Executive Sponsorship --
How to be Great Sponsor

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Project Management Professional (PMP)
Objectives for Today

1. Why are Projects so Hard

2. What does it mean to be an Executive Project Sponsor?
   • What are my tasks as a Executive Sponsor?

3. As an Executive Sponsor, what kind of questions should I ask? How can I tell if a project is in trouble?
   • Cathy’s Top Five Lists for Executive Sponsors
Objectives for Today

4. I’m new to Project work – now what?
   • Tips for each Project Phases
   • Your role at the Project Steering Committee
Why are Projects so Hard?
State of Project Management

- Successful Projects -- 40%
- Challenged Projects -- 30%
- Failed Projects -- 30%

Source: 2009 Center for Project Management
State of Project Management

- Most things eventually get done, but:
  - Not in the right sequence
  - Not by the right people
  - Not in the right detail
  - Not by the right time
  - Not at the right cost

- Results: High Challenge/Failure rate on projects
  Lots of stress for those involved
Why are Projects So Hard?

- Solving a problem that you’ve had for years
  - New work vs. something you’ve done before
  - Reengineering of Business Processes

- New teams working together
  - Vendor & State; State IT & State Business
  - New roles for many people

- Timeboxed
  - Many parallel activities
  - Business needs change over time
## Cal Tech Tool: Project Complexity/Risk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low Complexity</th>
<th>Business Attribute</th>
<th>High Complexity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Static</td>
<td>Business Rules</td>
<td>Changing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Static</td>
<td>Current Business Systems</td>
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<td>Decision Making Progress</td>
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<td>Local</td>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>State-Wide</td>
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<td>Clear &amp; Stable</td>
<td>High Level Requirements</td>
<td>Vague</td>
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<tr>
<td>Few &amp; Routine</td>
<td>Interactions with Other Departments &amp; Entities</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Business Attribute</td>
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<td>None</td>
<td>Impact to Business Process</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Proven</td>
<td>Hardware</td>
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<td>Stand Alone</td>
<td>Level of Integration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proven/Stable</td>
<td>Network</td>
<td>New</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 to 5 Mon to Friday</td>
<td>Operations</td>
<td>24 Hrs, 7 days</td>
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<tr>
<td>Light</td>
<td>Security</td>
<td>Tight</td>
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</table>
What should I do as a Executive Sponsor?
What should I do as a Executive Sponsor?

Obvious Answer:

Act as Executive Sponsor

To do this you need to be clear about what is your role and what is the project manager’s role.
Lindsay and Mom Party Before Deposition

Lindsay Lohan is clearly in a “better place” now that her mom is in town – actually, it's the same ol' place ... the Chateau Marmont where mother/daughter partied until 2 AM today.
Role of Project Manager

- The **Project Manager** is the person responsible for ensuring that the Project Team completes the project.
Role of Executive Sponsor

- The **Executive Sponsor** is the manager with demonstrable interest in the outcome of the project.
- Sponsor should be the highest-ranking manager possible, in proportion to the project size and scope.
Role of Project Manager

- Project Manager develops the Project Plan with the team and manages the team’s performance of project tasks
- To secure acceptance and approval of deliverables
- Responsible for communication, including status reporting, risk management, escalation of issues that cannot be resolved in the team
- Making sure the project is delivered in budget, on schedule, and within scope
Role of Executive Sponsor

• The Sponsor acts as a vocal and visible champion, legitimizes the project’s goals and objectives, keeps abreast of major project activities, and is the ultimate decision-maker for the project.

• The Sponsor provides support for the Project Manager; assists with major issues, problems, and policy conflicts; removes obstacles; is active in planning the scope; approves scope changes; signs off on major deliverables; and signs off on approvals to proceed to each succeeding project phase.
Attributes of Executive Sponsor
Poor Project Manager

- Project Manager does not work well with business team
- Waits until issues are “on fire” before bringing them to the Executive Sponsor
- Every issue is “on fire” and becomes known as “Chicken Little”
- Project Manager does not know the status of key milestones
Poor Executive Sponsor

- Does not attend Project Steering Committee meetings
- Delays or will not make decisions on scope and policy conflicts
- Critical of project team and deliverables with others
- Keeps adding scope to the project
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Role of Executive Sponsor & Project Manager

Exercise

Executive Sponsor = New Homeowner

Project Manager = Contractor
Cathy’s Top Five Lists for Executive Sponsors
Top Five Signs a Project Is In Trouble

1. Client/vendor relationship is deteriorating
2. Schedule delays push one or more major milestones
3. High turnover of key staff and/or high volume of staff vacancies
4. IV&V findings and project issues/risks remain open for extended periods
5. Significant data quality issues surface when new functionality is implemented
Top Five Areas to Watch For

1. Workload impacts on the department and the effect on critical processing timeframes – speed, accuracy & workarounds

2. Data quality (either newly captured or converted) and the impact on new and legacy systems

3. External interfaces (batch or online) especially with external organizations

4. Thoroughness of implementation planning (ramp up plans) and contingency planning (roll back plans)

5. “Will Power” - How bad does team (business, IT, vendor) want to make this happen?
Top Five “To Dos” for Executive Sponsors

1. Create an environment where candid and honest dialog is the norm - encourage “bad news” early
2. Be strategic - you’ll have the solution for 15+ years
3. Drive change and challenge the status quo
4. Make timely decisions and remove barriers for the project team
5. Ask Project Managers what you can do to help
1. Everyone has a boss - always know the team’s management chain (names/phone numbers) all the way up to the CEO
2. Know what motivates your vendor – (e.g. good reference, lasting client relationships, new revenue, getting paid timely)
3. Know quarter & fiscal year end dates - actions by these dates can be used as leverage points
4. Communicate clearly and often - be consistent about your top risks, pain points and expectations
5. Know your contracts – your responsibilities & the vendors
Top Five Things Experienced Executive Sponsors Know

1. The best projects are the well planned projects.

2. Everyone wants to report the project is “green.” The following words mean your team is behind:
   - effort words vs result words
   - ‘they’ vs ‘we’

3. Ask for trends - history tends to repeat itself

4. Surprises are on the way – count on it and be prepared to make course corrections

5. Tradeoffs are an unavoidable component of the Project (aka Project Management Matrix)
Project Management Matrix

Functionality (Scope)

Quality

Time

Resources/$
Project Phases
Project Management Phases

- Initiate
- Plan
- Control
- Execute
- Close
Project Management Phases

Phases and Resources Usage

- Initiate: 5%
- Plan: 20%
- Execute/Control: 60%
- Close: 15%
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Innovation is not about saying yes to everything. It’s about saying no to all but the most crucial features. -Steve Jobs
Initiate
Initiate

Tip 1: Create clear vision & objectives

Tip 2: Try to have common objectives where ever possible
- Vendor payment based upon business outcomes
- Penalty relief
- Additional revenue for State

Tip 3: IT/Business/Vendor “Marriage”
Plan
Plan

If I had eight hours to chop down a tree, I'd spend six hours sharpening my ax.

–Abe Lincoln
Without planning, everything is left to chance.
Define Murphy’s Law:

________________________________________________

________________________________________________

Define Parkinson’s Law:

________________________________________________

________________________________________________

Murphy’s Law + Parkinson’s Law =

________________________________________________
Plan

Tip 1: Don’t have LARGE projects, break it up
- Prototype
- Phases, Waves
- Crawl, Walk. Run

Tip 2: Have a realistic schedule

Tip 3: Change is hard for people & activities are usually not fully funded
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Plan

- Leading Change by John P. Kotter
- Managing Transitions by William Bridges

Click to LOOK INSIDE!
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Execute
Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence wins championships.

-Michael Jordan
Tip 1: Requirements sign off is one of the most important decisions you make

Tip 2: Risk Management is an every day activity

“Risk in itself is not bad; risk is essential to progress, and failure is often a part of learning. But we must learn to balance the possible negative consequences of risk.”

- Van Scoy, 1992
Tip 3: Communication is difficult

- Communication channels = \[\frac{n(n-1)}{2}\]
  - \(n\) = number of members on the team
  - 2 people = 1 channel
  - 5 people = 10 channels
  - 20 people = 190 channels
  - 100 people = 4950 channels
  - 400 people = 78,000 channels

- Communication: 10% words, 30% visual, 60% body language

- Executives: Start with conclusion!
Execute

Communication – Vocabulary

What’s taking you so long on the project?

The application is unstable because the data model is driven by an overly complex relational database and there was no integration testing.

Does any of that mean the same thing as “lazy”?
Execute
Execute

Tip 4: Value good process. Without a process, work activity is adhoc and not repeatable.

Tip 5: Use lessons learned! Or you will have lessons “relearned”
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Control
And we’d like one final change...
We’d like Ronald Reagan instead of Teddy Roosevelt.

- Project Client!
Tip 1: Scope must be controlled if you ever want to finish!
Green = On Schedule

Yellow = Behind but have agreed upon plan so will be on schedule at next review

Red = Behind and no agreed upon plan
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Control

--- 1 (Revised) ---  May 11, 2006

Project Readiness at a Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation Management Readiness</th>
<th>Change Requests</th>
<th>Action Items</th>
<th>Project Initiation</th>
<th>Project Risks and Issues</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<th>System Functionality Readiness</th>
<th>Key System Readiness</th>
<th>Interface 1 Readiness</th>
<th>Interface 2 Readiness</th>
<th>Network Readiness</th>
<th>Data Center Readiness</th>
<th>Security Readiness</th>
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<tr>
<th>User and Organizational Readiness</th>
<th>User Training Readiness</th>
<th>User Change Management</th>
<th>Key Organization 1 Readiness</th>
<th>Key Organization 2 Readiness</th>
<th>Key Organizations Readiness</th>
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<th>Data Readiness</th>
<th>Obtain New Data</th>
<th>Conversion Activities</th>
<th>Data Loading</th>
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<th>External Interfaces &amp; Customer Readiness</th>
<th>Customer Outreach</th>
<th>External Media Outreach</th>
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<td>Red</td>
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Legend:
- **Green**: Activities on schedule, on or ahead of planned threshold.
- **Red**: Major activities are behind schedule or exceed planned threshold.
- **Yellow**: Activities that are slightly behind schedule.

- **Stoplight Legend**
  - Green: Major activities on schedule and will not impact project.
  - Yellow: Major activities slightly behind schedule and any issues are being monitored and plans in place to correct by next reporting period.
  - Red: Major activities behind schedule or high WP/D/R or high impact OR significant delay in activities, significant defect problems or other project issues.
  - Any: High WP/D/R or high impact OR significant delay in activities, significant defect problems or other project issues.

5/15/06
Tip 1: Celebrate accomplishments along the way

- Hot dog lunch celebrations
- Cake & Punch
- Met goal—entire team took week off on vacation!
- Hat day, Yellow day
- Picnic—for staff and family
- Peer Celebrations—Certificate “you rock”, “thanks for making a difference” notes, e-cards
- Candy bars for all—“Crunch bars”
I’d rather regret the things I have done than the things I have not.

-Lucille Ball
Executive Sponsorship

Your role at the Project Steering Committee
The Steering Committee generally includes management representatives from the key organizations involved in the project oversight and control, and any other key stakeholder groups that have special interest in the outcome of the project.

The Executive Sponsor is a member of the Steering Committee.
Steering Committee - Roles

• Committee members must attend the meetings.

• The Steering committee acts individually and collectively as a vocal and visible project champion throughout their organization.

• Helps to resolve issues and policy decisions, approve scope changes, provides direction and guidance to the project.

• Fill other roles as defined by the project.
Key Take Aways

• Be involved throughout the entire project in “your role”

• Ensure tough decisions get made in a timely manner

• Work to ensure a healthy relationship is present with IT, vendor, oversight groups, and business community
Your Key Take Aways

•

•

•
Questions