

Managing The Emotional Response Of Customers

Being able to manage the emotional responses of customers is a key skill within project management. Within the delivery of software, customers are the primary focus of this and their expectations and emotions need to be managed in order to achieve the outcomes that all parties are seeking. Project managers can utilise a number of techniques in order to manage these expectations and emotional responses.

One key aspect of managing these emotional needs is by developing emotional intelligence in project managers. According to Clarke (2010), there is a direct correlation between a high level of emotional intelligence and project outcomes. Although their research highlights that there is a delay in this happening, they hypothesise that “training will result in positive improvements in project management behaviours (competences) associated with teamwork and conflict management 6 months following training”. Kerzner (2024) backs up this view point, indicating that “effective emotional intelligence can lead to better decision-making, improved collaboration with everyone, including stakeholders, and positive relationships with co-workers”. This in turn has a positive impact on customers, as there is limited friction that may come to them.

Likewise, it is also just as important to regulate emotions during decision making. Turner (2021) highlights that negative facets of emotion such as nervousness and frustration can lead to poor decision making, which in turn can lead to customers embodying some of these emotions as they take control of deliverables. We can only expect customers to be as rational and emotionally regulated as we are, given the deep relationship between development team and customer.

It is clear that customers naturally experience different emotions during the production of a deliverable, and they often have a high level of stress related to this. However, by project managers acting in an emotionally conscious way, with key regard to their own emotions, we can avoid potentially escalating these emotions in customers and work with them to alleviate any concerns.

References

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