

Messenger

Vol. 9 No. 5

May, 2011

Goals of a Project Manager

Goals are an important part of being successful. Setting goals will continually give you something for which to strive and a direction to follow. Knowing where you're headed will keep you moving forward and will give you a target to hit. Also, it lets you cross off things on your ever-growing To-Do list. If you are like me, you find there's just something rewarding about making that little line across words on a list.

Goals are especially important for project managers. They have a long list of activities and resources they're in charge of and having a specific direction is beneficial. Let's look at five goals every project manager should have.



Finish on time
I know, this sounds so simple, but if you've ever worked on a project, you know how hard this is to actually accomplish. So many things come up or go wrong during the life of a project that it can be very difficult to keep the original schedule. The key to finishing on time is to watch the scope of your project. Don't allow changes in the scope to make your project creep a direction that's different from the original. Creating a Change Control Board to approve all changes in the scope will help control scope management. Have frequent status meetings for updates on progress.

Finish on (or under) budget

This sounds like another common sense goal, but it's hard to keep a project on budget. Using a Work Breakdown Schedule in conjunction with a Cost Estimate will help create an accurate budget. As a project is broken down, each task must have an estimated time frame and cost to justify its completion. This is done not only to help schedule the project, but also to make sure there is no hidden time or money which might hurt time sequencing in the future or the budget. There are times, however, when it's impossible to not spend more than was budgeted on a particular item. When this happens, get creative in ways you can spend less than budgeted somewhere else.

Meet requirements

Before the project begins, have a detailed meeting with your customer to set the requirements of the project. Obtaining this information as early as possible will set project parameters and needed requirements in the shortest amount of time. Waiting to do the interview last is a sure way to have wasted effort and to miss the real goal of the project. These requirements should be as detailed as possible from the very beginning.

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If you aim high, you can't shoot yourself in the foot.

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Keep your customers happy

Throughout the course of the project, your customer's requirements or expectations may change. You may do everything according to the original plan, but if the customer's plan changed and you didn't follow the new plan, you will have an unsatisfied customer on your hands. Having regular meetings with the customer will allow you to inform him or her how the project is progressing. In turn, he or she will be able to tell you of any changes that need to be made. Keep the dialog open and honest about how things are going.

Keep your team happy

If your team isn't happy, it's almost a guarantee that the project will be late. Negativity leads to low motivation for team members to do their best. You should keep your team in the loop of how the project is progressing and any changes that are being made. No one likes to spend time doing a task, only



to find out that task was unnecessary because of an uncommunicated change. Frequently reward and recognize your team publicly for a job well done. Everyone likes to know their work is being appreciated. If your team has had a good experience on this project, the chances are they'll do a good job on the next project.

Striving for these five goals will make a huge difference in how your projects run. You will find that there are fewer missed dates, over extensions of time and money, and you will have happier customers and team members. While it will be easier on some projects than others to achieve each of these, the objective should be to do your best in each area.



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GSA Contractor - GS02F-0010V

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