

8 Success Factors of a Project Manager

How can a Project Manager influence large scale projects toward success? If you have ever led a project, it is a question that often comes to your mind. Based upon my experience, there are eight different elements or factors that any project manager should always gravitate to. Focusing on these eight different factors can help you influence your project in a positive manor.

The first factor is **Goals**. Always ensure you have clearly defined goals to the project. These should be established by the project sponsor(s). Once they are established, communicate them to everyone and often. You probably have heard this said before, but it takes 7 different methods of communication before a person will remember what you have said. This is very true of communicating project goals. You cannot over communicate on this one.

The second factor is **Vision**. Vision is taking the goals and being able to show people how they will get there. Team Members have to comprehend how they will get to their goals and what is expected of them. They have to envision it in very practical terms. You may want to read the paper titled *Project Guidelines* on our website under the Resource and Download page. This paper will help you walk through practical steps of communicating vision.

Motivate – I don't mean to sound cynical, but what I have found that motivates people is highlighting "what is in it for them". Bring it around to how it will help make their job better in a realistic way. How will their care giving improve or how the process will be better.



Creating venues for **Team Work** – Give people the opportunities to work collectively in a team oriented environment. You will want to set clearly defined standards of behavior for the group. Give them clearly defined goals of why they are meeting. It always amazes me in these types of meeting how people come to understand other departments. For example, I was working with a group on how Order Management was going to work. The Lab never got along with Nursing at this hospital and everyone thought I was crazy for trying to bring a multi-disciplinary group together. The lab was constantly frustrated with Nursing for not following their protocols for nurse collect specimens and vice versa. It had become a "warring faction" between the two departments. Before any discussion even began on the topic, I ask for two volunteers from nursing and two volunteers from lab if they would work together on the current process. I set a standard of behavior in place on how they were to

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treat each other and gave them a very clearly defined goal – go watch each other during the current nurse collect process and report back the positive and negative findings at the next meeting. At the next meeting, these four individuals came back completely changed. Both departments got to see how they were impacting each other, and had already had suggestions on how it could change for the better. I can't guarantee that it will always come out this way, but you never know until you try.

To **Mentor** means to be a trusted counselor. I realize that we are IT people, but we have to acknowledge that people's emotions can hinder their progress in a project. A very real example of this is when people feel that they are not being heard, or have been excluded. It can be when they are outside of their comfort zone in a project. They need to express their concern without feeling rejected or shamed. In so many of these instances, I am more than willing to share what works for me. I will try to offer them concepts to better communicate or perhaps it is perception on what the other person maybe understanding. Be ready to offer practical suggestions that may help them. Look to yourself for ideas and what works for you.



Webster's Dictionary defines **Inspire** as "to influence, move or guide."

There would have been a time in my career early on that if you told me I need to inspire people I would have just rolled my eyes. For me, it was about tasks and timelines. I am so glad that I have matured since those days. To inspire does not mean that you make everything sound rosy. It is much more practical than that. The moments you want to inject inspiration is when people are negative, panic, frustrated or ready to give up. First, you need to stay positive and objective. Second, listen to what they are saying. Third, acknowledge their emotion and repeat back what you have heard. Fourth, offer ideas, thoughts, or suggestions that are practical and helpful. If you don't know off the top of your head, ask if you can get back to them in a specified time period. Then brainstorm and write down ideas that come to mind. Most likely, you will be able to influence, move or guide them back to where they need to be.

Example - use present real life examples versus hypothetical examples. Anyone can make up extreme cases that may never happen. You will never get the project moving forward if all your time is spent on the hypothetical. Bring the person back to present every day examples. Ask them to give you a specific scenario, or ask when did this happen last with a specific time period mention. I have also asked for people to come back with the specific case scenario they are talking about. If they state HIPAA, I ask them to change the name of the individual. Once you have validated the facts, and then move forward with the resolution.

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Always take time to **Teach** people when the opportunity presents itself. It doesn't always mean that you have to know everything and need to schedule one on one time with everyone. For example, I was recently installing a HIS System. I was constantly being asked about how registration was going to work. At this organization, registration was centralized and because of this many other people were trying to understand how the new system would impact their department. The Admission Team was far enough along that we invited the other departments to a demonstration of the registration process. It ended up alleviating much of the anxiety and gave an opportunity for the groups to talk through the process. I can't stress it enough; never pass up an opportunity to teach.

I will never guarantee that all your projects will go perfectly, but I can promise you that they will go smoother with these 8 Success Factors. While the end product should always be insight, it is often more about the journey or process that makes you successful. Take a moment and do an inventory on yourself. Are you utilizing all 8 of Success Factors? Which ones do you need to work on? Take one factor and try putting it into practice. When it becomes second nature to you, then it is time to start working on another one.

D288 IT Solutions, LLC was founded by Kevin L. Frederick in 2009, a former Vice President and CIO of a health system, who was always in search of a company that could assist him in seeing the "big picture" and help him achieve it in a practical approach. With 26 years of experience in Healthcare Information Technology, Kevin brings together a broad range of experience from technology, application and telecommunications to readiness assessment, project management and systems integration.

The goal of D288 IT Solutions, LLC is to support the IT advances of hospitals and healthcare. To come along side and assist with their strategic vision and objectives.

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