. My project had to get through this CEO. He had his hands on everything. Despite being at the top of a successful organization with more than \$1 billion in revenue, he still approved expense reports, training room layouts, and other details. Without his explicit support, our project would die. As I prepared for the meeting, I realized I had not packed my business cards. He always asked for business cards, and it could make or break a meeting, I had been informed earlier in the day. I quickly called my office and had a few cards overnighted to the hotel.

The next day, I walked into the CEO's office. I was wearing my best suit and holding a fresh business card. We sat down, and I braced myself. What followed surprised me. The CEO was cordial, asked questions, and was introspective. He explained his challenges and his desire to be more “hands off.” He wanted the team to do more and wanted our project, which was to improve organizational project management maturity, to liberate him to focus more on the big picture. Could it be that this “difficult” CEO was actually just a real person with hopes and fears like the rest of us? Was it possible that he was doing what he felt was best to lead the organization to the next level? I walked out of his office, well past our scheduled finish time, with a pat on the back and his strong support. The project would live to see another day. I walked down the hallway and smiled to myself as I was reminded that strong leadership sometimes means being unpopular. Others may see it negatively as pushing and prodding, just as we don't like our personal trainers when they ask for one more push-up, but those seemingly stubborn demands from leaders encourage us to be our best.

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **RISK UNPOPULARITY TO BE A GOOD LEADER.**
- 2 **SEEMINGLY STUBBORN DEMANDS FROM LEADERS ENCOURAGE US TO BE OUR BEST.**

“Strong leadership sometimes means being unpopular.”

CONNECTING SUSTAINABILITY TO THE ENTERPRISE

RICH MALTZMAN AND DAVE SHIRLEY

Co-Founders of
EarthPM, LLC

Rich Maltzman, PMP, has been an engineer since 1978 and a project management supervisor since 1988. As a second, but intertwined career, Rich has also focused on consulting and teaching. Currently Rich is a Director, Learning and Professional Advancement, at the Global Program Management Office of a major telecom concern.

Dave Shirley, PMP, has been an instructor and consultant, with more than 30 years experience in management and project management, in the corporate, public, and small business arenas.

EarthPM, LLC is the collaboration of Rich Maltzman, PMP and Dave Shirley, PMP.



With the increasing emphasis on sustainability in the “C-Suite,” it becomes more and more necessary to be able to connect that emphasis to the fundamental workings of the enterprise. The question becomes, where is the best place to make that connection?

Projects are the lifeblood of any enterprise. Projects are “where the rubber meets the road,” where ideas are made real. The project charter therefore should be where the connection between the C-Suite and the fundamental workings of the enterprise is made apparent and strong. But who is responsible for insuring that the project charter includes an accurate portrayal of the message being communicated from the C-Suite and what is that message?

Answering the second question is much easier than answering the first. The answer to the second question is that the “message” is part of the enterprise’s mission/vision statement. As a PM, would you want to undertake a project that was not specifically aligned with one of your organization’s stated missions, say for example, sustainability? Maybe. But your answer may also be: “Sorry, I don’t really think about that. I’m too busy managing my project.”

That answer is perfectly legitimate if the sustainability message has not been brought—with emphasis—to the project managers. So where does the project manager get his or her marching orders? Sometimes it comes from a project sponsor. Other times it may come from program management.



KEY LESSONS

- 1 **WITH AN INCREASING EMPHASIS ON SUSTAINABILITY, IT IS NECESSARY TO BE ABLE TO CONNECT THAT EMPHASIS TO THE FUNDAMENTAL WORKINGS OF THE ENTERPRISE.**
- 2 **THE PROJECT CHARTER IS WHERE THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE C-SUITE AND THE WORKINGS OF THE ENTERPRISE IS MADE APPARENT AND STRONG.**
- 3 **THE MESSAGE COMING FROM “ABOVE” SHOULD BE CONSISTENT AND DIRECTLY CONNECTED FROM THE ENTERPRISE MISSION/VISION TO THE PROJECT CHARTER.**

“It takes true project leadership (i.e. more than project management) to communicate a consistent message to the project charters so that all of them reflect the enterprise’s mission, vision, and values.”

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Where does the project sponsor or program manager get their marching orders? Hopefully, there is portfolio management. That could be either a formal function in larger organizations that may have a portfolio management organization, to a smaller company where one person makes the decision about which projects to pursue. Whatever the structure, the message coming from “above” should be consistent and directly connected from the enterprise mission/vision to the project charter.

It takes true project leadership (i.e. more than project management) to communicate a consistent message to the project charters so that all of them reflect the enterprise’s mission, vision, and values. And this leadership will pay off in the short, medium, and long term.

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COMMITTING TO AN AGILE TRANSFORMATION

STEPHANIE STEWART

Director of Agile Leadership at Cox Target Media

Stephanie Stewart is director of Agile Leadership at Valpak, a Cox Target Media company. Stephanie is a career project leader who has more than 16 years in the field, including past positions with AT&T Business and IBM Global Services, and has maintained the project management professional certification since early in her career. More recently, she earned the PMI-Agile Certified Practitioner credential. Her academic credentials include a B.S. in Marketing from the University of South Florida and an MBA in International Business from the University of Bristol in England.

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It's no secret that Agile is the most remarkable of all leadership secrets. Yes, that's right: *Agile!* I learned this first hand in 2011, when I led the Agile transformation of Valpak based on nothing more than a gut feeling that there must be a better way. I quickly went from the rules of the Project Management Body of Knowledge and the flaws of Waterfall to the values and principles of The Agile Manifesto and the magic of self-organizing teams. It was probably the most enlightening moment of my career, and over the next couple of years, I had the pleasure of inspiring that same truth across the entire organization.

As a result of our Agile transformation, we are not only achieving greater results and delivering more value more quickly than ever before, but we are also enjoying our work, our teams, and our company more than ever before. Other outcomes of our Agile transformation include:

- Our Agile transformation case study contributing to a book by Charles G. Cobb, entitled *Managed Agile Development: Making Agile Work for Your Business*; and
- Becoming the community poster child for all things Agile. We organize The Tampa Bay Agile Meetup group and have grown membership by almost 300% this past year. In addition, we regularly give Agile tours of our process to companies looking to go Agile and offer advice and mentorship upon request.

Unlike a project, our Agile journey will never be complete, but we continue to make progress each and every day. Our progress is evident in the ways in which we are truly *being* Agile, not just *doing* Agile. In such a short time, my company went from being behind the times to being a role model for Agile transformation. I couldn't be more proud of how far we have come.

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **UNLIKE A PROJECT, UNDERTAKING AN AGILE TRANSFORMATION WILL NEVER BE COMPLETE.**
- 2 **TO MAKE PROGRESS, ORGANIZATIONS MUST BE AGILE, NOT JUST DO AGILE.**

"I quickly went from the rules of the Project Management Body of Knowledge and the flaws of Waterfall to the values and principles of The Agile Manifesto and the magic of self-organizing teams."

ENCOURAGE AUTONOMY, COLLABORATION, EXPLORATION

JOHANNA ROTHMAN

President of Rothman Consulting Group, Inc.

Johanna Rothman, known as the *Pragmatic Manager*, provides frank advice to clients' tough problems. She helps organizational leaders recognize potential risks, seize opportunities, and remove impediments. Johanna is the author of several books and more than 200 articles. She writes two blogs on her website, jrothman.com, as well as a blog on createadaptablelife.com.



My leadership secret? Tell people the results you want to achieve. Remove their impediments. Create an environment that helps the team see where they are and provides feedback. Keep other people out of their hair. Make sure they don't multitask. Encourage the team to collaborate and explore together. They will make magic. Of course, this is not easy. You can tell people the results you want to achieve by creating a project charter together. Doing so helps a team jell.

Sometimes, the biggest impediment I've removed was to get a senior developer a new desk, so his back didn't hurt. Sometimes, I had to take on the facilities department and tell them that, "Yes, we need to remove those cube walls. I know you think it's strange, but the people have agreed to it. You have the e mails. The testers and developers want to work together."

Sometimes, the challenges are at the senior management level. "You can have everyone busy, or you can have projects out the door. If you have everyone busy, you won't make this quarter's revenue. If you have projects out the door, you will. You do not want 'busyness,' you want throughput. That will allow us to ship and to recognize revenue." That one was a tough sell.

In contrast, when a team works together, collaborating and exploring to complete the product with me facilitating them, as needed, we are all in flow. We maintain a visual board of work in progress and what's complete, so that everyone can see status.

Project management is not project control. We don't need hierarchy. We need to know the results we're supposed to deliver. We need the autonomy to deliver those results so that we can collaborate and explore together. It sounds simple, but it's magic when it happens.



KEY LESSONS

- 1 **TELL PEOPLE THE RESULTS YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE, AND REMOVE IMPEDIMENTS.**
- 2 **CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT HELPS THE TEAM SEE WHERE THEY ARE AND PROVIDES FEEDBACK.**
- 3 **ENCOURAGE THE TEAM TO COLLABORATE AND EXPLORE TOGETHER.**

"Project management is not project control. We don't need hierarchy. We need to know the results we're supposed to deliver."

RESCUING FAILING PROJECTS

MICHEL DION

Project Manager at
Project-Aria

Michel Dion is a certified public accountant and project management professional in Canada. He also holds the internal auditor and risk management assurance certifications. Michel has managed various projects in the past decade, including audits, financial analysis, application development, data analysis, business transitions, and special initiatives. He is also the author and developer of the blog *Project-Aria*, a website featuring thoughts on project management, leadership, and productivity.



When you read about project management methodology, you will see the ideal scenario: A project is initiated, planned, executed, and closed. A successful project will be well defined, well planned, have the proper resources, and be successfully managed. At the end of a project, lessons learned can be used to improve the approach for future, similar projects and create better project managers (PM's).

However, life as a PM is not always as simple. Sometimes, project gets into trouble. It can then be abandoned or rescued. Rescuing a project is also different from managing issues. There will always be issues on a project, but a project that needs to be rescued has reached the point of "there is no hope."

Rescue project management is a specialty of its own in project management, just like the emergency room is a specialty for medical doctors. Rescuing projects requires a unique mindset from the PM and the project team. It is different from the usual project management. If you have to work on a project that needs to be rescued, here are some key considerations to remember.

Identify Key Success Factors

It is essential to identify the key success factors of the project and manage them closely. It will help to gain some key successes and ensure that they don't become points of failure.

Review Project Plans

It is also important to review the project plans and challenge the assumptions in it. A project plan will have dependencies that are based on best practices or just past experience. Often, the dependencies were just added to make the Gantt chart look good.



KEY LESSONS

- 1 **IDENTIFY KEY SUCCESS FACTORS FOR THE PROJECT.**
- 2 **REVIEW PROJECT PLANS AND CHALLENGE THEIR ASSUMPTIONS.**
- 3 **BE CREATIVE, AND FOCUS ON ACTION, MAKING DECISIONS QUICKLY.**

"It is essential to identify the key success factors of the project and manage them closely."

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Be Creative

If you step back from the original plan, you can often be creative and find new ways of doing things. Here are two examples. A project team on a difficult project used some innovative data-analysis methods to complete a research task faster. Another team was able to reduce the time required for an analytical report by breaking it into smaller parts and performing the quality assurance activities on each part more quickly.

Focus on Action

Finally, you have to focus on action and make decisions quickly. The project is already in trouble, so a leader must be able to decide—not recklessly, but there is no time for indecision and confusion. As such, it is important to focus on results, and perfection.

Sometimes, the project may just need to be abandoned, but rescuing projects can often be surprising. The experience can be stressful, even discouraging, but if the project team are focused on finding solutions and achieving results, such rescues can be rewarding. It is also a powerful way of improve project management skills.

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"It is essential to identify the key success factors of the project and manage them closely."

TRUST: THE KEY TO SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP

PAUL CABLE

Consultant Project Manager at Empachal Solutions Limited

Paul Cable is a certified project management professional and risk management professional in addition to a Prince2 Practitioner. Working in the IT industry for more than 15 years in a leadership role, Paul has a wealth of experience influencing stakeholders from all levels in different industries, most recently in banking, telecommunications, oil, and retail. He has worked with a variety of clients, such as Bank of Tokyo, Daiwa Capital Markets, HSBC, Waitrose, Orange, Ricoh, and Statoil.



Trust is a key leadership skill. Without trust, you could find obstacles throughout your projects and discover that teams will not optimally perform for you within the execution phase of your project. Gaining trust from your senior stakeholders ensures that your project has the appropriate level of support from the business and provides you with a level of authorization for any political issues.

A few years ago, I accepted an assignment with a large UK supermarket chain. The project was already in flight, and the project team was already established, but the project manager had departed. When I arrived, the thoughts from the main stakeholders were that this project was doomed and would continue to fail. I needed to gain trust from the stakeholders to continue with the project and from the team to improve their morale and organize them to complete the project.

I found that two members of the development team were leading the others, so these were the people with whom I needed to establish a mutual trust. I set about by asking questions and listening to their opinions, guiding them into making decisions that I could follow through with. This gave the team a sense of empowerment, as the actions of their decisions delivered results. I made it feel as if the decision had come from the team, which provided self-belief, pride, and a sense that they mattered. This, in turn, encouraged them to deliver. In addition, it secured the trust of management, as they could start to see the project delivering the business benefits.

Without obtaining the trust of the team, we would not have been able to deliver. The updated project plan set smaller deliverables; therefore, I was quickly able to gain the trust of the project sponsor and senior stakeholders by delivering results.



KEY LESSONS

- 1 **GAIN THE TRUST OF SENIOR STAKEHOLDERS BY DELIVERING RESULTS.**
- 2 **GAIN THE TRUST OF TEAM MEMBERS GIVING THEM A STAKE IN THE PROJECT'S SUCCESS.**

“Gaining trust from your senior stakeholders ensures that your project has the appropriate level of support from the business and provides you with a level of authorization for any political issues.”

BECOMING THE LINCHPIN FOR YOUR PROJECT

BARRY HODGE

Project Manager at
Bromford

A Prince2 Practitioner with a degree in Project Management, Barry Hodge has more than 15 years of experience managing projects in many industries. He has successfully delivered projects for organizations in defense, pharmaceuticals, logistics, retail, housing, and travel. With a passion for project management, Barry publishes a daily blog on ProjectNewsToday.com and is active on all the major social media channels.



As a project manager, it is important that you are the linchpin of the project. As with any leadership role, the project manager is the first person people should turn to for clear direction and guidance.

When on a project, those who stand to benefit from the project may be tempted to bypass the project manager and go straight to the person performing the task. Doing so can have many negative impacts on the project, from delays to distracting project team members through causing confusion.

While working on a project for one of the world's largest pharmaceutical companies, I stopped such a bypass from happening. I held daily 10 minute project meetings first thing every morning with all of the project team leaders. It was a chance to have an open discussion on the work that was planned for the day and discuss any challenges carried over from the previous day. The goal was to know whether we were still on track or if something was going to knock us off course. The ultimate goal, however, was to make sure everyone knew what job they had to do. This clarity meant that if someone approached a team member about a change, he or she would send that person straight to me, because the team member knew that questions would be asked in the team meeting on the next day.

With the project beneficiaries, I held a weekly meeting either face-to-face or by phone. I could discuss progress and verify that the requirements hadn't changed. By being open, transparent, and listening to the stakeholders, I was able to find out about changes early. I could then gather the information and come back with sensible estimates on the impact of the change. With the rapport that I had built up, they trusted what I was saying. I was the project linchpin.



KEY LESSONS

- 1 **BE THE LINCHPIN OF YOUR PROJECT.**
- 2 **MAINTAIN GOOD COMMUNICATION BOTH WITHIN THE PROJECT TEAM AND WITH PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS.**
- 3 **ENCOURAGE TEAM MEMBERS TO FUNNEL ALL QUESTIONS THROUGH YOU.**

“By being the go-to person—the linchpin—of the project, the project manager can provide leadership, limit confusion, and drive the project forward.”

IMPLEMENTING SITUATIONAL ADAPTED LEADERSHIP

CARLOS J. PAMPLIEGA

Architect & Project Manager

Carlos J. Pampliega is an Architect and PMP® at Salinero Pampliega Project Management. Carlos' professional aim is to optimize the client's assets. Carlos is results-oriented and adds value to the company with each project he is involved in. The expertise he has gained as an architect has facilitated communication skills, leadership, and team development, which complement the project manager profile demanded by businesses. Carlos has demonstrated his technical knowledge and management skills in his commitment to the successful completion of all types of projects.

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We discovered a company in the construction sector with a large number of projects that did not use any methodology or have a Project Management Office. Because of this, their technicians had many problems executing projects. We suggested implementing a PMO and standardizing the PMI methodology, so that the probability of completing projects on time would increase, within budget and to customer satisfaction.

At first, the company's management was skeptical about changing their way of working and we had to develop an implementation strategy based on leadership. Like in any change in organizational culture, we focused on the people involved, starting with senior management.

The aim was to implement the PMO in a sequential and evolutionary manner, with strategic features aligned with the focus of the company.

In this sequential process we used different leadership styles and directive behavior to help people develop and become self-sufficient. This would help the PMO to manage the portfolio of projects on its own. (Situational Adapted Leadership)

Directing: As leaders of change, we guided each person in his/her particular assignment. We established reference models based on PMBoK to find inspiration, and we empowered the technical organization in the methodology.



KEY LESSONS

- 1 **DEVELOP AN IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY BASED ON LEADERSHIP.**
- 2 **USE DIRECTIVE BEHAVIOR TO HELP PEOPLE DEVELOP AND BECOME SELF-SUFFICIENT.**
- 3 **USING THE SAL METHOD (SITUATIONAL ADAPTED LEADERSHIP) MAKES IT EASIER FOR WORK TO BE ADAPTED.**

“As leaders of change, we guided each person in his/her particular assignment.”

IMPLEMENTING SITUATIONAL ADAPTED LEADERSHIP

CARLOS J. PAMPLIEGA

Architect & Project Manager

Carlos J. Pampliega is an Architect and PMP® at Salinero Pampliega Project Management. Carlos' professional aim is to optimize the client's assets. Carlos is results-oriented and adds value to the company with each project he is involved in. The expertise he has gained as an architect has facilitated communication skills, leadership, and team development, which complement the project manager profile demanded by businesses. Carlos has demonstrated his technical knowledge and management skills in his commitment to the successful completion of all types of projects.

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Coaching: We let each one do their work according to their position in the organization, allowing mistakes along the way. This made it easier for each technician to identify emotionally with the proposal.

Supporting: When the methodology was standardized within the company, managers reflected the new culture in the organization.

Delegating: Once the whole company operated according to the new methodology, processes were executed automatically, without the need of our leadership. Technicians who took responsibility for the PMO within the company matured professionally.

The directors of the company began to see the PMO as a strategic asset for the company optimizing its own resources. It became a tool for managing the portfolio of projects, choosing those that were better aligned with the company's goals.

The SAL method (Situational Adapted Leadership) made it easier for our work as leaders of the PMO to be adapted, especially with the directors of the company, who took part in the whole process.

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **DEVELOP AN IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY BASED ON LEADERSHIP.**
- 2 **USE DIRECTIVE BEHAVIOR TO HELP PEOPLE DEVELOP AND BECOME SELF-SUFFICIENT.**
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“As leaders of change, we guided each person in his/her particular assignment.”

CHANGING AN ORGANIZATION'S DNA

DEANNE EARLE

Company Director and
Project Consultant at
Unlike Before Ltd

Deanne Earle is director of Unlike Before Ltd and a project consultant specializing in project delivery. She is a founding member of The Glass Breakers global women's network; a published author; and a sought-after expert on project delivery, management, change, and leadership. Focused on the intersection of projects and business operations, Deanne challenges the DNA of a company's leadership to achieve greater business value from technology initiatives.

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The influence and effect the C-suite and senior executive or management roles have on project outcomes is evidenced in the gap between the strategy they formulate and its day-to-day implementation. This gap can only begin to close when senior executives have more “skin in the game” and project managers (PM's) do more than manage the processes in and around the project.

When it comes to strategy implementation, however, the C-suite still retains a certain level of ignorance and naïveté of projects and their delivery. The rise of the role of PM and rightly or wrongly a focus on process can limit the value from projects and put the delivery of business-relevant outcomes at risk.

I work with clients around the world delivering a variety of technology-based initiatives. Relationships, belief, and trust are critical. By taking a more business outcome-based leadership role, I'm better placed to give decision makers information from the project perspective that's relevant for the business. They in turn can then see the connections between the project and strategic direction and make decisions that ensure that the organization continues to do the right thing. Sometimes the initiative continues, sometimes it changes course, and sometimes it stops. In one instance, the project was put on hold until other activities were aligned, and some weeks later my team returned on site. Senior management involved at the client and supplier were clear about what needed to be resolved and did not incur additional costs.

In summary, senior executives make decisions about projects based on:

- Ongoing business relevance;
- Continued alignment with strategic drivers;
- Soundness of business benefit versus cost ratio; and
- Creation of overall business value.

PM's who increase their leadership deliver projects that are better aligned to strategy and help change an organization's DNA.

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **RELATIONSHIPS, BELIEF, AND TRUST ARE CRITICAL.**
- 2 **PM'S WHO INCREASE THEIR LEADERSHIP DELIVER PROJECTS THAT ARE BETTER ALIGNED TO STRATEGY.**

“By taking a more business outcome-based leadership role, I'm better placed to give decision makers information from the project perspective that's relevant for the business.”

ENSURING SUCCESS THROUGH FACE-TO-FACE COMMUNICATION

JON HYDE

Programme Manager at
Cheltenham Borough
Council

Jon Hyde is a program manager specializing in public-sector transformation. Over the past decade, Jon has managed a diverse range of programs, including enterprise website design, the introduction of new waste and recycling services, and strategic commissioning of built environment services. Jon also has an interest in portfolio management and has successfully enabled improved control and prioritization of programs. He is an active member of the project portfolio management community and blogs at www.publicsectorpm.com.

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After working on a project with a very distant sponsor, I vowed never to let that happen again. That's my secret. On a subsequent business-transformation project, I began by agreeing with the sponsor up front that we would meet face to face for one hour each week. That time ensured that:

- We remained aligned on the project vision;
- We stayed abreast of progress, risks, and issues;
- I received additional insight as the sponsor shared details of informal discussions regarding the project held at a senior level;
- We were able to discuss delicate points and work up a strategy together before moving forward; and
- I knew that the sponsor supported whatever I presented to the project team and wider stakeholders, so I was rarely out on a limb.

This approach built trust and rapport between us, a virtuous cycle that brought additional tangible benefits:

- I gained a deep understanding of my sponsor's hopes, dreams, and fears for the project, which led to healthy risk and opportunity management.
- Project progress was accelerated, because we were able to make pragmatic decisions, factoring in cost and resource constraints, and a deep shared knowledge of the work.

That small change—regular quality time with the sponsor—made all the difference in terms of delivering a highly sensitive business-transformation project on budget and within timescales.

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **BUILD TRUST AND RAPPORT THROUGH REGULAR, FACE-TO-FACE COMMUNICATION WITH PROJECT SPONSORS.**
- 2 **COMMUNICATION HELPS YOU STAY ALIGNED WITH SPONSOR AND STAKEHOLDER NEEDS FOR THE PROJECT.**

“That small change—regular quality time with the sponsor—made all the difference in terms of delivering a highly sensitive business-transformation project on budget and within timescales.”

LEADING THOSE WHO FOLLOW

PATRICK RICHARD

Senior Project / Program Manager at PRGPPM

Patrick Richard is an experienced project and program manager in a wide variety of industries, including process, pulp and paper, manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, biotechnology, food and beverages, point-of-sale systems, and pharmacy systems. He also has extensive experience reporting progress and discussing challenges with senior management teams as well as leading implementation teams in fulfilling the goals of the project and organization. Patrick's specialties are team leadership and recovery of troubled projects.



You can lead only those who allow you to lead them. Some think that you can force people to follow your lead. That is possible only if you are a dictator, and we all know how dictatorships end—not in success and not happily. Whether we admit it or not, the real work is performed by project team members, not project managers (PM's). PM's are merely intermediaries between an organization's leadership and goals and those who realize those goals.

Between mid-1997 and 2000, I was a PM for the Y2K remediation efforts of a business unit in a large, integrated manufacturing organization. The business unit had facilities around the world. A survey yielded 200,000 items to remediate or replace, which confirmed that we had a sizable project on our hands.

The organization directed that all of its business units be Y2K compliant by July 1, 1999, with management being informed of progress and major issues every three months. To help the process along, a database of items and approved fixes was set up and made available within business units and across the whole organization.

Soon enough, it became clear that we had a changing situation with a hard deadline. Large organizations evolve constantly; new equipment is procured and entire facilities are acquired or sold. What was originally a project that involved existing operations now included procurement and teams from newly acquired facilities. We even had to fast-track remediation of facilities that were being divested. All the Y2K work that had been accomplished became a value add to the new owners.

By late 2008, the organization announced a merger that would yield a \$40 billion-per-year entity. The organization we were absorbing had to be brought in line with the existing one without a change to the existing deadline. Eventually, every business unit completed Y2K remediation between April 1, 1999, and July 1, 1999. This success was achieved through the team's hard work and its willingness to be lead.



KEY LESSONS

- 1 **PM'S ARE MERELY INTERMEDIARIES BETWEEN AN ORGANIZATION'S LEADERSHIP AND GOALS AND THOSE WHO REALIZE THOSE GOALS.**
- 2 **THE REAL WORK IS PERFORMED BY PROJECT TEAM MEMBERS, NOT PM'S.**

"You can lead only those who allow you to lead them."

STARTING PROJECTS WITH LOVE AND INTEGRITY

PETER SADDINGTON

Principal at Action & Influence, Inc.

Peter Saddington is a published author, organizational counselor and certified scrum trainer. He holds an M.A. in Counseling, an M.A. in Education, and a Master's of Divinity in Theology. Peter loves ramen and soda pop.



Most leadership secrets are already out there. With a quick Google search, you'll find the best ways to "lead" organizations, "influence" others, and "improve" every facet of your practice and profession. I've read many of these books myself.

At the end of the day, however, remember one thing: When all is said and done, people rarely, if ever, remember what you did. What they will remember is how you made them feel.

I'm talking about love. Love is what I'm trying to practice more and more. Start with love of oneself. If you love yourself, you respect yourself. If you respect yourself, you'll be more willing to say the tough things. Stick up for others. Speak out if you find things that are unethical or unfair. You'll be paid for the honesty and integrity you provide.

Don't leave your integrity at the door. Don't leave love out of the equation. When you have self-love, you can love others. People build the best software and services in the world. People. Not technology. If you can show love on a personal level to your clients, I promise you that you'll never regret a business decision—even when they're walking you out the door.

Whenever I work with executive management, I begin our engagements by talking about love. This discussion sets the tone of the engagement. It starts everything on a solid foundation. Love has the power to change hearts, change culture, and even build better products. I've seen it. I believe it.

Serve your clients by showing them the love you have for yourself, your integrity, and willingness to serve. That's a profession worth doing.



KEY LESSONS

- 1 **REMEMBER THAT AFTER THE PROJECT IS DONE, PEOPLE REMEMBER NOT WHAT YOU DID BUT HOW YOU MADE THEM FEEL.**
- 2 **DON'T LEAVE YOUR INTEGRITY AT THE DOOR.**

"Serve your clients by showing them the love you have for yourself, your integrity, and willingness to serve. That's a profession worth doing."

CULTURAL COMPETENCE: EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP IN MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENTS

RICARDO VIANA VARGAS

Director - Project Management at United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)

Ricardo Viana Vargas is a project, portfolio, and risk management expert and the author of 11 books. He was chairman of the Project Management Institute in 2009 and is currently the director of the Office for Project Services for the United Nations. Responsible for managing more than 300 project managers, his focus is on the improvement of humanitarian, infrastructure, and peace-building projects in more than 120 countries, including Haiti, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Iraq, and South Sudan.

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As the world becomes smaller, our networks expand. An increasingly globalized economy has led to more multicultural work environments and opportunities for international cooperation. This globalization has a unique advantage: Global teams with varying professional perspectives bring fresh ideas and a competitive edge to projects and teams.

Realizing these benefits requires a sound level of cultural competence. Each of us carries our own value and belief systems, and embedded within each of us are our own attitudes toward professional interaction and norms. Effective leadership in multicultural environments demands clear communication from the outset. We must establish rapport and a level of understanding among team members to develop the necessary communicative environment to move forward and ensure success.

Know Your Audience

As the adage goes, know your audience. Understanding the people you work with and the location you work in is crucial to effective leadership and the well being of your project. Being part of a team of people from varying cultural or professional backgrounds assumes different perspectives ranging from how we view time to how we interact with hierarchy.

The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) works in countries around the world—from Afghanistan to Haiti—to deliver sustainable and effective implementation of project management, infrastructure, and procurement services. We succeed because we tailor our services to the development environment. We employ not only experts who have technical experience but also experienced leaders who are able to understand local needs and cultural norms as well as actively engage with authorities and communities.



KEY LESSONS

- 1 **WORK TOWARD CULTURAL COMPETENCE.**
- 2 **EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP IN MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENTS DEMANDS CLEAR COMMUNICATION FROM THE OUTSET.**
- 3 **ASK YOURSELF WHOM ARE YOU TALKING TO AND WHAT ARE THE PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS THIS PERSON NEEDS.**

“Success is a key aspect of your project, but creating a meaningful and positive difference is possible only when we engage with and respect those around us.”

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Ask yourself this: Who are you talking to, and what are the drivers this person needs in the professional realm? Managing cultural dimensions necessitates that you, the project leader, question your own innate assumptions. You don't need to negate your core beliefs, but you should be flexible to practices different from your own. Establish open lines of communication from the outset. Speaking openly with your team helps everyone understand different behaviors and values. This way, you can set realistic guidelines based on mutual respect and individual capacities.

Make Relationship Building a Priority

Encouraging input from team members, local managers, and community leaders helps earn respect and ensure project success. Across cultures, information is processed differently, and business practices operate at varying speeds. Thus, it is imperative that you adapt your leadership and communication styles to local contexts. Respect for differences among the project team members means happier, more motivated individuals. My team at UNOPS is made up of people from 14 countries. Its success and that of other teams owes itself to building transparent relationships to ensure that our projects—more than 1,000 around the world—create a lasting impact while promoting local ownership and capacity development.

Cultural competence will help project leaders maximize employee productivity, efficiency, and sustainable results. A motivated team will also attract new talent and earn the respect of stakeholders across the value chain. At the end of the day, success is a key aspect of your project, but creating a meaningful and positive difference is possible only when we engage with and respect those around us.

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- 1 **WORK TOWARD CULTURAL COMPETENCE.**
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“Success is a key aspect of your project, but creating a meaningful and positive difference is possible only when we engage with and respect those around us.”

PROJECT LEADERSHIP: THE MAIN INGREDIENT IN GETTING TROUBLED PROJECTS BACK ON TRACK

ROB PRINZO

President of The Prinzo Group

Rob Prinzo is the founder and CEO of The Prinzo Group and senior consultant with the firm. Rob works with organizations to develop and implement strategic plans, conducts workshops on the implementation of technology, and is the author of *No Wishing Required: The Business Case for Project Assurance*; *Project Soup: Recipes for Managing to Success*; and *Collaborative Intervention: How to Identify, Assess and Intervene in Troubled Technology and Transformation Projects*.

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When diagnosing project issues, it is important to step back from the situation and look objectively at the project as a whole. Often, the people involved in the day-to-day project efforts become so engrossed with project status, metrics, and management concerns that they overlook addressing the root cause of a problem. A problem may be obvious, but the solution, such as increasing top management commitment or changing unrealistic expectations, is not.

Just as in the movies, the hero or heroine is aware that disaster is going to occur and must figure out how to stop it. The same is true for a project manager (PM). The PM may see the danger ahead but doesn't know how to stop it. Who in the organization has the ability and authority to make the required change? Is it one person, two, an executive, a vendor, or a team composed of all of them? More than likely it is the team. To avert disaster and change the project's direction, you need the buy-in of multiple people and departments. It is the PM's job to bring the warning signs to the attention of stakeholders, propose a solution, and facilitate its implementation.

Making significant changes to get an on-going project back on track is tricky and relies more on the ability to change and influence human behavior than the ability to update a project dashboard or conduct a fit-gap session. It also requires project *leadership*, not just project *management*. To further complicate things, that leadership may need to come from someone who is not in a position of authority but who needs to convince the people in positions of authority that change is required for project success. Mastery of such leadership skills comes from building a foundation of trust and credibility with project stakeholders and knowing how to navigate an organizational structure to implement solutions to complex problems.

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **WHEN DIAGNOSING ISSUES, STEP BACK FROM THE SITUATION AND LOOK OBJECTIVELY AT THE PROJECT AS A WHOLE.**
- 2 **DETERMINE WHO IN THE ORGANIZATION HAS THE AUTHORITY TO MAKE CHANGES.**
- 3 **MASTERY OF SUCH LEADERSHIP SKILLS COMES FROM BUILDING A FOUNDATION OF TRUST AND CREDIBILITY WITH PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS.**

“Making significant changes to get an on-going project back on track is tricky and relies on . . . project *leadership*, not just project *management*.”

DELEGATING YOUR WAY TO PROJECT LEADERSHIP

SUSANNE MADSEN

Project Leadership
Coach

Susanne Madsen is an international project leadership coach, trainer, and consultant and the author of *The Project Management Coaching Workbook*. She has more than 17 years of experience managing and rolling out large change programs of up to \$30 million for organizations such as Standard Bank, Citigroup, and JPMorgan Chase. Susanne is a Prince2 and MSP Practitioner as well as a qualified corporate and executive coach. She specializes in helping project managers excel by improving their leadership skills.



Several years ago, I was, like many other project managers (PM's), working hard on a project that seemed to be growing increasingly complex, with tighter and tighter deadlines. I was stressed and overworked, and there wasn't much time left for being proactive, thinking ahead, or building quality relationships with team members or stakeholders. I spent most of my time dealing with urgent issues.

One-to-one coaching helped me change this vicious circle. I realized that to grow and get better results for myself, my team, and my project, I needed to delegate more. I recognized that being a good PM didn't mean that I had to know it all and do it all by myself. I had to get better at asking for help and support and at trusting and empowering others. As a first step, I got a project administrator on board to help with lower-level task tracking and administrative work. It was essential work, but it wasn't essential that I did it.

Delegating more freed me up to spend time with the team and key stakeholders, listening to their ideas and concerns and looking at what we could do better. I started focusing more on picturing the end state of the project and proactively reducing the risks associated with getting there. I also began to put much more emphasis on empowering people and trusting others. Previously, I had spent up to 75% of my time managing tasks and as little as 25% on people. When I started to delegate, my focus shifted. I spent more time ensuring that high-level and strategic tasks were executed smoothly and on enabling the team to thrive and do their best work. I didn't know it at the time, but I was slowly taking on a leadership role, where it wasn't my specific skills or knowledge that defined me but my ability to lead and motivate others. The first step was to delegate more.



KEY LESSONS

- 1 **LEARN TO DELEGATE.**
- 2 **SPEND MORE TIME ENSURING THAT HIGH-LEVEL TASKS GET DONE AND ENABLING TEAM MEMBERS TO DO THEIR BEST.**
- 3 **WORK TO BE A PROJECT LEADER, NOT JUST A PROJECT MANAGER.**

“I recognized that being a good PM didn't mean that I had to know it all and do it all by myself.”

CONSISTENT PROJECT MANAGEMENT WITHOUT EXCUSES

TORSTEN KOERTING

Managing Partner at
projectyzer GmbH

Torsten Koerting is a paragliding and outdoor enthusiast, project management expert, entrepreneur, strategic thinker, visionary, and management consultant. He is often engaged as a speaker at conferences and is the author of various reference books. As business leader of projectyzer GmbH he specializes in how to introduce innovative, creative strategy-development processes at firms as well as bringing failing projects back onto a course to success. In his 20+ year career he has worked for global Blue-Chip companies in Europe, USA, and Australia. He currently lives with his family in Germany.

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Some projects do fail or go through crisis. Project crisis are extreme situations involving a lot of stress. This requires specific actions and skills, especially by the ones leading a team through a project crisis.

Going through project crisis and turn around requires strong and consistent leadership.

During my career I have met many leaders and seen different leadership principles and reactions by people working with those leaders. Based on this experience I derived eight principals of consistent project management that are critical to manage a project through a crisis.

Passion to Deliver

As a project manager, but also as a member of a project team, it is essential that your passion to deliver can be perceived and noticed. If you are showing that you do not believe in the outcome how should others believe in it?

Empathy

Your dedication, your empathy, your responsiveness for and towards others, addressing individual's fears and needs, are crucial for constructive team dynamics. Empathy is the true connection with people and the appropriate way of addressing the needs of people in any situation in any culture.

Focus on the Core

Do not get disrupted and diluted by anything that might distract you from the core.

Get into the Details

In crisis and decision-making it is essential to immerse into the details. Make sure the details have been explained to you and try to understand them.



KEY LESSONS

- 1 **AS A PM, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT YOUR PASSION TO DELIVER CAN BE PERCEIVED AND NOTICED.**
- 2 **A PM HAS TO BE VISIBLE, PERSONALLY INVOLVED AND PROACTIVE IN PERSONAL COMMUNICATION WITH THE TEAM, VENDORS, AND PARTNERS.**
- 3 **BE AWARE OF YOUR VALUE SYSTEM AND ACT ACCORDINGLY.**

“You are the role model for others. Lead and act the same way you expect from others.”

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Sense, Reflect, Act

Sharpen your senses, be alert, observant, and awake, watch out. Each small indicator might be a hint for something important and essential.

Be Visible

A PM has to be visible, personally involved and proactive in personal communication with the team, vendors, and partners. A project manager who sits behind his desk in his office and does not personally communicate with people is not able to sense, understand, and perceive the environment he is in, nor to reflect and act appropriately.

Walk the Talk

Let your words follow actions. Do not announce something that you do not stick to. Do not make any empty promises. This is essential for a trusting relationship between you, your project team and project participants.

Don't Let Your Leadership Style Erode

You are the role model for others. Lead and act the same way you expect from others. Be on time, avoid the use of your blackberry or iPhone during meetings, be consistent in your message and actions.

Integrity

Be aware of your value system and act accordingly.

Project management does not consist only of methods and tools—they are a means to an end and provide structure. The combination of methods and tools, technical and functional skills, as well as social skills and personal mindset is what makes successful project management.

Find your way, obey the pillars above, and the success will follow.

KEY LESSONS

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CLEAR COMMUNICATION LEADS TO COMMITMENT

IVÁN CARLOS RIVERA GONZÁLEZ

Sr. Project Manager

Iván Carlos Rivera González, PMP, is a computer engineer with wide experience as a business processes manager. His managerial background was developed through directive positions in service companies. Iván is innovative, solutions oriented, and has teamwork coordination abilities. Iván uses globally recognized methodologies and is specialized in the management of high-impact projects. Iván has been a project management professional (PMP) since 2006. He has an Information Technology Master degree and in 2010 received his advanced project management certification from Stanford University.

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Some years ago I had the opportunity to lead a project for a government agency in México. In December, my boss came to me with a document explaining the need for a prospect. At that time I developed applications for PDA's. After studying all possible sides of the problem, I prepared a document explaining that, to meet all customer needs, we should undertake a project that could last up to twelve months.

The project was to be implemented in different locations with two alternatives:

- The first was to work in teams that would communicate remotely. In the 90's, this was difficult because there were no social networks and partial use of email.
- The other option was to move one team to another city, which would include the expenses of travel and lodging.

When the project began we had just three months left of the original estimated duration and there was internal resistance to our participation.

The approach was to first have clear communication with the team, identify natural leaders and get their buy-in. The support of these leaders helped to get the team's commitment.

It's important for this kind of project to get customer involvement at the decision-making level and to get involvement and support on project management decisions from the performing organization.

The lesson is that, given the challenges of today's projects, it is increasingly necessary to lead with the participation of all team members.

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **GET CUSTOMER INVOLVEMENT AT THE DECISION MAKING LEVEL.**
- 2 **GET THE INVOLVEMENT AND SUPPORT OF THE PERFORMING ORGANIZATION ON PROJECT MANAGEMENT DECISIONS.**

“Have clear communication with the team, identify natural leaders and get their buy-in.”

PRINCIPLES OF PERFORMANCE-BASED PROJECT MANAGEMENT

GLEN B. ALLEMAN

Principle at Niwot
Ridge LLC

Glen B. Alleman is a program performance management leader in space, defense, and power systems. His specialties are: software intensive development for space, defense, energy, industrial, and commercial domains, program planning and controls, risk management, integrated master plan / integrated master schedule (IMP/IMS), and program performance management.



Project success is based on five Immutable Principles; five practices that implement these principles, and five tailored processes that produce the needed outcomes of the project.

The Five Immutable Principles of Performance-Based Project Management® are designed to meet both the definitions and requirement that they be effective. The principles are stated as questions that need to be answered by the project manager:

1. Where are we going?
2. How are we going to get there?
3. Do we have everything we need?
4. What impediments will we encounter, and how will we remove them?
5. How are we going to measure our progress?

These questions can be applied to projects just as they can be applied to any endeavor from flying to Mars to taking a family vacation. If we use the dictionary definition of immutable, "not subject or susceptible to change or variation in form or quality or nature," we can apply these principles to any project.

The practices, which are derived from the Five Immutable Principles, function to keep the project on track:

1. Identify needed capabilities.
2. Define a requirements baseline.
3. Develop a performance measurement baseline.
4. Execute the performance measurement baseline.
5. Apply continuous risk management.



KEY LESSONS

- 1 **PM'S MUST ENSURE THEY KNOW: WHERE THEY ARE GOING, HOW THEY WILL GET THERE, WHETHER THEY HAVE EVERYTHING THEY WILL NEED, WHAT IMPEDIMENTS THEY WILL ENCOUNTER, AND HOW THEY ARE GOING TO MEASURE PROGRESS.**
- 2 **USE THE FIVE PRACTICES TO KEEP THE PROJECT ON TRACK.**
- 3 **PROJECT GOVERNANCE IS A CRITICAL FACTOR IN THE SUCCESS OF ALL PROJECTS.**

"Project governance is concerned with five areas: business success, customer impact, team impact, project efficiency, and preparation for the future; it is a critical factor in the success of all projects."

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Project governance is concerned with five areas: business success, customer impact, team impact, project efficiency, and preparation for the future; it is a critical factor in the success of all projects. While the principles and practices are necessary for project success, we also need processes to guide us in how to apply them.

1. Organize the project.
2. Plan, schedule, and budget the work.
3. Capture actual costs of the project.
4. Assess cost and schedule outcomes against technical performance.
5. Record all changes to cost, schedule, and technical requirements.

KEY LESSONS

- 1 **PM'S MUST ENSURE THEY KNOW: WHERE THEY ARE GOING, HOW THEY WILL GET THERE, WHETHER THEY HAVE EVERYTHING THEY WILL NEED, WHAT IMPEDIMENTS THEY WILL ENCOUNTER, AND HOW THEY ARE GOING TO MEASURE PROGRESS.**
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LOVE YOUR PROJECT, AND YOUR TEAM WILL, TOO

JOSE MORO

CEO of gedpro

Industrial engineer and project management professional, Jose Moro is an expert at helping organizations to implement project management and project portfolio management solutions.



Love your project, and your team will feel your passion for it. If you don't believe in your project, your team will not follow up. Leadership is about your passion to get the objectives; remember that your project team is made up of people with feelings and family, so be human and hear them.

Projects are about people: A sponsor is a person with a context, a customer is a person with a context, teams are formed by people with a context. Understand them, hear them, have empathy with them, and they will follow you. Reach their hearts, and all will be easier.

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KEY LESSONS

- 1 **PROJECTS ARE ABOUT PEOPLE.**
- 2 **UNDERSTAND THE PEOPLE ON YOUR PROJECT, AND YOUR CHANCE OF SUCCESS INCREASES.**

“Love your project, and your team will feel your passion for it.”

Meet AtTask



AtTask is a cloud-based Enterprise Work Management solution that helps IT application development groups and other enterprise teams not only manage their work, but also think smarter about the entire lifecycle of work. It offers a single source of truth—one system for everything from ad hoc requests to long-term projects. AtTask provides a space where team members can collaborate, prioritize, and quickly update the status of every task, project, and issue. It also offers a complete solution—powerful enough for technical users, intuitive enough for business stakeholders, and flexible enough to utilize Agile, Waterfall, or a mix of the two.

Overall, AtTask increases visibility—from request to reporting—to eliminate the chaos of random work requests, tedious status meetings, and endless email threads. And with visibility, project managers can lead.

**To learn more about AtTask Enterprise Work Management,
please contact us at the following:**

www.attask.com | + 1.866.441.0001 | + 44 (0)845 5083771