Transferability of Project Management Skills & Competencies
AIPM IRC Bibliography
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Introduction: What are Project Management skills? Traditionally, PM skills involved a solid and competent grasp of the Nine Units of Knowledge of the PMBOK, preferably in an engineering/construction environment, which would only have really been transferable to a similar organisation using the same methodology. However, as Project management had advanced and matured, its take up has broadened across all industries, and now with the rise and rise of mature, project-based organisations, someone competent in PMBOK would be welcomed with open arms almost everywhere. As projects have become more complex and larger, however, these logical "left brain" PMBOK skills are suddenly not enough. So-called right-brained "soft skills", such as leadership and communication, have risen in value almost to the point where they are now the chief skills required to ensure project success. Such "soft skills" are definitely transferable. These article look at how transferable PM skills and competencies have been discussed in the recent literature. See also the existing bibliographies: Soft Skills in Project Management; Lynn Crawford: Competency & more; Project Leadership & Project Teams; Project Success – Why & How.

1. Tuxford, Edward. How many hats do you wear? Australian Project Manager 24 (2), 23. 2004. Keywords: Leadership; skills mix; human resources; competencies, soft skills. 
Abstract: Project Managers are often called upon to be all things for all people and, depending on where the project is when you join, you will perform many roles during the life of a project, including Captain and leader, salesperson, counselor, facilitator, and accountant!

2. Rutherford, Phil. Leadership for the 21st Century. Australian Project Manager 24 (2), 30. 2004. Keywords: Human resources; soft skills; teams; leadership; competencies. 
Abstract: Nothing happens without humans. So what are the three most important competencies for project managers? Planning, team building and leadership. This article looks at the latter two categories, and the "soft" skills that are required to excel at them.

3. Wheatley, M. Play to win: To develop new products quickly and efficiently, project managers must focus on the essentials with an eye toward innovation. PM Network 17(9), 34-39. 2003. Keywords: New Product development. 
Abstract: New product development is a risky business, and this article offers perspectives from numerous experts in the field on the best way to proceed. Business management skills don’t always translate into project management skills: business people need to be steeped in project management, and trained in the use of project management tools. Extra care is needed in the up-front planning and project definition phases to avoid disaster. The four important questions to ask of a new product development project are: 1) why is the project being done? 2) who are the appropriate people to be involved? 3) what is the ultimate goal of the project? and 4) when is the project going to happen? Bringing customer focus to the project is also important - carefully structuring customer involvement will yield the most benefit for the development team.

4. Buckle P. and Thomas J. Deconstructing project management: a gender analysis of project management guidelines. International Journal of Project Management 21(6), 433-441. 2003. Keywords: managing projects; managing and leading; competence; culture; gender; soft skills; hard skills. 
Abstract: Strong isomorphic forces are at work in the emerging project management profession. At the same time, competent project management practice is evolving and expanding to include both soft and hard skills. Contemporary gender scholarship purports that these different skill sets are founded on inherently gendered logic systems. Thus, questioning regarding the role of masculine and feminine logic systems is project management become increasingly important. We deconstruct portions of one of the pre-eminent isomorphic forces at work today – the Project Management Body of Knowledge – to initiate discussion on the ways in which gendered logic systems play in role generally-accepted project management practice.

5. Hoard, Craig A. Hierarchy of skills: Laying a foundation for PM maturity. gantthead.com, 3. 2003. Keywords: pm maturity; hierarchy of needs; pm skills. 
Call Number: ART 273 
Abstract: Organisations are currently assessing their project management maturity in an effort to improve project delivery capabilities. This paper offers a conceptual model for a hierarchy of project management skills and suggests the prerequisite skills necessary before more advanced project management capabilities can be achieved.

6. Van der Merwe A. Pencil and paper. Project 2002;15(1):15-6. Keywords: Project Management Care; Ethical Questions; Underdeveloped Countries; Third World Countries. 
Abstract: The lack of project management skills has been identified as a major factor in the slow progress of developing countries. Part of the problem is that "first world" knowledge has limited success in these nations. Looks at current initiatives which take a low-tech, 'pencil and paper' approach with minimal training, adapting skills that can be understood and implemented in South Africa.

7. Shepherd M. Setting standards in China. Project 2002;15(2):25. Keywords: China; Project Management; Standards; Change Management. 
Abstract: In a quest to improve its project management skills, China is turning to the international scene for assistance.
Keywords: Career Development; Teams; Managers; Training; Recruitment; Motivation; Communication; Ernst and Young; NASA.
**Abstract:** Every organization's dream for ongoing success is a team of managers with project management skills and an understanding of core methodologies. Some global organizations have established a formal project management career track to recruit, develop, and retain outstanding managers. These tracks match employment experience, classroom training, and demonstrated competence to promotion and salary increases. Skills such as communication, negotiation, risk management, and organizational methodologies are emphasized to keep project managers motivated and projects on target. Example programs are described: the U.S. Department of Energy's Project Management Career Development Program, Cap Gemini Ernst & Young's Center for Engagement and Project Management, and NASA's Academy of Program Project Leadership.

Keywords: Competence; Professionalism; Core Skills.
**Call Number:** CON 37
**Abstract:** An interesting new approach to professionalism an organisation and to tackling and managing projects is based on the deployment and utilisation of its core competencies. Core competencies or core skills, can be regarded as the sum of the organisations collective experiences, especially in the field of continually reintegrating the different motives, skills, expertise and information and knowledge streams in a client-oriented way.

Keywords: Core Competence; Industrial Relationships; Software Subcontracting.
**Abstract:** This paper addresses the evolution of competence in contractual software development projects based on the findings of two case studies, where the skills of a software subcontractor were made explicit and their change during the past 14 years was analysed. Competence evolution is crucial for software subcontractors, not only to stay in the market as professional service firms, but to build the assets needed for being able to offer service products. This requires a relationship-based view to compensate creation and management, which has not been emphasised in the literature.

Keywords: Competence; Professionalism; Cultural Differences; Change management; Tunisia; Germany.
**Call Number:** CON 37
**Abstract:** Looks at how transferable project management is across different cultures by using a German/Tunisian joint project.

Keywords: computer software - development - management; competency cluster.
**Abstract:** What are the essential skills of a successful project manager in a software development environment? Are all project managers well suited for every development project? Why do project managers with great records of success become ineffective on a project? Are you more effective in one stage of the project life cycle than another? This paper is designed to provide a new angle on an old subject. It presents the case that not all project managers are created equal, and that their inequality is a good thing depending on the objective of a project. A simple model is developed using a crystal ball, a bottle of whiskey, and a revolver to provide a broad perspective on the project management skill set in a software development environment. It then applies this model to different types of development projects and throughout a project’s life cycle.

Keywords: education; training; training programs; outcomes.
**Abstract:** This paper examines the reasons behind the historical and inherent difficulties in transferring (project management) learning outcomes into the workplace. Drawing on recent Australian, British and American research, the focus lies with four dimensions of training programs - organisational motivation for learning, the depreciation of skills and the notion of transferring learning to the workplace, the return on training investment and post learning evaluation.

Keywords: Competence; Professionalism; Education; Leadership; skills; training.
**Call Number:** CON 37
**Abstract:** Project management takes place under more difficult circumstances than line management. For this reason it is necessary for the project manager to have above average leadership skills which allow him/her to complete a project successfully. However, a considerable number of project managers experience their position as hopeless and retreat to the role of a project administrator, thereby giving up standards of leadership. This is a risky development, because it endangers the success of projects. Therefore, it is argued that project managers build up on leadership skills in addition to the necessary schooling in methods of project management. Innovative leadership models and holistic concepts of management training can be directly applied to the specific situation of project management.
15. Horowitz, A. S. **Covering Project Skill Gaps - Training plays a large role in whether or not projects will come in on time and on budget.** *PM Network* 15(9), 30-35. 2001.
   **Abstract:** A skill gap is the difference between the skill level needed to complete a project, and the skill level possessed by the project team. The article discusses different ways of assessing skill gaps, and offers various strategies to overcome them. Gopal Kapur of the Center for Project Management has created a scale for measuring the skill gap on a particular project: where the skill gap is 15 to 25 percent, training and hiring can be used effectively to overcome it, but teams should not be assigned projects where the skills needed exceed the skills possessed by 30 percent. Several options for covering skill gaps are discussed, such as training vs. hiring, borrowing skills within the organization vs. contracting, and cross-training.

16. Clark, M. T. **Opening the Window to Learning. In the 10 months since creating a competency center, this manufacturer trained hundreds of project managers, established an intranet Web site and radically improved project management skills.** *PM Network* 15(7), 40-41. 2001.
   **Abstract:** A Project Management Competency Center (PMCC) was created by the Andersen Corporation, a wood window and patio door manufacturer, to address inconsistency in their information project management processes. The PMCC was based on the PMBOK Guide principles and initially focused on the creation of an intranet site to educate project managers and foster a sense of community among them. Workshops were used to clarify project goals for each of the PMBOK Guide processes (Initiating, Planning, Executing, Controlling, and Closing), and another workshop focused on a sixth process identified by Andersen: Project Manager Competencies. The PMCC effort went on to address intranet support, recruitment of champions, training, and coaching. This methodology has been used to train over 180 project managers.

   **Abstract:** In response to new project procurement methods and growing complexity in construction industry, new disciplines of building professional have been added to the traditionally recognised practices. The respective characteristics and roles of different disciplines in the construction industry are becoming less clear cut. In recent decades there is also a concern with their integrity in terms of professional value and competence in their specialised skills. Specialism of different disciplines and working relationships among them are not so easily defined. Crossing boundary practice among different disciplines of building professionals is becoming obvious. This paper, based on a research study, aims to investigate these phenomena and develop anticipating actions.

   **Call Number:** ART0026
   **Abstract:** Highlights the versatility of having good project management skills and the move by many companies to become "project managed organisations".

   **Keywords:** AIPM 2001 Conference; Training; Education; Competency-Based Training; Assessment.
   **Abstract:** The author argues that anyone in a managerial role needs to be using the methods and techniques of project management. PM is no longer the domain of engineers and architects and that unless this is recognised and accepted, the future of PM as an independent professional calling will be in jeopardy. The presentation challenges the traditional methods used to train PMs and suggests better ways of doing it to ensure the profession both survives and thrives. It looks at the competency-based approach to training and assessment and shows where most trainers and assessors are in many ways contributing to a 'dumbing down' of the profession rather than an enhancement of it. Based on extensive research in Australia and overseas, the presentation puts forward examples of trainers getting it right and what current and prospective students should be demanding of their training and education providers. It also represents a model for all future training in this field and how, by working together, trainers, employers and their professional bodies can create a new order in project management skills and knowledge.

   **Keywords:** project management - South Africa - case studies; competency; standardisation.
   **Abstract:** This paper presents, as a case study, the work performed to develop project management competency standards to be used within the South African Qualifications Framework. This project is one of many in the program of the national 20-year Skills Development Strategy. This has meant endeavoring to 'fast track' the production of project deliverables within a national environment subject to continuous change as the national strategy was refined and implemented. The standards are intended for use in learning programs in the workplace, by training providers, academia and professional bodies. They have to take into account recognition of prior learning that may be knowledge or experienced based (without formal learning) that are readily implementable for developing competence through learning programs and experience in the workplace. We decided to concentrate upon 'generic' project management skills and to leave sector specific skills to groups writing standards in those sectors. (e.g. construction, mining, IT). However, even related to generic skills many debates have been held upon the differences between 'engineering versus business versus developmental / aid projects'.

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Keywords: Education; Training; Project Management.

**Abstract**: Effective project managers require skills and knowledge that must be applied to "one-off" projects. Traditional methods of teaching do not always provide the depth of learning to apply knowledge to such unique situations. This paper describes a course in project management in which students use project management skills and tools to manage their learning. Starting by describing the motivation for the course design, the paper goes on to discuss some key features on the operation of the course. Elements of the organisation of this course could be successfully used as a method of delivery in other project management courses.


Keywords: competency; competency dimensions; Keane, Inc.

**Abstract**: "Congratulations! You have been given the opportunity to advance in your career and are now a project manager. Go forward and lead the project to ultimate success." This is the common directive given to so many new project managers as they embark on their new career in management. Unfortunately these new project managers usually have little if any idea what skills and competency behaviours are key to success in their new role. It is important that project managers of all levels recognize and understand what competencies are important to produce better project results on a more consistent basis.

Several years ago, Keane, Inc. combined its project experience with the research capabilities of a behavioural specialist company. Together we studied the behaviours of the superior performer project managers and determined what was different about what they said and did to achieve better project results. Currently PMI has a standards group studying and creating a model for Project Manager Competency. The PMI model discusses 3 categories of competencies in the model. Input competencies include that which a project manager needs to know, output competencies include those things a project manager needs to deliver, and personal (or behaviour) competencies that include those behaviours that lead to better success.

The Keane, Inc. model that I will address concentrate on the personal (or behaviour) competencies that we have determined are key to producing better results, more often, with better results. This model groups competency into 4 clusters. These distinct but critical clusters are Problem Solving, Project Manager Identity, Achievement, and Influence. When combined, the 4 clusters include a total of 17 specific competencies composed of many behavioural event indicators for each competency. We have identified an interesting phenomenon in regards to the 17 competencies. What we discovered is that no one project manager needs to be great at all 17 competencies. This is because no one project or project phase needs all competencies as critical success factors. Which of the 17 is most important? That depends on the project and the company doing the project. This paper and discussion will address this Keane Project Manager Competency model. The clusters and competencies will be identified, their importance to successful project management will be listed, and relevant behaviours around the competencies will be examined. This kind of model, when applied properly, can be used to improve several areas in the constant struggle to fill the business need for more good project managers to successfully lead the ever growing backlog of required projects. The processes that can be improved include hiring for those competencies that are hard to train, mentoring for those competencies that are easier to coach, and professional development and training for those that are easier to teach. Those who read the paper or come to the discussion will walk away with a good feel for the model and its benefits to project manager development.


Keywords: management - evaluation; project managers.

**Abstract**: Representing a breakthrough in thinking, this project successfully identified the critical factors that differentiate superior project managers. This large project emerged from a series of meetings with a New Zealand telecommunications company that outlined a need for a formalized assessment and development planning process for Project Managers across all business units as part of business process project they were undertaking. The client wanted to identify their competent project managers, and understand what made them different. Individual development plans were also produced.

Taking a phased approach, in Phase One, 87 people (and their managers) completed a competency based questionnaire. This questionnaire was developed by Winsborough Limited, and Project Plus Ltd and was referenced to a globally recognized set of project management standards. Using these standards, a 'cut-off' was set and fifty three people moved forward to Phase Two. These participants underwent an in-depth competency based interview and also completed a psychometric test of managerial judgement (Scenarios test). This phase revealed a pattern consistent with the work from phase one. The second assessment identified a number of individuals whose competence far exceeded that of their colleagues.

The Scenarios test measures managerial judgement - a person's ability to weigh up 'real life' situations and decide on appropriate and effective ways of handling them. The top group was significantly higher on overall managerial judgement but this difference was almost entirely attributable to their skill in people management. This pattern was consistent across all scales. These results validated the competency model and suggested that selection of project managers ought to focus on people management, big picture thinking and the ability to clearly manage priorities. In previous work to develop the specific competencies that identified superior project manager competencies as well as the project manager competencies used in this project, the hypothesis predicted three specific areas of importance in superior capability:

* Ability in dealing with and relating to people
* Ability to navigate through competing interests
* A "will do" attitude that translates into an unflagging commitment to the project coupled with a "can do" attitude that
translates into unshakeable faith in their ability to achieve a successful outcome.

This project substantially confirmed the view that these factors differentiate the top participants from the rest. These factors should guide future selection, and guide development planning for all potential project managers and project directors. Suggestions for improving overall bench strength included coaching, specific training in project and people management skills and developmental tasks. This assignment provided a large number of highly useful outputs at each phase of the project for both individuals (development plans, capability graphs) and for capability planning at the organizational level (bench strength, gap analysis, recommendations for training). It was completed to budget, on time and to a high standard.


Keywords: Research; Conference Proceedings; Competencies; Standards.

Abstract: This paper presents a review and analysis of research-based literature concerning the criteria by which project success is judged, the factors that contribute to the success of projects; and the knowledge, skills and personal attributes of project managers that are expected to lead to achievement of successful project outcomes. Analysis of data on the project management practices and perceived performance ratings of over 350 project personnel from three countries are then presented. Analysis suggests that there is little direct relationship between perceived performance in the workplace and the level of project management knowledge and experience reported against either project management standards (PMBOK Guide and Australian National Competency Standards for Project Management) or previous research findings.


Keywords: Change; Public Sector; IRNOP IV; Methodologies.

Abstract: This paper will reflect upon the experience of the collaborative research team in developing and applying a model using Soft Systems Methodology to make sense of the project management transformation process underway in two government agencies.


Keywords: Conferences; Project Management; IPMA; Congress 2000; Finance; Banking; Success; Competencies.

Abstract: The central theme of this paper is that, in improving the success rate of projects, our attention continues to focus on the processes and competencies of project and change management. But, as the volatility and rate of change of our environment increases, it is now critical that we move on to also address the area of benefits management. Techniques in this area are immature compared to project and change management, but these techniques are becoming essential for managing change in our businesses in this new millennium.


Keywords: Project management skills -Transferable skills - Industries.


Keywords: Career advancement; Finance; Banking; Certification.

Abstract: Using project management as a tool for career advancement can put financial executives on the fast track. But successful project managers require skills beyond the realm of general management, so be careful what you wish for.


Keywords: roles; competencies; project organisation; life cycle management.

Abstract: This paper makes a case for a fundamental shift in the preparation of the next generation project managers and in re-definition and registration of project managers. The traditional models of project management are increasingly inadequate in the highly turbulent and technology dependent world. There is an increasing trend to require project managers to accept part responsibility for the eventual facility and its commercial success. In order to do so project managers must be proficient in the core technology of their client’s operation, be capable of integration and addition of value to information, be IT literate and be capable of operating within a concurrent engineering/construction environment. Preparation of such professionals will require skills in systems engineering and knowledge management.
30. Gadeken OC. **How to get the most from your project management training.** 14th World Congress on Project Management, June 10-13, 1998 Proceedings, Volume 2; AIPM. Slovenia: International Project Management Association; 1998.
   Keywords: project training; trainees; training providers; mentors.
   Call Number: CON 2
   **Abstract:** The demand for project management training is growing at an outstanding pace as both government and industry organisations embrace and expand their project management initiatives. These organisations are confronted with the dilemma of how to rapidly train their workforce in project management skills. The number of training providers is also increasing as new vendors and consultants are entering the market. The key question is how to make intelligent choices to get the project management training you and your organisation need. This paper examines the project management training challenge from two perspectives - the project management organisation (the training provider) and the individuals being trained (the training receivers).

31. Tilley PA. **Project management/ General management: similarities and differences between leadership and management.** Australian Project Manager 1997;17(2):22.
   Keywords: Project management skills - Leadership.
   **Notes:** Looks at whether project management is more due to good management or leadership skills. Incl. references.

32. Freeman, Kerrie A. **So you say you’re a project manager.** PM Network 11(1), 15-16. 97.
   Keywords: project management; project management profession; competencies; experience; skills.
   **Abstract:** Just tacking the words project manager on after your name doesn’t mean you are one. Can your skills measure up to this demanding checklist?

33. Crawford L. **Developing project manager skills: an industry partnership approach.** IPMA 96 World Congress on Project Management; 1996; AIPM. IPMA; 1996.
   Keywords: project management skills; industry.
   Call Number: IC4
   **Abstract:** An innovative partnership between industry and academia is supporting corporate culture change, providing long term and in depth development of project management skills, while offering new approaches to real projects. The University of Technology, Sydney is working with government and industry to provide project managers with enhanced skills and transportable tertiary qualifications, on the job.

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