

How to be more complete as a project manager ¹

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Based on our practical experience (Randall L. Englund and Alfonso Bucero), success in any environment largely depends upon completing successful projects, and successful projects are done by skilled project managers and teams, supported by effective sponsors. The integration of a broad set of skills can help us, as project managers to make a difference and achieve more optimized outcomes.

The complete project manager extends fundamental knowledge of project management to integrate key people, team, business, organizational, and technical skills, drawing upon multiple disciplines for knowledge, practices and insights. The right set of skills to achieve completeness depends on individual starting points, aptitude, attitude, desires, and the supporting context. For instance, in my case I tried to be open minded and learn from all the projects I was assigned as a project manager, and I did. Obviously, I made some mistakes but I learned from them.

A good practice is to establish your brand – brand YOU. That way people appreciate consistency in what to expect from your involvement and efforts. Getting results on every assignment and using social media appropriately, including blog postings, are ways to do this. Integrating skills from multiple disciplines and applying them effectively are the means that contribute to the uniqueness that is you. Being adapted to our social era is indispensable to move forward. We need to work together with five different generations and work successfully with all of them.

An organic approach

An organic approach to project management is appropriate: adopt, adapt, and apply effective concepts from nature to make organizations more project (and people) friendly, leading to greater value-added outcomes and better economic results (Englund & Bucero, 2019). Embrace a mindset that your actions help to create the right environment to “grow” people to produce their best work. My coauthor Randall L. Englund and I believe that all leaders need to create healthy environments for people to constantly and sustainably achieve project success.

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Much like organic proteins may be complete or incomplete completeness in our context taps your passion, persistence and patience, achieving outstanding project and organizational results requires passionate belief in our projects. While this comes easier with worthwhile projects, changed thinking may be required with challenging or questionable projects. This takes time and dedicated effort. A complete project manager needs to persist, much like an infectious positive mosquito, with all project stakeholders, and use your patience to get results.

Are you incomplete?

Most of us are incomplete when it comes to skills, knowledge, and attitude that lead to consistent project success. Many of us make mistakes because our lack of skills and experience. As a consequence, project fail suffers from mindset deadlines, insufficient resources and support, missed commitments, surprises, new challenges we are unprepared to meet, unhappy team members and customers, career stagnation, unfulfilled dreams and aspirations, perhaps even depression. Struggles are too common. We are victims of politics, disappointed that our ideas are not accepted, and do not get others in our side. Strategic goals are a foreign concept for some project managers.

There is a hope

When operating in our strengths, regardless of personality -being introverted or extroverted, quiet or loud – we can get along with others, share the credit, and complement each other. When we pair up with people and team members who possess complementary strengths and skills, we become more complete. And then it will be a good day for us.

The Project Office of One

Sometimes it appears necessary to operate as a *project office of one* with no formal position or authority, these people feel alone within their organizations. They may not have a structured learning system; they keep knowledge to themselves since others may not be ready to receive it. Having both aptitude and interest, they may serve as a central source to identify, schedule, track, and coordinate more effective processes and relationships. This role may be a position to which people devoted to excellence in project work can aspire, as they eventually serve as change agents within organizations.

Final message

It seems that the only constant thing in our society during the twenty first century is change- technical changes, paradigm shifts, project manager behavioral changes. We need always to be ready to change and keep developing. We all have potential to be excellent, it means making a commitment to be extraordinary. If you believe in yourself, you will achieve your goals.

Today is a great day to start. If you dedicate time and effort to open your mind and face new possibilities, tomorrow will be even better.

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