CAPM Chapter 3:
The Role of the Project Manager

Figure 3.1. The role of a project manager is to lead the team (quicksandala, 2013).

3.1. Overview

The project manager leads the project team to achieve the project objectives. They may start their work at various stages in a project. They may start once the decision has been made to proceed with the project by the sponsor or the appropriate authorities or they may become involved at an earlier stage, when analysis is being done to identify the need for a project and what it will do. They may stay involved throughout the project planning and execution and may either conclude their duties when the project ends or stay involved to support the operational activities that follow. Their role will be influenced by its organizational and environmental context.

Project managers manage project team members who can have a wide variety of roles in the project. Some may perform the technical work of the project and others may undertake communications, provide logistical support, manage finances etc. The project manager will coordinate these different activities to ensure their effective integration and performance in pursuit of project objectives. The project manager is responsible for understanding the project objectives and how the team can be best organized to contribute effectively to them. PMBOK describes this as being similar to the role played by an orchestra conductor.

It is important that the project manager is an effective communicator, in order to effectively lead the team, and that they have knowledge of effective project management processes and practices. They also need to have some technical understanding of the area in which the project is being conducted. A project manager of a construction project needs to have some understanding construction practices and technologies. They don't need to be specialists in every area of project activity but they do need a good understanding of what the project team will be doing.

Semegnew Bekele is the project manager for the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam project. He has worked on large dam construction projects in the past and has a degree in civil engineering. He knows that he will manage specialists who will work on many different aspects of the project. There will be civil and structural engineers, power systems engineers and architects. There will also be financial specialists, social workers, human resources managers and many others who will directly or indirectly report to Semegnew. To manage these people Semegnew needs to have an awareness of what they do.

Semegnew will also need to work with the many project stakeholders, including local villagers, government officials, trade union leaders and suppliers to the project. Semegnew will need to have sensitivity to their interests and strong diplomatic and communication skills.

3.2. Definition of a Project Manager

The PMBOK stresses that the Project manager is the person who leads the team to achieve the project objectives.

Figure 3.2. Responsibilities of a project manager (Kokcharov, 2009).

3.3. The Project Manager's Sphere of Influence

3.3.1. Overview

The project manager will seek to influence various groups of people that might contribute to or hinder the success of the project. Often it is thought that the main focus of the project manager is the project team and their work in carrying out their tasks to execute the project. In most projects today there are many other people that the project manager will work with. These might include managers within the organization in which the project is being conducted, project sponsors and senior committees and bodies within the organization, the Project Management Office, project suppliers, customers and users of project outcomes and of the organization and other stakeholders. Project managers should be focused on managing this sphere of influence in pursuit of project objectives.
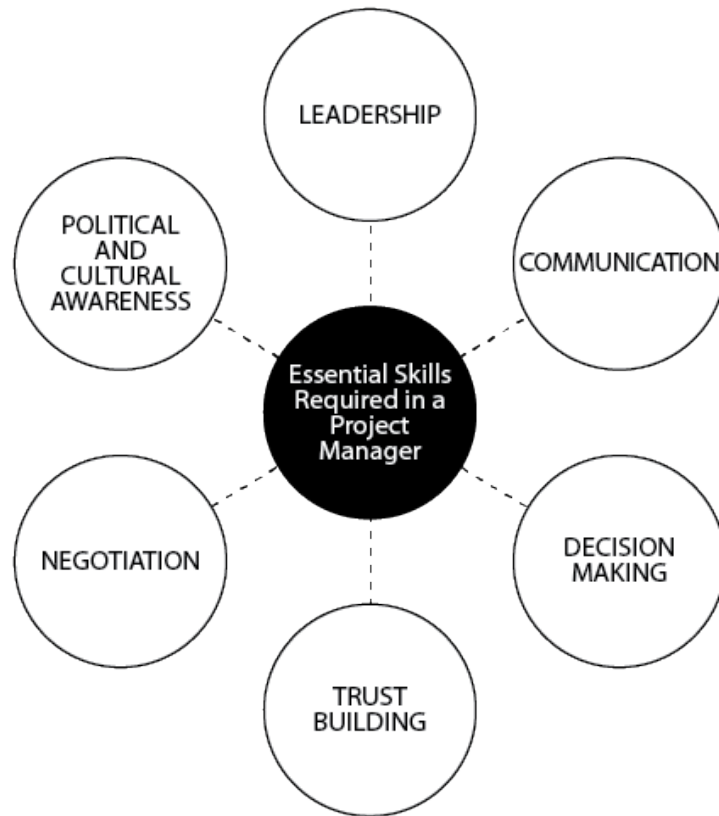
Figure 3.3. Soft skills required to be a project manager.
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3.3.2. The Project

Excellent project managers have excellent relationship and communications skills, according to recent research. These skills allow project managers to spread the project vision and provide direction towards its achievement. They allow them to manage conflicting objectives amongst project stakeholders and achieve agreement on moving forward.

Skills that will help project managers do this include: understanding multiple communication methods, developing and implementing communications plans, communicating clearly and simply, including receiving feedback, dealing with positive and negative matters and developing their own networks inside and outside the organization.

3.3.3. The Organization

The project manager also needs to work with other project managers who are working on projects that are part of the same program as their own. In these circumstances these discussions may deal with issues in the division of resources between projects and to ensure the effective coordination of project activity to achieve overall organization objectives. Cooperation between project managers may allow knowledge and resources to be shared, including the involvement of technical specialists and scarce technical resources. In the GERD project, Semegnew had an issue with the access road construction and was able to resolve it by

contacting a project manager of an Ethiopian bridge construction project and borrowing one of their engineers who specialised in road construction, for a short period.

The project manager will also be an advocate for the project in the organization. They will report on project progress and respond to questions from and engage in discussions with other people in the organization. This activity will influence support for this project and for other projects that the organization may undertake. It may also influence support for project management activity in the organization generally. The project manager needs to bee able to communicate effectively in these areas.

The organization structure will influence the relationships that the project manager will have. They may report to a functional manager or to a Project management Office, depending on the structure. They will work with other managers in the organization in pursuit of the project objectives.

3.3.4. The Industry

The project manager needs to stay up to date with trends in the industry that they are working in because it may influence how they will conduct their current project. These might include technological developments, emergence of new markets, regulations and standards, developments in project management and management generally. They will also monitor the environment that is external to the project including economic and political conditions.

3.3.5. Professional Discipline

Project managers need to stay up to date in the area that they specialize in and in the project management profession itself. They should also contribute themselves to knowledge of others in the profession. This means participating in the profession (for example through their local PMI chapter) and through accessing training for themselves.

3.3.6. Across Disciplines

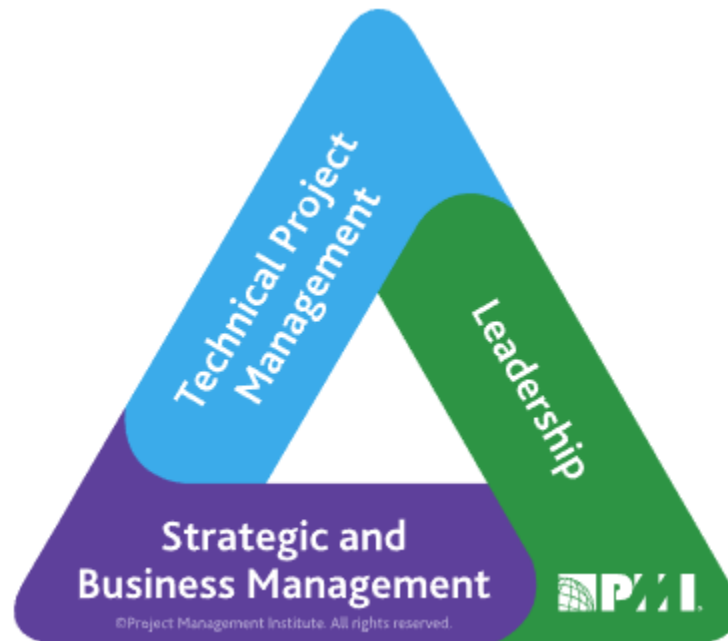Project managers can help people in other professions understand the value of project management in their profession.

3.4. Project Manager Competencies

3.4.1. Overview

The PMI Talent Triangle has been developed in recent years and is based on the Project Manager Competency Development Framework. It describes the skills required by a project manager in three main areas: Technical Project Management, the technical knowledge and skills needed to manage projects, Leadership, guiding and motivating the project team and strategic and business management, industry and organization knowledge that can be applied to improve business performance.

The following figure represents the PMI Talent Triangle:

Project Management Institute. (2018). Talent Triangle.
Retrieved from https://www.pmi.org/learning/training-development/talent-triangle

The triangle has been developed by the PMI to emphasise that project technical skills are not enough for success in managing projects. Rather, Leadership and Strategic and Business knowledge and skills are also necessary.

3.4.2. Technical Project Management Skills

The Knowledge Areas in PMBOK describe many of the technical skills that are used in managing projects. Expert judgement is frequently referred to in PMBOK. Knowing where to find appropriate expertise is an important characteristic of a project manager.

Project managers select the technical skills that will be applied in their project. The PMI's research indicates that the following factors are important elements in most projects: The Critical success factors for the

project, the schedule, selected financial reports and the issue log. Project managers also need to be able to decide how the technical knowledge and skills should be applied in their own project. Options exist for how application may proceed and they need to be able to know what is appropriate for their project. Allowing sufficient time for project planning and carefully managing the technical elements is also critical.

3.4.3. Strategic and Business Management Skills

The project manager must be able to understand how the project fits within the overall goals and objectives of the organization. How does it impact these and how do the goals and objectives influence the project work? They also need to understand how the execution of the project will impact the operations of the organization. How can disruption be minimised and benefits maximised? To be able to do this, the project manager needs to understand activities throughout the organization, including how its products or services are created, the processes that are used and the market that they are operating in. This is known as domain knowledge. The project manager should work to maximize the business value of the project. This will require knowledge of the organization's mission and strategy, its goals and objectives.

The project manager will consider the risks that the project may pose to the business and how it will influence the risks that the business is facing. The financial implications of the outcomes of the project should be considered, its value to the business and how the project benefits will be realised.

3.4.4. Leadership Skills

The performance of the project will be influenced by the activity of the project team. Guiding and motivating the team are the responsibility of the project manager and require skills in many areas, including negotiating, communicating, problem solving, critical thinking etc. Projects are becoming more complicated and strategically important to organizations and effective people management is essential for project success.

Effective leaders of people are thought to be good at communicating and winning support for the project vision, being optimistic, working well with others, dealing with relationships and conflict and communicating. They are respectful, demonstrate integrity, and are life long learners. They are good working under stress and deciding on their priorities, take a holistic view of the project and build effective teams.

Good leaders also get things done and that often means being good at working well with politics, being able to influence, negotiate and deal with power. Good political management requires understanding of the political environment of the project and how power can be obtained and exercised within it. Power can be positional (associated with a particular role), informational (obtained by having information), referent (given to someone because they are respected or admired) situational (due to circumstances that may exist) and can also be obtained in many other ways. Project managers need to be able to seek out the power that they need to complete the project successfully.

3.4.5. Comparison of Leadership and Management

Management is usually associated with directing people to do things while leadership is usually associated with guidance, through inspiration and persuasion. Project managers need to be able to both lead and manage, according to the situation in their project. The following chart from the PMBOK illustrates the differences between leadership and management:

Management	Leadership
Direct using positional power	Guide, influence, and collaborate using relational power
Maintain	Develop
Administrate	Innovate
Focus on systems and structure	Focus on relationships with people
Rely on control	Inspire trust
Focus on near-term goals	Focus on long-range vision
Ask how and when	Ask what and why
Focus on the bottom line	Focus on the horizon
Accept status quo	Challenge status quo
Do things right	Do the right things
Focus on operational issues and problem solving	Focus on vision, alignment, motivation, and inspiration

Leaders have various styles that they use. These may depend on the personality of the leader or the situation that they are dealing with. People (including the leader) have different moods and needs and this will influence the leadership style that is used. Common leadership styles include Laissez-faire (people can do what they want), transactional (rewards are based on behaviours that are desired), and charismatic (leaders that inspire, often through their energy and enthusiasm).

People can also have a range of personality types, including authentic, courteous, creative, emotional, intellectual, political, systemic, etc.

3.5. Performing Integration

The project manager works with the project sponsor to align project results with the project objectives, the objectives of the organization's other projects in its portfolio and/or programs and business areas and the strategic objectives of the organization. They also provide focus for the project team, ensuring that their work is where it can provide the most benefit. Integration of processes, knowledge and people is intended to do this.

Integration is fully discussed in the next chapter of PMBOK. Integration is discussed here in process, cognitive and context areas. Finally, complexity and integration is discussed.

3.5.1. Performing Integration at the Process Level

Project management involves the application of many processes and activities. Integrating these through understanding how they impact each other is the responsibility of the project manager and is important to enable project success. The relationships between processes are complex and will vary from project to project. The Perform Integrated Change Control process is used to manage changes in the project to ensure that their impact throughout the project will be considered and addressed.

3.5.2. Integration at the Cognitive Level

Projects can be managed in different ways — many different approaches exist. The project manager is responsible for applying the project management knowledge areas using the approach that is being used for their project. This may depend on their own beliefs, knowledge and skills. They use their understanding of the business, their technical skills, experience and leadership which are integrated with their knowledge of the project management processes.

3.5.3. Integration at the Context Level

The project context will influence how the project manager will manage the project and will be integrated into their approach. Semegnew is managing the GERD project in Ethiopia and will be influenced by the local culture, government regulations and requirements, local stakeholders, the international community and relations with downstream nations such as Egypt.

3.5.4. Integration and Complexity

Research indicates that projects are becoming more complex and more difficult to manage. This complexity is thought to be because of the organization's system, human behaviour and uncertainty in the organization and its environment. Managing this complexity is part of project integration. Through understanding the sources of complexity, project managers can better understand how to manage it.

References

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1. The project that Rod is undertaking is in the CVG organisation which uses an internal social media system for communications, involves people from many cultural backgrounds, and enables people to participate in project teams using online tools. Rod will manage his project, taking these factors into account. This is known as:
   A. Integration at the cognitive level
   B. Integration at the process level
   C. Integration at the complex level
   D. Integration at the context level

2. Which of the following is not a dimension of complexity:
   A. Communications
   B. System behaviour
   C. Human behaviour
   D. Ambiguity

3. Which of the following is not a characteristic of project complexity:
   A. Containing multiple parts
   B. Exhibiting dynamic interactions between the parts
   C. Possessing a number of connections between the parts
   D. Behaving in a static manner

4. Olivia is the manager of a software development project in the TYU company. She is managing a member of her project team who has been frequently late for work. After raising the issue repeatedly with the team member she has now decided that a formal warning has to be issued to the team member to try to get their behaviour to improve. This is which type of power:
   A. Reward oriented
   B. Punitive
   C. Referent
   D. Persuasive

5. Domain knowledge is also known as:
   A. Business knowledge
   B. Technical knowledge
   C. Interpersonal knowledge
   D. All of these factors

6. Which of the following is not a personality characteristic that is important for a project manager:
   A. Cultural sensitivity
   B. Authenticity
   C. Political intelligence
   D. Dominance

7. Which of the following describes the role of the project manager most accurately:
   A. The project manager focuses of providing management oversight of a functional or business unit
   B. The project manager is responsible for ensuring that business operations are efficient
   C. The project manager is the person assigned by the performing organisation to lead the team that is responsible for achieving the project objectives
   D. None of the above

8. Terry is the project manager in YHU company and works with people from inside and outside the organization to complete the project successfully, including stakeholders, suppliers, sponsors and project team members who are all part of Terry's:
   A. Sphere of influence
   B. Network
   C. Community
   D. Environmental enterprise factors

9. The top 2 % of project managers, as designated by their bosses and team members distinguish themselves by:
   A. By being good micro managers
   B. By being able to manage many tasks at the same time
   C. By being popular with team members
   D. By demonstrating superior relationship and communication skills while displaying a positive attitude

10. Other independent projects or projects that are part of the same program as that of the project manager may impact their project. Which of the following is not a reason for this:
    A. Conflicts between members of the project team
    B. Demands on the same resources
    C. Priorities of funding
    D. Alignment of project goals and objectives with those of the organization

11. Georgia is a project manager in the TRE construction company. She regularly keeps her project management skills up to date by attending training courses and participating in her local PMI chapter. This activity is known as:
    A. Knowledge development
    B. The learning process for a project manager
    C. Knowledge transfer and integration
    D. Professional development

12. Which of the following are the elements of the PMI Talent Triangle:
    A. Technical project management, Strategic and business management, Leadership
    B. Technical project management, Strategic and business management, Authority
    C. Technical project management, Visionary expression, Leadership
    D. Technical project management, Tactical precision, Leadership

13. Which of the following is not a technical project management skill:

    A. Tailor both traditional and agile tools, techniques, and methods for each project
    B. Make time to plan thoroughly and prioritize diligently
    C. Manage project elements, including, but not limited to. schedule, cost, resources and risks
    D. Explain to others the essential business aspects of a project

14. Which of the following is a strategic and business management skill that is desirable for a project manager:
    A. Manage the project schedule
    B. Tailor both traditional agile tools, techniques, methods for each project
    C. Developing and applying pertinent product and industry expertise
    D. Guide motivate and direct a team

15. Which of the following is not a leadership skill that is desirable for a project manager:
    A. Negotiation
    B. Communication
    C. Critical thinking
    D. Scheduling

16. Power that involves charm and attraction is known as:
    A. Positional power
    B. Personal or charismatic power
    C. Punitive or coercive power
    D. Ingratiating power

17. Which of the following is a characteristic of leadership:
    A. Focus on relationships with people
    B. Focus on systems and structure
    C. Do things right
    D. Ask how and when

18. Which of the following is a characteristic of management:
    A. Innovate
    B. Inspire trust
    C. Ask what and why
    D. Accept status quo

19. Yvette is a project manager in JNM company and likes to allow her team to make their own decisions and establish their own goals. Yvette's leadership style is:
    A. Transactional
    B. Laissez-faire
    C. Transformational
    D. Interactional

20. The ability to think abstractly, to see things differently, to innovate is the personality trait:
    A. Creative
    B. Cultural
    C. Intellectual
    D. Systemic

Quizlet Flashcards

PMBOK emphasizes this role for a project manager.

The person who leads the team to achieve the project objectives

Examples of people project managers might work with outside of their project team but *within* the organization conducting the project

- Managers
- Project sponsors
- Senior committees
- The Project Management Office (PMO)

Examples of people project managers might work with outside of their project team and *outside* the organization conducting the project.

- Suppliers
- Customers
- Users of project outcomes

Oft-cited skills that excellent project managers must have to spread project vision and provide direction

Relationship-building and communication skills

Reasons that project managers will need to work with other project managers part of the same program

- Division of resources
- Coordination of project activity
- Overall organization objectives

Ways that project managers fulfill their role as advocate for the project within the organization

- Report on progress
- Answer questions
- Engage in discussions
- Support project management generally

Particular to each organization, this will influence the relationships the project manager will have

Organization structure

These are some areas that project managers should pay attention to stay up-to-date

- Trends in the industry they are working in
- The environment (economic and political conditions)
- The area they specialize in
- The project management profession
- Making contributions to the project management profession

Three main areas described by the PMI Talent Triangle

Technical Project Management, Leadership, Strategic and Business Management

Framework for the PMI Talent Triangle

The Project Manager Competency Framework

Within the PMI Talent Triangle, Technical Project Management can be described this way.

The technical knowledge and skills needed to manage projects

Within the PMI Talent Triangle, Leadership can be described this way.

Guiding and motivating the project team

Within the PMI Talent Triangle, Strategic and Business Management can be described this way

Industry and organization knowledge that can be applied to improve business performance

Knowledge Areas in PMBOK

These describe many of the technical skills that are used in managing projects

Project manager knowledge that contributes to Technical Project Management skills

- Critical success factors
- Schedule
- Selected financial reports
- Issue log
- Appropriate application of technical knowledge and skills
- Sufficient time for project planning

Project manager knowledge that contributes to Strategic and Business Management skills

- Impact on goals and objectives of the organization
- Impact on operations of the organization
- Activities throughout the organization/domain knowledge
- The organization's mission and strategy
- Risks to the business
- Financial implications

Project manager skills that contribute to Leadership skills

- Guiding and motivating
- Negotiating
- Communicating
- Problem solving
- Critical thinking

Four types of power leaders may need to be able to deal with

- Positional
- Informational
- Referent
- Situational

Positional power

Power associated with a particular role

Informational power

Power obtained by having information

Referent power

Power given to someone because they are respected or admired

Situational power

Power due to circumstances that may exist

The difference between management and leadership for project managers

Management – associated with directing people to do things

Leadership – associated with guidance through inspiration and persuasion

Three common leadership styles

- Laissez faire
- Transactional
- Charismatic

Laissez faire leadership style

People can do what they want

Transactional leadership style

Rewards are based on behaviours that are desired

Charismatic leadership style

Inspirational, often through energy and enthusiasm

Relationship between project manager and project sponsor

Alignment between the project and the organization, focus for the project team, and integration of processes, knowledge and people

Perform Integrated Change Control process

Process used to manage changes in the project to ensure that their impact throughout the project will be considered and addressed

Integration at the Cognitive Level

Integration of the project manager's beliefs, knowledge, skills, understanding of the business, experience, and leadership, with their knowledge of the project management process

Integration at the Context Level

Integration of the project context with the project manager's approach

Test Your Knowledge — CAPM Content Chapter 3 Answers

1. D
2. A
3. D
4. B
5. A
6. D
7. C
8. A
9. D
10. A
11. C
12. A
13. D
14. C
15. D
16. B
17. A
18. D
19. B
20. A