

Project Management is not Rocket Science

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I am going to let you all in on a little secret.....ssssh, don't tell anyone.....but project management is not rocket science. We just need to convince everyone else that it is, so we can charge the high rates and get lots of responsibility. Here are four simple ways to succeed:

1. **Manage Project Cash Flows**

Identify and estimate when cash from the project will need to go out (paying suppliers, consultants, contractors, etc.) and when cash from the project will be coming in (government or organizational funding, savings, etc.). I am not advocating a complex financial analysis, but by having a monthly cash flow statement for the project, you will be able to better manage the ebbs and flows of the project budget.

2. **Collaborate with Suppliers**

Not enough projects or companies do this well. You have spent a great deal of time negotiating contracts with suppliers, so now you need to manage those contracts and suppliers. Hold them accountable for what was promised and look for other ways to collaborate with them to create mutually beneficial situations. This can be simply done through regular performance meetings with those suppliers providing goods or services to your project.

3. **Integrate Systems and Processes**

Different organizations use different systems and project management methodologies. Ensure that they are all integrated....your change control process should be integrated with the process to changing the contract; the tool you use to manage the project plan should be integrated with your budget. These are all logical links that need to be in place to reduce non-value added activities for you and your team.

4. **Develop and Retain Your Talent**

Sounds easy, but it is very difficult to do because it is thought to be a soft skill. Find opportunities for members of your project team to take on additional responsibilities and show what they can do. Who knows, maybe they can take some work off your plate. Keep them motivated and engaged and you will be surprised at what some people can do. Take time out to provide feedback on their performance, including what they do well and areas where they can develop. A big part of your job as project manager is communication.

Of course, there can be many other things to focus on, but these are four simple ones that can be addressed quickly and easily. If you are not doing all four of these, you should be. If you are already doing them, then kudos to you.