

Is Project Management Office the Conductor of an Organization?

By Ipek Sahra Ozguler

Just close your eyes. Dream you're in the finest concert hall, Boston Symphony Hall, after a busy day at work. Listen to the music. Watch the orchestra play. Watch the conductor's movement. The conductor waves his hands around. Sometimes slowly. Sometimes fast. The orchestra plays in relation to the conductor's beat. Sometimes slowly, sometimes fast. Suddenly you remember the quote by L.R. Sayles.

"Project Managers function as bandleaders who pull together their players, each a specialist with individual score and internal rhythm. Under the leader's direction, they all respond to the same beat." You want to differentiate the statement of L.R. Sayles and adapt it to the project management office. You think if there is a relationship between bandleaders and project managers, it might be possible a relationship exist between conductors and project management offices. But before you accept this, make some research to prove this argument.

First of all, you should learn what a bandleader is. A bandleader is defined as "the conductor of a band." [1] Dave Halls wrote in his latest blog the secret to being a great band leader. He defined five areas for being a successful bandleader: considering and managing people, musicianship, administration, commercial, communication. [2] Based on this information and your project management knowledge, you create a comparison table.

Band Leading Knowledge Areas	Project Management Knowledge Areas
People	Project Human Resource Management
Musicianship	Project Human Resource Management
Administration	Project Integration Management Project Scope Management Project Time Management Project Quality Management Project Risk Management Project Procurement Management
Commercial	Project Integration Management Project Stakeholder Management Project Cost Management
Communication	Project Communications Management

Figure 1: Comparison Table between Band Leading Knowledge Areas and Project Management Knowledge Areas

This comparison table will help you better understand the connections between project managers and band leaders. Now you're ready to prove the correctness of your argument. Your argument is that a project management office is conductor of an organization, but it's true or not. You need show the relationship between conductors and project management offices. According to Wikipedia a conductor is a person who leads a musical ensemble. He or she is a guide for the orchestras and choirs as using visible gesture.

The primary duties of the conductor are:

- To unify performers
- To set the tempo
- To execute clear preparations and beats
- To listen critically and shape the sound of the ensemble. [4]

Now, you can put your knowledge to work by creating a comparison table.

Duties of a Conductor	Duties of a PMO
To unify performers	To centralize management and control of projects
To set the tempo	To prioritize and orchestrate project delivery
To execute clear preparations and beats	To execute projects based on PMO standards, methodologies
To listen critically and shape the sound of the ensemble	To monitor the status and healthy of projects

Figure 1: Comparison Table between Duties of A Conductor and Duties of A PMO

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is worth repeating and emphasizing that a project management office in an organization acts as a conductor. As the conductor is the leader of an orchestra, the project management office is the leader of an organization for centralizing management and control of projects, prioritizing and orchestrating project delivery, executing projects based on standards and methodologies, and monitoring the status and health of projects.

References

- [1] <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bandleader>
 - [2] <http://promote-your-band-by-blogging.com/secret-great-band-leader/>
 - [3] PMBOK 5th Edition
 - [4] Wikipedia
 - [5] <http://www.cio.com/article/2441861/project-management/the-function-of-the-project-management-office--pmo-.html>
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About the Author



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