

What is the catalyst to delivering results and value from projects?

Written by Ian Rogers, eNable Inc Consulting

Studies have found that there are significant issues with delivering projects on time, on budget and that meet the initial business objectives. As a result the first job of any project leader is to build confidence and creditability with the stakeholders.

Why is this so difficult, and what is the root cause why businesses keep repeating this pattern of ineffective project execution?

We believe the answer lies in how companies view the role and competencies of the person who is managing the project (ie project manager). Traditionally, a good project manager has been defined as an individual with the following characteristics:

- Solid understanding of one or more project methodologies.
- Can create and manage complex project plans.
- Can create and track a project budget.
- Good at monitoring and controlling i.e. produces meeting minutes, status reports etc.
- Focused on being efficient and doing things right.

While these characteristics are important, the larger and more complex a project is, the more important leadership characteristics are:

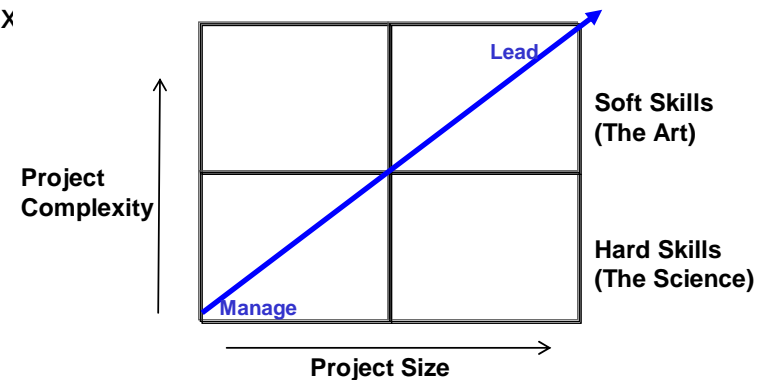
- Set a clear direction.
- Relationship Management with Stakeholders.
- Inspire team work.
- Positive attitude.
- Results focused.
- Ability anticipate issues.
- Being effective
- Doing the Right Things.

Project Baggage

- 90% of projects deliver late (Aberdeen)
- 50% of projects are over budget (Gartner)
- 50% fail to meet the objectives (Gartner)
- 30% Canceled prior to completion (Aberdeen)



At the start of a project - building client confidence in the team is job one !



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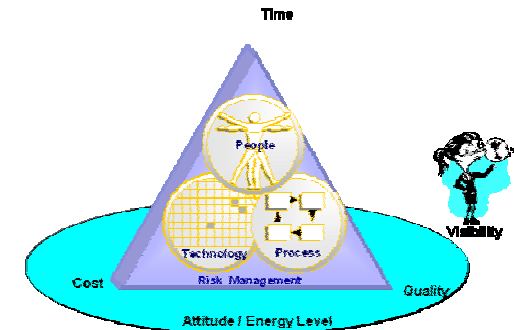
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The challenges for project leaders delivering on projects are:

- Understand the objectives of the business, both the stated and implied ones.
- Effective relationships interaction with the sponsors, stakeholders and the project team. This requires strong communications and planning skills to ensure that all messaging is pre-planned, clear, and proactive.
- Proactive, anticipating the up coming pitfalls.
- Enable the project team to perform at their peak performance, by creating a positive, focused, energetic work environment.

This includes:

- Ensuring they have the tools they need
- Protecting the team from non-project requests and distractions.
- Continually, driving for results in a positive manner.
- Effective scope containment.
- Decoupling of dependencies.
- Effective management of the team through the emotional ups and downs as they pass through the various phase of the project.



PM's need to have the pulse on the tangible and intangibles of a project.

Companies need to seek out seasoned project leaders for their larger projects, and not fall in the trap of believing that **a project manager is a project manager.**

A project manager manages a project;

A project leader is **the catalyst to delivering results and value from complex projects.**