

# 03 - Final Notes (2nd Module)

## Where is this course?

- Google Career Certificates - Project Management

## My Notes

My notes for this overall course will be laid out by module in the course, and have subheadings in order to differentiate between different topics/videos that are presented in the courses. I'll add in any extra notes/resources that I use where necessary, and hope it will be helpful for anyone looking!

## The Value of a Project Manager

### Project Manager - Definition

Shepherds projects from start to finish and serve as guides for their team, using their impeccable organisational and interpersonal skills every step of the way

### Stakeholders - Definition

People who are interested in and affected by the project's completion and success

- Value of a Project Manager
  - What do they do?
    - Generally Involves
      - Planning and Organising
      - Managing Tasks
      - Budgeting and Controlling costs
    - ...all so the project can be done in the approved timeframe
  - Adds Value through key areas
    - Prioritisation
      - *Project managers add value to their teams and organisations through effective prioritisation of tasks required to complete a project*

- Communicate with the team and stakeholders in order to make a plan on what to do first and what order
- Real life example
  - Painting a house
    - Picked out paint, and eager to get started
    - Although tempting, have to do other tasks, such as:
      - Laying out drop-cloths
      - Buying more supplies
      - Tape corners and edges
      - Cover furniture
    - Then you can paint
    - Other decisions such as new face plates for the light switches can come later in the process
      - or be switched out if not needed
    - By doing all of these things before actually painting, you are prioritising the steps of the project, and are able to overall be more efficient and be able to have less mistakes
  - By effectively prioritising tasks, you are able to set up your team (and yourself) for a better project outcome
- **Delegation**
  - *Project managers use delegation to add value to their teams and organisations by matching tasks to individuals who can best complete the work*
  - Allows for the project to be much more efficient
  - Real life example
    - Painting multiple rooms can take a long time
      - Therefore enlist a few friends to help
    - People
      - One of the friends has a lot of painting experience
        - ask this person to handle the more challenging aspects of the project
        - such as painting the ceiling, or the detail work
        - Schedule her to paint the moulding before another less experienced friend paints the walls
    - By delegating the tasks to those with appropriate skill, and ordering them appropriately as well, applies strength to the planning of the overall project
- **Effective Communication**

- *Project managers deliver value through effective communication, both with their team and with key stakeholders*
- Being transparent
  - Being up front with plans and ideas
  - Making information readily available
- Keep in regular contact with the rest of the team and identifies areas where a team-mate need support
- Real life example
  - Check in with friends periodically
  - Ask if they have enough paint/supplies to complete their task
    - By checking in regularly, you can see if you need to buy more paint before the can is empty, and no work can be done
  - Reach out to the landlord to let them know the days you will be working on the project
    - although not directly involved, the outcomes will affect their property, therefore important to keep them informed
- Regular contact with people outside the team
  - company leaders that are invested in the project for example

## How Project Managers Impact Organisations

### Customer - Definition

Refers to a person or an organisation that defines the requirement of the project and sets important guidelines, such as budget and deadlines

- **How Project Managers impact Organisations**
  - **Focusing on the customer**



### **Focusing on the customer**

- **Customers**
  - Customers are always a key element to success in any business scenario
  - Customers can be internal or external
  - **Internal Customers**

- Stakeholders within the organisation
- Examples
  - Management
  - Project team members
  - Resources managers
- **External Customers**
  - Stakeholders outside of the organisation
  - Examples
    - Clients
    - Contractors
    - Suppliers
    - Consumers
- To successfully deliver a project, you have to meet the customer's standards
  - Therefore have to clearly understand expectations
- **Asking the customer questions**
  - *"What is the problem you would like us to help solve?"*
    - The customer wants help developing a new process that would allow their company to be more efficient.
  - *"How is the problem impacting your organization?"*
    - The customer states that they are losing clients because of their current inefficient processes since clients are sometimes receiving their orders late.
  - *"What prompted you to ask for help now?"*
    - The customer says that they may lose department funding if they do not improve efficiency.
  - *"What is your hope for the outcome of this project?"*
    - The customer states that their ultimate goal is to increase the speed at which they fill orders without sacrificing quality.
- **Building a great team**



## Building a great team

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- **Team**
  - A project's biggest asset

- A project manager should take the time to understand each person's motivations, strengths, and weaknesses
- Project managers add value by identifying the right team of the project, and enabling it to make decisions
- **Building a team**
  - Consider the skills needed for the project
  - Consider the resources available
  - Understand what the customer needs
- **Fostering relationships and communication**



## Fostering relationships and communication

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- **Fostering relationships**
  - Maintaining customer satisfaction and building a great team are two ways that a project manager can bring value
  - Treat others with consideration and respect
  - Project managers set the tone for a project and build relationships within their teams and stakeholders
  - Take the time to check in daily with the team, and ask if there's anything you can help with
- **Managing the project**



## Managing the project

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- **Managing the project**
  - Each person should be assigned specific project tasks
  - Once each task is done, the person responsible hands that part over to the next person
  - Note that team members may not see the bigger picture and how their work impact others
  - Make sure that everyone understands the bigger picture and how important their work is

- Breaking down barriers



## Breaking down barriers

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- **Breaking Barriers**
  - Breaks down barriers, and allows for their team to innovate new ways of doing things
    - Avoid the "Because we've always done it this way."
  - Provide support while your team is trying something new

## Key project manager roles and responsibilities

### Project Management - Definition

The application of *knowledge*, *skills*, *tools*, and *techniques* to meet the *project requirements* and achieve the *desired outcome*

### Project Task - Definition

An activity that needs to be accomplished within a set period of time by you, your team or your stakeholders

- **Project Management Responsibilities**
  - **Planning and Organising**
    - Making use of productivity tools and creating processes
    - Create plans, timelines, schedules, and other forms of documentation to track project completion
    - Maintain the documents throughout the project
  - **Budgeting and Controlling Costs and other Factors**
    - Monitor and manage the budget
    - Track issues and risks
    - Manage quality
    - Remove unforeseen barriers
      - Things that can get in the way of the project

- **Managing Tasks**
  - Keep track of tasks
    - Managing workloads
    - Make sure things are being done
    - Demonstrates progress
  - Use some form of project tracker, and actively manage tasks

## Identify: Project Opportunities and Tasks

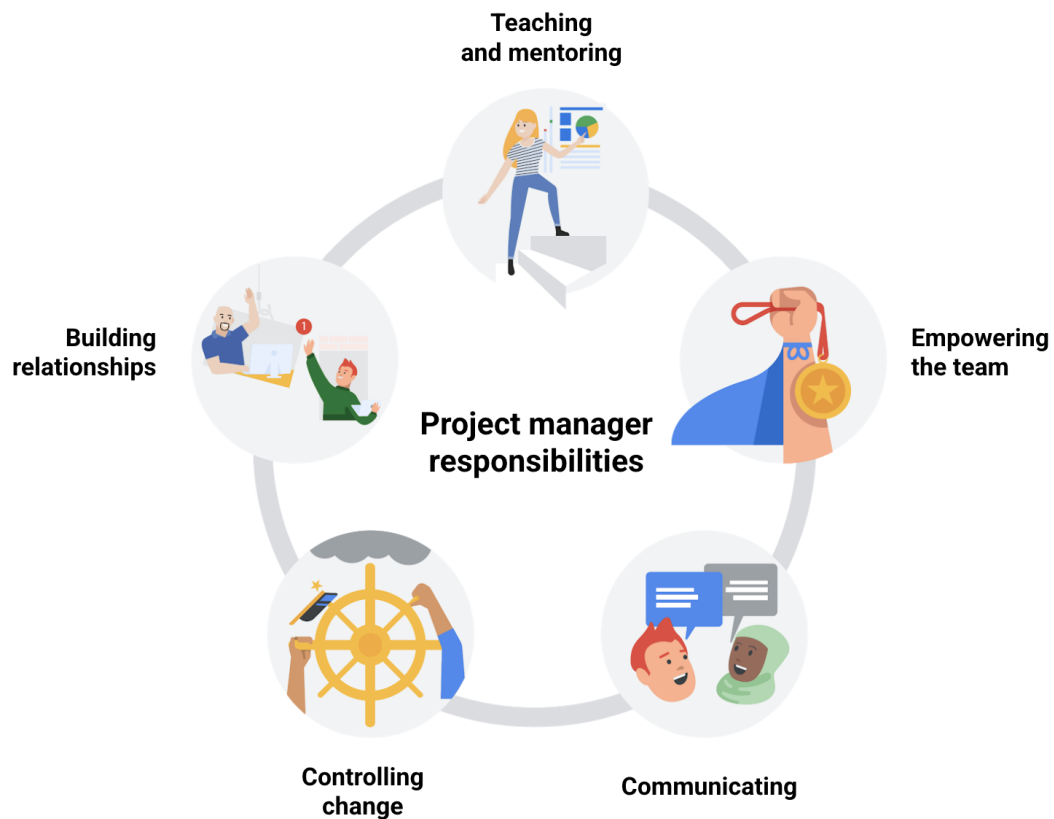


- **Background Info**
  - As project manager for an arts education centre, you join a planning meeting for the upcoming quarter. Team members will discuss top priorities, and you'll identify a project and related tasks to achieve these goals.
- **Notes**
  - **Roles**
    - **Senior Artistic Director**
      - Makes programming decisions and develops the long-term vision for the company.
    - **Director of Education**
      - Oversees curriculum planning and evaluation and supervises instructors.
    - **Communications coordinator**

- Manages publicity, social media, and other communications content
- **Chief development officer**
  - Heads fundraising efforts by meeting with donors, organizing events, and writing grant proposals.
- **Meeting Notes**
  - **Online Education**
    - "More classes we put online, the more students we can reach"
    - Live-stream classes
      - Although pre-record some classes as demos
        - Most popular courses
          - Art
          - Music
          - Theatre
          - Dance
      - 30-minutes each
    - After developing topics, develop marketing
    - Play demos at fundraiser
  - **Tasks**
    - Needs to create an online course to then market, and fundraise for
    - Then let instructors choose their topics
    - Let instructors script their lessons
    - Director of Education speaks with Videographer to set up a schedule to film
    - Communications Coordinator plans to write a press release as a part of the promotional materials

## Responsibilities that utilise interpersonal skills





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- **What are the core job responsibilities of project managers?**
  - Project Managers are responsible for planning, organising, managing tasks, budgeting, controlling costs, and other factors to help keep the project within budget and on time
    - therefore a project manager is responsible for tracking the day-to-day details of the project
- **Interpersonal Responsibilities**
  - **Teaching and Mentoring**
    - As a project manager, you serve as a mentor for the team
    - Take time to
      - Fully explain expectations
      - Eliminate rework
      - Eliminate confusion
      - Eliminate frustration
    - Support each individual in meeting expectations and exceed their own sense of personal potential
  - **Building Relationships**
    - Get to know your team members
      - Let them know that you care about them as people, and not just as employees

- Take the time to build relationships with customers, clients, vendors and other stakeholders
- Dedicate time to check on people
- Ask about their lives beyond the project
  - Follow up on those discussions later on to show interest
- **Controlling Change**
  - "The only thing that never changes, is that everything changes"
  - Remain flexible to adjust to the stakeholder's needs
  - Protect team from constant change and rework
  - Document initial expectations of the project, and identify any changes being requested
    - Helpful to understand the budget and schedule impact of the changes and make sure that the stakeholders understand those impacts
- **Empowering your Team**
  - Get fresh ideas and passionate employees willing to help find solutions to problems
  - Delegating responsibilities to the team, and make them have more impact in the project
- **Communicating Status and Concerns**
  - Create an open door policy
  - Build trust between the team, and stakeholders

## A Project Manager's role within a team

- **A project manager's role within a team**
  - A "Project Manager" is not often the direct manager of the people working on a project team
    - Manages the *tasks* of a project
    - Therefore although you may have to manage teammates for a certain task/project, you are probably not their day-to-day boss
  - Everyone on the team will have their own set of roles and responsibilities
    - Each person will be an expert on their portion of the project, but no one will be an expert on every aspect of the project
  - Responsible for guiding your team
    - Making sure they have the support they need to complete the project
- **How can this be done?**
  - "Hold all team members accountable for their assigned tasks"

- "Ensure that issues and risks are tracked and visible, and be able to establish escalation paths"
- "Understand and help teammates to adopt the right workflows and project management styles"
- "Collaborate with other teams at the organisation to deliver solutions that meet the requirements based on project scope, schedule and budget"

## Working with cross-functional teams

Managing cross-functional teams effectively requires the project manager to:



Clarify goals



Get team members with the right skills



Measure progress



Recognize efforts

### Cross-Functional Team - Definition

A team, whose members have different backgrounds, types of expertise and job functions.

- **Cross-Functional teams**
  - Members are sometimes referred to as "T-shaped" professionals
    - Skilled in how to collaborate and innovate with those in different job functions and different departments
    - Also contribute their own specific areas of expertise
    - Each member has their own unique perspective and experience, bringing different ideas and strategies to the project
  - How this can be done
    - **Clarify Goals**

- Ensure that every team member understands their role, how they support each other, and the common goals of the project
- Set clear goals. and make sure everyone understands those goals
- **Define**
  - Budget
  - Deadlines
  - Quality requirements
  - Important resources
- Continually check up on the team
- All team members work together with the project manager to support the current project
- **Get team members with the right skills**
  - Make sure that all the team members have the correct skills for each of the project functions
  - Make sure that the right people with the right skills are available
- **Measure progress**
  - Showing your team how much they have accomplished can help them keep motivated
  - Take the time to measure and communicate the project's progress to the entire cross-functional team
  - **Measuring progress**
    - Key milestones
    - Completing project tasks
    - Meeting project goals on time and within budget
  - Document when tasks and goals are completed
  - Make sure to communicate if everything is on track, and if not, how to get there
- **Recognise efforts**
  - Make sure that every member of the cross-functional team recognises their value
  - Also makes sure that everyone is considered to be a 'team', and equal

## The core skills of a project manager/Key Competencies: Flexibility and handling ambiguity

- **Core Skills**
  - **Enabling decision making**
    - The core skills of a project manager

- The ability to enable decision making on the team, or gathering decisions from the appropriate leader is crucial to keep tasks on time, and achieve goals
- Gather information from all the team-mates
  - Use that information to make informed decisions
  - Also make sure to communicate relevant stakeholders of decisions
    - such as the rest of the team and higher ups
- Your job is to get all the relevant data to inform a decision between A and B
- **Key Competencies: Flexibility and handling ambiguity**
  - Make the decision making process collaborative
    - Example
      - State the goals of specific deliverables
      - Elicit input from your team on how to achieve these goals
    - Your team members may think of ideas and solutions that you may not have thought about
    - Allows for you to focus on the over-arching management tasks, and prioritise them, while your team can focus on the details
- **Communicating and escalating**
  - **The core skills of a project manager**
    - Use communication skills everywhere
      - documenting plans
      - sending emails about the status of the project
      - holding a meeting to escalate a risk or issue to stakeholders
  - **Key Competencies: Flexibility and handling ambiguity**
    - Clearly communicate
      - project goals and expectations
      - team member roles and responsibilities
      - constructive feedback
    - Know how to effectively communicate, and when to escalate issues to management
    - When escalation is required, try proposing a solution to management when you confront them, as it shows that you are taking initiative as a project manager
- **Strong Organisational Skills**
  - **The core skills of a project manager**
    - Have the ability to organise processes and core elements of a project, so that nothing gets lost or overlooked

- Examples
  - Track daily tasks in a spreadsheet
  - Send daily reminders to team-members
- **Key Competencies: Flexibility and handling ambiguity**
  - Use organisational tools
    - *Planning and scheduling software*
      - templates
      - workflows
      - calendars
    - *Collaboration tools*
      - email
      - collaboration software
      - dashboards
    - *Documentation*
      - files
      - plans
      - spreadsheets
    - *Quality assurance tools*
      - evaluations
      - productivity trackers
      - reports
- **Flexibility**
  - **The core skills of a project manager**
    - Be willing to change plans
    - Examples of issues
      - Goals of the company may change
      - Team member leaves
    - Unpredictable moments are guaranteed
    - Stay cool under pressure
  - **Key Competencies: Flexibility and handling ambiguity**
    - *Flexible planning*
      - **Assess external constraints**
        - When planning take external events into account
          - such as national holidays and team member vacations/sick leave
        - Leaving extra time in the schedule allows for these events to have a minimal effect on the project
      - **Plan for risks and challenges**

- Consider any potential risks, and plan for them in advance
  - example
    - Someone leaves/decides to quit
      - Are you able to replace them?
      - Can you hire an independent contractor?
      - Come up with a list of potential people that can join your team if someone isn't available
- Look at historical data
  - Review past projects, and past challenges you faced
  - Evaluate if a similar challenge can occur in your current project, and how it can be negated/managed
- **Calculate "float" into your schedule**
  - calculate the amount of time you can wait to begin a task before it impact the project schedule and threatens the project outcome
  - Identifying this can allow for keeping the project on track, and make sure everything is as efficient as possible
- *Handling ambiguity*
  - **Keep calm**
    - being calm, and handling ambiguity with grace and poise can set a good example, and allow your team to do the same
  - **Express empathy**
    - important to understand what your team is thinking, especially during times of ambiguity
    - let team members know you care about the challenges they are facing
  - **Communicate what you know clearly**
    - Define the aspects of the project that are confirmed and will not change
    - Allows for the team to have a better sense of what to expect, regardless of any potentially variable aspects
  - **Make decisions and stick to them**
    - Don't second guess your decisions, as it can lead to more uncertainty
    - If you have to change course, make sure you explain to the team exactly why, and why this is a better option
  - **Trust the expertise of your team**
    - Have everyone on your team discuss what they already know
      - such as resources needed, components, specific tasks, etc.

- Then use what you know to brainstorm and figure out what to do

## Leadership and team dynamics (Influencing without Authority)

### 📘 Influencing without authority - Definition

A project manager's ability to guide teammates to complete their assigned work without acting as their direct manager

- Leadership and Team dynamics

- Key Interpersonal Skills

- *Communication*

- Checking in with teammates
        - understand how they are going with a task
      - Providing feedback on the quality of the team-mate's work

- *Negotiation*

- Working with a team-mate to compromise on a new deadline, when they tell you they can't get work done on time
    - You have to use negotiation often with stakeholders and teammates, to balance their needs and the betterment of the project

- *Conflict mediation*

- Project plans will change, and tension will arise
    - Must not allow for conflict to interfere with the project
      - Setting up a meeting with feuding teammates for example

- *Understanding motivations*

- Get to know teammates
    - Figure out what makes them do their best work
      - Learning how teammates prefer to receive feedback
      - How they like to receive feedback when they do a good job