PM World Journal (ISSN: 2330-4480)
Vol. XII, Issue V – May 2023
www.pmworldjournal.com
Second Edition

Develop your Personal Skills to be a
Complete Project Manager
by Randall L. Englund &
Alfonso Bucero

Develop your Personal Skills to be a Complete Project Manager [1, 2]

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Abstract

Project managers are a very special breed of people, requiring a complete set of skills. The uncertain project environment forces project managers to adapt to circumstances and deal with them. We strongly believe the only things not flexible in life are stones. However, sometimes excessive project manager flexibility can damage him or her because other people may abuse that situation and create negative project results. Project managers are in great demand, and we believe that will increasingly be the case as the need for effective technologists continues to soar. Good project managers are trained, not born. We believe the right project managers are people who want to be in that position. They develop skills through experience, practice, and education. They become better project managers each time they successfully deliver a project. They learn new techniques and apply them on their projects. They learn lessons—sometimes the hard way—to be better managers and leaders in the future.

Skills for Dealing with Individuals

Project managers need to deal with people. In very few organizations the project manager can choose his/her team members. Usually available team members are assigned to the project, and probably not all of them are skilled enough. So project managers need to develop skills that include:

- **Networking**: The ability to assess the quality of working relationships, to identify where better relationships are required in order to complete the project, and develop a wider support network.

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[2] How to cite this paper: Englund, R. L., and Bucero, A. (2023, 2013). Develop your Personal Skills to be a Complete Project Manager, Originally published in 2013 PMI Global Congress Proceedings, Istanbul, Turkey; republished in the *PM World Journal*, Vol. XII, Issue V, May 2023.

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- **Building trust and rapport**: Developing a positive attitude in those who might be called upon for support.
- **Winning commitment to project goals**: This is not just a matter of having project goals; it is ensuring that everyone is sufficiently motivated to help the project manager deliver them.
- **Listening**: Listening is a vital skill at all times, especially to recognize emerging risks.
- **Counseling skills**: The project manager does not have to become a counselor, but these skills can be used to overcome personal emergencies.
- **Appropriate use of power**: Project managers' relationships with power are often very complex. Power is necessary and needs to be used appropriately; otherwise the goodwill and productivity of people vital to project success are lost.
- **Delegation**: This is a basic management skill and a vital one in a project environment. Some project managers, often those who come from a technical background, run into difficulties when not delegating sufficiently or appropriately.
- **Conflict Management and Negotiation**: Conflict can be a good thing. When it is managed well, project managers win respect and commitment and find better solutions to problems.

Managing from the Heart

Here is a touching example from one of my (Englund) on-line learning colleagues. Very early in her career, Brenda was a direct report to a manager whom she still admires as a leader to this day. "Although I no longer work for her, I am thankful that I had the opportunity to be coached and mentored by her. She helped to shape the leader that I am today."

"Margaret (I've changed her name slightly) is very skilled at the political games that the senior management team engages in. She has great vision for the organization, and she knows how to inspire her people to be their best. She is the type of leader that people do not want to disappoint by doing things halfheartedly; because she never gives less than 100%. But best of all, she is an all-around genuinely nice person."

Brenda applied for a position as a lateral move but in a high visibility position that would have put her in front of the senior management team on a regular basis. "I had all of the qualifications for the position: a bachelor's degree in business, a master's degree, and 13 years of operations experience. In my mind, there was absolutely no reason why I should not get the job."

"Then came that fateful Friday afternoon when I found out that I was not selected for the position. According to the hiring director, while my technical skills were a perfect match for the job, a few of the 'stakeholders' had expressed concerns about my interpersonal skills and my ability to effectively interact with others. I was crushed! In my mind, there was nothing wrong with the way that I communicated and related to people. My thought processes on technical matters were

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always very logical and I presented them the same way. I'll admit, there were a few instances when communications between me and someone in another department were not as smooth as they could have been, but I chalked that up to those folks not wanting to do their jobs!"

"I remember going into Margaret's office that Friday afternoon, shutting the door, and crying my eyes out. She let me go on and on about how the organization that I had committed my entire adult life to could treat me so horribly. After about 10 minutes of my incessant babbling, Margaret asked me if I would be open to hearing some honest feedback about my personality. I said 'of course' and she proceeded to tell me that, although I thought I was the most wonderful person in the world, other people in the organization did not necessarily share that same sentiment. She told me that there were times when I was too focused on getting the technical aspects of the job done right, and not focused enough on cultivating relationships with the people around me. She told me to consider taking a 'softer' approach when interacting with people. She guaranteed me that once I mastered the art of relationship building; I could have any job that I wanted. Margaret said 'Just as the key to real estate is location, location, location; the key to business is relationships, relationships, relationships'! That was the best advice that anyone has ever given to me," says Brenda.

"Along with that advice, Margaret also gave me a book to read called *Managing from the Heart* by Bracey, Rosenblum, Sanford, and Trueblood. She told me that I reminded her of the book's central character and perhaps there were some lessons that I could learn from that book." The book's main points are that leaders should heed the following five tenets when interacting with people:

1. Please don't make me wrong, even if you disagree
2. Hear and understand me
3. Tell me the truth with compassion
4. Remember to look for my loving intentions
5. Acknowledge the greatness within me

"I read the book and Margaret was right; I was the main character. I was talented, focused, and driven, but my interpersonal skills were horrible! From that moment on, I committed to being a different employee by utilizing those five mantras in all my interactions with my coworkers, and now with my own employees. In hindsight, I deeply appreciate how Margaret employed all five of those tenets when she spoke with me. It is sometimes hard to hear not so flattering things about you, but on that day, it wasn't hard at all. I can honestly say that Margaret and that book have forever altered my personality, in a good way!"

Attitude and Aptitude

Early in our careers, we the authors demonstrated negative attitudes regarding our jobs and towards the projects we managed. That negative *disposition* generated more problems than advantages. We created negative images of ourselves in front of colleagues, team members and managers. Results were not good—transmitting negativism to managers and team members, tarnishing our reputations, and limiting our options. The maturing process led us to change our thinking. We needed an attitude check! By changing attitude, we changed our worlds. This is such a fundamental, life changing experience that we now feel compelled to share it with our readers.

A Definition of <u>Attitude</u>

The dictionary defines attitude as: *a position of the body or manner of carrying oneself, a state of mind or a feeling; disposition, an arrogant or hostile state of mind or disposition.* Attitude is the preference of an individual or organization towards or away from things, events or people. It is the spirit and perspective from which an individual, group or organization approaches community development. Attitude shapes all decisions and actions. Attitude is very difficult to define with precision as it consists of qualities and beliefs that are non-tangible.

Skills for Dealing with Teams

In order to deal with small teams, the types of skills required for managing the core team include:

- **Diagnosing a team's state of development** (for example, using the Tuckman model through the stages of Forming/Storming/Norming/Performing)
- **Planning interventions** to improve collective performance and progress development
- **Building joint ownership** for common objectives
- **Managing differing personalities** and the team roles they play
- **Developing and maintaining team processes**
- **Integrating new people** into the team and managing team exits
- **Ensuring continuity of communication** flow and sharing of experiences
- **Improving relationships** and encouraging bonding, where appropriate

We are used to talking about the attitude of individuals, but it is important to recognize that project teams and organizations also have attitude. Usually, however, when we talk about an organization's attitude, we use the term "organizational culture." When we talk about project's attitude, we use the term project culture. The project manager's attitude dramatically affects team attitude. The following figure shows key qualities and beliefs that, from experience, determine whether or not an individual, team or organization has the attitude needed to successfully lead or actively participate in a project.
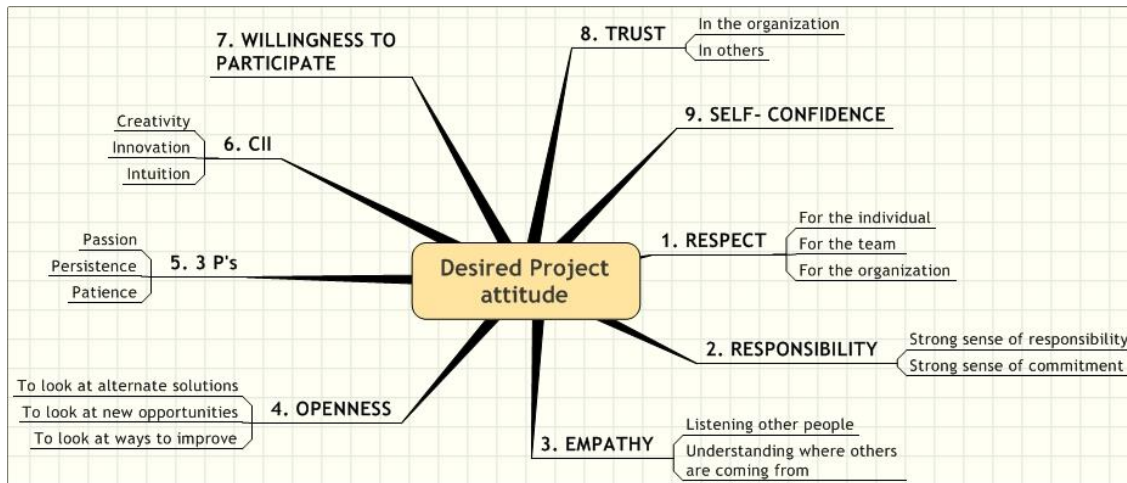
Exhibit 1 -Desired Project Attitude

Attitudes are a secret power working twenty four hours a day, for good or bad. Attitude is a brain filter through which you experience the world. Some people see the world through the mind of optimism while others see life through a mind of pessimism. Some people are in the middle—not very optimistic but also not very pessimistic.

People with positive attitude focus on project solutions. People with negative attitude focus on problems and issues. Project managers with negative attitude dramatically affect project success. It is the attitude of the project manager to the project and to the team that will determine the attitude of the project to the project manager. We shape our own projects. We have the choice of choosing the attitude that will make a success of our projects.

Take Attitude Actions to Improve as a Project Manager

Negative or positive thinking is an option for the complete project manager. Negative thinking is unfortunately an instinctive process. Positive thinking is a learned self-discipline that needs to be studied and practiced every day. In order to achieve a positive attitude, take physical, verbal, and mental actions. We want to share the following suggestions, based on managing projects in various organizations worldwide. You may be tempted to say these practices are not valid for you. We ask that you suspend that thinking and give them a try.

1. Admit it is no one's fault but yours: The more you blame others, your team members, your sponsor or other project stakeholders, the less chance you have to think positive thoughts, think about an alternative or potential solution, and take positive action toward a solution.

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2. Understand that you always have a choice: Your attitude is a choice, and many people select the negative side. Why? It is more natural to blame and defend than it is to admit and take responsibility. Team members observe your reactions, so be careful about them.

3. If you think it is okay, it is. If you think it is not okay, it is not: Your thoughts direct your attitude to a path. If you think this is crappy—Why does this always happen to me?—you have chosen a path. If you think this may not be greatest, but look what I'm learning, you have chosen the positive path.

4. Invest your time, do not spend it: Manage your professional career like a project. Invest an hour a day in developing one needed skills as a project manager. In five years, you will become a world-class expert.

5. Study the thoughts and writings of positive people: If you do not have positive colleagues around you, read material from authors like Norman Vincent Peal. His words are really priceless.

6. Attend seminars and take courses on attitude: Look at any school or university and find an "Attitude course." The Project Management Institute increasingly offers soft skill seminar experiences and knowledge.

7. Check your language: Do you say "half full" or "half empty?" They are just words, but they are a reflection of how your mind sees things and an indication of how you process thoughts. How do you answer somebody who asks how are you? Positively or negatively?

8. Avoid negative words: The worst ones are can't and won't. A loaf of bread has two beginnings, not two ends..

9. Say why you like things and people, not why you don't: I like my project manager job because I love dealing with people and issues. I like my attitude because…. Say things from the positive side enough, and it will become a habit. However, you need a lot of practice.

10. Help others but without expectation or measuring: If you think someone "owes you one," you are counting or measuring. If you give help away freely, you do not ever have to worry about the measurement. The world will reward you ten times over.

11. Think about your winning and losing words: Be aware of "loser" phrases and expressions. We see people saying things like, "I always fail when I deliver a sales presentation." Do not do that. Analyze why that happens and make a plan to improve.

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12. Think about your mood and your mood swings: How long do you stay in a bad mood? If it is more than five minutes, something is wrong. Over time, your attitude, your relationships, your results, and your success will suffer.

13. Are you a complainer? List the lessons you can learn from those you have bitterness for, and the results will turn your thinking toward your own success, and away from theirs.

14. Celebrate victory and defeat: Winning and losing are parts of life, and part of the projects we manage and a part from attitude.

15. Help other project managers who are less prepared than you, and count your blessings every day. Make the list as long as you can. If you are fortunate enough to have it, start with health.

Are these fifteen best practices the secret to change and for being a positive project manager? We think it comes darn close. Everybody can improve his/her attitude. It remains to implement purposeful change and take action.

A Definition of <u>Aptitude</u>

Aptitude is an inherent capacity, talent or ability to do something. Having a high aptitude for something means you are good at doing that something. When we talk about project manager aptitude, we are talking about a professional who has talent or ability to manage projects correctly and achieve good results according to stakeholder requirements.

Some characteristics we believe a complete project manager needs to have include:

- High tolerance for ambiguity
- Teamwork abilities
- Customer oriented
- Business oriented

Intention

Many experts on leadership point out that the worst decision is the decision not to make a decision. You can find this phrased in many different ways, but the meaning is the same. What many people do not realize is that avoiding a decision is a decision in itself. Analyze the ramifications of avoiding or delaying a decision against actually making a decision. The lack of a decision can be quite detrimental to any project. To be successful, projects need to continuously make forward progress. Since the project manager's performance is measured by the success of their project(s), it is of utmost importance that project managers ensure that decisions are made effectively.

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There are two categories of decisions to consider. The first is a decision that is out of the project manager's control, and the second is a decision that is within the project manager's control. Yes, there is a lot of gray area in between, and being able to decipher who has the authority to make decisions is not easy. For those decisions that are clearly outside of the project manager's authority, the project manager needs to document these decisions and the effect of the decision on the project. Include how the timing of the decision will affect the project. Typically the longer that a decision takes, the more risk, cost and time is added to the project. This all needs to be clearly documented and sent to the project sponsor(s) and decision makers.

Difficulties arise in determining which decisions project managers have authority to make and which they do not. There is a tendency to step back from making decisions that are within their realm of authority. Over time this will diminish the authority of the project manager. This is not unique to project managers as people in general are concerned about making wrong decisions. By erring on the side of making more decisions rather than less, you gain an effect of increasing your authority level.

To gain authority project managers need to continuous test their authority level because no one will actually tell them where their authority level ends. In fact, if you ask, you will likely be told that you have much less authority than you can actually take. We find that people are typically happy if you make decisions beyond your control. If you go too far you will be corrected, but that may not be too bad or be viewed negatively. Organizations are in desperate need of decision makers. Stepping up to the plate to help in this arena will not only advance your degree of authority but will also improve progress in getting projects completed. You also gain respect for your courage to make the call. These actions improve your effectiveness as a project manager and make you more valuable to the organization.

Influence

Most project managers face the challenge of influencing people over whom they have no direct managerial authority. Whether it is team members themselves or the line manager who assigned them or project stakeholders or those at the executive level who control the project management process, the complete project manager's ability to persuade and inform is critical to project success. Perfect your written and oral presentation skills—through practice and solicited feedback—and gain the competency and confidence needed to influence stakeholders at multiple levels. Effectively negotiate with external subcontractors and internal service providers to attain win-win agreements. A fundamental solution to personal influence effectiveness includes applying tools of persuasion:

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Reciprocity. Give an unsolicited gift. People will feel the need to give something back. Perhaps a big contract or maybe just another opportunity to continue building a strong relationship.

Consistency. Draw people into public commitments, even very small ones. This can be very effective in directing future action. Ask for explicit commitments and be consistent to enforce them. Even the simple act of getting people in public to nob heads in agreement is a powerful technique.

Social Validation. Let people know that implementing a project management methodology is considered 'the standard' by others. People often determine what they should do by looking at what others are doing.

Liking. Let people know that you like them and that you are likeable too. People like to do business with people they like. Elements that build 'liking' include physical attractiveness, similarity, compliments, and cooperation.

Authority. Be professional and personable. A suit and tie can do wonders. Other factors are experience, expertise, and scientific credentials. Tap referential power by being publicly named as the project manager by someone high up in the organization; use that connection to get the attention of others**.**

Scarcity. Take advantage of how rare good project, program, and portfolio management practices are, not to mention people who can transform a very culture.   Not everyone knows what it takes to make a project successful. Stand out as a person willing to do the right things in the right ways.

Many people can have influence over your projects. Some influencers are obvious and easy to spot. Others are less obvious but are no less significant. If you fail to recognize and "manage" these influencers, you will most-likely experience unexpected resistance to your projects and sometimes bewildering failure. This is increasingly the case on large projects and as the number of people affected by the projects increase.

Passion, Persistence and Patience

Especially when working on an international project, the complete project manager needs to consider different team member's cultures and values. Aside from geographical boundaries, people create their own personal borders, and every project manager needs a good people skill set to cross them. Most importantly, the manager need to ground project practices in the three P's: passion, persistence and patience. The complete project manager needs to be passionate when approaching the project and the people. He or she needs to reinforce best practices, often more than once, and explain why those methods make the most sense. To ensure project activities are getting done the

right way, the project manager needs to be persistent. Spending the necessary time to talk with people and solve problems takes patience. Managers need to spend some time with every project team member, dealing with misunderstandings, miscommunication and different perceptions. Listen to team members, even when it is not easy. If you focus on people as human beings, language, culture and unique behaviors do not matter. When people feel valued, they are more proactive and their performance improves. Communication is the underlying problem in many international efforts. Language differences create difficulty, but the main issue is how different people filter your directives. Words represent just 10 percent of the total communication, according to *Managing Cultural Differences* by Philip R. Harris and Robert T. Moran. Communications is an active process without a beginning or end.

Different cultures have different values, so international team members may misunderstand your approach to executing activities and tasks. Good managers need to clarify reasons for their priorities.

Networking

If given the choice, wouldn't you like to succeed sooner rather than later? Well, networking is a way to leverage your own efforts and accelerate the pace at which you get results. We strongly believe that the more solid relationships you build, the greater your opportunities for success. The sooner you start creating a network, the faster you will progress in your career. Your success starts with you; however it grows to higher levels as a result of associations and relationships with people. Simply put, you cannot succeed on a grand scale all by yourself. The power of networking is nothing short of awesome. That is why networking is so important. Networking may be defined as the development of relationships with people for mutual benefit. Exhibit 2 shows some business benefits for a project professional that can be derived from networking activities.
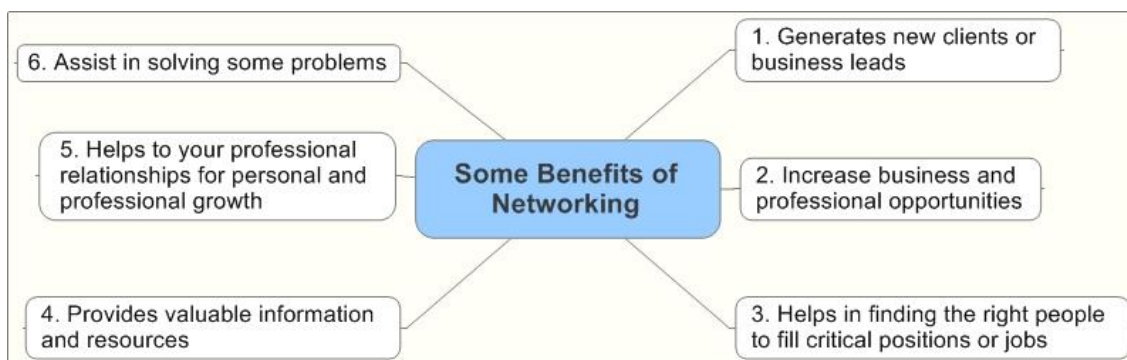

Exhibit - 2 Networking Benefits

But, what can you do to enhance the effectiveness of you network?

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Take Action

1. *Project a winning attitude*: When we talk about networking, attitude is a key for success. If you are positive and enthusiastic, people will want to spend time with you. They will want to help you. If you are gloomy and negative, people will avoid you, and they will hesitate to refer you to their colleagues.

2. *Be active in organizations and associations:* Effective networking and relationship building takes more than paying dues, putting your name in a directory and showing up for meetings. You need to demonstrate that you will take the time and make the effort to contribute to the group. What kinds of things can you do? For starters, you can volunteer for committees or serve as an officer or member of the board of directors. The other members will respect you when they see you roll up your sleeves and do some work. They will also learn about your people skills, your character, your values and last, but not least, your attitude.

3. *Serve others in your network:* Serving others is crucial to building and benefiting from your network. You should always be thinking, "How can I serve others?" instead of "What's in it for me?" If you come across as desperate or as a "taker" rather than a "giver," you will not find people willing to help you. Going the extra mile for others is the best way to get the flow of good things coming back to you. How can you serve others in your network? Start by referring business leads or potential customers.

Follow-up

Send a prompt note after meeting someone for the first time. Say you attend a dinner and make a new contact. Send a short note as soon as possible explaining how much you enjoyed meeting and talking with him or her. Enclose some of your own materials and perhaps include information that might be of interest to this person. Ask if there is anything you can do to assist this individual. Be sure to send the note within 48 hours after your initial meeting so that it is received while you are still fresh in your contact's mind.

Acknowledge powerful presentations or articles. If you hear an interesting presentation or read a great article, send a note to the speaker or writer and tell him or her how much you enjoyed and learned from the message. One person in a hundred will take the time to do this; be the one who does. Speakers and writers often have developed a huge network of people covering a variety of industries, a network you can tap into. When you receive a reference or helpful written materials, ALWAYS send a thank you note or call to express your appreciation. Follow this suggestion only if you want to receive more references and more useful information. If you do not acknowledge that person sufficiently, he or she will be much less likely to assist you in the future.

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Send congratulatory cards and letters. If someone in your network gets a promotion, award or celebrates some other occasion, write a short note of congratulations. Everyone loves to be recognized, yet very few people take the time to do this. Being thoughtful in this manner can only make you stand out. It is also appropriate to send a card or memorial gift when a family member dies.

Build Your Network

The networking suggestions offered above are merely the tip of the iceberg. You should be able to come up with several ideas of your own. How? By going to your library or bookstore and seeking out the many excellent books on networking, and by noticing what other people are doing and adapting their ideas in a way that suits you. Remember that networks are built over time and that significant results usually do not show up immediately. Passion, persistence and patience need to be cultivated if you want to increase your network. Build a solid foundation of relationships and continue to expand and strengthen them. You will have to put in a lot before you begin reaping the big rewards. Finally, great networking skills are not a substitute for being excellent in your field. You might be a terrific person, but if you are not talented at what you do, and constantly learning and improving, your efforts will yield disappointing results. Now move forward. Select a few of these networking techniques and implement them right away. Get to work serving and improving your network. Then you will truly have an army of troops working to help you succeed.

Create a Personal Networking Plan

Professional networking is also a project, so you need to prepare a plan for that project. It is critical to clearly identify network contacts, develop a personalized networking plan, and build an administrative process to manage it all. It is very important to ask network contacts for their help, not for a job. People are delighted to help, but few will have a job to offer.

1. First level contacts: These are the hottest prospects and people you know best, current and past colleagues and managers, vendors, consultants, recruiters with whom you have an established relationship. Your initial contact will likely be via phone, for instance a quick call announcing you are in the job market and would appreciate advice, assistance, recommendations or referrals.

2. Second level contacts: These are people you know casually. Your initial contact will most likely be 50% by phone and 50% by mail or e-mail, depending on how comfortable you are in these relationships and how easy it is to connect with each individual. Whenever possible, it is best if the initial contact is a phone call, allowing you to establish a more personal relationship. If you have called a contact, follow up immediately by sending a resume. If you have not heard back from contacts within three weeks, call or email them and inquire if they have reviewed your resume and if they have any recommendations.

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Once you have developed your list of contacts and determined how to connect with each individual, set up a system to track all calls, contacts and follow-up commitments.

How to Develop Your Potential as a Project Manager

Complete project managers want the satisfaction of knowing they are making the most of their potential. To be successful in your own eyes and in the eyes of other project stakeholders, pay attention to these twelve basic traits we uncovered via interviews among European colleagues:

1. **Common sense**. Brush away extraneous, irrelevant thoughts and ideas to get at the core of what matters. All professionals interviewed agreed upon this subject, with a Spanish colleague commenting that "common sense is the less common of all the senses in project management."

2. **Specialized knowledge of your field**. Make an effort to keep learning constantly throughout projects. Knowing what you are doing reduces the risks and works like an insurance policy for your own stability. Most Europeans have a desire for security and continuity as part of our culture.

3. **Self-reliance**. Have the courage to get things moving in life by relying primarily on your own resources and abilities and exerting plain old willpower.

4. **General intelligence.** The professionals interviewed say this includes an extensive vocabulary as well as good oral and written skills. European project managers are more and more focused on soft skills development. Inter-cultural training is also being increased in European countries like Spain.

5. **Ability to get things done**. Successful project managers have strong organizational abilities and productive work habits and can distinguish between what is important and what is not.

6. **Leadership.** Think motivation, not intimidation. Combining a blend of discipline and flexibility. Dealing with globalization and dealing with people as human beings, regardless of nationality or origin, are important for European professionals.

7. **Knowing right from wrong**. Be sensitive to moral and ethical concerns—and be "politically savvy." Understand your local project environment, acting locally and thinking globally.

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8. **Creativity.** Natural talent plus insight or intuition is equal to creativity. Natural gifts are not, however, as important as making the best use of your abilities.

9. **Self-confidence**. This feeling of assurance is based on knowing you have done everything possible to prepare. Europeans have the feeling that all people have weaknesses and sometimes one has to "muddle through" life.

10. **Oral expression.** You can get your message across, even in front of a large group.

11. **Concern for others.** At the very least, successful project managers can get along with others.

12. Luck always helps, but it is never enough.

Successful project managers usually have a winning attitude and a passion for their work. Under stress, they have no doubt about themselves. There is some pride and self-esteem involved. They have both a desire for and an expectation of success. Winners are single-minded in setting and then pursuing goals. Your main goals should be five or 10 years in the future—and involve more than a good salary. You also need short-range goals, for today, next week, and next month. Having goals increases your efficiency and effectiveness, and makes it easier to make decisions.

Focus on Your Strengths

At the beginning of my (Bucero) professional career as a project manager, I was responsible for three projects in Spain at the same time. They were not very complex projects, but they needed time, effort and focus. As the maturity level in project management among my executives was not high, they thought I would be able to chase "three rabbits" at the same time and manage three projects at the same time effectively. That situation complicated my life, and it stressed me. However, I did it and was a great opportunity for me to be aware that "focus is a must." I had to prioritize, and learn to speak the truth to my executives. Sometimes I had to say "not now." Little by little my executives became more conscious that focus is necessary. Every project manager needs to be focused on his/her project. However, customers and other project stakeholders think you, as a project manager, are assigned 100% to that particular project.

I (Bucero) also had the opportunity to manage projects in different countries and that characteristic adds many degrees of difficulty. I needed to concentrate on cultural aspects all the time. When I managed two projects at the same time in Portugal and Spain, I had to be aware of my behaviors and patterns. And that effort takes a lot of time and practice to be effective. If you feel that you are not focused enough, here are suggestions to get back on track:

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Develop your Personal Skills to be a
Complete Project Manager
by Randall L. Englund &
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- Work on yourself: Spend time with yourself every day. Do not worry if you only start with 15 minutes every day. Try to know your feelings better as a project manager.
- Work at your priorities: Start each day prioritizing daily tasks. Five minutes early in the morning helps a lot. Do it with a cup of coffee. Be focused on importance first and urgency second.
- Work in your strengths: Spend time developing your strengths. If you are good delegating, observe the process you follow in order to do it better and better.
- Work with your contemporaries: Look for the commitment to improve. Join positive people; your attitude will improve, too.

Because I was observant, innovative and persistent, I created something that has helped many companies find great PM candidates and deliver great business results. Those hires have benefited from exemplary ratings and reviews…and the promotions and bonuses that come with it.

Summary

The complete project manager possesses the aptitude, attitude, and networking skills to interact with people and achieve results. Since networking is so important, remember these best practices:

- The sooner you start creating a network, the faster you will progress in your career.
- Your success starts with you; however it grows to higher levels as a result of your associations and relationships with people.
- Be a good listener.
- Call people from time to time just because you care.
- Treat every person as important, not just the "influential roles".
- Send a prompt note after meeting someone for the first time.

Being focused on your strengths is worth it and helps you grow personally and professionally.

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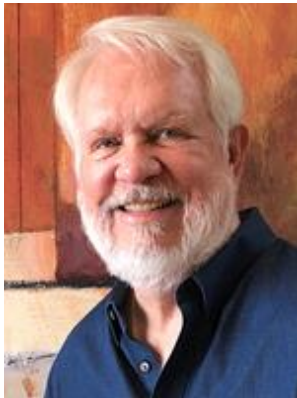
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Randall L. Englund, MBA, NPDP, CBM believes all leaders need to create healthy environments for people to consistently and sustainably achieve project success. Sponsors can do a better job of guiding and supporting project teams, and project managers can expand their people skills.

Randall offers keynote talks, consulting, professional facilitation, executive education, and advanced training services to people in management, managing projects, and working on project teams. His approach includes the behavioral, technical, business, and change management aspects that create an environment for project success. The goal is to get greater, optimized results from projects underway or contemplated in the organization. An organic approach to implementing project, program, and portfolio management taps the inherent power of people to work in harmony, have fun, and be more productive.

Randy provides management and leadership awareness through presentations, workshops, seminars, consulting engagements, books, conference papers, blogs, and online University courses. His experiences stem from 22 years at Hewlett-Packard, as a senior project manager in a corporate Project Management Initiative, and as a seminar leader for the Project Management Institute. He was awarded the PMI Distinguished Contributions Award in 2013 as well as Eric Jenett Award of Excellence in 2018.

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Alfonso Bucero, MSc, CPS, ACE, PMP, PMI-RMP, PfMP, SFC, IPMO-E, PMI Fellow, is an International Correspondent and Contributing Editor for the **PM World Journal** in Madrid, Spain. Mr. Bucero is also founder and Managing Partner of BUCERO PM Consulting. Alfonso was the founder, sponsor and president of the PMI Barcelona Chapter until April 2005, and belongs to PMI's LIAG (Leadership Institute Advisory Group). He was the past President of the PMI Madrid Spain Chapter, and then nominated as a PMI EMEA Region 8 Component Mentor. Now he is a member of the PMIEF Engagement Committee. Alfonso has a Computer Science Engineering degree from Universidad Politécnica in Madrid and is studying for his Ph.D. in Project Management. He has 32 years of practical experience and is actively engaged in advancing the PM profession in Spain and throughout Europe. He received the PMI Distinguished Contribution Award on October 9th, 2010, the PMI Fellow Award on October 22nd 2011 and the PMI Eric Jenett Excellence Award on October 28th, 2017.

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