

Transferable Project Management Skills

Project management and similar skills found in other careers

Project managers oversee all aspects of a project, from start to finish. They manage the budget and resources, organize the team, and provide feedback at every process stage. They ensure deadlines are met and the final product is of high quality. Being a project manager comes with tremendous pressure because a project manager is responsible for the success and failure of a project. The best project managers should possess the soft and technical skills to address the responsibilities associated with their position.

Many of these skills and characteristics are transferrable from other jobs. By the time you finish reading this article, you will know how to compare positions that overlap with project management and which roles could easily transfer into project management.

Roles with skills that transfer to project management

- A *data analyst* may be good with organization and math; both are vital skills for project managers because they need to keep an organized schedule to keep the project on plan and budget their allocated resources to stay within their quota.
- A *project coordinator* is like a project manager; it is common to find a project coordinator assisting a project manager in their projects. Both roles involve coordinating, organizing, writing documentation, and having the ability to manage time wisely.
- A *technical writer* is someone who writes content about technical subjects. Like project managers, they must be good with grammar, writing documentation, analyzing, and researching because these skills are also used in many everyday tasks of a project manager.
- A *contract manager* is a professional who handles a company's legal documents and contracts. They weigh the pros and cons of new contracts and negotiate to ensure their company gets everything they need to get the job done. Contract managers must be good at negotiation and risk management. Project managers must also be able to weigh the pros and cons of different budget and resource strategies and negotiate with stakeholders to come to the best possible outcome for the entire group. Project managers must also be able to manage risk.
- A *budget analyst* must think critically and be able to analyze data to solve a problem or find an answer. A budget analyst's role typically includes reviewing budgets and providing guidance on how to manage the company's budget. Project managers must also think critically and look at all factors to determine the appropriate course

of action. Some project managers will also handle project budgets, so they must be able to look at the budget and determine how to move forward. For example, if materials for the project are more expensive than originally planned, they may need to find another vendor, renegotiate a contract, or reallocate budget resources.

- An *event planner* must take many moving pieces and align them to ensure an event goes smoothly. They have to consider the stakeholder's budget, the scheduling of events, and ensure everyone and everything coordinates. Event planners make great project managers because events are very similar to projects.
- A *quality control inspector* monitors the standards of manufactured products. They must be meticulous in catching any product mistakes before leaving the facility. They must also be good at documentation to improve quality control with each new batch of products. A project manager must be equally meticulous to ensure catching mistakes in a project before sending it to a client or going live. Project managers are also responsible for documenting processes to ensure continuous improvement.

Skills that transfer to project management

As you have seen, other careers with skills that transfer well to project management include event planners, technical writers, data analysts, and operations managers. But many soft and technical skills found in other positions also transfer well to project management, such as

- time management
- written communication
- verbal communication
- budgeting
- foundational computer skills
- time management
- leadership

Therefore, many other roles can provide you with skills you can apply in a project management role. So long as you possess (or are willing to learn) the soft and technical skills to address the day-to-day tasks and responsibilities associated with a project management role, you can be a successful project manager.