



Creating a Project Leadership Culture Based on PMP Best Practices

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PMI Great Lakes Chapter Meeting - March 11, 2019



Agenda

- ❖ **Project Sponsor: Areas For Improvement**
- ❖ **Project Managers: Observations in Excellence**
- ❖ **Project Managers: Areas For Improvement**
 - ❖ **Project Managers as Change Agents**
 - ❖ **Table Exercise**

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Successful Project Management requires:

- ❖ 1/3 Common Sense**
- ❖ 1/3 Logic**
- ❖ 1/3 Process Discipline**

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Project Sponsors
Areas For Performance Improvement

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❖ Quality of Business Case

- Clarification on how the project ties into overall company objectives & strategy
- Monetize expected outcome versus required investment: ROI

❖ Crafting a more Robust Project Charter

- List of known project stakeholders: External & Internal
- How will project success be measured and verified? Metrics
- Are there any known risks that could negatively or positively effect project outcome?
- What is driving the key project milestone dates?
- On what assumptions was the pre-approved project budget developed?

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❖ **Establish Clear Roles, Responsibilities, and Expectations for performance with the Project Manager**

- What are the mutual performance expectations between the Project Manger & Project Sponsor?
- What roles & responsibilities will the Project Sponsor play within the project?
- What roles & responsibilities is the Project Manager to play within the project?
- What authority will be given to the Project Manager by the Project Sponsor?
- How will the Project Sponsor help manage key project stakeholder expectations?
- How will the “gray areas” between expectations, roles, responsibilities and authority be handled?

❖ **Do not overextend Project Sponsorship Responsibilities**

- Balance executive level duties with Project Sponsorship duties to properly support projects
- Issues supporting your sponsored projects Reevaluate your time management

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- ❖ **Educate the Project Manager/Team on How to Communicate with the Executive Team**
 - What type of information do they want to understand project progress?
 - How do they want it presented so it is easily understood?
 - What is the frequency with which information is to be communicated?
- ❖ **Respect the Perform Integrated Change Control Process**
 - Scope, Budget & Schedule Baseline preservation
- ❖ **Hold a “Kick-Off Meeting” with key Project Stakeholders co-hosted with the Project Manager to facilitate calibration on Project Objectives, Deliverables, Timing and Expectations.**
- ❖ **Recognize and Reward the Project Manager and Project Team for work well done throughout the project not just when it ends.**

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Project Manager: Observations on Effectiveness

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Observations of an Effective Project Manager

❖ Practices Purposeful Leadership

- Stays focused on project goals & objectives. Coaches & Mentors teammates to do the same.
- Works with teammates to clearly define roles, responsibilities for project deliverables and how they interconnect.
- Takes personal ownership and is accountable for overall project performance/results.
- Assertive & tenacious with team & key stakeholders to cultivate accountability & commitment.
- Actively listens to teammates on how to continuously improve personal performance
- Delegates tasks to teammates based on their expertise/skill-sets. Sets teammates up to succeed not fail.
- Gives teammates the respect and freedom to do their job. Not a micro-manager.
- Addresses team conflicts in “real-time” to avoid downstream issues
- Readily accessible to teammates and project stakeholders 24/7
- Decisive and Resolute how the team is lead.

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Observations of an Effective Project Manager

❖ Excellent Interpersonal Skills

- Practices and preaches “we vs I” as a means to build teamwork.
- Creates and builds personal relationships based upon candor, honesty and respect.
- Will listen to and accept multiple viewpoints to make logic based decisions.
- Willing to give and take constructive criticism to improve personal and team performance
- Cool under fire....Can diffuse tense situations or issues that may negatively impact the project/team.

❖ Excellent Communicator

- Understands the importance of keeping team and key stakeholders continuously informed
- Ensures communications are clear, concise, received and understood.
- Understands the communication methods required to educate C-Suite levels on project status
- Uses multiple communication methods to keep team and stakeholders informed.

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Observations of an Effective Project Manager

❖ **Strong Planning, Process Discipline & Organizational Skills**

- Ability to mentally see a logical project path and create a realistic project plan using this logic.
- Expects, Practices and Coaches on the importance of process discipline to achieve project deliverables
- Utilization of Perform Integrated Change Control Process to prevent “Scope Creep or Gold-Bricking”
- Ability to capture, process and segregate information into understandable data bites.

❖ **Politically Savvy**

- Knows the client/organization landscape and plays it well to advance the project to successful closure.
- Able to interface at all level within an organization and understands how to effectively leverage them.

❖ **Believe in the Value of Mentorship**

- Has a project management mentor and/or Leadership mentor.
- Shares knowledge with other project managers to learn best and worst practices.

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Observations of an Effective Project Manager

❖ Strong Mental Radar

- Constantly looking and listening for potential opportunities, issues, risks, obstacles, etc.

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Project Managers: Areas for Improvement

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❖ Better Use of Project Management Tools to Control and Monitor a Project

- **Assumptions Log:** Used to record *all assumptions* and *constraints* throughout the project life cycle.
- **Basis of Estimates:** Outlines details used to establish project estimates such as assumptions, constraints, level of detail, ranges and *confidence levels*.
- **Change Log:** Inclusion of *all* changes requests and their current status.
- **Checklists:** Assists in verifying tasks related to critical deliverables
- **Communication Management Plan:** Stakeholder Engagement Assessment Matrix
- **Lessons Learned Register:** Continually updated versus at end of project.
- **Perform Integrated Change Control Process:** Integrity of process vs. source of change request
- **Risk appetite:** Agreement on acceptable risk levels and when to escalate risk issues

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- ❖ **Consideration of a Work Breakdown Structure as a key project planning tool**
 - Clearer definition of Work Packages
 - More accurate estimation of Work Package Cost, Duration and Assignment of Resources

- ❖ **Use of a Team Charter to establish expectations for behavior, teamwork and values.**

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Project Managers as Change Agents

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❖ Do not just lead horizontally and below ... Lead Up and Out!

- Coach & Mentor upper management on the process of project management and required disciplines.
- Give upper management a “vision” of how project management can help the company vs. current state.
- Use the voice of the customer throughout a project to mobilize upper management support for change.
- Share Lessons Learned with all project stakeholders to reinforce the positive results generated by change.

❖ Use metrics to track the impact of change for your business

- How much money has been saved vs. historical performance?
- How much project cycle time has been cut vs. historical performance?
- What is the effect on sales-to-new-business?
- How much cost/waste has been eliminated from the operation?
- Legitimize the case for positive change using project management by generating verifiable data.

❖ Hold your Leadership Team, Teammates and Suppliers accountable for achieving project deliverables

- Define roles, responsibilities and deliverables up-front to avoid accountability issues downstream.
- Clarify each deliverable in its entirety, how its achievement will be verified and who owns it.
- Establish consensus of what “accountability” means so it is universal amongst everyone.
- Hold everyone accountable for working the project management plan and using agreed upon process discipline.
- Utilize a “Team Charter” to establish team norms, values and operating guidelines.

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❖ **Foster an Environment of Candor, Honesty and Integrity**

- Be willing to say and hear what has to be said in an honest, respectful manner.
- Listen to constructive criticism to strengthen yourself as a leader and your team.
- Do not allow misrepresentation of fact and/or truth.
- Do not do encourage or support anything that is illegal, immoral or unethical.

❖ **Practice Purposeful Leadership**

- Create a project vision that clearly articulates the mission and its importance to the business.
- Take responsibility for your leadership, as well as, the development and success of your teammates.
- Do not burden your team or project stakeholders with unnecessary work, procedures or processes.
- Understand the success of the team to accomplish or change anything belongs to the team.

❖ **Reinforce Teamwork every day and Do Not Be Afraid to Cut Players who can't Function as a Teammate**

- Create a “One Team ... One Common Goal ... Customer Centric” mindset
- Utilize all minds and skills on the team to plan and run the project. It creates ownership and commitment to results.
- Allow teammates the freedom to do their work. Freedom leads to productivity and productivity drives results.
- Help teammates acquire new skills through cross-functional training.
- Remove teammates who refuse to play team ball and/or detract from team success.
- Recognize and reward teamwork in real-time.

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Thank You!

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Meeting Exercise

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Exercise: Choose an change request that your Company Leadership Team and/or Project Sponsor(s) imposed upon you as a Project Manager in a current or past project that negatively impacted your project scope, cost or schedule baseline.

- 1. What was the change request?**
- 2. What was the rational for the change request?**
- 3. What did you do to resolve or mitigate the issues created by the change request?**
- 4. What lessons on effective project management did you learn from living through this experience?**
- 5. What lessons did you share with Company Leadership/Project Sponsors to help them understand their change request was not in the best interest of the project to help them change their behavior?**