



PROJECT MANAGEMENT

PROJECT MANAGEMENT



Welcome to this Reading Course!

We are confident that the most rewarding and impactful learning experience awaits you. We encourage you to be armed with adequate materials to make your own notes and chronicle the inspirations that will come to you as the Spirit of God ministers to you uniquely.

This study explains fundamental principles of Project Management; how to manage projects effectively and achieve intended outcomes, with excellence always.

Now let's get started.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson, you should be able to:

- i. Express your knowledge of Project Management.
- ii. Clearly state what a project is.
- iii. Identify the qualities of an effective Project Manager.
- iv. Skillfully manage projects with the understanding of the processes of Project Management.
- v. Avoid failure in any project you are involved in.

INTRODUCTION

Project Management is the discipline of planning, organizing, motivating, and controlling resources to achieve specific goals. Everything, from organizing a Crusade to organizing a wedding in your church can be referred to as a project and can benefit from the science of Project Management.



Simply put, a project is a temporary endeavor that is usually time-constrained, and is undertaken to meet unique goals and objectives. It typically brings about beneficial change or added value. An example is organizing a local food drive. It has to be done within a specific period and would require some funding. The purpose is for the eventual salvation of souls by meeting a fundamental human need.

The art of managing a project successfully is a skill much needed in the body of Christ today. As ministry work expands, so will the need for diverse projects in fulfillment of ministry endeavors. In Project Management, qualities like courage, leadership, project management skills, technical competencies, project knowledge and understanding, solving of disputes, assessing the scope of work required, and evaluating technical issues are all vital. The Bible says *“Any enterprise is built by wise planning, becomes strong through common sense, and profits wonderfully by keeping abreast of the facts.”*¹ This scripture best describes Project Management.

¹Prov. 24:3-4 (TLB)



Come to think of it, God Himself was the first Project Manager. He managed the greatest project ever: the construction of the Heaven and the earth, and He was absolutely successful at it.² He finished everything there was to be created within six days and even planned a day of rest. He was and still is a quintessential Project Manager. This should strike a chord in you. Think about the fact that He has given us His nature to function like Him- nothing should stop us from being super project managers just like Him. The Bible declares: *“Therefore be imitators of God [copy Him and follow His example], as well-beloved children [imitate their father].”*³

QUALITIES REQUIRED OF AN EFFECTIVE PROJECT MANAGER

There is a mindset a good Project Manager ought to have and certain qualities he/she should possess. Let's look at some of them in detail below.

1. ABSOLUTE CLARITY

As a Project Manager, it's very essential that you have a clear picture of what you want to accomplish, in what time frame, and the resources required. Be clear about what's to be achieved before getting started. Before Moses started building the sanctuary, he understood the full picture first; the Lord showed him the pattern of what he was to build.⁴ What project do you have in front of you? Be clear about what you are to do before you even start. A project clearly seen in the realm of imagination is already half-done.



2. DIVISION OF LABOUR



Now that the project is clear to you, the next major step is to build a work plan and break it down into smaller tasks which you can then assign to members of your team according to their abilities and how the tasks relate to each

²Genesis 1:1 ³Ephesians 5:1 AMPC ⁴Exodus 25:9

other. This is needed so that a particular person or group of people would not bear the burden of the whole project.⁵ Your effectiveness as a Project Manager would be seen in how well you are able to do this.

3. CLEAR COMMUNICATION

Your communication must be clear, concise, and precise. It allows projects to progress smoothly and on time. The strength of your communication will determine determine your ease and speed of executing a project to a large extent. In the book the Lord knowing the power of communication confounded the language of those who intended to build a tower with its top reaching to the heavens. Their goal was well spelled out and understood by everyone involved in the project.⁶ The only thing that could stop them was a break in communication, and that was exactly how God stopped them. In managing a project, you need to communicate in such a way that your team members understand what is required of them and how best to get it done.



4. GOOD MANAGEMENT

You need to effectively manage cost, time, and quality as they are the building blocks for successful management of any project.



i. **Cost management:** This has to do with estimating, allocating and controlling project costs. In planning for a successful project, its predictable costs ought to be estimated before the commencement. Luke 14:28 declares: “*For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it.*” This is great wisdom from the Master Himself!

A good Project Manager is not only able to estimate the total cost of a project but is also able to manage the variations that may come to play in the process of its

⁵Nehemiah 3 ⁶Genesis 11:3-9

execution. Projected costs are calculated during the planning phase of a project and must be approved before work begins. As the project plan is executed, expenses should be documented and tracked so things can stay within the cost management plan.

ii. **Time Management:** The time frame of any given project should be estimated before the start of the project, and ought to be well managed. Ecclesiastes 3 clearly stresses the importance of timing in life – there should be a time to start and a time to finish your project. In Genesis 2:2, God had planned to finish the project in six days and rest on the seventh day, and this He did.



iii. **Quality Control:** Matthew 7:24-27 is a comparison of two projects; the first stood the test of time and challenges, but the second failed because due attention was not given to its quality management in the course of project execution.

What amount of attention would you give to your next project? Good management is the secret to the success of a good project.

5. FORESIGHT

Every great project is bound to have challenges. One of the secrets of excellent Project Management is identifying things that could go wrong, and preparing for them before they go wrong. This is what is referred to as risk.



It greatly reduces the Project Manager's stress level. *"A prudent person sees trouble coming and ducks; a simpleton walks in blindly and is clobbered"*⁷ Learn to work out in advance how you can avoid, minimize or deal with challenges if they happen. Joseph was given the project of preparing for the famine which was to visit the land.

⁷Proverbs 22:3 MSG

The Bible says he gathered up all the food for seven years,⁸ but he also foresaw the possibility of exhaustion of supplies, which caused him to gather corn as much as the sand of the sea. That was the wisdom of a good project manager. He foresaw the tendency of scarcity and therefore prepared for it. In the case of Nehemiah, he had oppositions which were out of downright maliciousness, but he already had a response plan.⁹

6. RESILIENCE

It takes determination to see a project through. This is where resilience comes in. A lot of times, projects do not just go as planned; hence, the determination to drive them to the finishing line. Tenacity, perseverance, a finisher's mentality, and so on, are some of the qualities needed to get to the end of a project. There must be an unending desire to finish the project irrespective of possible challenges. In John 4:34, the Lord Jesus spoke of His passion which was to finish the work of His Father. Once you have started a project, decide, against all odds, to finish it. *"Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof..."*¹⁰. A Project Manager must be determined to finish the project, no backing out.



7. LEADERSHIP



Leadership is important because Project Management often entails working with people. Project execution is teamwork often done by a team but led by a leader. Without teamwork, there is no success. A leader leads the team well

and makes sure that any challenges that may arise are well managed. Aside from clear communication, a good leader ought to be meticulous – very mindful of details – just like our heavenly Father as seen in Matthew 10:29: *"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered"*

⁸Genesis 41:47-49 ⁹Nehemiah 2:19, 4:1-3, 6 ¹⁰Ecclesiastes 7:8

STEPS IN MANAGING PROJECT

Now that we have explained the qualities of an effective Project Manager, let's proceed to discuss how to effectively manage a project from start to finish. Following the steps detailed below in the right order and with the right resources will facilitate the successful execution of any project. These steps mirror the work of our great heavenly Father in creating the world and humanity including His plan for redemption in the event of man's fall. Everything was finished from the foundation of the world.¹¹

1. PROJECT INITIATION



The first stage of the project life cycle is project initiation. In this phase, the scope of the ministry work is well defined. You as the manager of the project should conceive the project, and then identify and gather the resources needed to complete it.

Gathering resources here includes recruiting a team of people who would complete the project, tools to complete it, and any financial resources needed to acquire these tools. For example, you have been told to lead a team of people to have a city wide crusade. This is the stage to decide the purpose and target audience of the crusade, your workforce, and the resources required.

2. PROJECT PLANNING

Once the required resources are in place, you could begin the project planning process. The planning phase is critical and involves outlining the activities, tasks, resources, budget, and timeline required to execute the project. It has to do with a clear explanation of how the project should progress from start to finish. At this point, risks are identified and contingency plans are agreed upon.



¹¹Ephesians 1:4

3. PROJECT EXECUTION



At this stage of the project, most of the work gets done by the project team. They begin to work on its needs by following the provided plan. While the team works, the Project Manager monitors the progress and also monitors compliance with

the project plan. This way, if a problem arises, they are able to work together to evaluate the program. Where there is no ready solution, the Project Manager might consider creating a new plan. Once the ministry event, for instance, is completed, the project team is ready to move to the closure and evaluation phase.

4. MONITORING AND CONTROLLING

This critical stage which precedes the closure and evaluation stage involves reviewing the performance of all relevant parties regularly, in line with the project plan, and making adjustments if necessary, in the light of performance, changing circumstances, and new information. Nevertheless, the Project Manager makes sure everyone remains on track and within the original terms of reference.



5. PROJECT CLOSURE & EVALUATION

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied



This is the final phase of the project where the project manager and the entire team review how well the project was executed. In a project closure and evaluation meeting, the team considers what went well, and the lessons

application or sharing with other project teams in the organization. This very step is as important as any other one we have mentioned earlier; therefore, it should not be disregarded.

WHY DO PROJECTS FAIL?

Before we begin to round off this interesting discourse on Project Management, it is expedient to point out reasons some projects fail so that you can avoid them. Perhaps you started off really excited about a project, you did your research well, planned well, gathered a good team, and got to work but somewhere along the line, things fell apart, and the outcome was below expectation. Outlined below are some of the reasons projects fail.



1. ***Unclear Goals and Objectives:*** Failure is inevitable when the goal of the whole effort is unclear to the team. The objectives have to be clear both to the manager and the team members.
2. ***Lack of Resource Planning:*** The entire resources required for the success of the specific project ought to be well put into consideration, and meticulously budgeted. Failing to do this could lead to the failure of a project.
3. ***Communication Gaps:*** The information being communicated must be clear to the Project Manager and his team to avoid wrong perceptions which could lead to the eventual failure of the project.
4. ***Scope Creep:*** This happens when Project Managers or clients take on tasks that were not part of the original project plan. Adding to the already existing arrangements could lead to the failure of a project.
5. ***Unrealistic Expectations:*** To avoid the failure of a project, the expectations projected to the team members in terms of Time, Budget, and Targets ought to be realistic one.
6. ***Change in Organizational Priorities:*** This is the most common reason projects fail. When priorities change, things could get muddled up, leading to the eventual failure of the project.

ACTION NOTES

01 ► Develop the Qualities of an Effective Project Manager

02 ► Follow the Essential Steps in Good Project Management

03 ► Avoid Failure in Your Execution Process

CONCLUSION

After all that we have discussed, you ought to know that managing a project becomes easy when the procedures are known and applied. It becomes even easier when the essential qualities are developed in a Project Manager. Note, however, that you should not just consider a project in terms of the construction of structures or organizing of events alone. Consider that your very life is a project. Your call or assignment in ministry ought to be seen as a project, which you need to finish well. Paul knew when he had finished his course. He managed his life project well.¹²

We are surrounded by diverse projects; and whether these are personal or corporate, they ought to be successfully completed.

We trust that you have acquired so much knowledge in this particular reading course. We look forward to receiving your testimonies from your application of the principles we have shared therein. God bless you.

¹²2 Timothy 4:7