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800-224-3731

wanda@themathisgroup.com  
keith@themathisgroup.com  
kim@themathisgroup.com  
www.themathisgroup.com

9515 N SPRING VALLEY DR  
PLEASANT HOPE, MO 65725

FAX 417-759-9110

# The Messenger

Nov/Dec 2020

## A Letter from Wanda

Project goals keep the focus on what is most important. However, on some teams these primary goals are lost amidst their meeting's activities. Make sure each meeting is structured to move the project forward. Even if the progress is only inches rather than by huge leaps, the team must be pushing the project forward as quickly, safely, and reasonably as possible.

Here are five goals of every project.

1. Finish the project within the scheduled timetable.
2. Finish the project within the scheduled budget.
3. Finish the project with the same level of quality.
4. Finish the project within the specified guidelines.
5. Do the best you can with you have been given.

To help attain these goals, create clearly defined objectives to give a clear path to accomplishing them. Let's also look at six reasons why project objectives are important.



## How Important are Project Objectives?

### *Objectives must support the project goal's mission*

Interviews set the tone for what will happen during your project. Acquiring correct information in a thorough interview establishes relevant objectives to meet the goal of the project. Sometimes you must ask hard questions to discuss the bottom line. Remember, you are in charge of asking questions, and if you are not obtaining beneficial information or if you simply do not understand, you need to rephrase the question. Sometimes it is even good to ask, "What would be good to know about this project that I have not asked you?" The customer will expose extra information that is almost always helpful.

### *Objectives must have some way of being measured*

Evaluate your project's core objectives; make sure they can be measured for completion. Often, objectives will focus on improvements but with little specifics for measuring progress. It is human nature to want to see success. Do not set your team up for failure with objectives which are too



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# How Important are Project Objectives? continued

large or unclear. These cannot be measured and will only cause frustration and ultimately hurt morale for future projects.

## ***Objectives must have a deadline set for achievement***

Don't throw out a time or date. If you are just picking a date from the air, then you are doing nothing any different from those who create a project plan without information. Make sure you consider all the issues the project and project team are facing. Many objectives will have only a brief statement while others will be numbered with detailed subpoints.

## ***Objectives give team members authority***

Authority can be defined as the power, right, and stamp of approval to make decisions. By making an assignment to a specific person, it will become a high priority. Do not be afraid to give people a series of tasks which all support a larger piece of the project. By delegating pieces, it is easier to control and advance the project. Remember, though, people need authority to run their portion of the project. Authority demonstrates trust in that person and gives the freedom to make a certain range of decisions.

## ***Objectives need to be documented***

Documentation will keep you and your team focused on the project. It will help clarify where you have been and in what direction you are headed. Yet, documentation seems to be one of the weakest areas on all project teams. We often close out a project with little or no documentation which means no new ideas, processes, or best practices to pass on except what we have kept logged in our memory. It is important to maintain a register for all projects of what has been discovered to provide valuable information for future projects.

## ***Objectives drive the project forward***

Driving the project forward is accomplished by having action plans and assignments throughout it. This should include detailed implementation plans. You also must decide how you will measure each objective or deliverable. This forces you to create progress indicators throughout the project for measuring.

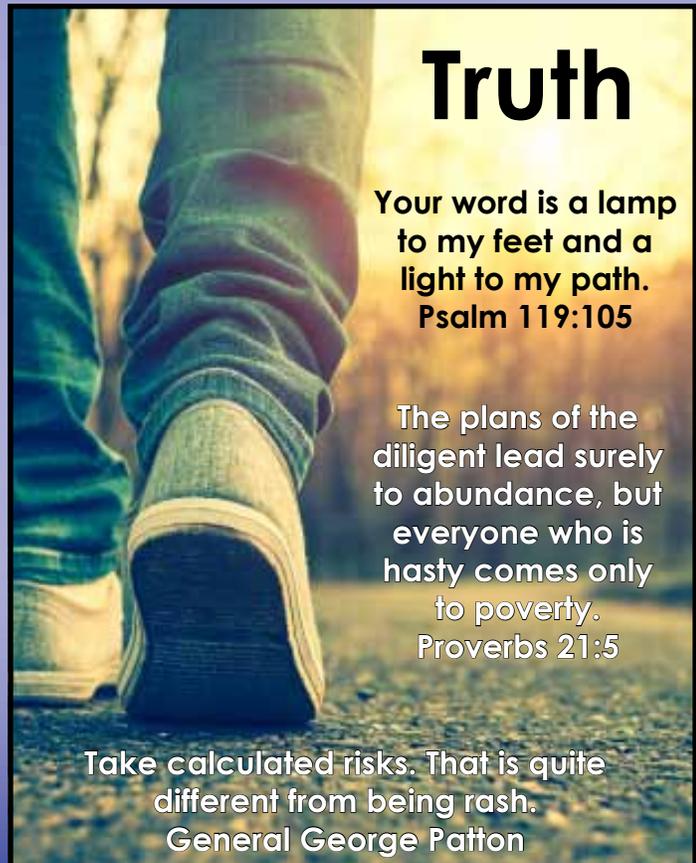
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# Truth

Your word is a lamp  
to my feet and a  
light to my path.  
Psalm 119:105

The plans of the  
diligent lead surely  
to abundance, but  
everyone who is  
hasty comes only  
to poverty.  
Proverbs 21:5

Take calculated risks. That is quite  
different from being rash.  
General George Patton



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