

# **Confidential Report:**

## **15 Deadly Project Management Mistakes *Government Agencies Make Which Cost Them Revenue, Time and Efficiency***

**“GSA Contractor Reveals The Shocking Truth On How To Create  
And Run Project Teams More Effectively And Efficiently!  
Read This Special, Free Report To Find Out What Project  
Sponsors, Project Managers or Even Agency Directors May Not  
Know About How To Make Projects More Productive Once And  
For All...With The Present Workforce!”**

**Keep reading this report to find out some of the best methods to get your  
project team trained and functioning in a high manner.**

**Inside this FREE report you will discover:**

- Why lack of planning can make your project take longer than needed.
- Why refusing to detail roles and responsibilities will confuse the team.
- Why neglecting to create a solid communication plan will create needless gaps.
- Why inappropriate authority and controls can cause mismanagement of the team.
- Why rejecting to conduct post mortems increases your risk of failure in future projects.
- Why neglecting to create the best practices for running projects in your culture will reproduce substandard skills.

**WARNING: Ineffective project teams are wasting hundreds of hours and millions of dollars in the government. This impacts the lives of thousands of workers each year. That is the bad news. THE GOOD NEWS is that project management techniques can be taught to each employee and reduce some of this frustration. Keep reading this report to find out the well-hidden truth you will not find anywhere else!**

# **15 Deadly Project Management Mistakes Government Agencies Make Which Cost Them Revenue, Time & Efficiency**

Your decision to read this book tells a lot about your openness to try something new and to consider additional options for future changes. Project Management is here to stay. It is a skill which helps deliver the greatest value to the most individuals. During a time when all organizations are faced with tight budgets and limited staff, we must make sure we can complete projects in the shortest and most economic way.

This report focuses on the most common project blunders made by private and public organizations and agencies. Many of these mistakes are not a one-time event, but are part of the organizational culture and happen in as many as 90% of projects.

While this report focuses on project management mistakes, it does not indicate that everything you are doing is wrong. Most organizations and agencies have methods and processes that are very productive. Many organizations have been able to finish projects on time and within budget even though they have violated numerous project management fundamentals. However, when an agency creates a realistic timeline and better organizes their staff, they are able to reduce stress and burnout while using their resources in a positive way. This book will help you tweak many of your present processes or operations to be more successful in the future.

This report is also in no way critical of the great men and women who run projects and give a great deal of time and effort to make them run as smoothly as possible. As each mistake is discussed, it is always with the desire to make project management processes more effective and not to criticize employees or to take shots at their efforts. Most project teams are filled with people who care deeply about their jobs and are strongly committed to the goals and the objectives of their organization.

## **How to use this report**

This report is written as a secret weapon to help an agency like yours become more productive in reaching project objectives. Each point is designed to give you numerous ideas, create new ways for running projects within your organization, and, ultimately, make each project or process as efficient as possible. As you read, do not be afraid to mark it up and make notes for further examination and research. This book has been designed to assist you as an action plan to help increase your project management skills with time tested ideas.

## **What you should do after reading this report**

There are three groups of people who will read this report.

*Group #1* is the type who makes excuses for missed dates and budget over extensions. They normally focus on reasons that are outside of their control. Excuses are different than reasons.

Excuses are created to get the pressure off one area and to point it in another direction. Reasons are a calculated analysis of low results which explain why something is not productive. In addition, reasons can be educational with the end result being a new solution.

*Group #2* thinks they already possess all the project management knowledge ever needed. When I discuss project management skills, I always find individuals who want to fight on the front end by showing the great depths of truth they possess in the area of running projects. They can quote all the project management theories; however, sometimes they are using techniques which are outdated. Worse yet, they know what to do, but continue to do the wrong thing. The most ridiculous thing is to continue wasting our project dollars and expecting results to be better. For this group of knowledgeable individuals, I would like to ask: If your techniques are working so well, why are deadlines still being missed and projects not reaching their objectives?

*Group #3* includes those who will take action and make changes so they can be successful. This means learning new techniques and making changes to target specific skill sets which are missing. This group will do what is needed to be successful.

Which group are you? Hopefully, you are willing to move into our third group by reading this book and taking action. This group understands there is no miracle worker who will come in and fix your project. If you desire your projects to run more effectively while impacting the performance of each team member, there must be special actions created. Reading this book and creating an action plan of high priority items to examine is just one such special action.

To assist you in gaining a better focus on areas to analyze, I am going to put my consulting hat on for the remainder of this book. I want to show you some areas which consistently surface as problems in various settings. This book in no way guarantees that these small mistakes are happening in your agency; many agencies are successful in these areas. However, I recommend you recheck and examine each section to make sure processes are running smoothly and everything is in order. If any part of project management theory processes or core competencies is misdirected, it can have a dramatic effect on the end results. This is why you will see a close connection to training your project teams and creating best practices that fit your agency. To fail in one area can kill the budget and timeline of projects for the entire year.

We have researched and found there are 15 project management mistakes which waste dollars and hours in time. Once again, I do not think every agency is committing all of these mistakes; however, why should we needlessly lose project time when the skills and knowledge are at our fingertips?

## **Project Management Mistake # 1 Planning Before A Customer Interview Is Completed**

Due to enormous pressure and time crunches, project teams are faced with beginning activities on a project prior to completing a detailed project plan. This causes a great deal of hardship and mistakes, which costs time, money and adds unneeded frustration to the project team.

### **• Reasons why planning takes place before the interview**

There are three basic reasons why planning takes place prior to a detailed interview of the customer and/or project sponsor. The first reason is based on the fact that, in the American culture, we have substituted activity for planning. We want activities to be happening at a record pace to demonstrate that we are running the project, even though there is no plan in place. Unless project managers and project sponsors come to the realization that interviewing the customer and setting precise objectives must be completed up front, we will continue to have blurry plans and frequent rework on our project.

The second reason is that no one has taken the time to understand the real goal and objective of the project. The project team is faced with planning the project on the run with limited understanding of the real goal. This is not an effective way of using manpower and resources. In most cases, it will cause the project to take longer, cost more, and experience numerous gaps.

The third reason is that some project sponsors and managers do not see the benefit of getting all the information upfront. Many project managers have been trained in a culture that disperses information in small, bite-size pieces rather than large chunks. This means that the average project is being planned with only knowledge of a few short goals rather than a full understanding of what it should look like at completion.

### **• Need for interview**

Interviewing the customer is the best way to gain a thorough understanding of the project's objectives and goals. Unless a project sponsor or manager has this knowledge, the project will take longer and cost more than anticipated and may even require a great deal of rework. All of these reasons emphasize the need to take the time upfront to interview the customer and make sure you understand their goals, objectives, and timeframe.

## **Project Management Mistake # 2 Top-down Planning With Little Input From Those Working On The Project**

The responsibility for planning the project is always a hot topic of debate. There seems to be a consensus that individuals are planning the project, setting deadlines, and establishing budgets with little or no input from the frontline worker. Many forget that upper management is normally

the ones who have control and understanding of the resources, as well as the organization's larger mission.

There are three main areas which should be considered when having top-down planning of a project. Each of these must be looked at based on the individuals and their expertise in breaking down the project. There is a great deal of strength using both upper management and frontline employee in putting together a plan, budget, and time sequence of any project.

- **Top-down planning is old style**

Top-down planning is a demonstration of the old style of management, which was used consistently in the 1950s through 1980s. Top-down planning makes the assumption that upper management has the best processes and ideas to run a project smoothly. This is true when management has a great deal of experience with some of the specialized projects of the organization. However, top-down planning can hurt a project and repeatedly destine it for severe problems because the employees have not had an opportunity to give input.

- **Top-down planning could reinforce the “Peter Principle”**

During the 1970s, management was introduced to a new phrase which was called the “Peter Principle.” This principle meant that individuals are promoted until they reach their level of incompetence, at which time the promotions cease. In other words, people are promoted until they start doing a bad job, and then they are left in that position until they retire or quit. What if this principle is being applied to the project planning process in your agency? What if the person doing the planning has been promoted to their level of incompetence? If they are producing project plans and happen to be at their level of incompetence, they are doing an injustice to frontline employees who have expertise in the project.

This does not mean that every manager is demonstrating the “Peter Principle.” Most managers have worked extremely hard to move up in the organization, and they are making the best decisions to run the organization toward the fulfillment of its mission and objectives. However, there are instances where you will find a walking example of the “Peter Principle”; and they are hurting their agency because they have position power.

- **Top-down planning limits buy-in from the team**

Is team buy-in important to your project success? Do you desire for your team to generate ideas and solve problems on their own? If the answer to these two questions is “yes,” then top-down planning might be something which limits buy-in and input from your team. When an organization experiences a great deal of top-down planning from their executive staff, a culture is created that signifies a lack of trust toward frontline employees. The frontline employee begins to stop making even the most common decisions in a project and begins running all questions through the management team. This kind of response slows down the project and prevents the project team from taking the needed responsibility and initiative.

In conclusion, one of the best things a project sponsor or manager can do in project planning is to set parameters and then work with the team to come up with the needed timeline and expectations. This will reinforce input and buy-in from the team while assisting upper management and controlling the outcomes.

## **Project Management Mistake # 3 Creating Teams With Improper Skills**

Have you ever been on a project team which was ineffective or did not possess the proper skills? This can be extremely frustrating to the project team, as well as the customer, and can damage the progress and confidence in project planning. How does something like this happen? What do we do when we have project teams with improper skills? All of these questions are important and must be examined in order to make the project advance in an effective manner.

### **• Reasons for teams with improper skills**

There can be several reasons why a project team does not have the skills needed to complete a project. In most cases, a team will possess 80% of the needed skills and must bridge the gap for the remaining 20%. This gap can be bridged with the use of other experienced team members, outside contractors, or internal training to provide the necessary skills.

The first reason why teams have improper skills is the project requirements have changed, but the team has stayed the same. Some projects evolve and change objectives while being completed. When this happens, changes of skills and core competencies are required within the project team to handle this type of evolution.

The second reason why teams have improper skills is due to a lack of project management training. Many teams have basic skills for running a project, but have become lazy and allow those skills to turn cold or dormant. They must be reminded in team meetings and with updated training how to use the knowledge they once used.

The third reason why teams have improper skills is because the team has never possessed the skill in the first place. They try to use knowledge that others possess. Some project teams are doing the best they can with a calendar and Excel sheets. They have never been taught a proper way of running a project, so they revert back to the skills that they know. This makes it very difficult for a project team to monitor one another because there are numerous systems being used to track and calculate project success.

Project teams must keep their skill levels strong and effective. This can be done very easily through short training sessions at the end of project meetings. This training will only need to be 15 to 30 minutes in length to keep skills fresh and to build new techniques into your project.

## **Project Management Mistake # 4**

### **Roles And Responsibilities Are Not Spelled Out**

Many projects are hurt because the team members are unaware of their roles and responsibilities. Foolishly, project managers and sponsors think that the team should already know which role they are to fulfill. When roles and responsibilities are not explained, this understanding is left up to the individual team member. Oftentimes, they will miss the mark and function in a role which is not consistent with a project manager's plan. When performance is not as desired, there is frustration and anxiety. Let's examine the most common reasons roles and responsibilities are not fulfilled.

- **Misunderstanding of role**

Employees often work on a number of project teams. On some teams they are expected to have more leadership responsibilities, while on others they are expected to function in a supportive nature. Making sure the roles and responsibilities are discussed in the early stages of a team meeting will reduce frustrations and permit the team member to engage in a manner which is desirable.

- **Being placed in a role which is out of one's expertise**

Team members are expected to walk on water, if needed. This causes many of them to take on jobs within the project team which are out of their comfort zone and expertise. Most team members are wonderful people and will do anything the project sponsor or manager desires. However, if we really want success in these new roles, one should make sure they are providing education to expand their skill set and then put these new skills into practice.

- **Explaining where they can get information and help**

Project managers assume individuals know where to get needed help and assistance. Managers think that if you do not know, you should just ask. Some team members are assertive and confident enough to do this when needed. But what about the non-assertive one? What about the quiet team member? There are times when a team member is not sure what to do or where to get help when problems arise. Project managers can empower and encourage their team in a mighty way by simply giving direction on where to get questions answered and help on assignments.

In closing, if you desire for your team to take on more in the project, take steps to equip them with the correct skills and provide support on how to solve problems.

## **Project Management Mistake # 5**

### **Little Accountability When Productivity Is Low**

Running project teams can become very difficult, especially when you are not the immediate supervisor and do not have position power. This is complicated when project teams have no

formal way of evaluating the work members have completed or a way to give feedback to the team member's supervisor. This results in a very low productivity level; however, he or she continues to get great performance evaluations.

We are going to look at the reasons this happens, ways to change accountability in your culture, and how to set up feedback sessions for tracking project teams and holding them more accountable.

### • **Reasons for low accountability**

There are three primary reasons why project teams struggle with little or no accountability. Many of these can be removed through simple communication, detailing the roles and responsibilities of each team member, and the setting of standards. Let's examine each of the three reasons for little accountability on a project team.

The first reason is due to using staff from various departments who report to different supervisors. This is more complicated when the internal culture of an agency requires that only the direct supervisor is able to hold a worker accountable. Problems arise when communication breaks down and there is a lack of feedback about the worker's performance on a particular project. Some employees are aware of this gap and have started using this lack of communication to their advantage.

The second reason why there is little accountability on many project teams is due to a lack of proper evaluation of the work one has performed. As project teams develop, there should be a reasonable amount of evaluation taking place to maintain quality, communication, and to confirm the objectives of the project are being achieved. When there is no internal evaluation, it compels the team to put off examining quality until the end of the project. This forces corrective actions to take place at the end, which will increase budget and time. Unless evaluations are examined throughout a project and individual roles and responsibilities of each team member are detailed, the entire team should be held accountable even though it might only be one or two team members responsible.

The third reason why there is little accountability is due to an improper manner of setting up the project team. Project teams are often set up without a code of conduct or a value statement of how the team plans to work and conduct themselves. Without this code, many teams find themselves floundering as they try to hold each other accountable with no position power. Since there is no standard that the project team is agreeing to follow, each individual sets personal standards with different measuring indicators. Unless a standard is set up from the beginning, the team will continue to have conflict after conflict throughout the entire project.

### • **Changing accountability culture**

Changing accountability culture must take place with the support of everyone. Unless you have the corroboration of the project manager and sponsor, the team will notice a lack of resource leverage. Changing the culture of the project team to one which possesses more accountability happens through a series of detailed steps rather than just one activity.

The culture of an agency is the way an organization is run and what is allowed. This can be demonstrated by how individuals are treated, what is talked and joked about, and what has been said behind the backs of others. When we focus on a culture which violates accountability, we are discussing a problem which sabotages positive work and reinforces the slug mentality. People with a slug mentality seek every way possible to get out of work. They are consistently complaining they are overworked, but are not assertive or proactive in pushing the project toward its completion. Slugs wait until someone else is willing to do the work for them or at least assist them in doing a portion of the work.

The following is a list of some events which must take place in order to change the accountability culture in your project team and agency. First, the organization must detail the new culture design or model. This entails having an idea of what would bring about the best situation for the agency. It can be something as simple as shifting from an autocratic style to one which is more team oriented. It can also include making adjustments on how communication is distributed among personnel. Regardless of what is needed, there must be a picture in the leadership's mind as to the proper culture for the future.

Second, you must brainstorm which personnel will be the most supportive of this new culture and make them an active participant in the transition. Some personnel struggle with any type of change, while others thrive on change, especially when shifting culture is described. You must get a mix of employees who are supportive and those who might be resistant working on making the needed changes. Both will be beneficial during the process. Resisters will bring up ideas of future hurdles that might hinder the shifting of culture. As you solve these problems within the team and prior to rolling it out to the entire agency, you have actually made the changing of your culture stronger.

Third, you must be willing to weather the storm of negativity that follows the shifting of a paradigm such as this. People have the tendency to be more negative than positive, especially during times of massive change. You will need individuals who will verbally support the change of this culture in spite of a high level of negativity from others.

### • **Setting feedback sessions for tracking**

Creating feedback sessions is one of the best ways for monitoring the performance of the project team. These sessions must include detailed evaluation of the quality, communication, roles and responsibilities, budget, and cohesiveness of the team. To have a feedback session and refuse to be involved in evaluating these details is like shooting at a target blindfolded.

Feedback sessions can be done on a weekly, monthly or quarterly basis. They are not just to examine what is wrong with project. They are done with a purpose of evaluating performance and progress. In a normal feedback session, you should not only to discuss where a team has not measured up, but also to identify those areas where outstanding work has been accomplished.

It is the obligation of the culture of any project to hold team members accountable. If this is not taking place, it is the responsibility of the project manager, project sponsor, and each team member to discuss the situation and fix it immediately.

## **Project Management Mistake # 6 Timeline Is Not Realistic**

Creating a timeline for a project can be a battleground between the project team and the project sponsor. Each agency has its own policy as to who will calculate the timeline. Sometimes they are calculated by the project sponsor, other times by the project manager, and, in many cases, there is a great deal of input from the project team.

There are strengths and weaknesses regardless of which manner an agency chooses to use in figuring the timeline. However, there are three primary concerns which must be considered regardless of who makes the calculation. When these three areas are violated, it causes the timeline to be incorrect and not realistic for the project team. This may result in shoddy work or, even worse, the timeline may not be taken seriously.

- **Planned by someone on best guess scenario**

When a project is started, there are many circumstances in which timing is a guesstimate without the benefits of real life calculations. This is common in the early stages of project development discussions. However, as a project continues to progress, the timeline should move farther away from a guess and to a more calculated destination.

The areas where this impacts the agency most is when the best guess method gets locked in as if it were a legitimate, calculated timeline. Due to embarrassment or lack of time, no one discusses this mistake, which causes the project plan to have major errors. These errors impact performance, morale of the team, and expectations of the customer. Unless these areas are changed, you will reproduce an incompetent project process in the initiation phase of every project.

- **Planned short times to force team to work harder**

Another incident which is very frustrating to project teams is the determination to shorten the timeline on purpose to force more work out of the project team. For example, after a timeline has been calculated, a project sponsor may change the calculation by reducing its time by 10% to 30% to cut out all contingency time. Cutting this time is an attempt to demonstrate one's position in power over the process. Does this mean that a project sponsor should never change the timeline? Of course not! There are times when a project plan has been calculated with an extreme amount of contingency time. During those incidents, the project sponsor bears the responsibility of discussing those findings with the project manager, and possibly even the team, and the result will be to shorten the plan. You must be fair to the project team when calculating time if you expect them to work hard in meeting all desired deadlines and core objectives.

The best way for an agency to compute a timeline is to establish the basic time calculation model that can be used extensively by all project sponsors, managers, and teams. Establishing a model for calculating time is one of the most fundamental elements of training that can reduce stress and conflict between the project team and sponsor.

## **Project Management Mistake # 7 Work Breakdown Structure Was Shallow**

Any successful project must have a detailed WBS. The WBS breaks down a project into smaller pieces in order to track budget, time, and responsibility. Many projects struggle due to the WBS being very shallow and superficial. When this happens, the project has not been broken down into small enough units of time, budget, or structure to be able to accomplish the goals.

- **Limited breakdown**

Some projects are broken down with a limited amount of structure. An individual or team has broken down the project, but have not gone deep enough into setting up the design and plan for accomplishing its objectives. This often occurs when inexperienced individuals create the WBS. Some cases show this as evidence of a team under a great deal of pressure to produce a plan, but they have violated the foundation of core competencies of standardized project management.

Limited breakdown of the project leaves large gaps open for interpretation by the project team. These gaps can create work stoppage or more time delays due to lack of planning in moving the project forward. It is best for a project to have a detailed breakdown with all the individual activities and tasks documented to assist in tracking those units of time and budget.

- **Refusal to plan the project with enough detail**

Limitations in planning a WBS is normally demonstrated when a project planning sheet only goes two or three levels in depth. If the main components of the project are broken down to only one or two levels, it is possible the project is going to be hit with unforeseen time delays and budget overextensions. Normally in a project plan, you will have the main components of a project followed by major tasks or activities, followed by minor tasks or activities, and, finally, subtasks bring up the remainder of the project. You will notice an example of the breakdown in the following diagram.

**Project**  
    **A. Major Task**  
        **1. Minor task**  
            **a. Sub task**  
                **1) Sub-sub task**

This diagram points out at least four levels to a project plan. Unless a project manager or its team can breakdown a project into multiple levels, gaps in the timeline and budget will constantly be found.

- **Assumptions are forgotten or limited in focus**

Every project has a certain level of assumptions built into the planning process. These assumptions are connected to the way past projects have been planned or run. Assumptions are those foundational views that must take place if you are going to complete a project successfully. For example, it is assumed that if a customer wants a project, they are going to meet budgetary requirements and give input into the goals or core objectives they desire the project to achieve. Unless the customer is willing to do this, there is no way that a project can be accomplished. There are also assumptions such as human resource and budgetary allotment, time, tools and equipment provided, communication, and feedback that must be considered in order for a project to move forward.

It is necessary to have all of these components working together in order to create a WBS that is effective, correct, and timely. Unless a WBS is able to be broken down into small, measurable pieces and detailed with realistic assumptions, the project cannot be successful.

## **Project Management Mistake # 8 Risk Analysis Was Limited In Depth**

Project risk must be examined and planned for in order to prevent untimely delays. Project teams oftentimes fail to discuss the risk of a project to avoid focusing on negativity. Conducting a risk analysis on a project is needed to help build a solid contingency plan to prevent the project from running across delays which could cost large chunks of time and money.

The lack of risk analysis seems to come about due neglecting to compare the performance, risk, or implementation of previous projects. The project team is not learning from past performance and has to make the same mistakes themselves. When discussing risk analysis, one should be examining two issues: What can go wrong in the project? What is the impact if it does go wrong?

- **No discussion on what can go wrong**

Project planning should be filled with a detailed examination of what can go wrong in each phase of the project. To do this, encourage your team to think outside of the box and in terms of what has the highest probability of malfunctioning. Individuals on your project team who are more negative in nature can assist in creating this list the fastest. However, do not think this is just a time to be negative about the project. This is a time to spend looking at those areas that have the highest potential for failure, while building and planning time for preventative measures to keep that from happening. Unless a project team is willing to discuss these issues, they will constantly run from crisis to crisis or be exposed to planning on the run.

- **Crisis plan was left out**

Crisis planning is the next step once a project team has examined risk. The project team has itemized each risk and provided a detailed way of solving or reducing it from taking place. They

then create a detailed crisis plan for those areas which have a severe amount of devastation if it goes wrong. For example, a nuclear power plant that has thought through every possible risk and makes contingency plans for either solving the crisis or reducing its effect. Some project teams feel that this is not necessary since their project is not as critical as others.

Making this change is extremely hard in many cultures since project teams often plan on the run. To do this correctly, the project team must spend time and effort thinking through each critical point of the project to determine the risk, its criticalness, and ways to reduce its effect.

## **Project Management Mistake # 9 Little Or No Implementation Plan**

Project implementation is crucial in order to keep project plans and progress current. Most organizations have a WBS created, but have no implementation plan to drive each phase of the project. After a WBS has been created, it is important to spend time designing an implementation plan. This plan is created with dates and times for starting each section of the WBS. Implementation plans work best when you also have people designated to accomplish the assigned work.

### **• Objectives of implementation plan**

An implementation plan is used to make every section of the WBS function as easily as possible. It is created to ensure that all roles and responsibilities, dates, times, and sequences for running the project are clear to each team member. When an implementation plan is created correctly, it allows all of the team to understand what is happening in the project and when they can expect their duties to begin.

### **• How and when to implement**

Implementation must be conducted in a very structured and calculated away. The project team must be realistic in designating who should do a particular portion of the project, as well as when it should begin. In some cases, the team will build in a certain level of contingency time in order to assist the project timeline. They might examine the earliest time an activity can start, the latest time an activity can start, and calculate the median time for most dates. This method is used by many experienced project managers. Its strength is that dates and times are being calculated with small amounts of contingency time built into the plan.

Implementation failure happens due to six main reasons. Each of these reasons can be overcome if proper steps have been taken on the front end of the project.

### **• Reason #1 – Not making a decision until it is too late**

Project teams struggle with decisions throughout the project. However, some are plagued with an uphill battle in making the right decision. They are trying to consistently run a perfect project and make sure they never make a mistake. This is normally done because the team is

desperately trying not to be blamed for failure or the lack of progress in the project direction. Fear of making a decision will sometimes cause people to panic, and they are constantly trying to play it safe; however, this will not always produce the best solution.

- **Reason #2 – Waiting too long for data**

Waiting too long for data is normally committed by cogitators on the team who desires solid information before making a decision. Cogitators are people who must review and examine a great deal of information prior to making a decision. They also spend more time than normal analyzing this information to ensure they are making a solid decision based on correct and current data.

Correct information is wonderful to assist in working on a project; however, there are some instances where that information is coming far too slowly or is nonexistent. Refusal to make a decision is in itself a decision. Each project team needs to understand that their refusal to make timely decisions could kill the project faster than making a decision on limited knowledge. With all the resources presently available in our culture and organization, one should have a good idea of what needs to be done even when data is sparse. Obviously, it is the ideal situation to work on perfect projects with a plethora of correct data to make the right decision every time; however, in the real world that is not always possible.

- **Reason #3 – Upper management goes in and redirects the plan**

We often hear of situations where upper management will violate a project plan with autocratic orders to go in a new direction. Many times this makes no sense to the project team and has been brought about with no communication indicating what has created the change. When communication is only in a top-down manner, the team is unable to give feedback to their boss in a receptive manner. Some projects change over and over again due to upper management making unscheduled and uncommunicated changes to the plan. There are times, however, when upper management does need to step in and make changes. This works best when the project team has been kept in the communication loop, and they understand what the real goal and motivation revolved around this change.

- **Reason #4 – Jumping from one priority and focus to another during the project**

Priority management is one of the hardest things to do when running multiple projects. Individuals frequently have to jump from focus to focus and project to project based on the crisis at the moment. Sometimes, when examining the project, you can determine that the reason they are struggling is because there is a trend in putting this project second based on the crisis of the day. We tend to favor projects that have an immediate crisis and treat them as if they are the highest priority. The frustration with this is that projects which are lower on the priority list are sometimes treated with the same level of urgency as strategic projects. Running projects based on crisis confuses the project team and reduces the potential that other projects will be on time and budget.

Priority management of the project must be clear and concise. Each team member must remember which projects have the highest priority even while dealing with the crisis of the day. If priorities have really changed, the team must understand the new order projects are going to be running.

- **Reason #5 – Sabotage by internal fighting from individuals in the organization**

An additional reason for implementation failure is due to organizational sabotage and fighting. This happens when one department does not see the need to provide support for another department's project. An example of this is when one project is of highest priority for you, but is a secondary priority for the people assisting you. Learning how to break down the silo effect throughout your organization will naturally open up communication and increase the potential success for your project. This process also builds higher morale throughout the agency.

- **Reason #6 – Failure to train the project team**

Training is a needed skill to make sure that the project team is running in a proper fashion. The type of training will differ depending on the skill level and expertise of team members. A good way to train your team is to make it part of your normal project meetings. It can be as simple as conducting 15- 30 minutes of training periodically in team meetings. This can be as brief as handing out articles on a particular topic to as deep as a multi-slide presentation with handouts. Regardless of what you do, you want to consistently expand the skills and application of your project team.

As you can see, each of these six reasons for implementation failure can happen to any project team In spite of how high functioning they have been in the past. A good implementation plan will reduce your failure rate and speed up your project time as much as 3% to 20%. The increase will depend on the priority of the project and how well the project team fulfills the desired plan. Regardless, each project should have a detailed implementation plan with a thorough examination of these areas that have caused others to fail.

## **Project Management Mistake # 10**

### **No Communication Plan**

Communication plans can benefit the project by detailing exactly how much interaction a project team will have with the various stakeholders. We will examine how to create a communication plan, as well as problem areas where communication is lost or misunderstood on a project.

Have you ever been working on a project and felt that you do not know what is happening? Have you ever attended project meetings only to leave more confused than before you came? All of this revolves around communication. Communication within a project is one of the most important tools for making sure people get clear directives and do what they are supposed to do. As part of a balanced approach to keeping the communication channels open, each project team should create a detailed communication plan. This plan is a pointed document clarifying how

often communications and status reports will be completed. Communication flow to each of these reports must be accomplished in a specified timeframe and revolve around giving particular data and updates.

- **Communication plan defined**

A communication plan is a document which spells out the process and timing for communication in a project to all interested parties. This type of plan must be created in a matrix form indicating how often you will be communicating to the customer, sponsor, departments, or agencies which are influencing this particular project. The most important thing about a communication plan is a clear understanding as to when and how the communication will be given and what timeline it will follow.

- **Meetings with project customers**

The project customer normally has more interaction with the project's sponsor than anyone else. In many projects, the sponsor interviews the customer to discuss the goals of the project and passes that information on to the project manager and team. One monitoring technique which can be assisted by the communication plan is scheduling periodic feedback sessions with the customer. This will do several things, such as informing the customer on the progress of the project and verifying you are progressing properly. It is essential for communication to take place between the project team and the customer; not just during the initiation phase, but throughout the entire project. If this is done correctly, there will be no surprises from the customer nor will the project team miss the desired outcome and goals.

- **Meetings with the project sponsor**

Project sponsors represent management viewing the project through that culture's eyes. The project sponsor normally has a vast amount of input and can influence the budget or resources provided to the team. This person has a great deal of responsibility as they oversee multiple projects and resource packages to complete those project plans. It is essential for project teams to maintain communication with the sponsor. This can be done weekly, monthly, or, in some extreme cases, even daily. How often a project team communicates with the sponsor is determined by the amount of interaction desired for that particular project.

Several areas have been identified which should be detailed as part of the communication plan of any project. Each of these are considered high priority in making sure everyone is well informed and has current information.

- **Current status on project**

Getting a current status on the project is necessary in each team meeting. Some team meetings waste 90 minutes, yet did not detail project progress so people would be able to make the needed decisions. Giving an updated status on the project should be the minimum each team member is prepared to do when they arrive at the meeting. They should come prepared and

knowledgeable about their area of assignment and be equipped to defend where the project is and what help they need to move the project forward.

One way to make this easier for your project team is to create a standardized status and update checklist form. This form will ensure each team member is giving the needed information back to the team and is also used in organizing and documenting the information.

- **Checks on critical path updates**

You can run a project extremely hard trying to meet every due date, but if you miss critical path dates your project is doomed! The critical path consists of dates which are considered hard dates and unmovable. These dates, if missed, make the project late. They are different than an activity task date, which oftentimes has contingency time built in it.

Naturally, all dates are important, but many project members will track them all as if they are the same priority, thus missing critical path dates which sabotage their planning. Usually, this happens due to a lack of understanding of the importance of a critical path date compared to an activity or task. This is one of the items that each team member should be trained on during a team session. Project managers should also assist in monitoring to guarantee successful completion of the project. One way to magnify the importance of critical path dates is to separate them into a different type setting or color to make them stand out from the other dates on your project plan. This calls attention to the date and reminds team members of the higher priority of its position. In addition, if you make sure part of your agenda deals with the discussion of critical path dates, your team will begin looking at these issues the same way as the project manager.

- **Approved change orders**

Troubled projects have team members doing work in areas that have been changed without their knowledge. Passing along change orders to the team and documenting those changes for future reference is vital to the communication plan. It causes a great deal of frustration to find out you have spent time, energy, and resources on a task that is no longer needed because of a change that had not be communicated.

Change orders must be communicated instantly to the project team. This can be done by contacting the team member who has direct responsibility to that area. Second, contact the entire team through e-mail notifying them of the change and how it will impact their part of the project. Finally, point out the change orders which have been approved during the project team meeting. In this meeting, it is good to have documentation and questions to clarify. This allows you to make any additional adjustments to the plan or to the team member's priority list in order to fulfill these changes.

- **Bottlenecks and work stoppage**

An additional area that needs to be communicated is the discussion of bottlenecks or work stoppage on the project. It is not surprising that many projects will be on time and budget until

they reach a particular department or person, and then you notice a work stoppage. This needs to be discussed and brainstormed with the project team to develop ways to move the project forward. Some teams never discussed bottlenecks. They force team members to be involved in areas of high frustration with little leverage for moving the project. By adding this discussion to your team meeting, you can increase the knowledge base and experience of your entire team while gaining ideas for faster application.

- **Concerned areas**

The last section which should be considered as part of the communication plan is the examination of areas of concern. People mistakenly leave this area out and anticipate the project team will handle these problems on their own without any help from others. Concern areas allow your team to verbalize their frustration and keep you knowledgeable of hurdles they are running up against. Unless the project team is able to hear these areas of concern, it is possible that there will be the assumption that the project is running in a more positive manner than what is true.

- **Transfer of information to other important parties**

Transfer of information to other parties influenced by this project is very important. It is not uncommon for some projects to function in a vacuum; limiting their communication outside of the project team. This vacuum is fine if the project is confidential; however, many project teams continue to limit the transfer of information to parties that are very much part of the future of the project. This means that at the last minute they are trying to get others equipped and up to speed with the needed knowledge.

Transfer of knowledge is being neglected at such a high rate that agencies are watching knowledge go out the door. Someone might question where this is happening most often. Agency after agency has acknowledged the need to get rid of contractors when budgets become tight. Many of these contractors have worked for the agency for years and know a great deal about a specific area. After they left, it becomes apparent they knew something which no one else knows.

The second area we are seeing a lack of knowledge transfer is in retiring employees. Men and women who have worked for an agency for 15-25 years are now leaving for retirement. However, no one puts a plan into effect to have this person transfer their knowledge over to whoever is remaining behind. This gap is foolish and hurts agencies by forcing them to redo numerous processes and projects in order to educate the new employee.

In conclusion, a communication plan is central in imparting knowledge, data, and information to the entire project. It must be examined, included, and followed.

## **Project Management Mistake # 11 Lack Of Project Audits To Measure Progress**

Project audits are important for tracking and monitoring progress in a methodical way. Project audits can be used to help drive the project forward while maintaining quality throughout the entire process. In this section, we will examine what should be audited, the timing of audits, who should conduct the audit, and how those audits will be reported.

### **• Discuss areas to audit**

Project audits should take place throughout the entire project. The project team should conduct an audit based on time, budget expenditure, or anything they are designed to track. Audits are a means of tracking projects early rather than examination at the end of the project cycle.

The most common areas of audit are:

- Budget
- Time
- Phases
- Level of service
- Quality
- Communication
- Cycle time
- Processes
- Pilot programs

### **• Timing of audits**

Audits can take place at any time during the project. The interval of the audit can be determined and planned by the project team based on feedback desired. For example, if a project team is having a severe problem with the quality of internal customer service, they may want to conduct an audit periodically to see if the service is getting better or worse. In other cases, project audits take place to determine the quality of a particular product. You see this happen with projects involving software development. The team will design the product and test it over a period of time to establish if everything is working properly and at the optimal level of quality. Audits can be conducted throughout the entire project based on the timing and sequence needed to provide the data and confidence that the project is doing well.

### **• Who will do them**

The people conducting the project audit should be an expert in that particular area. For instance, people who have an expertise in quality will normally examine the area dealing with quality. This does not mean other individuals cannot be part of the audit team nor does it mean that you must always have proficiency in that particular area. It is possible for people to be very beneficial to a project audit regardless of their skilled area. They can participate and give valuable comments and feedback even on something that is outside of their realm of expertise.

- **To whom will they be reporting?**

Normally, audits are reported first to the project team and then to all the relevant individuals involved in the project. It may be reported to the project sponsor, project manager, or internal and external customers to gain feedback and insights into the level of quality that is being accomplished. In larger organizations, project audits are tracked by a project management center that has been created for the purpose of maintaining project quality. This center will also conduct project management training and encourage certification in project management in order to push skills to higher level.

## **Project Management Mistake # 12**

### **Performance Appraisals Which Do Not Measure Project Management Skills**

Each year we are told by participants they have non-performers working on their teams. These people experience frustration because they have little or no power to encourage more performance. One example was given that even when the team member's supervisor talked to the non-performers about their behavior, nothing changed. This creates a crisis within the project team. Can project teams only function effectively when they are supervised by someone who has position power? If so, that undermines the entire process of running project teams. Today, it is impossible to have all teams be supervised by someone with position power. There are not enough supervisors or managers to accomplish this task nor should they be forced to run projects in this manner. Then what can a project manager do to run the team as well as monitor performance? Project teams must have some way of evaluating each team member. This can occur with two simple changes in the way most agencies are performing evaluations of their staff.

The first and most simple solution to this problem is for an agency to redo the evaluation process of each employee's performance; include the running of projects. The immediate supervisor gathers feedback from project managers on how the staff is performing on a particular project. When this is done appropriately, you will notice team members can no longer be a non-performer and still think it will not impact their performance evaluation. You are now holding the employee accountable to perform not only on those items that are directly supervised by you, but to also fulfill all the objectives of their job, which includes running projects.

The second way of measuring and evaluating how staff performs on projects is to have each project manager fill out that portion of the team member's performance appraisal. You would then have a direct observation from the project manager on how that individual is performing.

What is the anticipated outcome of this? In most cases, you reduce the frustration being experienced when you have created an excellent feedback system for communicating and holding each employee accountable.

## **Project Management Mistake # 13**

### **Allowing Turf Battles To Impact The Project Team**

Turf battles between departments frustrate the progress of your project team. Teams are being forced to play politics with individuals over turf issues and personal preferences. Some project managers are even unaware of the abuse their team endures surrounding turf. On one occurrence, a manager refused to give information and data which was needed to successfully drive a project forward by another department. This same manager even informed his staff that they were not to support requests being made from a particular department. This turbulent culture slows down the progress of your project and increases your team's frustration.

#### **• How turf battles are created**

Turf battles are created by individuals holding positions for long periods of time and being treated as untouchable. During these individual's tenure, they have determined there are certain people they do not like and with whom they have disagreed publicly. Most people within an agency will disagree at some point, but they will do it in a calm fashion. Others, however, will become bitter and unforgiving. They harbor the ideas and situation, playing it over and over again in their minds.

#### **• Why turf battles are allowed**

Bitterness and grudges bring on many battles since countless people harbor resentment over past offences. Since they have been employed at their organization for a long time, they become set in their ways and believe they can behave any way they desire. This is reinforced when these same individuals are given glowing performance reviews each year, which only emphasizes wrong behavior and performance.

A second cause of turf battles is the natural silo effect within the agency. Some people are fearful in sharing important information to those outside of their silo. A silo is the main chain of command associated with how communication is carried out. For example, a government agency has a silo for revenue, information services, and facilities. Each department functions as a silo with all information only running through the specific area. Facilities will not know what Information Services are doing. Oftentimes, one department has information which could benefit another's project team, but it is still not communicated. A silo organization can hurt a project and its team due to all of the interactions associated with that project.

Third, there is no mechanism put into place to reinforce sharing information outside of the silos. This makes staff that is willing to share information feel like they are doing something wrong by letting people know successful project techniques.

#### **• How turf battles impact the project team**

Teams are frustrated with having to go through the hassle of turf battles. In one of our conference, a participant indicated that he spent his entire time guarding what he said to different

people because of all the turf battles. People feel that they are being forced to take sides or represent a side that is not their fight. This situation becomes even more complicated if there are several battles going on at the same time. Team members feel they are pushing along a thousand pound weight.

- **How to deal with turf battles successfully**

How to deal with turf battles vary depending on the person and the situation. For some situations, simple discussions with all parties involved will reduce tempers. However, there are others who have no intention of making changes or relaxing their demands. They have justified these feelings to themselves and are almost insulted that someone would even consider asking them to change. The group that refuses to change and loves the fight might need leverage from your project sponsor and upper management. There is one word of caution in enlisting upper management. This action will get movement on the situation, but it will occasionally prevent repairing the relationship which has been damaged. The first thing to try, in most instances, is talking with the person or persons involved before going to upper management.

## **Project Management Mistake # 14**

### **No Close Down Plan Or Post Mortem For Ending A Project**

One of the great strengths of having your project team properly trained in project management is how they handle the close down and post mortem process of the project. Our trainers have asked countless attendees how they utilize a close down plan or post mortem. Ninety-nine percent indicate their agency and project teams bypass this process. Project managers in the position of deciding how to close down a project properly and to conduct a post mortem are hindering the future development that can be learned.

A close down plan brings the project to an effective conclusion while handing it off to the customer without any gaps in service, quality, or communication. During the post mortem section, the team recognizes, analyzes, and documents what has gone right with the project, as well as what has gone wrong.

- **Why use a close down plan**

Closing a project down properly can assist the project team in two ways. First, it allows them to pass the project off to the customer in a structured and orderly manner. It allocates time for the customer to receive the project and to make sure there are no gaps in service. You are also able to educate the customer in ways to maintain the project at its highest level of quality. Second, without clear close down plans, the project team and the project manager might inadvertently leave portions of the project undone. The project close down plan guarantees that the project team is functioning in a structured manner and is driving the project to its needed end. It reinforces meeting all objectives and deliverables.

- **Reasons for a post mortem**

It is rather confusing why many organizations are neglecting to conduct a post mortem at the end of a project. It appears they are unaware that it promotes creating the best practices, while also modernizing many of their processes and techniques for future projects. Sometimes project sponsors feel that the advancement of new processes and techniques does not justify the time it takes to conduct a thorough post mortem. It is obvious that this is a myth and is distorting the overall process and success rate of projects. Unless project sponsors buy into the fact that post mortems are effective and must be included to determine the success or failure of a project, they will not be followed by the project team. Post mortems create concrete data that allow all parties to make decisions that will change the course of future projects and will move everyone away from generalities of measurement to a more precise manner.

Post mortems do not need to take a large period of time. They can occur in a streamlined fashion in which the project team, along with the project manager, conducts a brainstorming activity and analysis of the good, the bad, and areas to be changed on future projects. This will increase the effectiveness of future teams by 5% to 33%.

As a result of conducting post mortems, each team is building the necessary data to create the best practices which will streamline the process in a future project while increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of everyone. This level of understanding reduces the need of trial and error and allows project teams to function using proven processes that have already produced success.

## **Project Management Mistake # 15**

### **No Creation Of Best Practices**

Many project sponsors have never considered creating a best practices for their organization. By failing to do this, they are forcing each project team to recreate processes and procedures that have been done many times in the past; which takes a great deal of time. Therefore, the project team is not conducting business in the most effective way based on the culture and past performance of the organization.

- **Best Practices Defined**

Best practices are a series of standardized processes and procedures for a department or agency. These processes have been deemed necessary to achieve the desired results in completing the project. Best practices are not something that has been thrown together with little or no effort. They have been thought through and adjusted many time until perfected.

- **How they benefit projects**

Best practices help projects by minimizing the time a team needs to put together processes and procedures for running the project. They can also assist those overwhelmed areas in the project and amended team members. Let me suggest you unofficially track some projects for the next several weeks or months. Examine how they are running based on the processes and

practices of experienced team members. As you examined these projects more deeply, you will uncover a difference between a well run project based on proactive, well-tested practices compared to those using trial and error. In addition, these practices allow project teams to get up and running in the fastest way possible; while minimizing down time, discussion time, and foolish trial and error.

With all of these reasons, one wonders why project sponsors and managers are so resistant to create best practices for their agency. We tend to think that this is because they do not see the advantage of taking the time and effort to create best practices, nor do they trust the project will be run the same way after it has been developed.

- **What does best practices look like**

We all love to accomplish a great deal of progress in a short period of time. This is the main reason why best practices are so beneficial to a project team. Many people still struggle with what best practices look like once they are developed. Best practices can be a series of checklists, tasks, processes, and problem solving activities used for the purpose of driving a project faster and more effectively in a shorter period time. Many organizations have created best practices manuals for the purpose of passing along this knowledge base to team members and employees. By doing this, they are successfully reproducing their techniques. However, in order for this to take place, someone must take control and force the issue of creating best practices for that agency in the first place.

The Mathis Group has created multiple project management courses that lead an organization to duplicate foundational project management skills that can be passed on throughout the agency. Once learned, these techniques can become the foundation prior to creating a best practices manual. As project sponsors, team members, and management all come to an agreement on the processes and practices that will be used, you can anticipate maximum results for future reference. It will take a strong team leader who is willing to target and analyze the good, the bad, and the ugly of running projects to be able to weed out the bad techniques.

After these techniques have been discovered, they must go through an evaluation process to determine which are the best to be duplicated for the entire agency or whether you should focus on only a portion of the projects presently being run.

## **DISCOVER HOW OTHER AGENCIES HAVE EXPERIENCED SOME OF THE QUICKEST AND MOST SUCCESSFUL PROCESSES FOR RUNNING PROJECT MANAGEMENT IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY.**

Each of The Mathis Group Project Management programs is consistently updated with new ideas and processes to make the running of projects as effective and efficient as possible. You will experience some of the deepest content involving project management theory, numerous examples, illustrations, and a delightful mixture of fun regardless of which program you choose. Each training session allows the participant to gain needed insights to immediately help their projects by asking questions and participating in small group activities.

All of The Mathis Group training delves to the real cause of what is preventing your project from being on time and on budget. It examines the culture, how the project was planned, communication, staffing, budgeting, implementation, and feedback, as well as monitoring using Gantt and critical path charts. Special attention is given to close down processes and the examination of a post mortem. We align project management training into the culture in which you function every day. We look through your eyes in providing training for your agency. Isn't that how all training should function?

My name is Dr. Keith Mathis. I am an expert in project management and have been involved in running projects for over 25 years. I have been teaching project management courses to different types of industries for over 15 years. A doctorate of philosophy in administration management allows me to look at your organization and pick up on why projects are being hindered and not reaching their goal. When we come to conduct training with your organization, we are not satisfied with just providing classes. We are dedicated to changing the lives of each participant in the way they view projects, set them up, and interact with colleagues on a daily basis. This is our calling. This is why we spend hours making sure your people understand the material and have the ability to apply it.

## **WE ARE A REGISTERED EDUCATION PROVIDER WITH PROJECT MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE WITH OVER 40 COURSES APPROVED FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT UNITS.**

With this level of experience, the odds are we have seen a situation like what you are dealing with and have helped people with the exact same problem you are suffering right now. Unlike some organizations, we are not satisfied with just providing a training session. We want your people to be impacted with a new way of doing things that is going to fit you. This is why we discuss your problem in great detail prior to agreeing to any type of assignment. We only take assignments when we are convinced we can make the situation better.

## **WHEN YOU HAVE NON-PRODUCTIVE PROJECT MANAGEMENT SKILLS, YOU SHOULD BE CALLING US!**

In a day and an age of specialization, you need to work with the real professionals who are trained, experience success, and understand the pressures and strains involved with a government agency culture. Get advice and recommendations from professionals who are assisting other agencies like yours make their projects run smoother. We are such an organization! We have provided different types by training for organizations such as the States of Missouri and Kansas, Federal Communication Commission, Drug Enforcement Agency, Consumer Product Safety Commission, National Institutes of Health, Federal Aviation Agency, and the USDA.

If you are interested in checking out the training services we provide, you may be wondering the best way to get this information so that you can make an educated decision on whether or not The Mathis Group can help your agency. We will provide a *free* phone interview to discuss your project management issues to evaluate whether or not we can assist in making your project team run more smoothly.

### **A FREE TELEPHONE EVALUATION!**

When calling, you will have the opportunity to get to know us and tell us about the areas where your projects are missing the mark. You can evaluate us in this interview and get an idea as to whether or not our training programs can assist your staff. We will make a recommendation that is based on your need, timeframe, severity of the problem, and speed of changes you are wanting.

If, after the free telephone evaluation, you believe there is no benefit to working with us, you simply close out the conversation with no obligation. However, if you do find that you can use our help, we will discuss how to proceed by giving you course content, prospective dates, and budgetary expectations for this service.

If you are experiencing project management problems and have had training in the past with little or no improvement to your teams call us right now at 800-224-3731. Call today to set up your free telephone evaluation.

Whether you use our services or not, we wish you the best of luck in all future projects!

Sincerely,

Dr. Keith Mathis  
President, The Mathis Group, Inc.

P.S. No matter what else you do, please participate in the free telephone evaluation to determine what is really wrong with your project teams. Do not allow your teams to be dysfunctional any longer with aimless results. Call today and discuss the issues!

## **Questions & Answers: What You Might Want To Know About Booking A Project Management Program?**

### **Question #1 – Who should attend project management training?**

*Answer: This course can be taken by anyone who desires an in-depth knowledge of project management. However, there are some special people this course will help be more successful in running projects.*

- *Project sponsors*
- *Project managers*
- *Project team members*
- *Future project members*
- *Contractors who are working with teams*

### **Question #2 – What are the benefits of using courses and a company registered with Project Management Institute?**

*Answer: Project Management Institute (PMI®) is the premier association for registering project management certification and training. The Mathis Group is a Registered Education Provider with over 40 courses registered with Project Management Institute. Courses vary depending on content and length, but each give Professional Development Units (PDUs) to assist attendees in staying current with project management knowledge.*

### **Question #3 – Why should we invest in project management training?**

*Answer: Training courses in project management assist agencies in communicating the priority of a project. Each participant, sponsor, and project manager will use the same processes and communication so projects run more smoothly.*

### **Question #4 – How long does it take to go through a project management training course?**

*Answer: Project management training courses vary from a few hours to 120 hours. The length of the course will focus on how long the agency has to train their participants in project management theory and processes. In addition, it makes a difference in whether the agency is attempting to keep their workers updated in project management skills or if they are just beginning to train their staff with these techniques.*

### **Question #5 – Do you need past project management knowledge?**

*Answer: Each course has a specific description and core objectives to be taught. It is the amount of objectives that will cause the training to vary in time and depth. Some of our courses will lay the foundation for beginners in project management, while many assume the participants are ready for a more in-depth study.*

**Question #6 – What is the class culture and setting?**

*Answer: Each class is taught in an adult model. We know that adults bring to the class a great deal of knowledge and expertise. Our courses are normally deeper in content than most of our competitors. Our class culture is very relaxed, but structured. This gives participants the opportunity to ask questions at any time and give personal examples that fit the content being studied. Each class has also been designed to be very motivational with group activities, exercises, and fun. All of this allows the participants to love the training rather than endure it.*

**Question #7 – When we book training with The Mathis Group, what is included?**

*Answer: The Mathis Group offers fixed rate fees which include an on-site trainer, all travel, hotel, and meals as provided in most GSA contracts. In most cases, our trainer will bring in a laptop and projector to conduct the training. We teach using flip charts, activities, and PowerPoint.*

**Question #8 – What if I want more personalized service or help?**

*Answer: Dr. Mathis can be contacted directly and is prepared to assist you with whatever you need. Whether you need onsite seminars, more help consulting, or retraining your project team, just contact him.*

**Question #9 – What kind of payment options are available?**

*Answer: The Mathis Group takes the government credit card, direct deposit and also allows 30 day invoice payments.*

**Question #10 – What if I do not like the project management program?**

*Answer: In the unlikely event that you do not think this training program helped your organization, we give a 100% money back guarantee.*

## The Mathis Group Is A PMI® Registered Global Educational Provider

The Mathis Group is a Project Management Institute (PMI®) Registered Global Educational Provider (R.E.P.). We are committed to enhancing the ongoing professional development of PMI Members, PMI-certified Project Management Professionals (PMP®), and other project management stakeholders through appropriate project management learning activities and products. We have agreed to abide by PMI® established operational and educational criteria, and are subject to random audits for quality assurance purposes.

We have over forty courses to offer as a R.E.P. Each course is listed below.

***Pre-Class for Certification Exam Class*** is a 2-day course offering 13 PDUs (Professional Development Units). This course is designed to assist participants in preparing to take and pass the Missouri Project Management Certification Exam. The goal of this course is to provide participants with 14 hours of class time, which include discussions and review of all course content, cases, and the nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*. This course will conclude by giving the test. Scoring of the test will take place quickly, and scores will be reported as required.

***PMP® Prep Boot Camp*** is an intensive 4-day course offering 35 Contact Hours/PDUs. This fast paced boot camp prepares each participant with all the core competencies to pass the PMP® the first time. We teach you the terms, processes and skills to pass the course with minimal post course study. Also, learn methodologies for taking national tests.

***Project Management Fundamentals*** is a 1/2-day course offering 3.5 PDUs. This course focuses on ways to gather requirements from your customer by using detailed questions. Participants will examine change and ways to control it, risk analysis, communication, and ways to disarm and control conflict. In addition, this course uses four case studies to allow participants to instantly apply the principals within an organizational setting. This course will follow Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of the *PMBOK® Guide*.

***Project Management Fundamentals*** is a 1-day course offering 6.5 PDUs. This basic course provides core project management skills. Participants will explore ideas and actions to be more effective throughout the entire project management process. This course will follow the Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*.

***Comprehensive Project Management*** is a 2-day course offering 13 PDUs. This intermediate course provides competencies to monitor and lead a single or multiple projects' scope, critical path, scope creep, time slippage, and team conflicts. This course will follow the Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*.

***Mastering Project Management*** is our 3-day course offering 19.5 PDUs. This intensive course includes applicable hands-on activities and team exercises which will reinforce project management core competencies. This course will follow the Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*.

***Advanced Skills on Project Interviewing, Risk and Negotiation*** is a 2-day course offering 15 PDUs. This course focuses on ways to use communication to gather detailed information from the customer, analyze the information, and expedite the outcomes desired by the customer. Participants will understand how to focus a message and incorporate means to gain information using effective communication skills. This course will recommend ways of building stronger communication skills and provide insight to different communication styles. Participants will learn how to examine and measure objectives within cost, schedule, and cultural issues. Risk for this program is examined as defining the probability of the project. This course also examines risk identification, risk communication, and risk planning. In addition, this course examines the strategies of successful negotiation throughout the project's life cycle. Attendees will learn the value of successful negotiation, the negotiation process, and different negotiation models. This course will include examples of negotiation over scope, deadlines, change, and getting the best price from your vendor. This course will follow one or more of Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*.

***Agile Project Management*** is 2-day course offering 13 PDUs. Agile Project Management officially began in 2001 and has become a popular project management approach. Examine the focus of energizing, empowering, and enabling project teams to provide customer value in a very efficient manner. Examine the value and process of actively involving the customer in the project. Explore the actions of responding to change in the project while focusing on delivering high customer value.

***Business Analysis Fundamentals*** is 2-day course offering 14 PDUs. *Business Analysis Fundamentals* is a 2-day course which provides foundational skills in business analysis. Students will learn the basic roles of stakeholders and how to gather real requirements from each stakeholder; allow requirements gathering to influence the business case; and use communication techniques to strengthen stakeholder relationships throughout the entire project process. The course aligns with *A Guide to Business Analysis Body of Knowledge (BABOK®)*, 2nd edition.

***Creating a Successful Project Business Case*** is an intensive 1- or 2-day course offering 6.5 or 13 PDUs, respectively, will focus on the business case. Learn what a business case is, what it includes, why it is necessary for successful project management and how to develop a business case for every project. Learn how to conduct a business case review to ensure your project's success. This course will follow one or more of Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*.

***Executives Managing Projects in the 21st Century*** is a 1-day course offering 6.5 PDUs which focuses on ways executives can run projects faster and more effectively. This course will recommend a six-phase process and numerous preventative actions to efficiently speed up a project. Participants will learn how to successfully create, monitor, and guide the project's scope and critical path as well as how to manage multiple projects. Participants will diagnose and prevent problems such as scope creep, time slippage, and team conflicts.

***Microsoft Project 2003 Basics*** is a 1-day course offering 6.5 PDUs. It is focused on helping individuals who use Microsoft Office Project Professional 2003. The course will cover the critical skills necessary to create and modify a project plan file in Microsoft Project. Various skills related to the project plan that will be addressed include creating tasks, managing resources, and organizing resource assignments. By the end of this course attendees will be able to create a project plan file containing tasks and organize these tasks in a work breakdown structure containing task relationships. They will also be able to create and assign resources and finalize the project to implement the project plan.

***Microsoft Project 2003 Intermediate*** is a 1-day course offering 6.5 PDUs which builds upon the basic skills students learned in the Microsoft Project 2003 Basics course. This course will go beyond simply preparing a Project Plan and actually look at the skills needed to use Microsoft Project during the Project Implementation phase. By the end of this course, students will be able to exchange project plan data with other software applications, update current and past project plans, produce custom reports in a variety of Medias, and reuse project plan information in other current or future projects.

***Microsoft Project 2007 Basics*** is a 1-day course offering 6.5 PDUs. It is focused on helping individuals who use Microsoft Office Project Professional 2007. The course will cover the critical skills necessary to create and modify a project plan file in Microsoft Project. Various skills related to the project plan that will be addressed include creating tasks, managing resources, and organizing resource assignments. By the end of this course attendees will be able to create a project plan file containing tasks and organize these tasks in a work breakdown structure containing task relationships. They will also be able to create and assign resources and finalize the project to implement the project plan.

***Microsoft Project 2007 Intermediate*** is a 1-day course offering 6.5 PDUs which builds upon the basic skills students learned in the Microsoft Project 2007 Basics course. This course will go beyond simply preparing a Project Plan and actually look at the skills needed to use Microsoft Project during the Project Implementation phase. By the end of this course, students will be able to exchange project plan data with other software applications, update current and past project plans, produce custom reports in a variety of Medias, and reuse project plan information in other current or future projects.

***Proactive Communication and Interview Skills for Gathering Business Requirements*** is a 1-day course offering 6.5 PDUs and focuses on ways to use communication as a way to gather detailed information from the customer, analyze the information, and expedite the outcomes desired by the customer. Participants will understand how to focus a message and incorporate means to gain information using effective communication skills. This course will recommend ways of building stronger communication skills and will provide insight to different communication styles. Participants will learn new power by using certain words to impact the message and by asking questions that get noticed. This course will follow one or more of Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*.

***Program Management*** is a 2-day course offering 13 PDUs. This class is designed to offer direction in managing a number of projects under a common umbrella. These projects will often run within the same timeframe using the same resources. An effective program manager is able to see an overview of the whole picture while still attending to the individual pieces.

***Project Change Management*** is a 2- or 3-day seminar offering 13 or 19.5 PDUs, respectively. This course will show you how to implement, track and control changes to your project. This seminar focuses on ways to reduce the uncertainty of project changes. Learn how to analyze each change while developing processes, tools and techniques which can be used immediately. This course will follow one or more of Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*.

***Project Communication Management*** is a 2-day course offering 13 PDUs. This course will focus on ways to use project communication and communication theories as a way to influence others within and outside of the project team. Participants will learn how to focus on framing the data and information in a correct manner as well as proper usage of words and language for influencing project stakeholders. This course will follow one or more of Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*.

***Project Cost Management*** is a 1-day course offering 6.5 PDUs. This course focuses on basic cost management theories and techniques. Learn how to give value to the customer beyond cost. Discuss ways to get the project back on track and how to adjust budgeting issues during over expenditures. This course will follow one or more of Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*.

***Project Human Resources Management*** is a 2-day course offering 13 PDUs. This course will focus on planning for human resource needs. It is filled with behavioral skills that will help motivate, equip, and keep project team members accountable and on task. This course will also include issues such as conflict. This course will follow one or more of Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*.

***Project Integration Management*** is a 3-day offering 19.5 PDUs. This intensive 3-day course focuses on ways employees can run projects faster and more effectively. This course recommends a six-phase process, as well as numerous preventative actions to efficiently speed up a project. Participants will learn how to successfully create, monitor, and guide the project's scope and critical path as well as how to manage multiple projects. Participants will diagnose and prevent problems such as scope creep, time slippage, and team conflicts. Lastly, this course will examine the entire process of project planning and how to create successful practices in the future. This course will follow one or more of Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*.

***Project Management Concepts*** is an intensive 2-day course offering 14 PDUs. It provides an overview of the project management concepts and how they function within the organizational environment. It includes applicable hands-on activities and team exercises. Participants will learn tools and techniques which will help them run their projects faster and more effectively. This course will follow the Project Management Institute's five process groups and nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*.

***Project Management Office (PMO)*** is a 3-day course offering 19.5 PDUs. This course will give each participant an in-depth opportunity to engage in a complete examination of the breadth of the Project Management Office. Participants will examine the role, purpose, and the different models used, as well as how an organization would approach establishing a PMO. Participants will learn best practices for establishing, managing, and successfully leading toward project excellence with a PMO. We will discuss methodologies for the PMO that allows you to understand and implement project management core competencies across the organization.

***Project Monitoring, Evaluation and Oversight*** is a 2-day course offering 13 PDUs examines. It examines how to establish processes and evaluation techniques for auditing project solutions. You will learn data collection techniques and how to convert soft data to monetary values which can be measured and evaluated. Discover various audits and how to measure project components such as performance, resources, planning, customer relationships, and vendor-contractor relationships. This course also focuses on establishing process improvements in the maintaining of oversight procedures. You are able to apply widely accepted standards and preferred evaluation and oversight principles, as well as provide means to compile, analyze and optimize project performance. Explore ways to deliver feedback and make recommendations to the appropriate individuals in the organization. This course will follow one or more of Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*.

***Project Performance Management*** is a 2-day course offering 13 PDUs. This course focuses on developing strategies for tracking performance in project teams. This course examines issues such as benchmarking, performance, and establishing a gap between desired project performance and preferred performance. This course will follow one or more of Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*.

***Project Procurement Management*** is a 1-day course offering 6.5 PDUs. This is structured to lay the proper foundation for procurement principles and processes. The emphasis of this program is to help teams or individuals learn how to function in the procurement world in day to day operations. This course will follow one or more of Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*.

***Project Quality Assurance, Monitoring and Auditing*** is a 2-day course offering 13 PDUs. Participants will focus on issues such as how to maintain quality by using audits and evaluations for monitoring purposes. Quality theories taught by Drs. Deming and Juran are included as foundations for implementing new quality initiatives. In addition, several types of project audits will be explored as a means of controlling the project with more efficiency. This course will follow one or more of Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*.

***Project Quality Management*** is a 2-day course offering 13 PDUs. Participants focus on additional planning of the project while examining issues such as how to keep continuous improvement, symptoms of quality concerns, and how to maintain quality throughout the project. In addition, study techniques and theories taught by Drs. Deming and Juran as foundations for implementing new quality plans. Specifically, this course will focus on conducting risk analysis, problem solving, handling conflict, and maintaining quality throughout the entire project. This course will follow one or more of Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*.

***Project Risk Management*** is a 2-day course offering 13 PDUs. This course teaches participants how to examine and measure objectives within cost, schedule, and cultural issues. Risk for this program is examined as defining the probability of the project. This course examines risk identification, risk communication, and risk planning. This course will follow one or more of Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*.

***Project Risk Management Advanced*** is a 2-day course offering 14 PDUs. This course will review the basic concepts of project risk and project risk management and then dig deeper into identifying risks and strategizing solutions for those risks. Participants will explore tools and techniques for collecting, analyzing, implementing, and monitoring data and the responses to combat risk. This course will follow one or more of Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*.

***Project Scheduling*** is a 2-day course offering 14 PDUs. This course will review the basic concepts of the project management process with the emphasis content being on the planning and scheduling process. Participants will explore the Schedule Development Process as diagrammed by the Project Management Institute. Areas include creating a WBS, defining activities, creating a network diagram, estimating activity durations and resources, developing the schedule, and creating a baseline. This course will follow one or more of Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*.

***Project Scope Management*** is a 2-day course offering 13 PDUs. Participants focus on successful ways to control project scope. Organizations struggle with projects due to ineffective scope development and tracking. This course insures the ability to detail the scope, and deliverables, as well as how to handle changes to the scope. This course also includes project life cycle, project definition, project baselines, and using the work breakdown structure. This course will follow one or more of Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*.

***Project Time Management*** is a 2-day course offering 13 PDUs. This course will take into account ways to plan and schedule time as well as individual issues that affect productivity. Learn how to wisely confront procrastination and explore ways to better manage time issues and constraints. This course will follow one or more of Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*.

***Successful Negotiation in a Project Management Environment*** is a 2-day course offering 13 PDUs. This course examines the strategies of successful negotiation throughout the project's life cycle. Participants will learn the value of successful negotiation, the negotiation process, and different negotiation models. This course will include examples in negotiation over scope, deadlines, change, and getting the best price from your vendor. This course will follow one or more of Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*.

***Use Case Modeling*** is a 2-day course offering 13 PDUs. This hands-on, interactive course helps participants examine the fundamentals of Use Case Modeling and its application for gathering requirements in the project life cycle. This course will present an extensive, iterative Use Case Modeling methodology including identification, development, and implementation. Students will participate in Use Case processes, examine the importance/impact of Use Cases, and gain the skills necessary to utilize Use Case Modeling effectively as a requirements gathering tool.

***Vendor Management*** is a 3-day course offering 19.5 PDUs. This course will provide detailed instruction in areas such as pre-solicitation, solicitation and award of a contract. Each participant will develop tools for working with vendors, a clear understanding of vendor motivation, and techniques for making it a win-win relationship. This course focuses on ways to select, monitor and control vendors, as well as how to make vendors a partner or an extension as stakeholders who deliver the right performance throughout the length of the project. In addition, this course focuses on all aspects of vendor management, such as developing vendor management plans, identifying performance measurements and discussing various contract types and their strengths and weaknesses.

***Project Management 90 Hour Intensive*** - This intensive course focuses on ways employees can run projects faster and more effectively. Participants will learn how to successfully create, monitor, and guide the project's scope and critical path as well as how to manage multiple projects. Participants will diagnose and prevent problems such as scope creep, time slippage, and team conflicts.

***The 90-hour intensive is broken down into the following four courses. Each course is designed to be taught in 4½ days. Complete course objectives can be sent upon request to demonstrate what will be taught.***

***Project Management I – Initiating, Planning, Integration and Staffing*** is a 4.5 day course offering 30 PDUs. Participants will begin their journey into project management concepts, theories, and foundational processes. The focus in this course is on scheduling, creating a work breakdown structure and planning for human resource needs. In planning for human resource needs, participants will study behavioral skills that will help motivate, equip, and keep project team members accountable and on task. This is the foundational course specifically designed to align with the Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*. Each course will utilize both new content as well as best practices which will be taught from the Best Practice Manual.

***Project Management II - Budgeting, Quality, Change, Risk and Start-Up*** is a 4.5 day course offering 30 PDUs. Participants will focus on additional planning of the project while examining issues such as risk, budgeting, and how to maintain quality throughout the project. Specifically, this course will focus on conducting risk analysis, problem solving, handling conflict, and maintaining quality throughout the entire project. In Phase II, when planning the budget, quality and risk are aligned with the Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*. Each course will utilize both new content, as well as best practices which will be taught from the Best Practice Manual.

***Project Management III - Execution, Monitoring and Close-Down*** is a 4.5 day course offering 30 PDUs. Participants will focus on monitoring and executing the project while moving into the close down phase of the project. Additional focus will be on delivering quality customer service and value, regardless if the customer is internal or external. Participants will discuss and participate in analysis of measuring the individual performance of team members. This section also focuses on how to properly hand the project off to the customer for effective transition. Phase III is aligned with the Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*. Each course will utilize both new content, as well as best practices which will be taught from the Best Practice Manual.

***Project Management 120 Hour Intensive*** - This intensive course focuses on ways employees can run projects faster and more effectively. Participants will learn how to successfully create, monitor, and guide the project's scope and critical path as well as how to manage multiple projects. Participants will diagnose and prevent problems such as scope creep, time slippage, and team conflicts.

***The 120-hour intensive is broken down into the following four courses. Each course is designed to be taught in 4½ days. Complete course objectives can be sent upon request to demonstrate what will be taught.***

***Project Management I – Initiating and Planning*** is a 4.5 day course offering 30 PDUs. Participants will begin their journey into project management concepts, theories, and foundational processes. This is the first of four courses specifically designed to align with the Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*. Each course will utilize both new content as well as best practices.

***Project Management II – Planning, Staffing and Project Start Up*** is a 4.5 day course offering 30 PDUs. Participants focus on how to conduct the initiating and planning phase of the project. This week will focus on scheduling, creating a work breakdown structure, and planning for human resource needs. In planning for human resource needs, participants will study behavioral skills that will help motivate, equip, and keep project team members accountable and on task. This section is aligned with the Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK® Guide*. Each course will utilize both new content as well as best practices.

***Project Management III – Budgeting, Quality, and Risk*** is a 4.5 day course offering 30 PDUs. Participants focus on additional planning of the project while examining issues such as risk, budgeting, and how to maintain quality throughout the project. Specifically, this course will focus on conducting risk analysis, problem solving, handling conflict, and maintaining quality throughout the entire project. In Phase III, when planning the budget, quality and risk are aligned with the Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK*<sup>®</sup> *Guide*. Each course will utilize both new content as well as best practices.

***Project Management IV – Project Execution, Monitoring, and Close Down*** is a 4.5 day course offering 30 PDUs. Participants will focus on monitoring and executing the project while moving into the close down phase of the project. Additional focus will be on problem solving and delivering quality customer service and value, regardless if the customer is internal or external. Participants will discuss and participate in analysis of measuring the individual performance of team members. This section also focuses on how to properly hand the project off to the customer for effective transition. Phase IV is aligned with the Project Management Institute's nine knowledge areas of *PMBOK*<sup>®</sup> *Guide*. Each course will utilize both new content as well as best practices.

# Meet Dr. Keith Mathis



*Speaker, Trainer, and Seminar Leader  
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Over the last several years, Dr. Keith Mathis has emerged as one of the most effective business trainers in the field traveling throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico and South America. His provocative, informative, humorous presentations on a variety of organizational development topics are demanded by progressive companies. An animated and often electrifying platform speaker, Keith never merely talks to an audience, but he also seeks to involve them in his presentations through high content and numerous illustrations. Intellectually demanding of himself, Keith demands no less of his audiences!

As a consultant who specializes in organizational behavior and development, he comes with thousands of presentations to every kind of organization. He is flexible by teaching in full day formats, multi-day conferences or one hour keynotes for conventions.

He is founder of The Mathis Group, based in St. Louis, Missouri. His work includes teaching corporate America skills on topics such as: teambuilding, leadership, motivation, conflict resolution, project management, supervision, performance appraisals, goal setting and numerous other organizational proficiencies. His problem solving expertise provides him with the ability to help companies in the solving of the most complex difficulties.

Keith continues to broaden his knowledge base and practical advice by teaching. He serves as an adjunct professor of business/management at Nova Southeastern University in Ft. Lauderdale, teaching Consulting, Public Speaking, Total Quality, Project Management, Management, Communication, Customer Value, Leadership, Marketing, Organizational Behavior, Strategic Planning, and Group Dynamics.

Keith has authored numerous training programs as well as magazine and newspaper articles. His book *Dinosaur Tracks: Modern Leadership Strategies for Changing Employee Performance and Behavior* was published by Equipppers Press International.

Keith holds a B.A. in Behavioral Science, a M.S. in Management, and a Ph.D. in Administration Management. He is certified as a PMP<sup>®</sup> (Project Management Professional) by Project Management Institute and a COI (Certified Online Instructor).