

# PROJECT *Management*



BY JOHN MASON AND  
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# PREFACE

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Project management is something that a lot of people do, while not really understanding that this is what they are doing.

In the world of commerce; project management is a skill that can be refined and improved upon through reading, study and experience.

Competent project managers are valued in many, if not all professions

This book is designed to help improve your capacity to manage any type of project in any type of industry. It may be read as a stand alone book; used as something to refer to during the process of managing projects, or used as a complementary reference to help enhance the overall learning experience when studying a project management course.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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John Mason has had over 35 years experience in the fields of Horticulture, Recreation, Education, Journalism and Business Management. He has also run a successful small business for over 30 years.

John is a well respected member of many professional associations, and author of over thirty five books and of over two thousand magazine articles.

# CHAPTER 1 NATURE AND SCOPE OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Project management is a broad discipline, it can include anything from a change in a work procedures e.g. for health and safety, a new IT system, providing a new service, developing a product, undertaking research through to the construction of a new building, a park, or even the way in which a company or instrumentality (e.g. railway) is run.

Project management is done in a linear fashion – with a defined outline to include:

- A start date for commencement.
- A set completion date.
- Step by step procedures on how the project will be run.

It draws on resources (money and tools) and people as needed, to accomplish a set of outcomes (deliverables).

Projects are managed using the following elements:

1. Money
2. Time
3. People
4. Scope

The first three are self-explanatory. Scope defines what the project's aims and objectives (what it is meant to accomplish i.e. its deliverables). Scope draws on the first three elements – time, money and people. If the scope of the project is altered, then this affects the way the project is managed; it changes the budget and therefore also the time and people needed to accomplish the project's goals.

Project Management is a job that is found in almost every conceivable place and industry around the world. Wherever you find a project, there will be the need for someone to manage it. It can be a very exciting and creative job that allows you to use a very wide range of skills: technical skills, people skills, organisational skills.

Project management is never 100% predictable and for some people that is an unsettling prospect - but for others it is a thrilling opportunity.





## THE ROLE OF A PROJECT MANAGER

There are a number of mistaken assumptions about what project managers do. Some think they spend a lot of time dealing with paper work in an office, although this is a large part of the job, this is not necessarily true. Many projects require the project manager to oversee the day to day

workings of a project. They may make site visits on a daily basis, or many times a day, depending on the project they are managing at the time. For example in the construction of a new building or park, the project manager's responsibility includes the smooth running and also the quality of the project. This entails meetings with builders, supervisors, and on-site inspections to ensure that the project is on time and that quality is also assured.

### DEFINITIONS

Here are some definitions from a variety of sources:

*"A temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product or service"*

Definition adopted by the Project Management Institute, USA

*"Project management is the discipline of planning, organising and managing resources to bring about the successful completion of specific project goals and objectives. The Project Management Institute (PMI) defines project management as, "The application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities in order to meet or exceed stakeholder needs and expectations."*

Definition from ProjectSmart.co.uk

*"Project management is the process by which projects are defined, planned, monitored, controlled and delivered such that the agreed benefits are realised. Projects are unique, transient endeavours undertaken to achieve a desired outcome. Projects bring about change and project management is recognised as the most efficient way of managing such change".*

Definition from the Association for Project Management, UK

Not all project managers are necessarily at the top of the management tree. In a small event management business, or engineering firm (for example), the project manager may well be the business owner. In a larger enterprise though, there may be several project managers each running projects concurrently – all of them responsible to a general manager or department head.

- Often people become a project manager by accident.
- Architects may start their career designing buildings, but end up moving into managing building construction projects.
- Hospitality managers may start out managing a hotel restaurant, but end up managing conferences, weddings and other events.

- Doctors may start out as a medical practitioner, but end up managing aid projects in overseas countries.

Many project managers may have a “dual role” in their job. They may have routine responsibilities, but are also given projects to manage (e.g. the municipal parks manager who manages the daily maintenance of parks and gardens in a city, but is occasionally given a major development project such as construction of a new sports ground).



A project manager is responsible for controlling and introducing a set outcome – defined by a set of steps. He or she requires a set of well-formed skills and disciplines in order to achieve this outcome, to include:

- Understanding all the stakeholders’ objectives and requirements.

- Knowing how to plan outcomes i.e. what needs to be done, who needs to be involved what time it needs to be done in, and what standards are expected.
- Selecting the right team, motivating them, and coordinating their work.
- Monitoring the project through all steps.
- Introducing changes to the project plan as the need arises without compromising the project’s outcomes.
- Concluding the project on time and successfully.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF A PROJECT

- Each project is a separate to other projects – tasks within a single project will be unique to that project.
- A project is focused on achieving a well-defined objective
- A project is finite - it has a life-cycle i.e. a pre-determined time frame; a start and a finish date.
- Most projects will operate using dedicated resources for a variety of allocations
- Projects will have a budget
- Projects usually have a single point of responsibility (the Project Manager)
- Project usually consist of a team that have defined roles but that inter-relate with others on the project

## STAGES OF A PROJECT

Different experts will have varying ideas about the stages of a project. A good manager needs to have a framework of stages to work within, but should not allow their thinking to be confined by following the same 4, 5, 6 or more stages in every project.

There are different ways of breaking down the stages of a project and best way to do that might differ from one project to another or one industry to another.

Terminology may also vary from one reference to another, but the basic methodology is always logical and chronological, for example:

One structure might be:

Phase 1. Conceptualisation

■ Phase 2 Planning

■ Phase 3 Implementation (Execution)

■ Phase 4 Termination

*(“Project Management, an International Perspective”, by Ralph Keeling, Published by Macmillan, 2000)*

Another Structure could be:

1. Identification and Initiation

2. Planning

3. Implementation, Execution and Control

4. Completion and Evaluation

*From the ACS Project Management Course*

The Project Management Institute in the USA suggests five stages as follows:

1. Project conception and initiation
2. Project definition and planning
3. Project launch or execution
4. Project performance and control
5. Project close

Mind tools.com suggests seven phases in a project:

1. Project strategy and business case.
2. Preparation.
3. Design.
4. Development and testing.
5. Training and business readiness.
6. Support and benefits realization.
7. Project close.

SCM Wise.com lists five steps as follows:

1. Initiation
2. Planning
3. Execution
4. Control
5. Closure

Whichever structure you follow, the basic rule is to have a well-organized and controlled start, middle and finish.

Each of the steps suggested above should be broken down into smaller steps - for example if you chose the ACS Project Management course above as an example:

1. Identification and Initiation
2. Planning
3. Implementation, Execution and Control
4. Completion and Evaluation

Then each of the four steps identified could be broken down as follows:

1. The Identification and initiation phase may include:

- Identifying a need and developing a case
- Conducting a feasibility study
- Establishing a charter for the project
- Appointing a team
- Setting up an office
- Reviewing this phase

2. Planning may include:

- Develop a project plan
- Develop a resource plan
- Develop a financial plan
- Develop a risk plan
- Develop a communications plan

- Develop a resource requirement and procurement plan
- Initiate contracts for suppliers

3. Implementation, Execution and Control may include:

- Build deliverables – these are the actual things that are being produced by your project e.g. a service, a system, a building etc. Make sure that your deliverables align with your objectives. If they don't then your project is unlikely to succeed.
- Implement the project plans listed at stage 2
- Control the processes defined in your plans outlined at stage 2.
- Control material inputs as outlined in your supplier contracts.

4. Completion and Evaluation may include:

- Close the project using the criteria established in the initial project plan.
- Identify areas that were not completed or delivered and formulate a plan to rectify this.
- Plan a handover of all documentation relating to the project.
- Close all contracts you may have initiated with suppliers.
- Release the resources created by the project to the business.
- Inform all stakeholders of the completion.

## WHERE IS PROJECT MANAGEMENT APPLIED?

Project management (as discussed earlier) is applied across many public industry sectors, in government instrumentalities and private business including:

- Engineering
- IT
- Manufacturing
- Construction
- Services
- In business generally
- Health industry
- Education
- Transport

In fact in almost any type of industry or government initiative there will have at some stage been a project that required management.



## PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

Projects may be large or small however a project to implement a new IT system in a large firm (for example) will require a lot more input in the way of resources than a new IT system in a 2 person operation. However the importance of good project management is just as valid for both –each business depends on a fluid change over for its smooth and continued (viable) operation.



Some Project Examples:

- Research - e.g. the viability of a new product; analyzing the competition; ways to develop a new product; discovering ways to develop a new system etc..
- Construction – a building; an IT system; a community project;
- Procurement – this is when a 2<sup>nd</sup> party is involved – e.g. outsourcing a project to a contractor.
- Re-engineering – e.g. a new ticket system for the public transport system; upgrading a communications network; automating a production system etc.
- Business implementation – implementing a new business system e.g. ecommerce; implementing a new business process within an existing asset structure.
- These are just example of projects – there are many more that fall outside of a clear classification. Other example of projects include: large medical projects such as immunization; disaster relief projects; fund raising projects; consumer awareness; even the launching of a new political party or art show. The scope is expansive.

Are You Suited to being a Project Manager?

Not everyone is. The job is demanding - you need to have faith in your abilities, a thick skin and have a high self-esteem.



As a Project Manager you need to be able to:

- Have a focussed dedicated, systemic and logical approach to tasks.
- Assess and evaluate situations quickly and competently; identify problems and improve work practices as the need arises. Manage teams, time, resources and a budget within specified deliverables
- Have excellent communication skills; have a conciliatory approach to management; be open to the ideas and points of view of others; communicate well with people at all levels within a company; collaborate with others to achieve the objectives of the project.
- Work with different teams on a variety of projects.
- Work within a range of cultural environments.
- Work with various systems and areas within a business.
- Manage risk.
- Manage the project irrelevant of the industry.

## WHO IS NOT SUITABLE?

### PEOPLE THAT BRING PERSONAL PROBLEMS TO WORK.

- People that are procrastinators/ indecisive.
- People who thrive on risk taking.
- People that are Illogical and inflexible.
- People that are over-sensitive.
- People that are closed minded.

### UNDERSTANDING THE INTERESTED PARTIES

In any project, there will be a number of different interested parties. (e.g. project owner, investors, employees, unions, neighbours, lobbyists, government).

- It is valuable to realize that these parties are made up of individuals, not groups. Even if some are connected into a group; those group members are all individuals, and as a project manager; you have more possibilities of dealing with them when you see them as individuals rather than groups.
- There can be a tendency for people to become involved with a project as a result of inertia rather than and real logic. To best manage interested parties, you need to first understand them; and then be able to diffuse any imbalance in power that develops.
- People with strong personalities can dominate others and have an influence that is out of proportion. One way of diffusing such situations is to find, engage and empower other people who may have an equal claim to input.

## TYPES OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT

There can be many variations in the way a project might be managed. These variations can be in terms of where emphasis might be put by a manager, the leadership style that is used, or even the mechanics of how a project is organised and conducted.

A good project manager will use methodology (guidelines and principles) suited to the particular project at hand. Whatever methodology a project manager uses it should lead a team (and the work they perform) throughout the project's lifecycle. It will include guidelines and directives, sets of forms, templates and checklists that are used by the team from the start to end of the project.

Methodology won't include a 'quick fix' approach. It will consider the type and size of the project.

Choosing the wrong project management methodology can cause a series of problems including cost blow-outs, bad communication within the team, jeopardised time-lines, staff exits and the potential for the project manager to 'burn-out'.

## TRADITIONAL PROJECT MANAGEMENT

This approach is driven almost entirely by the opinion of the project owners. Public opinion is a side issue; and for projects that are not controversial; the traditional approach can work well. The key areas of concern for traditional project management are:

- The project.
- The actions required to complete the project.
- The players and stakeholders – people and organisations involved.





## LATERAL PROJECT MANAGEMENT

(Based upon work of Oliver d'Herbemont and Bruno Cesar)

This is a more flexible approach that seeks to identify and involve supporters of a project and in doing so, cause the support to grow naturally.

3 key principles:

1. People are too fast to label friends as enemies when they oppose a project.
2. Managers tend to have a stereotypical self-image that they are at war with the world.
3. Managers frequently equate delegating work with reducing control, hence they try to do too much and weaken their effectiveness as a leader.

A lateral project management approach will have eight areas of concern:

1. The project
2. The actions required to complete the project
3. The players and stake-holders i.e. people and organisations involved
4. Sensitive issues
5. Segmenting interested parties
6. Sociodynamics of anyone working on or affected by the project
7. Lateralising the Project
8. Identifying faults in the behaviour of anyone involved

