

Project Team and Stakeholder Management

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Lecture 8

PGM 341

Leading Project Teams



جامعة الجميع الذكية
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Course Outline

Lecture 1: Determining the Direction and Initial Specifications of a Project.

Lecture 2: the search for the high-performing team.

Lecture 3: Context: Laying the Foundation for Team Success.

Lecture 4: Composition: Getting the Right People on the Bus.

Lecture 5: competencies: Developing Team Skills for High Performance.

Lecture 6: Change: Devising More Effective Ways of Working Together.

Lecture 7: The Project Team's Environment (Stakeholders, Developing and Using Project Networks).

Lecture 8: Leading Project Teams.

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3. Internal role requirements.
4. Clarifying the leadership role.
5. Project leadership and the project's life cycle.
6. Project leadership and individual project members.

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Introduction:

This entire book is devoted to project leadership issues, but here we address three more sets of issues. **The first** concerns expectations others have of a project leader. Project leaders are called on to play many, often conflicting, roles for various stakeholders. We identify many of the more common role expectations and offer some advice about addressing them.

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The second set focuses on the leadership of a project team throughout the life of a project. Project leaders need to lead projects differently depending on where they are in their life cycle. **The final** set of issues deals with the leadership needs of individual project members. Project personnel come and go on projects and need different kinds of leadership depending on their “job maturity” in doing the project’s work.

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1.The roles of a project leader:

Leaders are expected to play a role in their organizations just like everyone else. The leadership role, however, is complex, and different people have very different, often conflicting expectations of a leader. Because the leadership role is so critical to project success, we examine some of the more typical expectations stakeholders have of a project leader. We conclude by suggesting how leaders can negotiate some of the expectations stakeholders have of them.

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The roles played by organizational leaders have been studied for some time. Two particularly well-known and appropriate studies are those done by **Henry Mintzberg and Luthans and Lockwood**. Although **Mintzberg** focused on higher level managers and **Luthans and Lockwood** focused on supervisors, their studies share some common elements that are particularly applicable to project leaders. They are integrated here with an eye toward the role demands of project leaders. We classify them into those role expectations held by external and internal stakeholders.

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2.External role requirements:

A- Figurehead and Spokesperson.

By the nature of their position, project leaders are the **figureheads** of their projects. They are called on to represent their projects at most, if not all, public functions. It is important, then, for project leaders to display proper demeanor in all public venues. Stakeholder and public judgments of the project and its team are influenced a great deal by the demeanor and behavior of its chief representative.

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As the chief representative of the project, leaders are also called on to be their project's **spokesperson**, whether giving formal presentations of the project before large groups or speaking one-on-one with individual stakeholders. It is important for project leaders to be up to date on the status of their projects and to be able to communicate the progress, needs, and benefits of their projects to external stakeholders when required.

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B- Liaison and Monitor

most project business is conducted through **project leaders** in their role as **liaison** to the project. Project leaders need to actively embrace, develop, and maintain their liaison role, not only for the good of their projects but for the good of their own careers as well.

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The project leader also plays a role as the project's **monitor**. The project network is a principal source of information about stakeholder needs, concerns, resources, and intentions with regard to the project. **In the role of monitor**, the project leader needs to continually observe the network of stakeholders to get important project information, anticipate project problems, and take advantage of opportunities as they arise.

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C- Champion and Negotiator

Project leaders are often expected to be the **champions** of the projects they lead. Project leaders must be able to communicate the benefits and needs of their projects in terms that speak to stakeholder interests. Working with their ties in the larger project network, leaders also need to help members of their project team resolve difficulties they may encounter outside the team.

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Because of their position, stakeholders turn to project leaders as the **chief negotiator** for the project. The negotiation role is particularly pronounced in the early stages of a project. When stakeholders first come together, all project parameters—**scope, costs, and schedule**—are open for negotiation.

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D- Controller

Clients and higher management in the host organization expect project leaders to control their projects. Essentially, **the controller** role means that the project leader makes sure the project is proceeding as planned—producing deliverables according to specifications, in line with the budget, and on schedule. Day-to-day problems with project tasks are generally expected to be handled within the project itself.

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3. Internal role requirements:

A- Planner and Resource Allocator

As **planner**, the project leader is expected to take the lead on all project planning. Although others may help in developing project plans, the responsibility for planning lies with the project leader. Team members look to the project leader to make sure project plans are doable. Project planning, moreover, is an ongoing process in project work.

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Much the same can be said for what project leaders should do in their role as the **resource allocator** for the project. Initial project plans, of course, require project leaders to allocate resources among project activities. As the project moves forward, however, project leaders may need to shift resources from one activity to another, **for example**, to keep the project on schedule. Experienced project members know that resource reallocations are often required and that they may have to do the same or more work with less.

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B- Coordinator

As the project's **coordinator**, leaders need to ensure that all pieces of the project and the project team are working together toward their common project objectives. Although coordination is also a need in general management, when operations reach a steady state, coordination can be achieved with standard operating procedures. Despite all the efforts made in project planning, steady states are rare in project environments. Coordination, therefore, requires much more real-time work.

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C- Problem Solver

Because projects are unique endeavors, project leaders are generally confronted with a constant stream of problems. Although project leaders should develop and empower their teams to solve problems as they arise, the project leader has ultimate authority and responsibility for problem solving in his role as **problem solver**.

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Few people like problems, and it is only natural to try to ignore or hide them. Project leaders, however, need to develop another mindset with the project team: Bring up problems before they get out of hand. With proper development and empowerment of the project team, team members will bring both problems and proposed solutions. Proposed solutions will need the consent of project leaders, however, because they are more aware of the ramifications of both the problem and the proposed solution on other components of the project.

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D- Team Leader

Teams expect their leaders to lead them. In their role as **team leaders**, project leaders are expected to take the lead in all the major task and operational decisions of the project from project initiation to closedown. Teams also often expect their leaders to take the lead in handling the social-psychological or “people” issues that arise in every project.

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4. Clarifying the leadership role:

It is easy to become overwhelmed with the project leader's responsibilities. Most project leaders will attest, however, that the real problem is the conflicting and widely different expectations that team members and external stakeholders have of them. The project leader's role will never be an easy one to play. Project leaders, however, can take the lead in helping to make their own role rather than just take the role expectations of others.

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To do this, project leaders need to discuss their role expectations with critical stakeholders (e.g., clients, managers, and team members). Project leaders, for example, should set aside time during the launch of a project to discuss their expectations of the team and to solicit and discuss the team's expectations as well. The same can be said of working with managers and clients—first probing their expectations, and then discussing what can be done to address their most important needs.

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5. Project leadership and the project's life cycle:

Different leadership behaviors are typically needed to respond to the needs found in different stages of the project's life cycle. We begin by examining the leadership needs typically required in the early stages of **initiation and planning**, followed by those required in a **project's launch**. Next, we examine leadership needs in the **execution phase** from two perspectives: needs of the internal team and those of external stakeholders.

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Finally, we take a look at the project's **closing stage**, which needs to address concerns of the client, the host organization, and the project team. These stages become more apparent and distinct in longer projects. In shorter projects, they can blur into one another, but their leadership needs remain the same.

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1- the early stages: initiation and planning

The initial stages of project initiation and planning begin when work first starts on a client's project. It ends when the leader finishes planning and organizing the project and is ready to launch it.

In those cases, it is still imperative for leaders to develop a deep understanding of the project, its components, and the rationale behind them.

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2- Project launch

Project launch begins when the leader initiates the execution of project work with the project team. The short-term objectives are to orient the team and have it begin work on project deliverables in an organized manner. The longer term goal is for the project team to assume management of the project's work as they move into the execution stage of the project.

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3- Project execution

Project execution begins when project work has been fully delegated to **the project team**, and project members have settled into producing the project's deliverables. It ends when the project enters its final, closing stage. The objective is to keep the project on track, and the project plan is the project leader's principal tool with its list of deliverables, work breakdown structure, schedule, and budget. To keep the project on track, leaders must accomplish a number of tasks during the execution phase of a project. **external stakeholders.**

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A- The Project Team

There is an old management saying: “You need to inspect what you expect.” Leaders need to monitor project work to make sure it is progressing as needed. Different leaders monitor their projects and supervise their teams differently, but this may be more a matter of leadership style than leadership principles. Too close supervision can get in the way of good performance and staff development.

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Project monitoring - involves comparing what has been accomplished to what should have been accomplished by a certain time, and the project plan is the leader's principal tool. On many smaller, less complex projects, monitoring project deliverables is enough—comparing what has been produced to what should have been produced according to the schedule.

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Project problems - generally reside in the project's organizational structure. One common problem is that the work breakdown structure failed to lay out the project's true work scope—the work that needed to be done. Another common project problem is poor scheduling of project staff.

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Deliverable problems - arise from the work on producing deliverables. Technical problems, for example, may take longer to solve than anticipated. Another example might be problems working with external stakeholders (e.g., auditees resisting audits or trainees not acquiring skills as quickly as anticipated).

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B- External Stakeholders

Project success greatly depends on how well project leaders deal with external stakeholders. Here, we focus on **four stakeholders** who are particularly important to the execution stage of the project: **clients, higher management, resource suppliers, and regulators.**

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- **Clients** generally want to see the project proceed as planned. The extent to which they require communications varies. Some clients require quite frequent updating; others simply wait for the project's deliverables. Most clients, however, want at least some progress reports at critical junctures or milestones of the project.

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- **Managers in the host organization also want to see the project proceed as planned.** At times, **higher management** may wish to move resources from a leader's project to use in other projects. Project leaders need to explain how this will affect the project so that management can get a clear idea of the ramifications of its actions.

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- Projects often depend on getting **resources** from external suppliers and passing certain requirements by external regulators. Project leaders need to check with suppliers about the resources required before they are actually needed. The amount of lead time needed depends on how well each supplier has delivered in the past. New suppliers of critical resources should be carefully tracked.

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- **Required regulatory** reviews also need close attention and careful preparation because certification is often critical to project progress. Remember, both suppliers and regulators are pulled in many different directions by demands of their own, and any particular project can drop from their attention. Project leaders should make sure that these external stakeholders are aware of the project schedule and its importance for project completion.

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4- Project closing

The project closing phase begins when the project begins with final project delivery and ends with a project review by the project leader working with a few critical stakeholders. The objectives are to close the project to the satisfaction of all critical stakeholders and to learn the important lessons the project has taught the project team.

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6. Project leadership and individual project members:

One common characteristic of project work is that personnel often come and go throughout the project as needed. Some staff, of course, may come with the project's launch and leave only at the project's close. Others, however, are often needed for shorter periods during one project phase or another.

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The first stage of development is when members first join a project team. Hersey et al.²⁰ suggest that whenever someone new joins a project team, he or she needs to be led with a more directive style of leadership. **Directive leadership** is characterized more by one-way communication from the leader to the team member.

As people settle into their project jobs and become more productive, leaders are advised to discuss with them the rationale behind their jobs and the larger project picture within which their jobs fit—a kind of **“selling leadership”** behavior.

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The next shift in leadership is to allow workers who are more willing and able to accept job responsibilities to participate more in the project's decision making—**participative leadership**.

Finally, the leader is advised to delegate project work entirely to those who demonstrate the ability and willingness to take it on - **delegative leadership**.

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