

The Role of the Project Manager

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A project manager is the person who has the overall responsibility for the successful initiation, planning, design, execution, monitoring, controlling and closure of a project. The job title is used in construction, petrochemical, architecture, information technology and many different industries that produce products and services.

The project manager must have a combination of skills including an ability to ask penetrating questions, detect unstated assumptions and resolve conflicts, as well as more general management skills.



Key among his or her duties is the recognition that risk directly impacts the likelihood of success and that this risk must be both formally and informally measured throughout the lifetime of the project.

Risks arise from uncertainty, and the successful project manager is the one who focuses on this as the main concern. Most of the issues that impact a project arise in one-way or another from risk. A good project manager can lessen risk significantly, often by adhering to a policy of open communication, ensuring every significant participant has an opportunity to express opinions and concerns.

It follows that a project manager is one who is responsible for making decisions both large and small, in such a way that risk is controlled and uncertainty minimised. Every decision taken by the project manager should be taken in such a way that it directly benefits the project.

Project managers use project management software, such as Microsoft Project, to organise their tasks and workforce. These software packages allow project managers to produce reports and charts in a few minutes, compared with the several hours it can take if they do it by hand.

Roles and Responsibilities

The role of the project manager encompasses many activities including:

- Planning and Defining Scope
- Activity Planning and Sequencing
- Resource Planning
- Developing Schedules
- Time Estimating
- Cost Estimating
- Developing a Budget
- Documentation
- Creating Charts and Schedules
- Risk Analysis
- Managing Risks and Issues
- Reporting Progress
- Team Leadership
- Strategic Influencing
- Business Partnering
- Scalability, Interoperability and Portability Analysis
- Controlling Quality
- Benefits Realisation

Finally, to be successful, a project manager must be given support and authority by senior management.