Project Sponsorship

Senior Management's Role in the Successful Outcome of Projects

What our clients have to say about this course…

"A must for all Senior Management staff including Executive committee. Very useful."
– Shaffeek Ali, Alberta Ministry of Agriculture and Food

"Excellent areas of coverage and I'm sure usable at the Sr. level to propel our organization forward."
– John Swan, Town of Markham

"Course was well thought out for all types of organizations with too many projects and too few resources!"
– Robert Steinberg, Grand River Conservation Authority

"Excellent incorporation of formal PM practices. Closely linked to PMBOK. Incorporated relevant company info."
- Participant, Clarica Insurance

"All content was very applicable and I will use many examples in my daily work.
Excellent seminar!"
– Liz Duncan, Shepell-fgi

"That was great… now if we could only get our Senior Managers to also take this course". We hear this from participants, in one form or another, after just about every delivery of our fundamental *Project Management Essentials* course.

To get the full value of project management tools and methodologies, most organizations have to undergo a culture shift regarding how they deal with issues such as project prioritization, risk, contingency, communication, and stakeholder involvement. Culture shifts within an organization are most successful when driven from the top – and that means from senior management, the s*ponsors* of corporate projects.

We don't expect project managers to understand everything there is to know about project management just because we give them the title of project manager — so why do we expect senior managers to automatically understand what is involved in sponsoring projects?

In 1999, at the direct request of one of our clients, WCP developed a course designed specifically for senior managers and their role as project sponsors. We believe this to be the first project management course of its kind in Canada. Through guided discussions and group exercises, senior management learn how to promote a culture of project management excellence in their organization. They also learn specific activities they should be doing as sponsors of a project, specific things they should look for in projects they are sponsoring, and specific questions they should be asking of project managers and teams throughout the project lifecycle.

Perhaps the value of this course was summed up best by a VP of a large company who, during the final wrap-up of the *Project Sponsorship* session, made the following statement: "I now understand that a project I recently sponsored was not nearly as successful as it could have been — partly due to my not having understood my role as sponsor". Project success is a team effort, and when the project sponsorship role is better understood, the whole team benefits.

Please see the following pages for the full course description.

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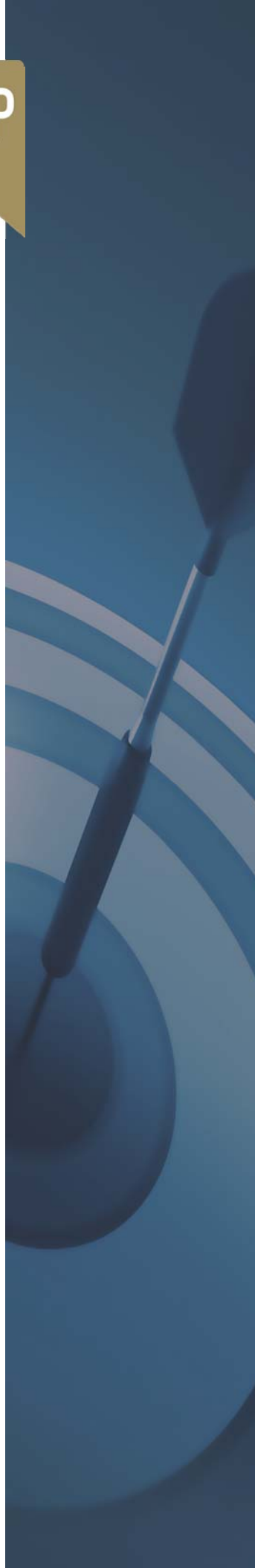

Projects are the means through which organizations achieve their goals and satisfy client needs. Successful implementation of projects is therefore critical to an organization's profitability and overall performance. It is no wonder that project management skills and the integration of a sound project management culture are a priority for leading organizations.

This 1-day course examines senior management's role in the successful management of projects and the creation of a sustainable project management culture within the organization.

Who Should Attend

The Project Sponsorship course is designed for senior level managers responsible for:

- Making or contributing to decisions related to project priorities, staffing, and strategic planning
- Authorizing projects

Typical participants include:

- Corporate Executives
- VPs
- Directors
- Managers of Project Management Office
- Senior Project Managers

Materials

- Course workbook containing presentation slides, exercises and sample solutions
- A colour poster summarizing the key roles of the project Sponsor through each phase of the project lifecycle
- Course reference files
- A framed certificate of completion

Learning Objectives

Participants of this course will know how to…

- Actively sponsor projects through each phase of the project lifecycle
  - Know what to ask — without having to micro-manage
  - Know what to look for — to ensure things are being done right
  - Know what to do — to make the most of the project Sponsor role
- Foster a healthy environment for project management success
- Encourage the right type of project organization
- Deal with the specific challenges of a matrix organization
- Seek and obtain the kind of information that enables prioritizing of projects — with confidence
- Evaluate a project plan to determine if it is realistic — or just a pretty picture
- Deal with project uncertainty and risk
- Ensure accountability on projects
- Identify whether or not project contingency has been dealt with realistically
- Identify when things aren't going well — before it's too late to do something about it
- Make the 'tough' decisions regarding how to (or whether not to) allow a project to proceed past key points

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Course Outline

Phase 1: Project Prioritization Issues

- Establishing clear project priorities
- Setting the right tone
- What to look for in a Project Charter
- Stakeholder identification issues
- Sponsor's role during the Initiation phase:
  - Things to do
  - Things to look for
  - Things to ask

Phase 2: Project Definition

- What to look for in a Work Breakdown Structure
- Ensuring that quality has been built in throughout the project
- Checking that resource/capacity issues have been considered
- Checking budget estimates
- Dealing with project risk
- Dealing with accountability/responsibility issues
- Why critical path scheduling is important
- Project contingency issues – what you need to know
- Sponsor's role during the Definition phase:
  - Things to do
  - Things to look for
  - Things to ask

Phase 3: Project Implementation

- What to look for in status reports
- Providing a clear mandate for moving forward at key stages
- Sponsor's role during the Implementation phase:
  - Things to do
  - Things to look for
  - Things to ask

Phase 4: Project Completion

- What to look for at the completion of a project
- Sending the right message
- Sponsor's role during the Completion phase:
  - Things to do
  - Things to look for
  - Things to ask

Course Wrap-up

Additional information

- Participants of this course will qualify for 7 Professional Development Units (PDUs)
- This course is available in both public and private sector versions

For more information

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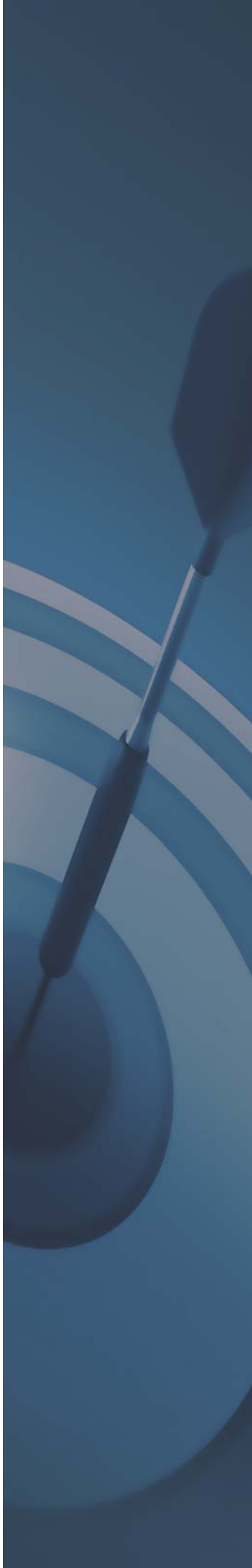
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