

SMALL BUSINESS | MANAGING EMPLOYEES | PROJECT MANAGEMENT

# The Best Practices in Picking a Project Manager

By **Elle Smith**, Contributor

*The project manager directs goals and procedures for team members.* Getty

A project manager is one of the most crucial cogs in the project management cycle. The success or failure of a project depends on her ability to be a team leader and to anticipate issues in the chain of events from concept to delivery. Although every company has its own definition of a best practice, and project managers are as varied as the projects they lead, there are basic things to look for to help determine if your choice will be a success.

## **Leadership**

Project management is not about technical ability, but depth of management skills within the project cycle. Every project manager needs skills such as planning, estimating, scheduling and budgeting, but the central skill for effective project management is leadership, according to author and certified Project Management Professional Larry Richman. The project manager must lead all phases and team members by influencing others to help accomplish the job's deliverables. When picking a project manager, there are several key leadership qualities to consider. Is the individual respected by his fellow co-workers? Is he always there to help with problems? Look for a leader who contributes to the team's motivation and removes obstacles to its success.

## **Communications Skills**

A project manager must excel in all forms of communication. Successful project managers effectively communicate the project's objectives through face-to-face meetings, via phone or text message, or by e-mail. A good project manager also knows exactly what she needs to cover, through each communications method, according to management consultant Fumi Kondo. Any communication that can be misdirected or even intercepted during the project cycle can lead to the project's failure.

## **Conflict Resolution and Problem-Solving Skills**

Problem-solving goes hand-in-hand with project management. The leader must demonstrate basic conflict management skills and have the ability to resolve issues that arise in the project cycle, according to author and project management expert Harold Kerzner, Ph.D. The project manager must also supply tools and techniques that enables his team to solve problems. When assigning a manager to head a project, look for a creative thinker who can solve problems when viable options have been created.

## **Organizational Skills**

A project manager must stay on top of many details. Organizing begin with defining resources, needs and supplies. This includes both human and nonhuman resources as required to fulfill the project's objectives. Look for a project manager who can see the big picture, as well as focusing on the smaller details.

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## **References**

- Improving Your Project Management Skills; Larry Richman, PMP
- Project Management Best Practices; Harold Kerzner

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### ***Contributor***

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