

# Project Management (PRO)

Kandidatekursus CS/INF



## Lecture 2:

*Being a project manager  
- and dealing with people*

Nina Boulus-Rødje (PhD), Assistant Professor  
Informatics & User-Driven Innovation. Institute for People and Technologies. [ninabr@ruc.dk](mailto:ninabr@ruc.dk)



---

# The project manager- analogy

---

- ❖ PM= conductor
- ❖ Responsibility for a team
- ❖ Need holistic view
- ❖ Leadership, planning, coord.
- ❖ Doesn't need to play every instrument- but have know.+ understanding
- ❖ Written & real-time cmns





---

# The challenges of the project manager

---

- ❖ Each project is **unique**
  - ❖ but the project owner requires **fixed price, time and resources**
- ❖ The position is **temporary** (limited in time) and **results-oriented**
- ❖ **Employees** are typically on **loan** (no staff responsibility)
  - ❖ therefore have a **different boss** who "pulls" at them
- ❖ The position has **little formal authority**
- ❖ **Team** spirit must be built among different specialists brought together
- ❖ Close cooperation and communication with **stakeholders, customers, product process**, etc.
- ❖ Continuous attention to problems is very stressing and unnerving



# The project manager's tasks





---

## Exercise 1: What characterises a good project manager

---

- ❖ Talk together in pairs
- ❖ What do you think are a project manager's most important competences?
  - ❖ i.e. what makes an excellent project manager?
- ❖ What do you think are the expectations of management?
  - ❖ check your answers with Crawford (2005)
- ❖ Summary in the plenary



---

# Suggested skills for project managers

---

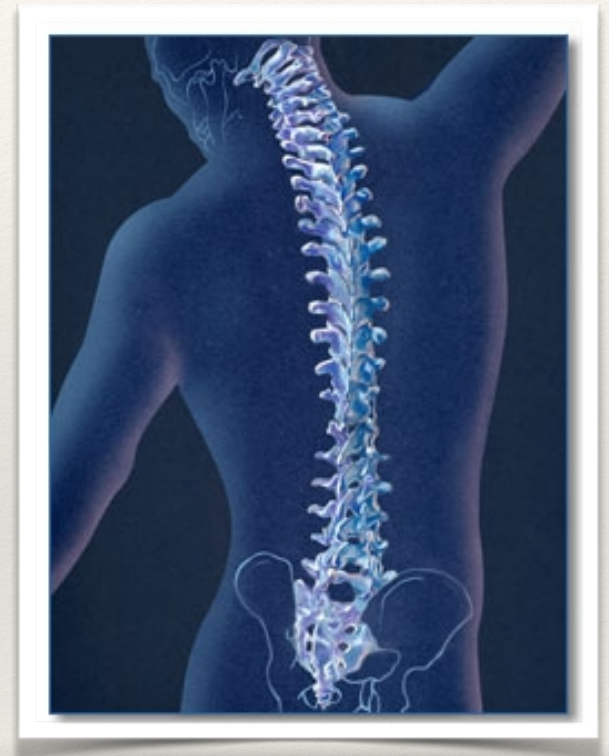
- ❖ Be comfortable with change, understand the organization, and be able to lead teams to accomplish project goals
- ❖ Have “hard” skills (e.g., product knowledge and knowing how to use various project management tools and techniques)
- ❖ Have “soft” skills (e.g., be able to work with various types of people)

❖



# Suggested skills for project managers

- ❖ Communication skills: listening, persuading
- ❖ Organisational skills: planning, goal-setting, analysing
- ❖ Team Building skills: empathy, motivation, esprit de corps
- ❖ Leadership skills: set examples, be energetic, have vision (big picture), be positive, delegate
- ❖ Coping skills: flexibility, creativity, patience, persistence
- ❖ Technological skills: experience, project knowledge





---

# The project manager's external focus

---

- ❖ Create value for the customer and the organisation
- ❖ Ability to control time, cost and **human resources**
- ❖ Achieve project goals (scope management)
- ❖ Manage procurement (subcontractors)
- ❖ Manage finalisation of contracts (projects)
- ❖ Project definition and planning
- ❖ Risk management
- ❖ Stakeholder management
- ❖ Communication and negotiation skills
- ❖ Ability to inspire and encourage the performance of others



---

# The project manager's internal focus

---

- ❖ Team performance instead of individual performance
  - ❖ Downplay your own technical role/expertise
  - ❖ Put emphasis on collaboration
- ❖ Create and maintain the full commitment of everyone
  - ❖ Involve them in the planning and let them have influence on the work
  - ❖ Involve them in the solution, take advantage of their skills
- ❖ Exercise leadership rather than control
  - ❖ Whenever the team is able to do so, let them decide and be in control
  - ❖ Be a role model, example, clear in word and deed, visible
- ❖ Expand the team's skills
  - ❖ Give them opportunities, support them, be a coach/mentor for them – so they can develop



---

# To give and receive criticism

---

- ❖ Be aware of yourself
  - ❖ Nervous, feeling uncomfortable, not up to yourself, overzealous
  - ❖ Breathing, body language
  - ❖ Feel your own inner values
- ❖ Be aware of the other
  - ❖ Body language, expression
  - ❖ What is actually said (not your interpretation)
  - ❖ Be sure to get verbal confirmation (of your interpretation)
- ❖ Be aware of the situation
  - ❖ Quiet and undisturbed environment
  - ❖ Friendly and welcoming atmosphere
  - ❖ Introduction and conclusion (clarification and agreements)
- ❖ •It's not the action that matters – it's your reaction!



---

# Receiving criticism

---

Three types of criticism:

- ❖ Valid criticism
- ❖ Unjustified criticism
- ❖ Vague, imprecise criticism, hints

Reactions:

- ❖ Accept the criticism
- ❖ Ask for more insight / information
- ❖ Ignore the criticism ? **NO**

❖



---

## Exercise 2: Criticism from a customer

---

- ❖ You have heard from your sales person that the customer has expressed concern regarding whether she will get a solution that meets her requirements (expectations). She feels that you have not listened enough to her employees.
- ❖ You know that there have been cases where, after long discussions with the customer's employees, you have felt that you had to "cut through" and propose a solution, which you believe can meet the customer's needs and which will work, both technically and financially.
- ❖ How will you handle this situation?



---

# Giving criticism

---

- ❖ Address the issue in question
  - ❖ Avoid negative statements
  - ❖ Instead: "I am concerned about", "I need your help"
- ❖ Describe the issue precisely
  - ❖ Avoid accusations and defensive positions
  - ❖ Instead: "When this happens..., the result is..., and I feel..."
  - ❖ Have the other person present his/her point of view: Use open question
  - ❖ All the time recapitulate what you have heard to ensure that you have understood it correct
- ❖ Request a change of behaviour
  - ❖ Discuss ways of resolving the issue, actively seek ideas and suggestions from the other
- ❖ Agree on an action plan
  - ❖ Recapitulate what has been said and confirm the common agreement on the solution
  - ❖ Close the discussion on a friendly upbeat note: "I am glad we had this talk"Follow up
- ❖ Follow up



---

## Exercise 3: Giving criticism to a project participant

---

- ❖ A couple of times one of your software developers has (carelessly?) uploaded code to the common code base, without it having been tested well enough. The result has been that the daily build has failed and it has cost the team a lot of time to find out why. He is one of your key employees on database software. He has lately seemed somewhat demotivated about the project.
- ❖ How will you handle this situation?
- ❖ Act it out in the plenary – a little role play



---

# Final note

---

- ❖ Project management is a contact sport, not a technical discipline



---

# Additional readings

---

- ❖ Gehring, D. R. (2007). Applying traits theory of leadership to project management. *Project Management Journal*, 38(1), 44–54:  
<https://www.pmi.org/learning/library/leadership-project-management-myers-briggs-5641>
  - ❖ the role of leadership in project management
- ❖ Gaddis (1959). The project manager. *Harvard Business Review*.  
<https://www.nickols.us/ThePM.pdf>
- ❖ Hauksson & Jonasson (2016). The mindful project manager. In *Proceedings International Expert Seminar in Zurich. Future Trends in Project, Programme and Portfolio Management 20126* (163)



