



# **Topic: How to be an effective project leader/manager**

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## **Introduction:**

Project managers are responsible for integrating assigned resources to complete the project according to plan. At the same time they need to initiate changes in plans and schedules as persistent problems make plans unworkable. In other words, managers want to keep the project going while making necessary adjustments along the way. According to Kotter (1990) these two different activities represent the distinction between management and leadership. Management is about coping with complexity, while leadership is about coping with change. Management brings about order and stability by formulating plans and objectives, designing structures and procedures, monitoring results against plans, and taking corrective action when necessary.

Leadership involves recognizing and articulating the need to significantly alter the direction and operation of the project, aligning people to the new direction, and motivating them to work together to overcome hurdles produced by the change and to realize new objectives.

# Leading versus Managing a Project

## Leader

- Innovate
- Focus on people
- Inspire trust
- Have a long range review
- Ask what and why
- Have eyes on horizon
- Challenge status quo
- Do the right thing

## Manager

- Administrate
- Focus on system and structures
- Rely on control
- Have a short range review
- Ask how and when
- Have eyes on bottom line
- Accept status quo
- Do things right

# Qualities of an Effective Project Manager

- 1. Systems thinker:** Project managers must be able to take a holistic rather than a reductionist approach to projects. Instead of breaking up a project into individual pieces and managing it by understanding each part, a systems perspective focus on trying to understand how relevant project factors collectively interact to produce project outcomes.
- 2. Personal integrity:** Before you can lead and manage others, you have to be able to lead and manage yourself (Bennis,1989).  
Begin by establishing a firm sense of who you are, what you

stand for, and how you should behave.

3. **Proactive:** Good project managers take action before it is needed to prevent small concerns from escalating into major problems. They spend the majority of their time working within their sphere of influence to solve problems and not dwelling on things they have little control over. Project managers cannot be whiners.

4. **High emotional intelligence (EQ):** Project management is not for the meek. Project managers have to have command of their emotions and be able to respond constructively to others when things get a bit out of control.
5. **General business perspective.** It is important that a manager have a general grasp of business and how the different functional disciplines interact to contribute to a successful business. It is important that a manager have a general grasp of business fundamentals and how the different functional disciplines interact to contribute to a successful business.

6. **Effective time management:** Project managers have to be able to manage their time wisely and quickly adjust their priorities. They need to balance their interactions so no one feels ignored.
7. **Skillful politician:** Project managers have to be able to deal effectively with a wide range of people and win their support and endorsement of their project.
8. **Optimist:** Project managers have to display a can do attitude. They have to be able to find rays of sunlight in a dismal day and keep people's attention positive. A good sense of humor and a playful attitude are often a project manager's greatest strength.



## **Suggestions for Project Managers**

- ❖ Build relationships before you need them.
- ❖ Trust is sustained through frequent face-to-face contact.
- ❖ Realize that “what goes around comes around.”

## **References:**

1. Project Management, the managerial process, 6<sup>th</sup> edition by Clifford F. Gray  
Oregon State University.

***Thank You For Your  
Attention!***