

Why am I passionate about Projects?¹

Manuel M. Ancizu Beramendi

Abstract

Why am I passionate about projects? In this article, I provide an overview of five main reasons, highlighting the facts that Projects are all about people working together, as well as they are the natural connection to transform ideas and strategies into something real that adds value and a positive sustainable impact on the world we live in.

And you, what makes you thrive from being part of a project?

Introduction

We live surrounded by projects, every day and everywhere: professional and personal, small and large, short or long term... whether we realize it or not, life itself is a project through which we experiment, learn, plan, execute, manage risks and gradually adapt our path, just to put some examples of some of the few characteristic similarities between life and projects.

A project is a temporary endeavor with a specific goal, beginning and end. It is also the natural link between people and their ideas, between companies and the strategies they want to implement.

Do you want to know what I like the most about projects? Below you can find five reasons why I am passionate about them:

1. Every new idea or strategy is implemented through a project.

Personal ideas or company strategic plans are just that (ideas and strategies) until they materialise, deliver results and provide the real value they were aimed for.

The first step to make that idea or strategy come true is to create a project with a defined final objective that contains the activities to be deployed, the way to do it and the people that need to be involved.

¹ How to cite this article: Beramendi, M.M.A. (2021). Why am I passionate about Projects? Commentary, *PM World Journal*, Vol. X, Issue XI, November.

Whatever the type of project, they all have something in common: they are the true connection that enable ideas to be transformed into actual outcomes and, therefore, projects have the possibility to improve the world we live in as they are the vehicle to make ideas come true.

2. People are at the center of the projects.

People are, without a doubt, at the center of projects. There are plenty of decisions to be made and agreements to be reached in order to move forward and achieve the objective:

- Does this project add value to the company's strategy?
- What team will execute it, who is the person assigned to lead it?
- Has progress been communicated to stakeholders?

As the ones mentioned above, lots of other questions emerge along the execution of a project; technology can be applied to make project management more efficient and collaborative but there is no doubt that projects are driven by people:

- leading, engaging and motivating teams to work cohesively, even at times when there seems to be no way forward.
- going the extra mile supporting another colleague, achieving the milestone on time or raising an innovative proposal that really makes a difference.
- reaching mutually beneficial agreements that build trust, credibility and consistency in front of the customer or among team members (probably one of the most complex aspects of people-to-people relationships).

None of these key activities is achieved automatically; it is people with their willpower, their determination and their desire to move the project forward that make it possible; it is people who are willing to involve and motivate other people towards a shared objective that can have a positive impact on the world we live in.

Placing people at the center of the project is certainly a key element to achieve outstanding sustainable results.

3. Working in teams and in multicultural environments is very rewarding.

Great teams are made of great people; and teams execute the projects. There is a special motivation and pride associated to the feeling of belonging to a team that is working towards a bold and inspiring goal.

The best teams are usually diverse and integrated by people from different gender, backgrounds, nationalities or ways of thinking; it is very beneficial that the composition of the team reflects the type of customer that will receive the product or service.

Thanks to technology, teams can interact face-to-face and virtually, people can have access online to a multicultural, varied and enriching environment, which requires cultivating different types of leadership depending on the configuration and characteristics of the team, its culture or the background of team members, among others.

This variety of situations, people and interactions is fascinating and requires a constant adaptation of leadership styles, a deep sense of listening and a great dose of empathy⁽¹⁾ so that, no matter the team we work with, the project becomes successful.

4. Projects enable to grow every day

The dynamism of projects is spectacular, partly because they have a specific objective, beginning and end; this means that each project is different and enables to have exposure to different situations, people and methodologies.

All this combined is an exponential generator of fabulous experiences which multiply learning possibilities, allow personal and professional growth, as well as push us to get out of our comfort zone. Working in a team reinforces this growth, learning from and exchanging knowledge with colleagues.

Moreover, if the team worked with a solid standardized methodological base adapted to each situation, it could better manage risks and transfer lessons learned between projects in a more agile and efficient way, creating a virtuous circle that lead to a positive impact not only on the current project but also on other similar projects that are being executed in parallel or that will be developed in the future.

5. Development of multi-disciplinary skills

Projects enable the combination of:

- technical knowledge and learnings.
- leadership of teams and people (empathy, decision making, agreements, motivation, ability to adapt, good communication skills).
- knowledge of business and strategy (projects are an integral part of an organization and it is necessary to clearly understand this context).

This is what PMI⁽²⁾ calls the Talent Triangle.

This combination promotes the development of relevant skills in multiple disciplines achieving a global perspective and leadership to identify the dependencies and connections between the different elements, situations and people in a project, as well as to evaluate how they might impact the company's economics.

These generalist skills can be applied in any sector or activity, which is another positive point to be considered by practitioners in terms of employability.

Conclusion

Transforming ideas into action, working with people, experimenting multiple different experiences, learning every day, being part of great teams and leading them, being aware of the positive impact of my activities and developing useful personal skills are some of the reasons why I am passionate about projects.

What about you, what makes you thrive of being part of a project?.

#people, #ideas, #projects, #delivery, #ideastoaction

References

(1) <https://www.forbes.com/sites/tracybrower/2021/09/19/empathy-is-the-most-important-leadership-skill-according-to-research/?sh=39cdc0d43dc5>

(2) <https://www.pmi.org>

About the Author



Manuel Ancizu

Pamplona, Spain



Human leadership, Global Sustainable Projects, Renewable energy, Story-teller, Keynote speaker, Lifetime learner, Risk management, Standardization

Manuel Ancizu is passionate about human leadership, sustainable projects and people's motivations. Enjoys working in international multicultural environments and wants to have a positive impact in society.

Manuel graduated in Economics from University of Navarra and obtained an MBA from IESE Business School (Spain); he has also studied in CEIBS (China) and University Anahuac del Sur (Mexico). He holds a number of professional certificates such as the PMP by Project Management Institute, Lead Auditor in ISO 9001:2015 by IRCA Association and has also received training in Management of Development Projects and Risk Management by Interamerican Development Bank (IDB).

Manuel has lived in Spain, France, UK and Mexico; he currently works in the wind energy sector leading the quality management of Offshore projects. Manuel has been involved in wind energy renewable projects developed in different parts of the globe with external customers, as well as in internal projects of cultural transformation, IT and global processes.

Thanks to his experience, he has delivered training sessions, lectures and keynotes to a different number of institutions. Manuel is a qualified member of the Spanish Standardization Body (UNE) and has been involved in the development of Standards and Norms in Projects, Programs and Portfolios; he has also participated in the translation of different ISO 21500 to Spanish language.

Manuel loves smiling, storytelling, dreaming and making ideas come true in a sustainable manner. Manuel lives in Pamplona (Spain) and can be contacted at manuel@manuelancizu.com