

Second, the PM must be *administratively credible*. The PM has several key administrative responsibilities that must be performed with apparently effortless skill. It goes without saying that effective time management and organizational skills are critical (the online Appendix to this chapter provides a primer on time management). One of the administrative responsibilities is to the client and senior management—to keep the project on schedule and within cost and to make sure that project reports are accurate and timely. This can place the PM in an ethically awkward situation sometimes. Another responsibility is to the project team—to make sure that material, equipment, and labor are available when and where needed. Still another responsibility is to represent the interests of all stakeholders (team, management, functional departments, community, and client) to one another. The PM is truly the “person in the middle.” Finally, the PM is responsible for making the tough trade-off decisions for the project and must be perceived as a person who has the mature judgment and courage to do so consistently.

Sensitivity

The preceding pages contain many references to the PM’s need for political sensitivity. There is no point in belaboring the issue further. In addition to a good, working set of political antennae, the PM needs to sense interpersonal conflict on the project team or between team members and outsiders. Successful PMs are not conflict avoiders. Quite the opposite, they sense conflict early, then confront and deal with it before the conflict escalates into interdepartmental and intradepartmental warfare.

The PM must keep project team members “cool.” This is not easy. As with any group of humans, rivalries, jealousies, friendships, and hostilities are sure to exist. The PM must persuade people to cooperate irrespective of personal feelings, to set aside personal likes and dislikes, and to focus on achieving project goals.

Finally, the PM needs a sensitive set of technical sensors. It is common, unfortunately, for otherwise competent and honest team members to try to hide their failures. Individuals who cannot work under stress would be well advised to avoid project organizations. In the pressure-cooker life of the project, failure is particularly threatening. Remember that we staffed the team with people who are task-oriented. Team members with this orientation may not be able to tolerate their own failures (though they are rarely as intolerant of failure in others) and may hide failure rather than admit to it. The PM must be able to sense when things are being “swept under the rug” and are not progressing properly.

Leadership, Ethics, and Management Style

Leadership has been defined (Kruse, 2013) as “. . . a **process of social influence, which maximizes the efforts of others, towards the achievement of a goal.**” Much has been written about how interpersonal influence is generated and the impact of leadership characteristics on team performance—for examples, see Jiang et al. (1998); Scott et al. (1998); and others in the bibliography.

The skills needed for leadership will probably vary depending on who is being asked. For example, top management might well have different answers from the PMs themselves and certainly will be different from the project team members. Since *leadership* “maximizes the efforts of others,” the Project Management Institute (2013) conducted a leadership survey by asking project *practitioners* (those whose efforts are to be maximized): What kinds of skills does a PM need to become a project “leader?” There were six primary skills identified: 29 percent said “communication,” 26 percent “people,” 16 percent “strategic,” 12 percent “requirements gathering,” 12 percent “leadership,” and 5 percent “time management.” Note that most of these are soft skills and are discussed in this chapter. Even a seemingly mechanical task such as requirements gathering has a crucial soft element to

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