

# **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!”**

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**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

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Your decision to read this tells a lot about your openness to try something new and to consider additional options for future changes. Project Management in a government setting is here to stay. It is one of those skills which help deliver the greatest value to the most individuals. During a time when all agencies 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 some of the most common blunders made by agencies when working on projects. Many of these mistakes are not a one-time event, but are part of the culture of the organization and happens in 90% of the projects.

Even though in this report we focus on project management mistakes, this does not indicate that everything you are doing is wrong. Most agencies have a method or two that is very productive and gives them their greatest productivity. In many cases the agency has been able to deliver and 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 is able to better organize their staff, they are able to reduce stress and burnout while using their resources in a positive way. This report will help you by tweaking many of your present processes or operations to be more impactful in the future.

Also, this report is in no way critical of the great men and women who work for Federal agencies and give a great deal of time and effort to make projects 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 many men and women who care deeply about their jobs and are strongly committed to the goals and the objectives of their agency.

## How to use this report

This report is written as a secret weapon to help an agency like yours be more productive in reaching project objectives. Each point is designed to help 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 this report, do not be afraid to mark it up and make notes for further examination and research. This report has been designed to assist you as an action plan to help you 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 be reading 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 us and to point it in another direction. Reasons can be 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. Anytime we discuss project management skills, we always deal with individuals who want to fight us on the front end by showing us 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 have become outdated. 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 are not reaching their objectives?

*Group #3* is those who will take action and responsibility to make changes so they can be successful. This means learning new techniques; 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 report and taking action. This group understands there is no miracle worker who will come in and fix your project. If you desire for your projects to run in a more effective way while impacting the performance of each team member, there must be some special actions created. Reading this report and creating an action plan of high priority items to examine is just one of those special actions.

To assist you in gaining a better focus on areas to analyze, we are going to put our consulting hat on for the remainder of this report. We want to show you some areas which consistently surface as problems in government settings. This report in no way guarantees that these small mistakes are happening in your agency. In many agencies you will discover you are successful in these areas. However, we recommend you recheck and examine each area to make sure processes are running smoothly and every thing 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.

In the following pages we have researched and found there are 15 project management mistakes which waste dollars and hours in time. Once again, we 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 finger tips?

## **Project Management Mistake # 1**

### **Planning Before A Customer Interview Is Completed**

Due to enormous pressure, project teams are faced with beginning activity on a project prior to completing a detailed project plan. This causes a great deal of hardship and mistakes which cost time and money for the organization as well as 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 the project sponsor.

The first reason planning takes place before a thorough interview has been conducted is based on the fact that, in the American culture, we have substituted activity for planning. This means 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 understanding that interviewing the customer and setting precise objectives must be completed up front, we will continue to have blurry plans and numerous amounts of rework on our project.

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

The third reason why project plans are created without an interview is the project sponsors and project managers do not see the benefit of getting all the information upfront. Some project managers have been trained in a culture that disperses information in small, bite size pieces rather than in large chunks. This means that the average project is being planned with only knowledge of the few short goals rather than a full understanding of what the project 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 project manager has this knowledge, the project will take longer and cost more than anticipated, and, in many cases, will 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 goal, 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 in any of our seminars. 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. In a government setting it is very common to hear this verbalized by the line worker. Many forget that upper management is normally the individuals 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 considerations 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 as well as the line 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 nineteen fifties through the eighties. Top-down planning makes the assumption that upper management has the best processes and ideas to run a project smoothly. In many cases, this is true when management has a great deal of experience with some of the specialized projects of the government agencies. However, top-down planning can hurt a project and, in many cases, 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 nineteen seventies, 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. To put it a different way, people are promoted until they start doing a bad job, and then they are left in that position until retirement or until they 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 they happen to be at their level of incompetence, they are producing plans which are substandard to front line employees who have an 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, it is not uncommon to run across individuals who are 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 solutions through the management team. This kind of response slows down the project and prevents the project team from taking the needed responsibility.

In conclusion, one of the best things a project sponsor or manager can do in project planning is to set the 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 for running the project in a timely fashion? This can be very 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 very 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 project team will possess 80% of the skills and will need to bridge the gap for the remaining 20%. This gap can be bridged with the usage of other experienced team members, outside contractors, or internal training to provide skills to the project team.

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. This requires changes of skills and core competencies within the project team in order to handle this type of evolution.

The second reason why teams have improper skills is due to a lack of project management training. Many project teams have basic skills for running a project, but over time they become lazy and allow those skills to become cold or dormant. This means that they must be reminded in team meetings and with updated training.

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 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.

It is very important for project teams to keep their skill levels strong and effective. This can be done very easily through the usage of training in short intervals at the end of project meetings. In many cases, the training will need to only be 15 to 30 minutes in length to keep the skills fresh and to build new techniques into your project. Our clients have enjoyed our free monthly e-zine which reinforces these skills. Each month a different skill is the focus.

## **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. This comes about due to a number of reasons. Foolishly, project managers and sponsors think

that their team should already know which role they are fulfilling. When roles and responsibilities are not explained, we are leaving this understanding up to the individual team member. When this happens, they are going to miss the mark and function in a role which is not consistent with a project manager's outcome. When they do not perform as desired, there is frustration and anxiety. Let's examine the most common reasons roles and responsibilities are not fulfilled.

- **Misunderstanding of role**

Project team members work on a number of project teams. On some of the teams they are expected to be more influential in the manner of interaction, while on other teams 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 these frustrations and cause 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. What you will notice is many of the team members are wonderful people, and they will try anything the project sponsor or manager desires. However, if we really want success in these new roles, one should make sure you are providing education to expand their skill set and then put these new skills into practice.

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

Working on a team requires accountability. Project managers are assuming the individuals know where to get the needed help and assistance. They think that if they do not know, they should just ask. For some team members, they are assertive and confident enough to do this when needed. But what about the non-assertive team member? What about the quiet team member? There are times when a team member is not sure what to do and where to get help when problems arise. Project managers can reduce a great deal of stress and encourage their team in a powerful way if they will give direction on where they can get questions answered and help on their 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 them support on how to solve their problems.

## **Project Management Mistake # 5**

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

Running project teams can become very difficult, especially when you are not their immediate supervisor and do not have position power over them. This is complicated when project teams have no formal way of evaluating the work their team members have completed or a way to give feedback to the team member's supervisor. This results in team members who are working on projects and have a very low productivity level, but they continue to get great performance evaluations from a supervisor.

We are going to look at the reasons this happens, ways to change accountability in your culture, and, finally, 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, the setting of standards, and detailing the roles and responsibilities of each team member. Let's examine each of the three reasons for little accountability on a project team.

The first reason why there is a lack of accountability in projects is due to the usage of staff from various departments who report to different supervisors. This has become more complicated due to the internal culture of most agencies which requires the only person to hold a worker accountable would be their direct supervisor. Problems surface when communication breaks down and there is a lack of feedback about the worker's performance on a particular project. Poor employees know about this gap, and they 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 make sure the objectives of the project are being achieved. When there is no internal evaluation to maintain quality, 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 of the project which increases budget and time. Unless evaluation is examined throughout a project and individual roles and responsibilities of each team member are detailed, hold the entire team accountable even though it might only be one or two team members.

The third reason why there is little accountability is due to an improper manner of setting up the project team. Project teams are set up without a code of conduct or a value statement of how the team plans to work and will 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 is a standard among themselves with different measuring indicators. Unless the code or standard is set up in the beginning, this 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 the project manager, project sponsor, and the entire project team. Unless you have the support 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 can be defined as the way we run the organization and what is allowed. This can be demonstrated by how we treat individuals, what is talked about, what is joked about, as well as what has been said behind the backs of others. All of these examples

demonstrate culture. When we focus on a culture which violates accountability, we are discussing a problem which sabotages positive work and reinforces the slug mentality.

The following is a listing of some of the events which must take place in order to change the accountability culture in your project team and in your agency.

First, the organization must detail what the new culture design or model will be. This means having a good idea of what would bring about the best successful situation for the agency. It can be something as simple as shifting from a strong autocratic style to one which is more team oriented. In other situations it is making adjustments on how communication is distributed among the 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 get them active in making the shift. Some personnel struggle with any type of change taking place in an organization. There are other employees who love the thought of change, especially when shifting culture is described. What you want to do is get employees who are supportive, as well as those who might be resistant, working on making the needed changes. 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 a stronger plan than before.

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

Feedback sessions can be done on a weekly, monthly or quarterly basis. They are not done just to examine the negative things wrong with project. They are done with a motive of evaluating performance and progress. This means in a normal feedback session, it is possible not only to discuss where a team has not measured up but also to point out those areas where outstanding work has been accomplished.

In summary, it is very important for the culture of any project to hold team members accountable. If this is not taking place, then 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 for the project. Sometimes timelines are calculated by the project sponsor, other times it is calculated 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 time. However, there are three primary concerns which should be considered regardless of who calculates the timeline in a project. 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 calculation. This is not that uncommon in the early stages of project development discussions. However, as a project continues to develop and evolve, the timeline should move farther away from a guess and more to a calculated destination.

The areas where this impacts the agency most is where 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 and so the project plan has major errors. This error impacts performance, morale of the team, and expectations of the customer. Unless these areas are changed, we are reproducing 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. An example of this would be when a timeline has been calculated and a project sponsor changes the calculation, reducing its time by 10 to 30 percent to make sure all contingency time has been cut out of the project. The cutting of this time is due in part 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 we have noticed a project plan which 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. This means we must be fair to our project team when calculating time if we expect them to work hard in meeting all desired deadlines and core objectives.

In closing, the best way for an agency to calculate time is to establish the basic time calculation model that can be used extensively by all project sponsors, project managers, and project teams. Establishing a model for calculating time is one of the most fundamental elements of training that can benefit an agency as well as 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 work breakdown structure (WBS). We can define a WBS as the breaking down of a project into smaller pieces for the purpose of tracking budget, time, and responsibility. Many projects struggle due to the WBS being created in a very shallow and superficial way. What this means is that the project has not been broken down into small enough units of time, budget, or structure to be able to accomplish the goals.

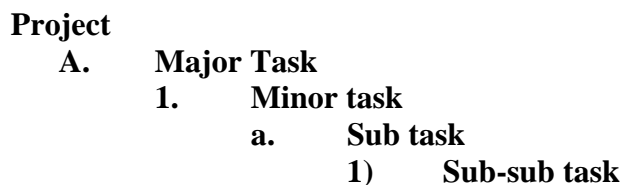
- **Limited breakdown**

Some projects are broken down with a limited amount of structure. This means that an individual or team has broken down the project, but they have not gone deep enough into setting up the design and plan for accomplishing its objectives. It is not uncommon to see this demonstrated when you have inexperienced individuals. Some cases show this as an 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 a great deal of 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 of the plan. If the main components of the project are broken down followed with only one or two levels, then it is possible the project is going to be hit with unforeseen time delays as well as budget over extensions. 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 then, finally, subtasks bring up the remainder of the project. You will notice an example of the breakdown in the following diagram.



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

- **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 have been run. Assumptions can best be defined as those foundational views considered taking 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 achieved. This is a simple example of our assumption. There are also assumptions such as human resource allotment, budgetary allotment, time, tools and equipment provided, as well as communication and feedback in order for a project to move forward.

In conclusion, 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 fail to discuss the risk of a project many times due to the thought that it is 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 a risk analysis seems to come about due to many projects never examining the performance, risk, or implementation of previous projects and compare those results this one. This means that the project team is not learning from past performance and has to make the same mistakes themselves. When discussing a risk analysis, one should be examining two issues. What can go wrong in the project? What is the impact if it does go wrong? The following will examine both of these issues.

- **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. This means engaging your team to think outside of the box and in terms of what has the highest possibility of malfunctioning. In many cases, individuals on your project team who are more negative in nature can assist in creating this list the fastest.

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 very important once a project team has examined risk. This means that the project team has itemized each risk and has provided a detailed way of solving or reducing the risk from taking place. You will notice on many projects that there is a detailed crisis plan for those areas which have a severe amount of devastation if it goes wrong. An example of this would be the nuclear power plants that have thought through every possibility and have made

provisions 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 previously discussed.

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 in determining the risk, its criticalness, and ways to reduce its effect.

## **Project Management Mistake # 9**

### **Little Or No Implementation Plan**

Implementation of the project is very important in order to keep it current. Most participants verbalize they have a schedule 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 in designing an implementation plan. An implementation plan is defined as a plan created with dates and times for starting each section of the WBS. Implementation plans work best when you also have people designated to accomplish whatever work you have assigned.

- **Objectives of implementation plan**

The implementation plan is used to make every section of the WBS function as easy as possible. It is created to make sure that all roles and responsibilities are clear to the individuals, as well as dates, times, and sequence for running the project. When an implementation plan is created correctly, it allows all team members 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. This means that the project team must be very realistic in designating who should do a particular portion of the project as well as when it should begun. In some cases, the project team will build in a certain level of contingency time in order to assist the project timeline. This means that a project team 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 and their project teams. 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 to prevent them from coming about in the first place.

- **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 project team is trying desperately not to be blamed for failure or the lack of progress in the project

direction. Fear of making the decision will sometimes cause people to panic, and they are consistently trying to play it safe. Playing it safe 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 desire solid information before making a decision. Correct information is a wonderful thing to assist in working on a project; however, there are some instances where that information is coming far too slow or is nonexistent. Refusal to make a decision is in itself a decision. Each project team needs to understand that their refusal could kill the project faster than making a decision on limited knowledge. With all the resources that we presently have in our culture and organization, we should have a good idea of what needs to be done even when data is sparse. Obviously, we would love to work on perfect projects with this great amount of correct data to make the right decision every time.

- **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 and go in a new direction. Many times this direction makes no sense to the project team and has been brought about with no communication indicating what has created this change. Our clients typically report this has been very common in the workplace. They indicate that communication is only in a top-down manner, and they are unable to give feedback to their boss in a receptive manner. During one training session, a participant indicated that some projects changed over and over again due to upper management making unscheduled and uncommunicated changes to the plan. This in no way means that upper management does not need to make changes from time to time and to usurp authority over previous plans. However, this works best when the project team has been kept in the communication loop, and they understand what the real goal and motivation this change revolves around.

- **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. It is not uncommon for individuals 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 though they have to deal with the crisis of the day. This means 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. When you become our client, we focus on this area and discuss ways to reduce internal fighting from individuals as well as break down the silo effect throughout your organization. Learning this skill naturally opens up communication and increases 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 team meetings. We have encouraged our clients to plan to update skills by conducting 15 to 30 minutes of training periodically in their 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 regardless 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 of a project. We will examine how to create a communication plan as well as problem areas to where communication is lost or misunderstood on a project.

Have you ever been working on a project and feel that you do not know what is happening? Have you ever attended project meetings only to leave more confused afterward than before you came? All of this revolves around communication. Communication within a project is one of the most important tools for making sure that 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 can be defined as a pointed document clarifying how often communications and 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 defined as a document which spells out the process and the 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 it is not uncommon for the project sponsor to interview and discuss the goals of the project and pass on that information to the project manager and team. The 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, as well as verification you are progressing properly. It is very important 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 normally represent management in viewing the project through that culture's eyes. This means that the project's sponsor normally has a great deal of input and can influence the budget or resources provided to the team. The project sponsor has a great deal of responsibility as they oversee multiple projects and multiple resource packages to complete those project plans. It is very important for project teams to maintain communication with the project sponsor. This can be done weekly, monthly, or in some extreme cases even daily. How often a project team communicates with the project sponsor is determined based on the amount of interaction desired for that particular project.

The Mathis Group's specialists have identified several items which should be detailed as part of the communication flow and plan of any project. Each of these items is considered high priority in making sure everyone is well informed and has current information.

- **Update and status on project**

Getting a current update and status on the project is necessary in each team meeting. In our experience, we have seen team meetings that wasted 90 minutes and yet did not detail project progress so that people would be able to make the needed decisions.

Giving an update status on the project should be the minimum each team member is prepared to do when they arrive at the team 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 to be used. This form makes sure that each team member is getting the needed information back to the team and is used in organizing and documenting the needed 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 then movable. These dates, if missed, make the project late. They are different than an activity task date, which many times has contingency time built in it.

Naturally, all dates are very important, but it has been our experience that many project members will track all dates 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, and the project managers should 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 as the project manager.

- **Approved change orders**

Troubled projects have team members which are 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 very important to the communication plan. Change orders appear to be a strong source of frustration due to members wasting a great deal of time working on areas that have been changed but never communicated to them.

Part of our training with your staff revolves around what to do with change orders. In our experience, change orders must be communicated instantly to the project team. We do this by contacting the team member who has a direct responsibility to that area being changed. Second, we contact the entire team through e-mail notifying them of the change and how it will impact their part of the project. Finally, we point out the change orders which have been approved during the project team meeting. In this meeting, we normally have documentation and questions to clarify. This allows us 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 in the past never discussed bottlenecks within the organization. These

forced the 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 leverage 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 it keeps you knowledgeable of hurdles they are running up against over and over again. Unless the project team is able to hear these areas of concern, it is possible that they will be missed with the assumption 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 type of vacuum is fine if the project is extremely confidential in nature. 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 the most. Agency after agency has reported the need to get rid of contractors when budgets become tight. Many of these contractors have worked for the agency for a long time and know a great deal about a specific area. After they have left the agency, 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 have worked for an agency for 15 to 25 years, and they are now leaving for retirement. However, no one puts a plan into effect to get this person to transfer some of their knowledge over to a person who is remaining behind. This gap is foolish and hurting agencies by forcing them to redo numerous processes and projects in order to educate them.

In conclusion, a communication plan is very important in the imparting of the 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 very important for tracking and monitoring project 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 want to 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**

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

Some of the most common areas to 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 desire. For an example, if a project team is having a severe problem with quality in the area of internal customer service, it is possible for that team to conduct an audit periodically to see if the service is getting better or worse. In other cases, it is possible for project audits to take place to determine the quality of a particular product. You see this happen when a project is being conducted that produces a product such as software designers. They will design the product and test it over a period of weeks or months to determine that is working at the most optimal level of quality.

In summary, audits can be conducted throughout the entire project based on the timing and sequence needed to provide the data and confidence the project is doing well.

- **Who will do them**

The person or persons conducting the project audit are going to be an expert in that particular area. This means that people who have an expertise in quality will normally examine the area dealing with quality. If a person has an expertise in structural engineering, they will conduct an audit in the area of their strength. This does not mean other individuals cannot be part of the audit team, nor does it mean that you must always have an expertise in that particular area. It is possible for people to be very beneficial to a project audit even though they do not have an expertise in that area. They can participate and be beneficial by giving comments and feedback while conducting an audit that is outside of their realm of expertise.

- **Who they will be reporting to**

Normally, audits are reported first to the project team and then to all the relevant individuals involved in the project. It is not uncommon for an audit to be reported to the project sponsor, project manager, or internal and external customers to gain feedback, and to give them insights into the level of quality that is being accomplished by this project. In larger organizations, project audits are sometimes tracked by a project management center that has been created by the

organization for the purpose of maintaining project quality. This same center will also conduct project management training and encourage certification in project management in order to constantly push skills to higher level.

## **Project Management Mistake # 12 Performance Appraisals Which Do Not Measure Project Management Skills**

Each year our instructors are told by participants they have non-performers working on their teams. They express a great deal of frustration because they have little or no power to do anything about it. One example was expressed 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 affectively when they are supervised by someone who has position power? If so, that undermines the entire process of running project teams across most government agencies. Today it is impossible to have all project teams 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 team do to run the team as well as monitor performance? We maintain that project teams must have some way of evaluating each team member. This can come about based on two simple changes in the way most agencies are performing evaluations and checks on 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 as a portion of that evaluation.

One simple way to do this is for the immediate supervisor to gather feedback from project managers on how their staff is performing on a particular project. When this is done appropriately, you will notice team members can no longer be a non-performer on a project and still think it will not impact their performance evaluation. What you are doing is holding the employee accountable to perform not only on those items that are directly supervised by you but also fulfill all the objectives of their job which includes running projects.

The second possible way of measuring and evaluating how staff performs on projects is to have each project manager fill out that portion of their individual performance appraisal. This means you would have direct observation from the project manager on how that individual team member is performing.

What is the anticipated outcome of this? In most cases, you reduce the frustration presently being experienced by many people in your agency 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 and agencies 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 teams endure surrounding turf. On one occurrence a manager refused to give information and data which was needed to successfully drive a project forward. This same manager even informed his direct staff that they were not to support the requests being made from a particular department. This turbulent culture slows down the progress of your project and increases your team's frustration.

- **How are turf battles created**

Turf battles are allowed due to individuals holding jobs for long periods of time and being treated as untouchable. During their tenure they have developed people they do not like and who they have disagreed with publicly. Most people with the agency will disagree, but they will do it in a nice, calm, agreeable fashion. However, others will become bitter, and they never forget it. They harbor the ideas and the situation while playing it over and over again in their heads.

- **Why turf battles are allowed**

First, bitterness and grudges bring on many of the battles. Since many of these individuals are harboring grudges over past offences, they have also been employed a long time. This means they have become set in their ways, and they have come to believe they can function in any manner they desire. This is reinforced when these same individuals are given glowing performance reviews each year, which only emphasizes wrong behavior and performance.

Second, the natural silo effect within the agency increases battles. I am not talking about confidential or proprietary information. I am talking about best practices and important information that could affect the project. Some people are fearful in sharing information outside of their silo. Many times the information could benefit the project team and reduce the time needed to complete it faster, but it is still not communicated.

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

- **How it impacts the project team**

Teams are frustrated with having to go through this type of trouble. One team member indicated he spent his entire time guarding what he said to different people because of all the turf battles. They 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 turf battles going on at the same time. The team members feel they are pushing a thousand pound weight along.

Does it not make sense to take fights like this away from your team members and deal with them through the project manager or sponsor ranks?

- **How to deal with them successfully**

Dealing with turf battles is different depending on the person and the situation. For some situations, simple discussions with all parties involved reducing tempers. However, there are others who have no intention of making any 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. One word of caution in enlisting upper management. This action will get movement on the situation, but it will sometimes prevent repairing the relationship which has been damaged. The first thing to try, in most instances, is talking with the person or persons 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 trained is how they handle the close down and post mortem of the project. Our trainers have asked countless attendees during each course how many of them utilize a close down plan and a post mortem for ending a project. 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 by not including these two pieces in their planning. The close down plan brings the project to an effective close while handing it off to the customer without any gaps in service, quality, or communication. During the post mortem section of the project, the project 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 the following two ways. First, it allows the project team to pass the project off to the customer in a structured and orderly manner. This allows time for the customer to receive the project and to make sure that there are no gaps in service and 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 bills and portions of the project undone. The project close down plan guarantees that the project team is functioning in a structured manner and that they are driving the project to its needed end. It reinforces meeting all objectives and deliverables of the project.

- **Reasons for a post mortem**

It is rather confusing why many organizations are neglecting to participate in the process of conducting a post mortem at the end of a project. It appears they are very much unaware that a post mortem can assist in being able to create 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 clear that this level of thinking is more of 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 that they must be included to determine the success or failure rate 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. Post mortems can take place in a streamlined fashion in which the project team, along with the project manager, conduct a brainstorming activity and analysis of the good, the bad, and areas they would change on future projects. This streamlined fashion of conducting a post mortem will increase the effectiveness of future teams in a quantitative manner. Just for the record, one common change based on this level of data can increase the effectiveness of future projects anywhere from 5% to as much as 33%. This alone justifies the inclusion of it.

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 told us that they have never considered the creation of best practices for their organization. This means that they are forcing each project team to recreate processes and procedures for running the project on their own. This level of activity takes a great deal of time. It does not mean that the way the project team is conducting business is the most effective based on the culture and past performance of the organization.

- **Best Practices Defined**

Best practices can be defined as a series of standardized processes and procedures for the department or agency. These processes have been deemed necessary to get 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.

- **How they benefit projects**

Best practices help projects by minimizing the time a project team needs to put together processes and procedures for running the project in an effective manner. They can also assist those overwhelmed areas in the projects and amended team members. Let me suggest you track some projects unofficially for the next several weeks or months. One of the things you can examine is how those projects are running based on the processes and practices of experienced team members. As you examined these projects more deeply, you will determine the difference between a well run project based on proactive practices which have already been tested compared to those used by 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 our project sponsors and project managers are so resistant to creating best practices for their agency. We tend to think that this is done 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 only in a shorter period time. Many of our past clients have created best practice 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 numerous 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 a project sponsor, project 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 leader in a team that 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 techniques to be duplicated to the entire agency or whether you should focus only on 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 TWENTY FIRST 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 The Mathis Group training gets 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 have to function in every day. We look through your eyes in providing training for your agency. Isn't that how all training should function? Don't you agree?

My name is Dr. Keith Mathis. I am an expert in project management and have been involved in running projects for 25 years. I have been teaching project management courses to different types of industries for the past thirteen 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, setting them up, and interacting 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 GLOBAL EDUCATION PROVIDER WITH  
PROJECT MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE WITH 18 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 training 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. If we do not think we can benefit your situation with our training, then we simply do not take the assignment.

**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 and experiencing success and who understand the pressures and strains involved with a government agency culture.

You need to get advice and recommendations from professionals who are assisting other agencies like yourself in making their projects run smoother. We are such an organization. We have provided different types by training for organizations such as Federal Communication Commission, Consumer Product Safety Commission, National Institutes of Health, and National Geospatial Agency.

You would not go to a medical doctor who only practices medicine on a part time basis and ask him to provide heart surgery on yourself would you? So why would you go with the training organization that has little or no expertise in dealing with a government agency like yours.

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 smoother.

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

When you call, you will have the chance to meet us, get to know us, and tell us about some of the areas where your projects are missing the mark. You can evaluate us in this interview and get a quick 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, then we will discuss how to proceed by giving you course content, prospective dates, as well as budgetary expectations for this service.

So, if you are experiencing project management problems and have had training in the past with little or no improvement to your teams, or simply just want to use us as your training provider, call us right now at 800-224-3731. Call today to set up your free telephone evaluation. The faster you book your training dates, the more likely your first choice will be open.

Whether you use our services or not, we wish your organization good luck in the running of 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 and function with 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 is the premier association for registering project management certification and training. The Mathis Group is a Global Education provider with 18 courses registered with Project Management Institute. Courses vary depending on content and length, but each give professional development units (PDU's) 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, sponsors, and project managers are all using the same processes and communication so projects run in a more smooth fashion.*

▪ **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 our longest, which is 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 a great deal of past project management knowledge and know how?**

*Answer: Each course is specific with the course description and core objectives to be taught in the class. These objectives 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 of our courses assume the participants have a solid understanding of the basics.*

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

*Answer: Each class is taught in an adult model. This means 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 allows 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 in nature 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 in your training?**

*Answer: The Mathis Group can do fixed rate fees which include a trainer on-site, 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 in every class.*

▪ **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 or 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 can help, 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 seventeen courses to offer as a R.E.P. We have listed them below.

***Project Management Fundamentals*** is a 1-day course offering 7 PDUs (professional development unit). This basic course provides core project management skills. Participants will explore ideas and actions to be more effective throughout the entire project management process.

***Comprehensive Project Management*** is a 2-day course offering 14 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.

***Mastering Project Management*** is our 3-day course offering 21 PDUs. This intensive course includes applicable hands-on activities and team exercises which will reinforce project management core competencies.

***Project Integration Management*** is a 3- day offering 19.5 PDUs.

This intensive three-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.

***Project Scope Management*** is a 2-day course offering 13 PDSs. 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.

***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.

***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.

***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 Dr. 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 the Project Management Institute’s nine knowledge areas of PMBOK.

***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 section is aligned with the Project Management Institute’s nine knowledge areas of PMBOK.

***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 section is aligned with the Project Management Institute’s nine knowledge areas of PMBOK.

***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 section is aligned with the Project Management Institute’s nine knowledge areas of PMBOK.

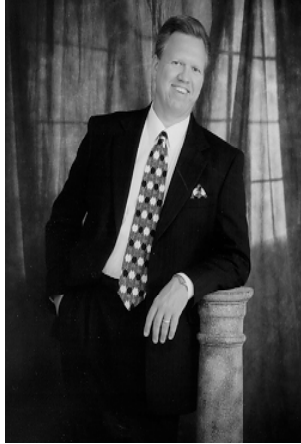
***Project Performance Management*** is a 2-day course offering 13 PDUs. This course focuses on developing strategies for tracking performance in project teams. This course examines issues such as benchmarking, performance, and establishing a gap between desired project performance and preferred performance. This section is aligned with the Project Management Institute’s nine knowledge areas of PMBOK.

***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 section is aligned with the Project Management Institute’s nine knowledge areas of PMBOK.

***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 four and 1/2 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. 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. 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. 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. Each course will utilize both new content, as well as best practices.

# Meet Dr. Keith Mathis



*Speaker, Trainer, and Author  
Specialist In Organizational Behavior and Development*

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**PMI - Registered Global Education Provider**

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! 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.

Dr. Mathis began a self study approach to marketing back in 1979. He began monitoring marketing models which were making organizations very successful. For twenty years he has used many of these techniques with not-for-profit organizations to promote events and major campaigns. He developed step-by-step processes and techniques which allow marketing campaigns to make a major impact without using and wasting huge dollars. Keith is a constant student of marketing.

Keith serves as an adjunct professor of business/management at Nova Southeastern University in Ft. Lauderdale, teaching Marketing, Consulting, Management, Communication, Customer Value, Leadership, Organizational Behavior, Strategic Planning, and Customer Service.

Keith is author of *Dinosaur Tracks: Modern Leadership Strategies for Changing Employee Performance and Behavior*. In addition, he has authored numerous training programs as well as magazine and newspaper articles. Keith is a Certified On-Line instructor who holds a B.A. in Behavioral Science, a M.S. in Management, and a Ph.D. in Administration Management.

He is a member of National Speakers Association, American Society for Training and Development. And World Future Society.