

Qualities of a Successful Project Manager

How Hard are the Soft
Skills?



Effective Project Manager

Works Well With Others



This presentation provides information on the hard and soft skills that project managers and project leaders must provide their team and users (customers).

Know your customer and understand how to build trust. Navigate rough waters using your communication skills. Mitigate conflicts and misunderstanding through negotiation. Most importantly, know your role in leading and lead by example.

Today's Topics



- Difference between Leadership and Management
- Common Leadership Mistakes
 - Recklessness
 - Cowardly behavior
 - Quick temper
 - Over sensitive
 - Extremely compassionate
- How to Improve Leadership Skills Involvement:
 - Don't lose touch
 - Be authentic
 - Take charge: Focus on challenges

Today's Topics

Communication Skills and Exchange Ideas



- Types of Communication and Media Used
- Traits of Effective Communicators
- Using Common Terms and Analogies
- Listen First to Understand
- How to Get a Project Team to Communicate and the Importance of Knowing the Customer
 - Small group discussion
 - Nominal group work
 - Round Robin feedback
 - Parliamentary procedure and consensus

Today's Topics

How to Improve Team Feedback & Types of Feedback



- Appreciate Inquiry
- Paraphrasing
- Checking Feelings
- Reporting your Feelings
- Please Tell Me More
- Sharing Available Information

Today's Topics

Negotiate Soft Skills & Navigate Through Rough Waters



- Meditation vs. Arbitration
- Getting to Yes Without Giving In
- Win-Win or Something-Something

Today's Topics

Problem Solving Skills & Techniques



- Defining the Problem
- Making the Right Decisions
- Clearing out Bias and Haste While Solving the Problem
- Step Out of the Box
- Try Incrementalizing

Difference Between Leading and Managing

There is a need for both leading and managing. One without the other typically produces bad results.

- Managing is primarily concerned with consistently producing key results expected by stakeholders.
- Leading is concerned with:
 - Establishing direction: Vision and strategies
 - Aligning people: Communicate vision with words and deeds to achieve cooperation and vision.
 - Motivating and inspiring others: Overcome politics, bureaucracy and barriers.

Management Skills vs. Leadership

“Leadership is doing the right thing, management is doing things right.”

- A leader’s authority is innate in approach. Good leadership is difficult to learn because it is more behavioral and emotional in nature than management skills required to complete the task.
- Leadership demands a self-awareness and understanding of emotions, moods and values. These aspects have a great impact on those around you.

Leadership & Management Quotes

- “You don’t lead by pointing, and telling people some place to go. You lead by going to that place and making a case.” Ken Kesey
- “It is not enough to have great qualities; We should also have the management of them.”
(both leadership and management are necessary)
La Rochefoucauld
- “Never try to teach a pig to sing; it wastes your time and it annoys the pig” (leadership cannot easily be taught) Paul Dickson

Avoid the 5 Common Leadership Mistakes

In The Art of War for Managers by Sun Tzu, it is stated that there are five dangerous faults that may affect a general:

- If reckless, he can be killed.
- If cowardly, he can be captured.
- If quick-tempered, he can be provoked to rage and make a fool of himself.
- If he has too delicate a sense of honor, he is liable to fall into a trap because of an insult.
- If he is of a compassionate nature, he may get bothered, troubled and upset.

The 5 Leadership Faults

- **Recklessness:** Does not use data effectively. Gives no forethought to doing the right thing. Frequently shoots from the hip and doesn't understand why a win occurred.
- **Cowardly:** Fears taking risk, generally taking the greatest risk of all. (Nearly all reward is associated with some level of risk taking.)
- **Quick temper:** Easily angered. Shoots the messenger frequently. Doesn't get correct information or any information at all at times.

The 5 Leadership Faults

- **Over-Sensitive:** Easily embarrassed. Takes things personally and lets their ego get in the way. Easy to disgrace and often does not remain in a leadership position.
- **Extreme Compassion:** So concerned about keeping short-term harmony sometimes leading to long-term disaster.

Improving Leadership Skills

- Observe successful leaders in your organization and note their actions and leadership/management styles.
- Choose (or request) diverse assignments and roles that grow your knowledge about leadership developing your skill sets in a variety of areas.
- Enroll in classes on teambuilding, interpersonal skills, motivation, counseling, etc.
- Become a problem solver (a people-problem solver) and each day find a problem you've encountered in your project or your life. Discover the solution and share it with a colleague or teammate.

Improving Leadership Skills

- Make your mission, outcomes and goals known and visible. Share them with others to avoid duplicate work or things falling through the cracks.
- Inspire people. Tell them why they are important. Say thanks. Offer help and ask for help. *Show enthusiasm!*
- Give people work that they will find challenging and enriching.

Improving Leadership Skills

True leaders know...

- “Success is fickle and fleeting, but living successfully is always possible. An ever enduring success must be grown from the inside out and a feeling of inner success is much more difficult to acquire than material success.”
- “Life is like a field of newly fallen snow. Where I choose to walk, every step will show.”

Denis Waitley, Timing is Everything

Communication Skills

The PMBOK defines communicating as that involving the exchange of information. The sender is responsible for making information clear, unambiguous, and complete so the receiver can receive it correctly.



Communication Skills

Types of Communications and Dimensions:

- Written and Oral (listening and speaking)
- Internal (within the project) and External (customer, media and public)
- Formal (reports and briefings) and Informal (memos and conversations)
- Vertical (up and down organization) and Horizontal (with peers and partners)
- Sender (receiver models and feedback loops)

Types of Media to Communicate: Writing, oral, memo, formal report

Improve the Project Communication Process

Be an Active Listener:

- Focus on the moment. (no multi-tasking)
- Participate in the conversation but wait your turn to speak.
- Clarify the information processed. Paraphrase back to the speaker. Repeat what you think you heard.
- Ask if there is more, if you missed anything or if you understood correctly.
- Empathize with your team members, teammates or customers. Understanding their situation helps build stronger relationships.

What Do the Most Effective Communicators Do?

The most effective communicators, according to behavioral research studies:

- Speak often but briefly (15-30 seconds)
- Ask more questions.
- Make fewer solution statements early in a discussion.
- Summarize frequently: “here’s where we are”.
- Invite everyone to share their views.
- Typically interject their views after others have had a chance to speak.

Communicate Using Common Terms

The moment you start using acronyms such as SQL, ODBC, DNS, HL7, CCHIT peoples' eyes may start to glaze over. It's a good way of alienating your customer and causing potential confusion.

- Choose common terms.
- Know your audience.
- Spell out acronyms and terminology.
- Find analogies to simplify difficult scenarios and technical issues.

The Life Coach

Learning to Listen to Understand

Improving your listening skills with The Life Coach, Israel Johnson:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nUvM_v7IYvM

- Listen to understand first *then* listen to respond
- You don't always need to respond
- Work on understanding. You don't have to agree with team members, you just have to understand.

Importance of Knowing Your Customer

- Without customers, organizations cease to exist. Therefore, every organization must constantly strive to communicate effectively. Know and satisfy their customers (stakeholders) to stay in business.
- In Customer Driven Project Management (CDPM), customers are *all* those touched by a the project or service, internal and external. The project team must listen to all customers.
- Customer needs and expectations must be determined and turned into specifications (they are dynamic and may change).
- Customer management is *ever changing and ongoing!* And requires excellent communication soft skills.

- “There must be a happy medium somewhere between being totally informed and blissfully unaware.” Doug Larson, English Gold Medal Winner in Distance Running, 1924 Olympics.
- “Good communication is as stimulating as black coffee and just as hard to sleep after.” Anne Morrow Lindbergh

- “The most basic and powerful way to connect to another person is to listen. Just listen. Perhaps the most important thing we ever give each other is our attention.... A loving silence often has far more power to heal and to connect than the most well-intentioned words.” Rachel Naomi Remen
- “What we’ve got here is a failure to communicate.” *Cool Hand Luke*

Communication

- One study shows the average employee gets 2.3 million words over three months. When bombarded by overstimulation, the brain stops processing information to prevent psychological burnout. In that respect...too much *may* be worse than too little.
- Right sizing communication is most *difficult!*

Getting All the Project Team to Participate



The Talent Zoo by Gary Kopervas for a great illustration of blamestorming.

- **Small Group Discussion:** Most helpful when the topic is complex and there are many factors to consider. Ask a question, determine amount of time to discuss, announce the time, divide into small groups of 4 to 5 members (becomes difficult beyond 10) and vary the teams by department or titles.
- **Brainstorming: (blamestorming)** Collecting as many ideas as possible at one time. Leader's role is capture key words, from all involved and ask people who aren't speaking to speak up. End the session when no new ideas are added.

Getting All the Project Team to Participate

Nominal Group Work Feedback: Involves brainstorming and group discussion. It provides groups with a priority list of ideas to consider.



Getting All the Project Team to Participate



Round Robin Feedback: Allows every person in the group to have the opportunity to share his/her opinion or response *before* any team member can speak a second time. Typically allow each member several minutes to think, write out comments and take turns telling the group their thought / opinion.

Getting All the Project Team to Participate

- **Parliamentary Procedure:** A formal way to implement majority rule decision making in a group and typically involves a vote.
- **Consensus:** An alternative to parliamentary procedure that occurs when everyone in the group chooses to agree without taking a vote. It is usually a more cooperative team effort. It takes more time, especially in a larger group. Consensus also requires a discussion leader to keep the group focused.

Tips for Project Manager Communication

Communication with a group is most effective when it is *simple*. Choose common terms

- Most people can only absorb 80% of what they hear. Information should be offered to a small group in small chunks.
- Try to refresh the group's memory periodically in the discussions to help recall the basic information.
- Try not to offer more information that is needed for decision making.

Tips for Project Manager Communication

- Stay objective.
- Offer information in more than one method. Write it, say it and even try demonstrating ideas.
- Give step-by-step or checklist when possible.
- Ask the group for feedback (“How do you interpret?”)

Communication Quotes

- “Stand up straight so they will see you. Speak loudly so they will hear you, and sit down quickly so they will like you.” Galion
- “Fail to honor people, they fail to honor you. But a good leader, who talks little, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say ‘We did this ourselves.’ ” Lao Tzu
- “Keep things informal. Talking is the natural way to do business. Writing is for keeping records and putting down details but talk generates ideas. Great things come from our luncheon meetings.” T. Boone Pickens

More Feedback

- Feedback is essential. Try to keep it positive. Try to determine what you did to right, instead of focusing on the negative.
- Start with something as simple as asking a question at the end of your meeting. “What did we, as a group, do well in this meeting?”
- You will likely get stunned silence and then depending on your position in the organization your team will begin to figure out the politically correct response to provide you.

Types of Feedback

- Appreciative Inquiry: Doing more of what works. Doing less of something we do not do well. “What do we do well?”
- Paraphrase: Saying what we think the speaker said and clarifying what was meant. “Did I hear you say that we should start the planning phase today? And hold off on initiating?”
- Checking Feelings: Check to see if we are correctly interpreting the emotions of the team. “Are you frustrated? Do you want to talk about this?”

Types of Feedback

- **Report your Feelings:** Tell others your emotional state. “I’m not productive after working 20 hours this weekend. Could we talk on Monday in our meeting?”
- **Tell Me More:** Asking for more information allows the other members of the team to expand.
- **Sharing All Available Information:** A project manager should consider everyone’s opinion as added value, and as being open and honest with other members. Staying objective is difficult. As a project manager, try to consider all of the options before making a decision and be as patient as possible.

Negotiating

Per the PMBOK:

- Negotiating involves conferring with others to reach an agreement. Agreements may be negotiated directly or with assistance. The two types of assisted negotiation are mediation and arbitration.
- Negotiations occur around many issues, at many times and at many levels of a project.
- During the course of a typical project, staff is likely to negotiate for:
 - Original scope, cost and schedule objectives
 - Changes to scope, cost or schedule
 - Contract terms and conditions
 - Assignments

Some Negotiation Ideas to Remember : Don't Be a Grinch



- Start slow with some small talk.
- It's like physics. Action typically gets equal reaction. Avoid strong statements.
- Look for points of tentative agreement.
- Look for possible trades. "If I give you this, would you give me that?"
- Hold out some attractive concessions or giveaways and use them as needed.

Getting to Yes Without Giving In



- Try to use questions to better understand positions.
- Try to separate the people and emotion from the fact.
- Don't let people read you easily, keep your cool. Sometimes emotional reactions lead people to feel you have a weak stance.
- Always try to return to the facts and try to find common ground.
- Use mediation or arbitration when necessary or know when to walk away.

Problem Solving

According to the PMBOK:

- Problem solving involves a combination of problem definition and decision making.
- Problem Definition: Requires *distinguishing* between problem causes and symptoms, and determining whether the problem is internal, external, technical, managerial or interpersonal.
- Decision Making: Includes *analyzing* the problem to identify the viable solutions and then making a choice from among the alternatives. Once made decisions must be implemented.

Problem Solving: Avoid Bias and Haste

Problem solving that is the most results driven requires time to define and understand the problem. Impatience and bias generally create more problems than it solves. Some people have solutions in search of problems.



Step Out of the Box Physically and Mentally



- Get out of your comfort zone. Many busy people rely too much on solutions from their own history and industry. We may see similarities in problems that may not be there.
- Beware of the thinking process “we have always done it this way” or “usually we just...”.
- Busy people also tend to be too self reliant and may not ask others for input as frequently as they should. Many of us try to do too much ourselves.

Incrementalism: Key to Bigger Problem Solving

Sometimes the key to BIG problem solving is breaking down the larger problem into a series of smaller problems.

Incrementalists break up a large problem into small problems. Collect data, make small decisions, get quick feedback, correct your course, collect more data, move forward again, make more small decisions, collect feedback, re-establish course, *until* the bigger problem is solved.



Problem Solving Skills

- Ask more questions.
- Go slow, get fresh ideas, look deep and talk with others.
- Look for parallels in other organizations and in remote areas totally outside your field.
- Put problems into a visual format or a pictorial chart called a storyboard (crime-solving) where the problem is illustrated by its components being depicted as pictures.
- Tell stories that illustrate the pluses and minuses of a problem and then flow chart those according to what works and what doesn't.

Influencing the Organization & Building Trust

According to the PMBOK Guide, influencing the organization involves the ability to “get things done”. It requires an understanding of both informal and formal structures of the organization, customer, partners, contractors, other vendors and others. *Influencing involves an understanding of the mechanics of power and politics.*

Summarizing the Soft Skills

- Leading and Managing: Stepping out, taking risks, mentoring your team.
- Using good verbal and written communications, and most of all *listening*.
- Establishing trust and acting as a team player as well as a team leader!

Summarizing the Soft Skills

- Being flexible, adaptable and learning from the criticism of your team.
- Self-confidence and projecting a sense of calm, and inspiring confidence in others and your team, even when your project is “blowing up” or “in crisis mode”.
- Negotiating for a *win-win* and recognizing when it is necessary to negotiate.

Summarizing the Soft Skills

- Working well under pressure and handling the stress that accompanies deadlines and tight timelines.
- Managing your time and prioritizing your tasks and handling a number of different problems at once (as well as those of your team).
- Problem solving skills: Being resourceful and creative when it comes to solving problems and taking ownership of problems - not leaving them for someone else.

Final Thoughts

Qualities of a Successful PM

Survey/ Contact Us

Survey says:

Please take the survey that appears when you close your Internet Browser after this webcast. You could win a \$100 VISA Gift Card.

For more information:

Please contact your **Iatric Account Manager**
or send an email to **info@iatric.com**



Qualities of a Successful Project Manager

Thank you for
attending!

