

COMMERCIAL SOLUTIONS TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

# WHAT EVERY PROJECT MANAGER SHOULD KNOW & DO

A PROJECT MANAGEMENT SKILLS SURVEY

A Complimentary Copy  
From Commercial Solutions Training & Development



# PROJECT MANAGEMENT SKILLS SURVEY

**Instructions:** You can complete this Project Management Skill Survey in one of two ways; about yourself as a project manager or about this organization and how, in your experience, its project managers manage projects. Check one of the two boxes below.

- About me as a project manager** - I'm thinking about my typical behavior as a project manager when I complete the items below.
- About my project managers** - I'm thinking about the typical behavior of the manager of my project team.

Check one box per item depending on how "typical" you believe the behavior is, from **Always** (does this behavior when managing a project) to **Never** (does the behavior).

- ALWAYS  
 USUALLY  
 SOMETIMES  
 OCCASIONALLY  
 NEVER

The Project Manager systematically gathers essential information (project objective, budget, timeline, available resources, shortfall consequences, outcome standards, level of organizational priority & support, etc.) from the Prime Mover(s) (people with the authority and resources to initiate and terminate the project).

An adequate sample of project end users are asked to describe what:

- the best project result would be for them,
- the minimum acceptable result would be (standards),
- the bottom line impact of the project result would likely be,
- date they would like to receive the project result,
- training they will require, if any, to use the result effectively and efficiently, and
- end users would be best suited to the role of beta testers of intermediate project results.

The work environment where the project result will be used is carefully observed and the project manager asks end users to describe/demonstrate how the project result would be used.

The Project Manager interviews an adequate sample of potential project participants, asking:

- what resources would be required to complete the project,
- who should and could participate in the project,
- what existing methods, products, services or technologies could be used to simplify or accelerate the project,
- if any aspects of the project would be particularly difficult and/or prone to schedule or cost overruns, and
- what functions and/or activities should be part of the project plan.

The project manager develops and negotiates procurement approval of a Needed Resources Budget that details every essential and non-routine resource (eg. equipment, vendor, raw material, Prime Mover approval, etc.) and when it will be required.

ALWAYS  
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- Before beginning the planning process, the Project Manager identifies and meets with all project participants to describe and ask for input to the project objective, priority, timeline, potential problems, benefits and preliminary plans (Work Breakdown Structure and Task Schedule).
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- The Project Manager asks project participants for preliminary commitments to complete their project tasks on schedule and to hand off an acceptable intermediate result.
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- When a project objective can be upgraded (better result, lower cost, faster completion, longer commercial viability, etc.), the Project Manager effectively sells the upgrade to Prime Movers, participants and end users before or during the conduct of the project.
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- The Project Manager develops a Work Breakdown Structure (project scoping), an appropriate project chart (P.E.R.T., C/PM, Gantt, etc.) and task lists before beginning the project and presents these plan elements to project participants for input and for specific performance commitments.
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- The Project Manager develops a thorough *documentation and review* routine before the project begins and maintains both throughout the course of the project.
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- The Project Manager methodically uses a time management/planning tool (Daytimer, computer-based scheduler, PalmPilot, etc.) to schedule and protect time required to effectively manage the project.
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- Contingency plans are developed for anticipated problems when project shortfalls would have significant financial effects or when resources and/or participants would become unavailable if the project schedule was compromised.
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- The Project Manager communicates to participants, end users and resource providers clearly, unambiguously and frequently enough to maintain interest, involvement and support.
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- The Project Manager is able to persuade people to support the project using benefit-focused techniques.
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- When benefit-focused persuasion techniques are ineffective and the success of the project is put in doubt, the Project Manager is prepared to and effective at generating project support by appealing to authority.
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- Coaching is provided or arranged by the Project Manager for reluctant, underperforming participants before they compromise the project schedule.
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- Delegation is only used with project participants who are not fully skilled in their assigned tasks but who are motivated enough to learn how to perform them successfully.
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- Able but reluctant project participants are pre-sold on the project to gain their commitment and are regularly re-sold until their project responsibilities are completed.

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The Project Manager meets with the supervisor(s) of time-critical project participants to ensure that their participation in the project will be prioritized (competing assignments will not significantly conflict with project work).

The Project Manager regularly meets with project participants while or just before they are scheduled to perform their tasks in order to:

- confirm their readiness to participate,
- arrange for needed resources,
- get an update on their progress,
- confirm their adherence to intermediate outcome quality standards, and/or
- diagnose/remedy any problems or shortfalls.

Before complying with a request/demand to shorten the project schedule, the Project Manager:

- reviews the benefits and the project shortfall potential of the request,
- discusses the request with impacted participants, and
- advises the requester of the impact that shortening the project schedule would probably have.


The Project Manager regularly meets with and/or sends memos to all Prime Movers to update them on progress, budget, problems (real and potential) and remedies.

The Project Manager treats participants well; as if the success of the project and of the project manager's career aspirations depend on their good will.

The Project Manager plans for and supports an end-user hand off presentation, training package, user's documentation, follow-through liaison and/or results measurement.

Participants are thanked according to their unique contribution to project success, ranging from a personal "thank you" to a hand-written thank-you letter and/or personnel file commendation.

A post-project summary is written and circulated that describes notable aspects of the project and lessons learned during the project.

When you finish, please return this survey to me at the address to the right. 

If you'd like to discuss the results, be sure to include your phone number.



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Principal

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