

Ease and Do

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Facilitating Success through Project Management and Business/Executive Coaching

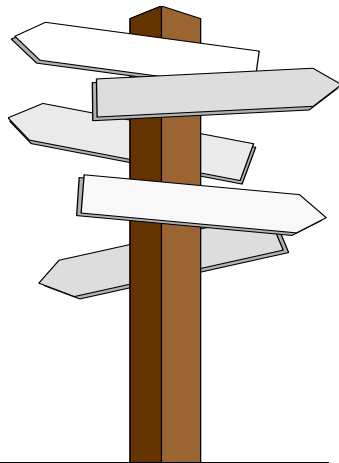
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Tell me, what exactly is project management?



Without project management, the path to success is not clear...

Project management (PM) is a process comprised of people, systems, and techniques. The goal of PM is to ensure the successful completion of a project

within a specified time frame and budget. There are five steps in the PM process: initiating, planning, executing, controlling, and closing. The project leader or manager coordinates the PM process and leads the project team.

The value of PM can be realized with projects of all sizes, however the greatest impact will be felt with projects involving multiple parties, departments, and functions. The weakest link in the PM scheme is failure to identify a suitable project leader. So, what does it take to be a project leader?

Can a project leader really be from outside my organization?

In a word, yes! Surprisingly, the best project leaders do not always come from within the organization. Those closest to a project often ‘cannot see the forest for the trees’. Coming from the outside is advantageous since the project leader does not carry the burdens of bias and preference that each of us develops during our tenure. As we have said, objectivity is a fundamental trait for a project leader. The contractual project leader possesses a forward looking perspective, unfettered by the practices of the past.

Perhaps the notion of a contractual project leader is attractive but does not fit into the budget. You might also consider the benefits of a contractual project leader to help you design the project and then rely upon qualified in-house leadership to complete the project. The objectivity of the independent project leader can increase project efficiency and result in reduced project costs.

Attributes of a good project leader.

Of the greatest importance, the project leader must be a true leader. A project leader must assert his or her authority with fairness, compassion, and firmness. A project leader must inspire the project team, earn their trust, and assure them that he or she can assist them in maintaining their focus and purpose. The ideal project leader is objective, flexible, and committed to task and staff. They possess strong people skills, are meticulously organized, and can manage multiple tasks and priorities simultaneously. A project leader understands that he or she cannot accomplish the goal single-handed. The leader must guide the project team through the mine field of existing prejudices to ensure that focus is maintained, despite resistance to change. A project leader must be a strong project advocate as well as a facilitator of change. The project leader must be knowledgeable of the subject matter. However, it is not necessary for the project leader to be a technical expert. In fact, technical expertise may interfere with the desired objectivity of the project leader. One final consideration is the source of the project leader. A project leader may be appointed from within the organization, but this step will certainly impact existing operations. Looking to the outside may just be the answer you seek.