



More Project Performance Secrets

An Online Continuing Education Course for Engineers

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More Project Performance Secrets

Fulfilling more of the Project's Plan

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COURSE INTRODUCTION

How many projects meet 100% of the performance expectations that were identified during the strategic planning process? Is even hitting 90% realistic or is the number closer to 80%? How about 70%?

An article in the July 2005 issue of the Harvard Business Review, *Turning Great Strategy into Great Performance*, identified many reasons why companies typically only realize a little more than 60% of their strategies' potential value. This course builds on that article to help project leaders make sure they get the most performance out of the strategy which led to their project.

Many of the reasons projects do not perform as expected are not clear. So, when executives try to fix what they think are the problems, they may inadvertently:

- Exacerbate the problem
- Miss the problem and “search for the guilty” causing career damage to some in an attempt to place blame instead of looking for causes of problems
- Create a new problem without really fixing the original one
- Waste additional critical resources in their hit-or-miss attempts to fix things
- Damage the project team's morale
- Damage the credibility of the project leaders
- Reduce the likelihood of success for more projects in the future

We will take a “here's-the-problem, here's-a-solution” approach to help students of this course not repeat common project mistakes and maximize the potential of their project's performance.

The eleven most common reasons that performance did not match strategy from their research are these:

1. **Inadequate or unavailable resources** (7.5%)
2. **Poorly communicated strategy** (5.2%)
3. **Actions required to execute not clearly identified** (4.5%)
4. **Unclear accountabilities for execution** (4.1%)
5. **Organizational silos and culture blocking execution** (3.7%)
6. **Inadequate performance monitoring** (3.0%)

7. **Inadequate consequences or rewards for failure or success** (3.0%)
8. **Poor senior leadership** (2.6%)
9. **Uncommitted leadership** (1.9%)
10. **Unapproved strategy** (0.7%)
11. **Other obstacles** (including inadequate skills and capabilities) (0.7%)

Total = 36.9%

We will offer practical solutions for most of these problems (we cannot do anything about ‘poor senior leadership’), so you can take measures to reduce their impact if not eliminate them altogether.

They will not be taken in descending order by percentages but rather in the most practical way they can be addressed in the real world. That means we will start with the “Uncommitted Leadership (1.9%)” and “Unapproved Strategy (0.7%)” because any strategy *if it is to have any chance of success*, must begin with the support and approval of the leadership. If you have the executives on your side, they can help remove many of the other obstacles listed among these sources of problems above.

Let’s get started!

UNCOMMITTED LEADERSHIP & UNAPPROVED STRATEGY (2.6%)

(1.9% + 0.7% = 2.6%)

The leadership's lack of commitment to the strategy (and the subsequent project intended to execute that strategy) could have its root in a poor presentation when the strategy was originally presented to the leadership. [We explore this concept farther in our course titled, "*Financial Proposals: The Why and How*" available also on this website.]

This section will provide the "big picture" to anyone with the responsibility of developing and presenting a financial proposal for new equipment, staffing, reorganization, or additional resources as part of a strategic initiative.

First, we will introduce the essential elements that are critical to a successful proposal. Without understanding and implementing these, you are just wasting your time, that of the executives, and risk damaging your credibility.

After that is the selection of the type of proposal you want to make and tips to ensure you include all the relevant factors.

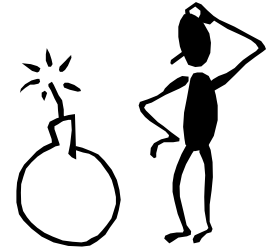
Then you must have a clear picture of where you are now, so you can persuade the eventual proposal audience that must be moved from their current position to one supporting your initiative. Present this picture using statistics drawn from historical data to describe trends and make realistic forecasts of the future requirements. (It is beyond the scope of this course to go into greater depth with statistics and forecasting.)

Finally, preparation of the proposal means careful selection of words to use and a carefully crafted strategy of presenting them in the best sequence for maximum effectiveness because ***you only have one chance to make a good first impression.***

DO NOT MAKE THESE MISTAKES

Five sure-fire ways to make sure your proposal (and credibility) BOMBS is to:

1. Assume the obligation for a “yes” is on the approver and not you! (It is up to you to convince them: not up to them to believe you.)
2. Think that if you get a “NO,” you no longer own the problem that prompted your proposal. (The problem that led to your proposal for a change IS STILL THERE: you still must deal with it. Do not assume that their ‘No’ means, ‘Well, I tried so now I’m out of it.’)
3. Just drop it off on your boss’ desk assuming he or she will figure out what you want and instantly act on it.
4. Come up with a great idea, then tell your boss about it (but never document it as a proposal), expect him/her to make it happen, and then complain about lack of management support when nothing happens.
5. Fail to show some “passion” about NEEDING (not “wanting”) it. If it does not excite you, the ‘parent’ of this idea, why should it excite anyone else?



THE THREE ESSENTIALS OF A SUCCESSFUL FINANCIAL PROPOSAL

A successful financial proposal must contain at least these three essential elements:

- You must identify benefits as seen *through the eyes of the executives*. Ask yourself, “What’s in it for them to approve this?”
- You must have accurate and comprehensive numbers including trends and realistic projections
- You must demonstrate a passion for the business needs that is contagious to the audience of approvers.

Identifying benefits as seen through the eyes of the executives

Accurate and comprehensive numbers

To view the remainder of the course material and to take the quiz for PDH credit, you must purchase the course.

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TYPES OF PRO

1.) Regulatory – r

Not looking for

a) Still must ident

(Remember tha

still accountable

b) May have time-sensitive issues involved

c) How are other organizations like us dealing with this?

d) Are there any penalties for not doing it?

2.) Non-Regulatory (Business Decision) – changes not required but desired for business benefits.

a) Is looking for benefits

i) Quantifiable