



PM CONNECT

A quarterly newsletter that brings information on modern project management methods, practices and tools to the international development community

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2. Who Defines Quality?

Quality is ultimately defined by the beneficiary and represents how close the project and deliverables come to meeting the beneficiaries' requirements and expectations. Quality is in the eyes of the beholder and the project manager's goal is to understand the beneficiaries' requirements and expectations and then ensure the project will meet those expectations.

There is a predisposition to think that quality means the most expensive material or equipment. However, in most cases, the beneficiary does not expect an expensive solution if it does not meet its expectations and solves the ...

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1. The Process Responsibilities of the Project Manager.

The project manager is 100% responsible for the process used to manage a project. This does not mean the project manager needs to do all of the work. The project manager can delegate some of the work to team members. Before the project execution starts, the project manager must ensure that the work is defined in terms of the overall objectives, deliverables, scope, assumptions, risks, organization, etc.; and that a schedule is prepared that shows how you will deliver the work. Once the project starts, the project manager must successfully manage and control the work, including:

- Identifying, tracking, managing and resolving project issues
- Proactively disseminating project information to all stakeholders
- Identifying, managing and mitigating project risk
- Ensuring that the solution is of acceptable quality
- Proactively managing scope to ensure that only what was agreed to is delivered, unless changes are approved through scope management
- Defining and collecting metrics to give a sense of how the project is progressing and whether the deliverables produced are acceptable
- Managing the overall project plan to ensure that all work is assigned and completed on time and within budget

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eCourse—Fundamentals of Project Management

PM4Dev has developed a web based course on the fundamentals of project management. The course provides a quick overview of the project management cycle and the project management processes, with particular attention to the new role a project manager needs to play, as well as the skills required to successfully run a project. This course is divided in 5 easy lessons:

- Introduction to Project Management
- The Project Management Cycle
- The Project Management Processes
- The Roles, Responsibilities of the Project Manager
- The Project Management Organization Structure

For more information go to our web site

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... The Process Responsibilities, from page 1

These process responsibilities does not mean that the project manager physically does all of this, but must make sure it happens. If the project has issues or scope creep, or faces risks, or is not setting expectations correctly, the project manager is the person held accountable.

To manage the project management processes, a project manager should be well organized, have great follow-up skills, be process oriented, be able to multi-task, have a logical thought process, be able to determine the root causes to problems, have good analytical abilities, be a good estimator and budget manager and have good self-discipline.

People Responsibilities

In addition to process skills, a project manager must have good people management skills. This includes:

- Having the discipline and management skills to make sure that everyone in the project follows the standard processes and procedures.
- Leading people so that they willingly follow the project manager. Leadership is about communicating a vision and getting the team to accept it and strive to get there.
- Setting reasonable, challenging and clear expectations for the project team and holding them accountable for meeting the expectations. This includes providing good performance feedback to team members.
- Team-building skills so that the project team works together well, and feels motivated to work hard for the sake of their other team members and the project . The larger is the project team and the longer the project takes, the more important it is to have good team-building skills.
- Communicating proactively using good verbal and written communicator skills, and good, active listening skills.

Again, the project manager is responsible for the success of the project. If the team has poor morale and is missing deadlines, the project manager needs to try to resolve the problem. If team members don't understand exactly what they need to do and when it is due, then that is a responsibility of the project manager.

...Who defines Quality?... from page 1

problem the project aimed to work out.



The purpose of quality management is to first understand the expectations of the donor and the beneficiaries in terms of quality and then put a quality plan to meet those expectations. Because quality is defined by the beneficiary, there may be some subjectivity in its definition. But there are methods to make quality more objective. One of these methods requires listing the specific characteristics of quality that are important to the donor and the beneficiaries. Then determine the metrics that the project can collect to measure the quality characteristic. In addition to understanding the beneficiaries' definition of quality, it is important to recognize other stakeholder's interests as well. Depending on the roles of the stakeholders, they may have other quality requirements that need to be satisfied. For instance:

- The organization - The project supports the development strategic goals.
- Donors - The project meets the contract or agreements
- Beneficiaries - The solution helps them do their job better, faster, easier.

One of the objectives of quality management is to find mistakes or errors as early in the project as possible. A good quality management process usually requires more effort and time but the benefits in many cases outweigh the costs. The project manager needs to set up a system that collects metrics to make the quality management process work. If the project is not capturing metrics, it will be hard to improve processes through a quality management process. The worst case is to have the beneficiary or the donor find the problem after the project has been completed.

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3. Increasing Participation by Project Stakeholders

Participation by project stakeholders means sharing a common understanding and involvement in the decision-making process of the project. Participation by stakeholders leads to empowerment and to joint



ownership of the project. To increase participation the project should start with a consultation process that moves to negotiations and ends with joint decisions. Participation by project stakeholders has many benefits and advantages, among them are:

- Ensures that the project plans are a reflection of the real needs and priorities of beneficiaries
- Ensures buy-in in the activities where the stakeholders need to be involved
- Develops an environment of trusts by allowing the voices of the stakeholders ne heard and their issues be known
- Increases project ownership, which ultimately leads to sustainability.
- Makes the project accountable to the stakeholders

Participation enables the voices of the stakeholders to be heard and by doing that the level of trust in the relationships increases.

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4. The Project Decision Making Process.

All projects need to make decisions, but good decisions usually come from the use of a logical and rational process. When used correctly the project manager increases its chances of coming to the right decision. The steps for a good decision making process are:

- **State The Problem** - The first and the most important step in the decision making process is to identify the problem. Only when there is a clear understanding of the problem or decision to be made, the project can proceed to seek a solution. If the problem is stated incorrectly or unclearly then your decisions will be wrong.
- **Identify Alternatives** – The project team should then start to list all possible alternatives. Most of the time there will be several alternatives and it is worth spending enough time to ensure the project has a good number of viable alternatives.
- **Evaluate The Alternatives** - This is the step where the analysis of the alternatives begins.

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With the objective of serving the needs of the global development community, **PM4DEV**© was created to provide with expert project management consulting and training services based on a **customized** methodology that offers the tools and processes to plan, implement, and monitor projects in a more **consistent, reliable and predictable** manner. PM4DEV's methodology is based on a project management cycle that incorporates all the processes, tools and practices to **effectively** manage projects of all sizes. Organizations should have the ability to complete a project successfully by combining systems, techniques, and knowledge and controlling and balancing the constraints of time, cost, and scope in order to produce quality

**DOING THE RIGHT PROJECTS...
... DOING THE PROJECTS RIGHT**

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....Decision Making Process, from page 3

The project can use techniques to rank the alternatives. Two of such techniques are Decision Matrices and SWOT analysis. The purpose is to have a list that ranks the best alternatives using a set of criteria for viability.

- **Make A Decision** – Once the alternatives have been evaluated. The project should select two or more of the high ranked alternatives. All low ranked alternatives should be eliminated. The project then will need to review the problem statement and test the solutions against the selected alternatives and decide on the solution that has the best chance at solving the problem.
- **Implement the Decision** – Before the chosen solution is implemented the project will need to make a revision of the project plan, schedule, budget and other resources to ensure the solution can be implemented. Part of the implementation phase is the follow up. The follow up ensures that the implementation of the solution has solved the problem .



....Participation, from page 3

Participation also promotes transparency in the actions of the project and ensures that the project is held accountable for its actions.

Participation increases ownership by stakeholders who feel the project is taking in account their views and motivates them to sponsor the project.

Participation is a key strategy to win support to the project, to gain commitment to the project, and ultimately to increase the chances for sustainability after the project has been completed.

Participation should aim to include the right mix of stakeholders including those that may be against the project, as it improves that the project solution is the best one.

The points of view provides a summary of themes, that in PM4DEV's experience, have proved critical in the successful implementation of project management methodologies. It draws on the expertise of Project management professionals and provides a guide to deliver a methodology that increases the chances of project success. For more information about PM4DEV services, contact us at info@pm4dev.com

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