
The Mathis Group's Messenger

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Choosing The Best Team For Your Project

Human Resource Management is needed everywhere. At home, at the office, and especially when working on a project with a group of people. Using human resources during a project requires getting the most effective use of the people involved with the project. This includes everyone associated with the project: sponsors, customers, partners, and individual contributors.

There are three major aspects of project human resource management: organizational planning, staff acquisition, and team development. Throughout this issue, we'll look at each of these more in-depth.

Organizational Planning

Organizational planning identifies, documents, and assigns project roles, responsibilities, and reporting relationships. Before the project begins, all role and responsibilities should be designated. This will cut down on any confusion after the project starts. Each team member will know what is expected of him or her and will be able to follow through on the assigned tasks. Having a staff development plan and an organizational chart will also decrease uncertainty and conflict. A staff development plan describes how and when human resources will be brought onto and taken off the project team. An organizational chart is a graphical way to breakdown the project reporting relationship. It diagrams who is to report to whom. There will not be any question as to the chain of command with a detailed organizational chart. Good organizational planning also includes any supporting documents needed to outline each job title and description or any training needs.



Staff Acquisition

Staff acquisition is the process of getting the human resources needed assigned to and working on the project. Choosing the correct people for a project is almost as important as the project itself. Without a knowledgeable team, the project will be much more difficult. Some things to consider when picking your team are previous experience, personal interests, personal characteristics, availability, and competencies and proficiency. Your resources for finding team members are endless. They may come from negotiations with managers and other project teams, pre-assignment from another project, or even from outside the organization. You will also need to determine whether each team member will be working on the project full or part time. Thinking ahead of the ideal team members will save your valuable time later.

Team Development

Team development includes developing individual and group competencies to enhance project performance. By coming together as a true team, the project will be more successful. Team development can be achieved a variety of different ways.

- Team building activities
- General management skills
- Reward and recognition systems
- Collocation or frequent face-to-face meetings
- Training

Significant improvements in team morale will cause an increase in team mentality. Other improvements that will be seen include performance improvements, improvements in individual skills, improvements in team behaviors, and improvements in either individual or team competencies.

(continued on page 2 *Choosing the Best Team*)

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Team + Work = Teamwork

(continued from page 1 *Choosing the Best Team*)

If there has been proper team development, your project will run with the epitome of efficiency and quality. You will see performance improvements, improvements in individual skills, improvements in team behaviors, as well as improvements in either individual or team competencies.

Management Support Is Important To Employees

Support from management is not just a matter of words. It means allowing workers to develop and use their skills and abilities. Managers inadvertently signal a lack of support when they fail to do this. Managers often fail to provide support in specific ways.

Managers sometimes send mixed messages.

We are guilty of this when we say one thing and do another. The most blatant example is hiring an employee with the expectation he or she will do one particular job and then assigning him or her to do something entirely different.

This lack of support that comes from inconsistency is magnified when companies change management styles frequently or when they used autocratic approaches. An autocratic approach will undermine personal integrity and destroy team spirit.

“Be aware of other’s styles. Adapt ones that are effective and learn to deal with those styles that aren’t so effective. Every employee, customer, supplier, and boss will vary in what works best with them. Don’t assume anyone is a specific type. Intelligently observe and then ask to confirm your assumptions.” (Benton, D., Warner Books, 1996, p. 101)

Managers sometimes arbitrarily pull people off their assignments to take care of special projects.

This practice can cause conflict within the employees and lead to stress throughout the organization. The effect is

complicated if there is a lack of communication among the individuals involved.

If managers fail to consider the qualifications and ongoing responsibilities of the employee, it is easy to push the worker to the point of stress and ineffectiveness in all areas.

The supervisor of the employee tapped for a special project is also affected. Consider the message that is sent to a supervisor when a high-ranking manager frequently assigns an employee under the supervisor to a special project. If the supervisor is the last person to find out about the action, he or she feels devalued and out of the communication loop.

Managers take authority from employees.

Management demonstrates a lack of support when they remove authority from the employee. Many supervisors are not aware of the effect this can have on workers.

When we strip our employees of power, we limit the expertise available to make the project successful. We also undermine the self-esteem of the worker.



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with the team instead of against it.
Lou Gehrig
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