

# Change Management: The Undercover Role of the Project Manager

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# About Dr. James T. Brown PMP



James T. Brown Ph.D., president of SEBA<sup>®</sup> Solutions Inc., a Registered Education Provider for the Project Management Institute, has provided training and consulting services for dozens of companies nationally and internationally. He has sixteen years of NASA experience that includes "hands on" experience as a team member, project manager and serving in executive level organizational leadership roles.

He provides consulting services in project management and has served as a subject matter expert for a leading project software vendor. James is the author of *[The Handbook of Program Management](#)* published by McGraw-Hill. The Handbook of Program Management has been ranked as high as number three of all project management books on Amazon.com. He also provides project management training through the online training portal [Onepdu.com](#). He is a regular contributor to the *PMI Community Post* and has also been published in *PM Network*, *PE Magazine*, *Projects@Work*, *The Systems Thinker* and *PM World Today*. A recognized authority in project management, he is a frequently invited keynote speaker on project management areas of interest and leadership.

Dr. Brown has a patent for a project scheduling methodology, and has received numerous awards including "*Engineer of the Year*" from the Cape Canaveral Technical Societies and is a recipient of the "*NASA Public Service Medal*" for exceptional contributions to NASA's mission. He is a member of the Project Management Institute, the National Speakers Association and the National Association of Corporate Directors.

James has a Ph.D. in Industrial Engineering from the University of Central Florida, a MS in Engineering Management from Florida Institute of Technology and a BS in Electrical Engineering from Tennessee State University. He is a licensed Professional Engineer (PE), a certified Project Management Professional (PMP), [Certified Speaking Professional](#) and avid surf fisherman.




# Change Management Defined

- Change management is a systematic approach... [http://searchcio-midmarket.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,,sid183\\_gci799426,00.html](http://searchcio-midmarket.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,,sid183_gci799426,00.html)
- The coordination of a structured period... <http://dictionary.bnet.com/definition/Change+Management.html>



# Organizational Improvement

- Organizations improve when humans *embrace* the tools and processes
  - Many organizations have provided good tools and processes only to have them not used
  - There is *wooing* involved!

**woo**  (woo)  
v. wooed, woo·ing, woos  
v.tr.

1. To seek the affection of with intent to romance.
2.
  - a. To seek to achieve; try to gain.
  - b. To tempt or invite.
3. To entreat, solicit, or importune.

# **DO YOU HAVE THE GREATEST PROJECT MANAGEMENT ABILITY?**

**Dr. James T. Brown PMP PE CSP**

The ability to anticipate is by far the greatest project management ability. Anticipation is an ability that is a culmination of knowledge, experience and skill. The ability to anticipate is not only what separates great project managers from good project managers; it is what separates great from good in most professions. The best hitters in baseball have the ability to anticipate what kind of pitch will be thrown to them and where the ball will be when it is time to swing the bat. The best soccer goalies have the ability to anticipate where the ball will be kicked so they can block it. This really comes into play during penalty kicks and this ability to anticipate will determine the goalies success or failure.

What the baseball batter and the soccer goalie have in common is that they cannot be successful trying to cover every possible outcome. The batter cannot possibly hit the ball with power and control trying to protect the entire strike zone. He has to limit the strike zone to maximize the chances of getting a hit. The goalie cannot possibly guard the entire net. He has to determine what part of the net he will defend and what part will be left unprotected. The batter and goalie that can most effectively anticipate and plan their response to the future circumstances get the best results. This is also true of project managers.

The challenge of project management is so daunting that the project manager's ability to anticipate and plan has a direct correlation on their ability to execute. A lot of project management books will state that everything needs to be planned in detail and every risk needs to be covered with a risk plan. This is good in theory and for a very small percentage of projects it is good in practice. However, most project managers live in a world characterized by uncertainty. Uncertain requirements, resources, risks, etc. The role of the project manager is to minimize or eliminate this uncertainty, but it is rare when uncertainty doesn't exist at significant levels. Therefore the best project managers anticipate. They are able to visualize and plan through the fog. They make aggressive decisions based on what they anticipate. The average and poor performing project manager waits on the fog to clear. They complain or whine constantly about the uncertainty and it becomes an excuse for inaction.

The great project managers anticipate then act. The great baseball hitters sometimes swing and miss wildly. The great soccer goalie sometimes leaps to the wrong end of the net. They make mistakes just like the great performing project manager will make mistakes. To anticipate and act means that you will occasionally make mistakes. Over the course of a project, program or career these mistakes will be small compared to the number of good decisions that were made due to excellent anticipation. The successful project manager is a continual learner, not afraid to make decisions based on what they know to be true and what they anticipate to be true.

## The Need for Change Management?

- People don't like change!
- People fight what they don't like.
- People respond differently to change.



Success is more than the triple constraint.

The project can fail even if the deliverable met the requirements...  
if organizational change is not adequately addressed.

# Conflict Management for Project Managers

**This course will be in Atlanta on September 22, 2011. You will be able to register soon on the PMI Atlanta Website. Don't miss it!**

**Course Description:** Organizational success is rooted in successful relationships at all levels. Conflict is a natural part of any work environment and must be addressed in a positive effective manner. When properly handled, conflicts are resolved in a manner that maintains relationships and produces mutually agreeable outcomes. When improperly handled, conflicts can create barriers to organizational efficiency that can linger and/or spill over to other areas outside of the original situation. This course focuses on conflict management and negotiations through prevention and resolution.

"Excellent! This program has given me many new tools to help me become a more effective project manager. The hand-out workbook will be a valuable reference." *C. Groves, Progress Energy*

Conflict prevention ensures participants know human behavior and relationship building skills that minimize conflict potential and impact. Prevention essentially attacks organizational conflicts at the source. This is especially important for technical personnel that are unaware of and/or discount the importance of human behavior and relationships. Resolution focuses on skill development for negotiations and handling real time conflicts.

**Learning Objectives:** After completion of this course the participant will be able to:...Understand key human behavior elements and their impact on conflict...Prevent and minimize conflict through the establishment of strong relationships...Resolve conflict in a positive way...Effectively negotiate with project stakeholders...Leverage trust to facilitate conflict resolution...Apply different negotiating strategies...Recognize the negotiation approaches that consistently produce the best results...Appreciate the role of communication in conflict and negotiations

## More participant comments about *Conflict Management for Project Managers*

- This class was like a suspenseful and action-packed movie where I didn't want to miss a thing! **5/5 (not 1/5) of my my mind was fully engaged.** Dr. Brown is a brilliant master and student of human behavior. *M. LaVigne, Essilor of America Inc.*
- **Information + concepts can be put to immediate use** + increase an employee's chances of success as a team member or project manager. *G. DeToro, Sypris Electronics*
- The Conflict and Negotiation process does not have to be feared if the proper tools + skills are utilized. The program is informative and provides **excellent information on how to achieve optimum results.** *K. Edwards, Achieva Credit Union*
- Good, **no-nonsense, practical tools** and concepts for conflict management based on proven principles and data. *C. O'Reilly, Ceridian Corporation*
- I have participated in several conflict resolution classes/courses/seminars and have found this one to be **one of the most useful in relating to actual real world situations.** *J. Naughton, Diebold*
- Today's training showed me that our challenges are not exceptional, and **I feel more empowered as a project manager** to make a positive difference for my corporation. *P. Barrier, Progress Energy*
- **EXCEEDED EXPECTATIONS!** Dr. Brown is extraordinary! I never leave his seminars unsatisfied. - a lot of things to bring back to the office and apply. *K. Scangarello, Nielsen*
- I found this session refreshing. A worthwhile break from the daily grind to focus on the important aspects of conflict management. Dr. Brown's presentation was **witty and at the same time very effective.** *Mark Becker, C/D/Htstanding program, loaded with practical, useful, actionable information* presented in an upbeat and optimistic manner. *M. Dettl, Gordon Food Service*

## Stakeholder Management?

- Stakeholder satisfaction is more than the quality of the deliverable.
  - Physical characteristics
  - Perception of the deliverable

## Organizational Change Management

- Organizational change must be planned
- Expect to encounter resistance
- *The amount of resistance... the amount of planning are proportional to the magnitude of the change.*

# Why Your Project Management Methodology Doesn't Matter Much

**Dr. James T. Brown PMP PE CSP**

One of the greatest debates in project management is what is the best project management methodology? There are numerous articles and books touting particular methodologies. Each usually talks about the deficiencies of other methodologies and uses some version of the high failure rate of projects to meet cost, schedule and scope targets to prove their point. Some methodologies are overtly or covertly backed by vendors and consultants selling software and/or services related to the methodology. I have come across no credible proof of one methodology outperforming another methodology. I hope the following isn't a news flash...

## **The methodology isn't the primary factor of success. It is the leadership!**

I have a client that was rolling out a new methodology. They had invested substantially in the methodology and training in project management. Early in the process the CIO called me aside and she asked "*Will this work?*" I responded by saying "*It will work if your leaders lead. A project management methodology and educated project managers ultimately escalate issues that require the organization to make decisions and lead.*" I am pleased to tell you three years later, all of this client's projects are in control and they have and are enjoying great success with project delivery. They have a good methodology, but more importantly they have strong leadership to back up their chosen methodology.

## **Strong leadership with regard to the methodology is much more than mandating compliance to the methodology.**

Strong leadership is striking a balance between people dependency and process dependency with regard to the methodology. Too much methodology can contribute to project failure. We must have a balance. Project management is simply Structured, Organized, Common Sense. If uncertainty is high and the requirements are fluid, it is common sense to use an iterative method. If the deliverable is critical and it's execution and use involves life and death you may want a strict development methodology. There are always trade offs and there is no free lunch. One size does not fit all. PMO's and leaders have failed trying to make one size fit all.

## **Strong leadership is also choosing when to violate the methodology.**

Sometimes there are circumstances that warrant not following the methodology. The key for success here is that exceptions and violations need to be formally approved by leadership. Without this formal approval individual project managers will violate the process and the process's integrity will erode over time to the point of being useless (useless... the methodology exists, it sits on a shelf, and we just don't follow it). The good part of pre-approving and approving violations to the methodology is that the violation requests themselves tell a story about the methodologies effectiveness and how it should be adjusted. Requests to violate the methodology are data that should be used to improve the methodology. These requests will lead you to the natural balance point for your organization's methodology.

## **A methodology doesn't have to be perfect!**

Earlier I mentioned a client that showed strong leadership with regard to their methodology and project management. When the methodology was rolled out the leader told the project managers "*I am rolling this out and I know it is no more than 80% correct. However if we wait, it will still never be perfect. I want you to use it and tell me what's wrong with it. Tell me how it can be improved. You have my commitment that I will listen. I will fix what's wrong with it and I will improve it.*" That's what he did. That's leadership! That is what made it successful. I have no doubt he could make any methodology successful through leadership.



## Change Models

- There are lots of change models out there.
- Understanding them enriches your perspective.
- None are correct for all situations.
- *Nothing beats knowledge and judgment!*

## The Change Curve

- Dozens of Consultants Model
  - Surprise
  - Denial
  - Hostility/Anger
  - Negotiation
  - Depression
  - Trial
  - Acceptance
- Kübler-Ross model\*
  - Denial
  - Anger
  - Bargaining
  - Depression
  - Acceptance



*\*On Death and Dying -  
1969*

## What does this company know that your company doesn't?

**Multiple Choice:** Why did a Fortune 100 company send Dr. Brown to Europe in 08 and 09 to train their project managers? Why did he already go again in 10? Why? Why? Why?

- a. Because they already sent him over ten times in the past three years.
- b. Because their project managers and stakeholders understand, believe in, and are motivated to follow project management processes after Dr. Brown's training class.
- c. Because after three years of leadership by their Project Management Office and Dr. Brown's training all of their projects are now green and in control.
- d. All of the above.

### Hint: The Real Question is...

If this company is willing to pay for overseas business class tickets (\$\$\$), travel expenses (\$\$\$), and extra fees (\$\$\$) to cover Dr. Brown's time while in Europe, and do it repeatedly, why isn't your organization willing to bring him in for project management training when there are no travel costs for courses in the United States?

Contact Dr. Brown today at  
jtbrown@sebasolutions.com to discuss your training needs.

*“Initially we brought James in for just one class that happened to be Leadership Skills for Project Managers. The class had such a profound impact on my staff that we rolled it out globally to all IT project managers and then added other classes. Usually people have to be pressured to attend training, but James's classes essentially sell out when scheduled. Most importantly, I see increased proficiency among my project managers that translates to bottom line results.”* C. Woodruff, Global CIO of Siemens Energy

Answer → d. All of the above. (As if you didn't know) ☺

# Kurt Lewin's Freeze Phases

- Unfreeze
- Changing/Transitioning
- Refreeze



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# Dislike of Change has its Roots in Fear

- They will lose their job
- Their job will become more difficult
- Loss of prestige
- Loss of power or control
- They will be unable to complete their work



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## Why is a book on the brain in the top 25 of Amazon's leadership books?

**Dr. James T. Brown PMP PE CSP**

I believe personal productivity and performance as a project manager are directly correlated. Just like we have to lead a project team, we have to lead ourselves to a higher level of a productivity and effectiveness. In all of the leadership classes I teach, emphasis is placed on knowing yourself. When you know yourself it provides you the ability to adapt to weaknesses and leverage your strengths (increase your personal productivity and effectiveness).

### **Knowing how your brain functions is part of knowing yourself.**

*Brain Rules*, ISBN 0-9797777-0-4 is so insightful and valuable that I sent a copy to my select clients. The value of the book hinges on the understanding of the brain and how it works which allows me to leverage that knowledge for increased personal productivity and in my interactions and relationships with others.

### **Myth Busters for the brain!**

The book is a fairly easy read because the author, John J. Medina, uses stories to illustrate the functionality of the brain. This book is not a "leadership-lite" book filled with cute and truthful antidotes, but a book with hard science communicated in an interesting way. Dr. John J. Medina is a developmental molecular biologist. He also shares what scientists don't know about how the brain works!

### **This book gave me many, many take-aways and here are just six ...**

- I. Some parts of the brain are just like a baby's and can grow new connections and strengthen existing connections. We have the ability to learn new things our entire life. Medina states this was "not the prevailing notion until 5 or 6 years ago." So much for the "you can't teach an old dog new tricks excuse." The old dog line is exposed for what it really is...an excuse.
- II. Humans can only pay attention for about ten minutes and then need some kind of reset.
- III. The brain can only focus on one thing at a time. This is further rationale on the futility of multi-tasking.
- IV. Exercise increases brain power and aerobic exercise twice a week reduces the risk of general dementia by 50% and Alzheimer's by 60%.
- V. There is a biological need for an afternoon nap. (Yes, when not with a client I am now taking a thirty minute nap and find my afternoon is much more productive. I would waste thirty minutes just fighting the urge to take the nap)
- VI. The brain is very active during sleep and loss of sleep hurts cognitive and physical ability. (I am actually solving problems during my nap. Although true...this rationale may not work with your boss.)

### **Buy and read *Brain Rules*. It will benefit you.**

One of the reasons I read leadership books is to learn new things but also to get old truths hammered into my thick skull so they result in action. So you may know or have heard of some of the truths in "Brain Rules" but I guarantee the author brings them to you in a unique and interesting way with solid depth that will allow you to easier implement those truths into how you handle yourself and others on a daily basis.

## Dislike of Change has its Roots in Fear

- Their contribution to the organization won't be as valuable
- They will have a new customer, boss or colleagues to deal with
- No one will be able to help them with the new system
- The unknown

## Fear of change is increased when...

- There is a history of poor delivery.
  - Doesn't have to be your history.
- The current circumstances or conditions are poor.
  - Pressure for the “new system” to work great.
  - Increased time pressure.

## Who is the Most Important Stakeholder Group?

**Dr. James T. Brown PMP PE CSP**

I recently surveyed five groups of project managers and asked them to prioritize the following stakeholder groups. In alphabetical order they are Community, Customers, Investors, Suppliers and Team Members/ Employees.

The average ranking for all of the groups was 1. Customers, 2. Team Members/Employees, 3. Investors, 4. Suppliers and 5. Community. One of the groups had employees/team members ranked number one, one group had investors ranked number one and three of the groups had customers ranked number one.

The variation in the groups was not a surprise. I recently read the book *Setting The Table: The Transforming Power of Hospitality in Business* by Danny Meyer. Why read a restaurateur's book on hospitality? A big part of project management is stakeholder management, and whenever I can study excellence in seemingly unrelated fields, there are often strong parallels to project management.

### **Team Members are Number One! Are You Kidding?**

Meyer shared how his restaurants began struggling and he had to re-establish his priorities and values. He described his priorities as "*Enlightened Hospitality*" and it puts stakeholders in the following order: 1. Team Members/Employees, 2. Customers, 3. Community, 4. Suppliers and 5. Investors. He credits this philosophy for turning his restaurants around and contributing to a very successful business.

Fundamental to his philosophy of Team Members/Employees being the most important, is the truth that if the team cannot treat each other with respect, hold each other in the highest regard and work harmoniously with one another, then it is difficult for them to treat the customer with respect, to hold customers with high regard and work harmoniously with them.

### **Disharmony within a team often migrates to external relationships.**

Meyer's most important concern is how his team members treat each other. This reminds me of some wise counsel given to me long ago... "*Take care of your people first, and then everything else takes care of itself.*"

It is just disingenuous to treat your fellow team members poorly and then treat your stakeholders well. It becomes an act. An act that at some point that will be exposed for what it is. Meyer believes, and has proven, that his prioritization ultimately benefits investors more.

### **Investors being ranked last provides greater returns in the long term.**

It is a sad commentary and very evident in the current financial markets how focus on the short term ultimately is more costly and sometimes devastating. Two other important takeaways from *Setting the Table* are below:

1. Judge your staff on 51 percent emotional (attitude and interpersonal skills) job performance and 49 percent technical job performance. You can always teach technical, while emotional is much harder, if not impossible to develop. Lack of emotional job performance skills destroys teams and alienates customers.

2. Employees can be categorized as *Overwhelmers*, *Whelmers*, and *Underwhelmers*. It is easy to identify *Underwhelmers* and get rid of them. The most dangerous employees are the *Whelmers* because they tend to stay in the organization longer because their performance is adequate but "they infuse an organization and its staff with mediocrity...and send a dangerous message to your staff and guests that "average" is acceptable."

## Fear of change is increased when...

- They don't know you
- They don't know their processes
  - Historical, Current, Proposed
- Roles and accountability are unclear.



## Dealing with Stakeholder Fear

- Methodically Analyze their fear
  - Examine all the potential fears they may have
- Develop strategies to overcome each fear
  - This may be different for each stakeholder
    - Address individually
    - Continual reassurance helps

## **Are You Spending Too Much Time on Project Administration?**

**Dr. James T. Brown PMP PE CSP**

Project administration functions are different than project management functions. By administration functions I mean inputting the project parameters into the project management software, scheduling meetings, issuing minutes, compiling and expediting all the documentation and deliverables for the project, and providing the obligatory “courteous” follow-up on late tasks and deliverables.

**I would never burden a great PM with administration functions.**

When project managers have to manage projects and do administrative functions, it is a very tough task, because the amount of work involved in administrative functions can be overwhelming. The non-administrative project management functions are much more important. Thus, project managers who must do both tend to fall behind, or often they ignore or do not perform administrative functions, especially since the consequences of doing so are delayed.

**Everyone doesn't have time to master sophisticated tools.**

The project management software in use today is very sophisticated with a lot of capability. Project management software packages usually add new features, capabilities, or other changes every year or two, which makes the products even more challenging to use. Most project managers understand and can use less than a tenth of this capability—they learn (often painfully) just enough to get their project tasks into the system in order to meet some reporting requirement of the organization.

A two- or three-day class or online tutorial isn't enough. Granted, the training will provide the basis for building proficiency in a project management software package, but that is true only if you use the tool frequently after the training is completed. The tool is a small part of good project management, and unfortunately, most organizations have their project managers operating on the wrong end of the learning curve. As such, their project managers never get proficient or effective at using the tool.

**The tool can be a burden versus something that makes the job easier.**

Realize that knowing the tool and performing all the necessary project management tasks is information/capability overload for the typical project manager. In fact, the skill set and natural ability to become proficient in the use of the project management software is different than the skill set and natural ability needed to be a great project manager, which is primarily people and relationship driven. It is a rare individual who is highly effective at both, because of personal preferences and time limitations. Time spent at the desktop with the tool is not time spent dealing with the myriad of project stakeholders

**Splitting the two functions is a strategic decision.**

When the functions are split, you have dedicated project administrators who work for and serve project managers. This means you can invest heavily in “tool” training for the administrators and make them experts on your project management software and methodology. Relieving your project managers of the administrative burdens allows them to work on more projects. Additionally, project administrators can serve more than one project manager. For example, very often, seven project managers and three project administrators accomplish more and provide better customer service than ten project managers all doing the project management and the administrative functions.



## Dealing with Stakeholder Fear

- Training and communication should address fears
- Stakeholders should know...
  - How their fears will be addressed
  - Who will address them
  - When they will be addressed

## Analyze Change

- Systematically address stakeholders attitude toward change.
- From the organizational level.
- From the personal level.



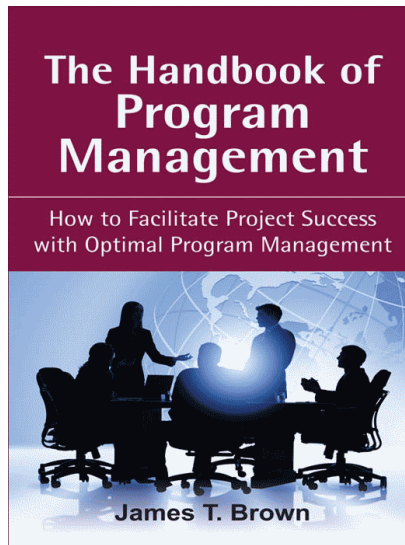
**Why this book will make you a better program manager,  
project manager and leader of teams!**

“The book proved to be a very quick read and loaded with **excellent insight** into Program Management. The section on **Stakeholder management was especially interesting**, Dr. Brown describes a ranking system and communication techniques that are **extremely helpful**. Risk management is also a section that has good approaches for managing a successful program.” *Greg Maloney*

“The book takes you **step-by-step** through the basics of setting up the structure necessary for a robust program environment. Where needed, examples and pointers are included, with **tips and scenarios** throughout the chapters, and the essence of each chapter is boiled down to a useful list of **"Keystone" principles** at its close.” *Calvert Kendrick*

...This book was **better than a handbook**, at least how I think of handbooks. It read very well (unlike my stereotype of a handbook which a choppy, reference guide) and was **full of "gems"** from real example projects and programs. The other word is "Program". While it's of course true that the book focuses on Program Management, my issue is that it is an **excellent book for Project Managers, as well.** - *Rich Maltzman*

“The chapter that covered stakeholder management was another excellent chapter that I have since asked all of my Program AND Project managers to read. I did this because it's an excellent chapter on **helping the Program and Project Managers to understand what stakeholders REALLY expect of them**. Additionally he goes over the types of stakeholders that you can run into and simple yet effective methods to work effectively with them.” *Ben Wilson*



“The book is a very **useful and pragmatic** approach to Program Management. Dr. Brown provides **real world examples** and guidance for improving your skills. He also does a great job addressing the leadership skills required to be a successful program manager. **A highly recommended read** for program managers and those aspiring to be one!” *Joe Savage*

If you are a program manager, or thinking of becoming one, you will want this book. Dr. Brown shares his wisdom on the program management without overburdening you with methodology. In reading the book, **I often felt like I was having a discussion about program management with a knowledgeable and experienced colleague.** J. F. Simmel

"Brown's book captures the essential skills of program and project management. It serves as a "how to" guide for those entering the business, as well as a refresher on the skills and attributes for those ready to take the next step. The book effectively defines the leader's role in creating the team culture and environment for success". - **Eugene F. Kranz, Apollo 13 Flight Director, Retired Director NASA Space Operations, Author - Failure is not an Option**

# Stakeholder Communication

- Regular, Planned
  - Define upfront
- Not just bad news
  - Take every opportunity to communicate success
    - Good news via email → okay
    - Bad news via email → *NOT* okay

# Communication

- The heart of change management
  - Not just telling
- *Communication is finding a way to bring the stakeholder information in a manner that allows them to accept it!*

# Milestones in Mirror are Closer Than They Appear

**Dr. James T. Brown PMP PE CSP**

At the beginning of the calendar year, a common conversational topic is “how fast time passes.” No one has an appreciation for how fast time passes more than a project manager with a tight schedule. Milestones that seemed far away when the project started seem to be accelerating towards you. Because we tend to immediately forget past accomplishments and their significance, milestones that have been completed seem like ancient history.

## **You can take a breath to acknowledge achievements!**

Always take the opportunity to remind yourself and the team of accomplishments, challenges overcome and milestones completed. Take some time to celebrate and acknowledge achievement of the milestone. This helps to build confidence and serves to relieve the seemingly constant pressure of the next project milestone.

## **Schedule pre-milestone reviews!**

You will find it valuable to schedule pre-milestone reviews ahead of the milestone to ensure there are no surprises or hidden issues that may prevent achievement of the milestone. These reviews are typically scheduled two to four weeks in front of the milestone completion date. The situation may dictate a formal team review or you may informally meet individually with team members. By putting this on the schedule it minimizes the “nagging” perception when you follow up...just like a good “nagging” project manager should.

## **2009 to 2010 is a big milestone!**

Some say the holiday season is depressing. Could it be depressing for some because it is a time of assessment? The change over of the calendar, from one year to another, even though it is just another day, causes people to assess themselves. This assessment is good for them and for those companies that sell fitness equipment.

So...just in case you haven't explicitly asked yourself, “How well did you do as a project manager or team member this year?” Evaluate how well you did: 1. From your own internal feelings; 2. From metrics and 3. By asking your key stakeholders. Analyze the variance among these three indicators. If you don't have metrics to assess your performance, have them for next year.

## **Commit to get better!**

- Were you a better project manager/team member in 2009 than you were in 2008?
- Was your organization better at project management in 2009 than 2008?
- What goal or capability do you have in 2009 that you didn't have in 2008?

I challenge you to set goals to achieve in 2010 related to the questions above. Answer the questions ahead of time! Remember in project management, requirements that are not written down are not really requirements and certainly not managed properly. The same applies for goals! If you do not take the time to visualize your goal and write it down, you are limiting (more likely eliminating) your ability to achieve it.

## Communication

- Listen to everything... especially the things you can't change or control!



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## Persistence

- Don't expect everyone to embrace or even accept change right away
- Change must be championed persistently
- *The biggest opponents often become the biggest supporters!*

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# What is your project's planning horizon?

**Dr. James T. Brown PMP PE CSP**

When project managers are asked the question about the length of their planning horizon, they usually frown in disgust or say "What do you mean by planning horizon?" I define planning horizon as the length of time you can plan into the future with validity. Validity meaning you know what work needs to be accomplished; you know what resources are required for the work that can be accomplished; and you know what resources are available or the work that needs to be accomplished.

**Knowledge of the work, the resource requirements and the resource availability enable the project manager to create a detailed schedule.**

If one of the three factors above is lacking, a properly detailed schedule cannot be put together. For some organizations the planning horizon is a month or longer. These environments are very stable. Work is planned out in detail and executed per the plan for the month with only minor changes. Still other organizations have a planning horizon that may be a week and the schedule is very stable for that week.

**Establishing a planning horizon is a strategic decision for an organization.**

Unfortunately it is very common for organizations to have a planning horizon less than a week and in some cases it is less than a day or non-existent. There are circumstances that warrant a very short or non-existent planning horizon and it is not wrong as long as it is a strategic decision, that was made by the organization with full knowledge of its positive and negative consequences. Every organization should establish a target planning horizon based on the kinds of projects, customers, deliverables and services they provide.

Organizations with short or nonexistent planning horizons are very dynamic and usually filled with higher levels of frustration. Unmanaged, this frustration can lead to turnover or worse... employees that just go through the motions because they feel their contributions are wasted by an organization that keeps changing things.

Longer planning horizons also have problems because the schedule is set and a better or more effective way to do something may arise, but the schedule is set. Additionally, longer planning horizons can make it more difficult to respond rapidly to changes.

**When it comes to details... once is usually enough!**

When it comes to dealing with the planning horizon you only want to plan the details once. What good does it do you to plan the details for three months from now if your planning horizon is three days. Yes, you want to understand as much as possible about what may need to take place three months from now, but unless your environment is stable enough to assure with a high level of confidence that the work that needs to be accomplished, its corresponding resource requirements and the resource availability for the work is known for that period three months from now, there is no point in planning it in detail.

**Establishing a planning horizon forces an organization to come to grips with all of the uncertainties that limit the planning horizon.**

What prevents you from having a stable schedule for one week? Two weeks? Six weeks? Identify the uncertainties that limit the planning horizon. Some of these uncertainties may be able to be eliminated, some may be reduced and others just have to be dealt with. It is important to understand the uncertainties to establish the planning horizon and then communicate this understanding to the team. When the team understands why the planning horizon is three days or three months and that the planning horizon was established as a strategic decision it reduces the frustration whether it is long or short. It is encouraging to know that your leadership is "thinking" and not just letting things happen in a haphazard way.

# Training

- Every stakeholder needs to be assessed as to what training they will require to make the change happen.
- *This is not just training on the deliverable or use of the deliverable.*

# Non – Deliverable Training Examples

- Project Management
  - The methodology (whatever that is)
- Requirements creation
- Business processes
- Organizational roles



## Book Review – Scappy Project Management® – Kimberly Wiefling

**Dr. James T. Brown PMP PE CSP**

*Scappy Project Management® - The 12 Predictable Pitfalls Every Project Faces* is worthy of being on every project managers bookshelf. It always pays dividends to get the perspective of other seasoned project managers because there is more than one right way to be successful at project management. The author's perspective is refreshing and insightful.

The biggest compliment I have about this book is that it is not an academic book. It is a book intended for practitioners of the project management craft written by a practitioner. I like books that provide the kind of advice a mentor would give you over a cup of coffee and *Scappy Project Management®* fits that mode.

My top ten take-aways from *Scappy Project Management®*

1. The very people who are supposed to be leading often abdicate responsibility in mediocre organizations.
2. Make your own team organization chart.
3. There are many people passing themselves off as project leaders when they are just occupying the position and not willing to take a stand and do the right thing.
4. Learn to love the tunnel. There is no such thing as a light at the end of the tunnel.
5. When tracking changes in action item due dates never change the original dates. Just mark through them.
- 5.5 Track changes to the project.
6. Humans are bad estimators and bottom up scheduling methods pay to little attention to handoffs and integration points.
7. Pre-emptive pessimism. People tend to assume something is impossible if it is very difficult.
8. Never reward firefighters.
9. Happiness is relative. You must do a good job of setting expectations.
10. It doesn't matter how much your team knows if it doesn't have the ability to execute.

Buy and read *Scappy Project Management®*. It is a keeper.

The ten take-aways above are not the only ones. This book provides tried and true principles of project management that are presented in a pragmatic way with a tongue in cheek style to keep you interested.



## Deliverable Training Elements

- Who will be trained.
- What is the time frame of the training?
  - How will the training be integrated with roll out and operations?
- Who pays for the training?

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## Deliverable Training Elements

- Will users help create the training?
- What is the scope of the training?
- What is the shelf life of the training?
- Who will conduct the training?

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## **What do they really think about you as project manager?**

**Dr. James T. Brown PMP PE CSP**

Odds are very high that even though you are highly capable, PMP certified, nice and good looking there is an opportunity for you to improve as a project manager. A significant opportunity! But if you are not looking at your faults from the perspective of others your ability to seize this opportunity is diminished. In the book "Selling the Invisible" by Harry Beckwith he states:

**"Even your best friends won't tell you but they will talk behind your back"**

I was conducting a leadership class for the PMI Atlanta chapter earlier this year and we were discussing the importance of getting feedback from your team and stakeholders on your performance as a project manager. Feedback can be a very painful, but as I heard the bestselling author Jack Canfield say "feedback is the breakfast of champions." A participant in my Atlanta training class said she has periodically used Survey Monkey, (<http://www.surveymonkey.com/>) to have her team assess her performance as a leader and the results have been very valuable to her.

### **Recurring feedback works best**

Additionally, as you request feedback more often you can see your progress (or lack thereof) in a particular area. It also allows you to address these issues with the group and communicate your commitment to get better. *Seeking anonymous feedback increases trust and provides the opportunity for open dialogue where appropriate.* People often rally behind a leader that acknowledges imperfection, especially when they see commitment to improve and they become more forgiving of transgressions. Every project milestone is an opportunity to seek feedback on your performance.

### **Be careful not to overreact to your survey results**

People often take for granted the positive and emphasize the negative. Allow time for the survey results to sink in and give them perspective and context. This does not mean you discount the feedback they provided because their perspective of you is very real to them... true or untrue.

### **Where there is opportunity for improvement, brainstorm ways you can improve**

Once you identify ways to improve then do the easiest/smallest improvements first. You will be surprised how small adjustments can make tremendous differences. This is a journey of improvement and too many people want it to be an instantaneous change. Make small improvements then survey again.

### **Honesty is the best policy**

Honestly looking at yourself (warts and all) requires effort. It is easy to go through life as leader without truly assessing your performance from the perspective of others. But, if you are committed to personal growth and improvement, garnering honest feedback is a requirement.

# Mentoring

- Formally identify mentors to support the change.
- Mentors should be *knowledgeable, available, supportive*
  - Involved early and throughout the process.
    - That's how they get knowledgeable.
- Have a super mentor for the mentors!



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# Sneezers\*

- Cultivate and identify Sneezers to spread the positive aspects of the change.
- Request people of influence mention the change at every opportunity.
- Sneezers are potential mentors.



\*Godin, Seth (2001). ***Unleashing the Ideavirus***.  
New York: Hyperion. [ISBN 0-7868-8717-6](https://www.amazon.com/dp/0786887176)

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SEBA

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# Book Review - Ignore Everybody: and 39 Other Keys to Creativity

**Dr. James T. Brown PMP PE CSP**

This book was ranked number 1 on Amazon's list of best selling leadership books. It contains some valuable universal truths presented in an interesting way. I would classify it as a "Leadership Lite" book worthy of downloading to your Kindle or stashed in your briefcase to be read on an airplane. (*See my one big reservation about this book at the end of this review before you purchase*)

I love "fun to read" leadership books versus the "utilitarian", "old foggy" "Harvard Business Review" style and this book is fun to read. I still read the utilitarian books...I just suffer through them. What makes this book good is the stories to illustrate points are the author's own.

Here are my top eight takeaways from Ignore Everybody.

1. The more original your idea is, the less good advice people will be able to give you.
2. Good ideas alter the power balance in relationships that is why good ideas are always initially resisted.
3. Your idea doesn't have to be big. It just has to be alone. The more the idea is yours alone, the more freedom you have to do something really amazing.
4. The price of being a sheep is boredom. The price of being a wolf is loneliness. Choose one or the other with great care.
5. Being good at anything is like figure skating - the definition of being good at it is being able to make it look easy. But it never is easy. Ever. That is what the stupidly wrong people conveniently forget.
6. Your job is probably worth 50 percent of what it was in real terms ten years ago. And who knows? It may very well not exist in five to ten years...Stop worrying about technology. Start worrying about people who trust you.
7. Part of being a master is learning to sing in nobody else's voice but your own...Put your whole self into it, and you will find your true voice. Hold back and you won't. Its that simple.
8. The biggest mistake young people make is underestimating how competitive the world is out there.

Point Number 6 is Profound!

I think point number 6 (Stop worrying about technology. Start worrying about people who trust you) is worthy of further discussion. In today's woeful economy or tomorrow's boom or bust economy your relationships matter more than your technological expertise. It won't matter how many certifications you have to your name if you lose your job, or your company goes out of business... the starting point to recovery (or going to the next level) is your relationships.

**I recommend this book with one big reservation.**

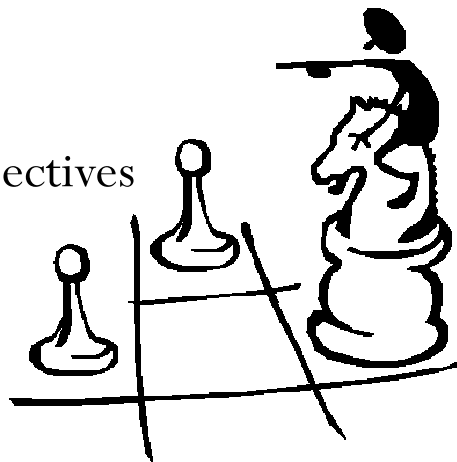
The captions in the cartoons are racy to say the least and not suited for the corporate environment or youthful readers. If the racy cartoons were toned down or removed I would have immediately sent a copy of this book to all of my clients. So my clients will have to choose to buy this book themselves knowing that some of the content is rated R.

## Requirements Management and Change

- A good requirements process facilitates good change management
- Good requirements means...
  - You know the stakeholders perspective
  - You can communicate the current condition and the future condition
    - How to get there

## Five Primary Strategies for Change

1. Evidentiary
2. Command
3. Vision, Goals and Objectives
4. Segmentation
5. Rites of Passage



# Leadership Skills for Project Managers

## Course Description:

This course provides participants with leadership skills to successfully navigate all the challenges in a demanding project environment.

## Learning Objectives:

After completion of this course the participant will be able to:

- Identify the traits of successful leaders and emulate the characteristics of successful leaders
- Build a strong team
- Establish consensus
- Recognize the importance of being an observer and learner of human behavior
- Understand the importance of relationship building
- Appreciate what motivates different individuals within project teams
- Know the different types of power leaders can use
- Conduct effective meetings
- Engage team members to resolve issues
- Establish processes to communicate effectively
- Create escalation strategies to facilitate resolution of complex problems
- Tactfully deal with stakeholders on sensitive issues
- Lead a project to successful completion

BRING THIS  
COURSE  
TO YOUR  
COMPANY!

### Participant comments about *Leadership Skills for Project Managers*

**One of the most effective programs I have attended** on training project managers to become project leaders." *P. Harbin, Hospital Corporation of America*

Was **extremely valuable**. It is the common sense that we know but continually ignore combined with a unique perspective of how to effectively use the tools. *H. Walter, Tyco Electronics*

It was **one of the best programs I have attended in my 20+ years of project management**. I can relate to James and see many ways I can improve my performance. It makes sense to me both personally and professionally. *D. Downey, TEK Systems*

I have **at least 2 dozen takeaways**, with 2-3 ready to be implemented/included in project management work right away. I also liked the depth/detail of materials and the library recommendations. *J. Cunningham, L. R. Kimball*

**Excellent, Inspiring and Relevant**. Dr. Brown is an excellent speaker, presenter. Not just theory but **practical application**. *R. Blouse Volvo 3P*

Dr. Brown **distills leadership in project management down to a few key elements with clarity and humor**. He dispels the notion of a magic bullet. *K. Henschel, ConAgra Foods*

**Top notch**. relevant, tight, well presented. *A. Spangler, IBM*

Today's program was **helpful in a very practical way**. Dr. Brown cut through the various accepted processes and went straight towards what works in the real world. *Kalyani Bulfer, Slalom Consulting*

## Concrete Steps

### 1. Identify all stakeholders.

- Don't forget the “*Unofficial People of Influence!*”
- Keep your friends close and your enemies closer.



## Concrete Steps

### 2. Understand each stakeholders perspective.

- Including fears and desired outcomes.
- Deal with conflicting objectives among stakeholders.
- Know why the change has to take place and how the change specifically impacts each stakeholder.
- Know how the project requirements relate to stakeholder perspectives.



## Functionality First

Dr. James T. Brown PMP PE CSP

I was returning from a business trip in Germany last year and had a very early taxi to drive me to the airport. It was so early that when I climbed in the front seat of the taxi it was still dark and I wasn't exactly coherent. As we speed along the autobahn I noticed the car had a hood ornament I had never seen before. I had a hard time identifying the ornament in the darkness. I suddenly couldn't grasp what kind of car I was riding in. I asked the taxi driver "what kind of car is this?" and he said it was a Mercedes (the typical German taxi).

I pointed at the hood ornament and he laughed and said it was a tablespoon! Obviously there was a story behind a Mercedes with a spoon as a hood ornament. He told me his Mercedes hood ornament had been stolen and replaced three times and so the last time he went into his garage and trimmed the handle off a spoon and attached it. He smiled and said "*no one has stolen the spoon.*" He said as a taxi driver he needed a hood ornament for reference since he was constantly pulling up very close behind other taxis in lines waiting on customers and the spoon worked just fine for judging distance.

### Professional Appearance Does Not Guarantee Professional Content

The taxi driver's tablespoon meets his functional purpose for a hood ornament regardless of how unique or unsightly it may appear to others. There is a lesson for project managers here. Often in a project a lot of time can be spent developing fancy presentations or reports or unnecessarily embellishing deliverables. Sometimes organizations have groups or consultants whose sole role is to beautify. There is nothing inherently wrong with this but I can guarantee thousands and thousands of hours are spent doing this beyond what is necessary. *You would be rich beyond words if you had a single dollar for every fancy report delivered by a consultant that gathers dust while it creates no action on the part of the recipient organization.*

### It's not just presentations and reports...tools can go overboard too.

I was told by one of the top project management scheduling tool providers that "project managers don't care about how good their product actually produces project schedules...their opinion is that a project manager's primary concern is the tool presents pretty Gantt charts." I wish I was kidding!. Next time a company is demonstrating their tool pay attention to what they emphasize. Boil it down to functionality.

### Err on the side of Simplicity

For presentations, reports and tools all you need is enough information presented in a structured way that provides the basis for making a good decision. With all the capability and choices products have today the real challenge can be keeping it simple. We just celebrated the 40th Anniversary of the Apollo Moon landing. *If we were gathering the requirements to do that today we would say it is impossible to accomplish it with the computing power/capability they used.* Because we have so much computing capability at our disposal we would find it next to impossible to trim it down to what they so successfully used in the Apollo program.

### Just because the capability exists doesn't mean we need to use it.

Take great care to understand that the bare minimum functionality of what is required for success. There is nothing wrong with more capability but you should always understand what the bare minimum capability is to achieve functionality.



## Concrete Steps

### 3. Communicate the current state, end state and the planned path.

- Do this repeatedly.
- Communicate to reduce and/or eliminate fears.
- Communicate to build awareness and enthusiasm. (Sneezers)



## Concrete Steps

### 4. Plan for acceptance.

- Training (Deliverable and Non-Deliverable).
- Mentoring.
- Acknowledge Success.



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- Define risk management
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- Identify all project risks in a team environment
- Write effective risk statements
- Perform Qualitative risk analysis for project risks
- Plot Qualitative risks on a risk matrix
- Perform Quantitative risk analysis for project risks
- Perform expected value calculations
- Select quantitative or qualitative risk analysis based on the +'s and -'s of each method
- Explain how our "risk attitudes" affects how we manage risks
- Understand the importance of updating risk plans
- Recognize that risk monitoring and control is an ongoing process



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When you my Risk Management Course, you will get some very important tools for Risk Management. Not only will you leave with important tools, but you will know the limitations and applications of the tools. You will know when and how to apply the tools of risk management.

[I am walking away from this class course with valuable tools to improve risk management practices. Dr. Brown practices what he preaches – His presentation style and materials were very understandable and usable. K. Buckwalter, State of Michigan](#)

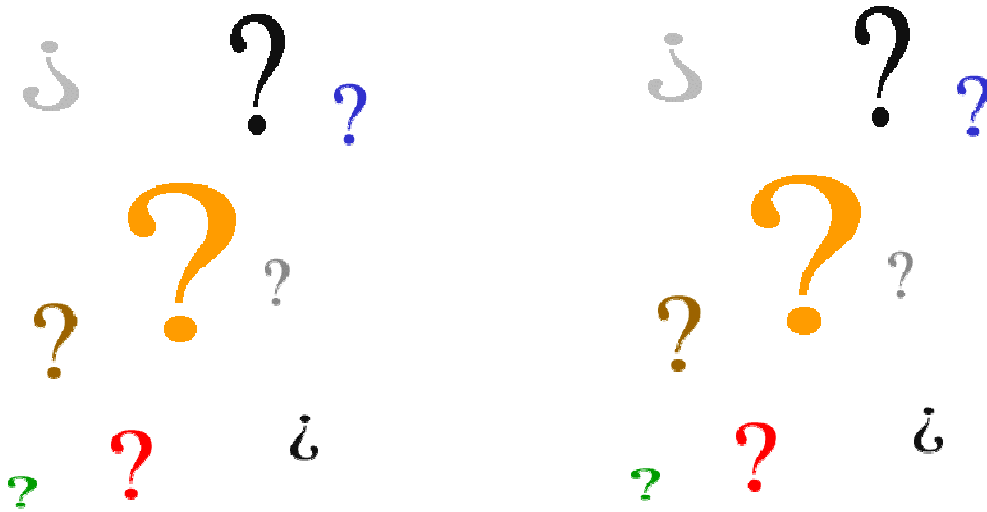
[Dr. Brown's insight into calculating and communicating risk was very valuable. We will be able to use his ideas immediately with our customers and projects. S. Pryor, CommandGlobal](#)

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## Questions



## Contact Information

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