

Project manager skills

The main skills required for the project manager are:

1. Organizational and planning skills (to set the plan for the project and to control its development)
2. People management skills, because functional employees who are assigned to project manager still taking their technical directions from their respective functional heads, who also control their careers (to influence the people working on the project)

“I can teach people the technology and give them technical experts to assist them in decision making. But, I cannot teach somebody, how to work with people”
3. Ability to follow problems to its detail, while at the same time standing apart so as to see the big picture. (Zoom in and Zoom out)
4. Communication skills (to ensure that everyone on the project is briefed and communicating well with others)
5. Drive and energy with optimistic look to push the project despite many problems.
6. Goal orientation and customer focus.
7. Good technical knowledge covering many disciplines (because PM needs to communicate with different functions involved in the project)
8. Change orientation (to introduce and manage change according to changes in internal& external factors)
9. Good knowledge and understanding of psychology, human behaviour, organizational behaviour, and interpersonal relations.
10. Good negotiation skills (Project manager has lot of responsibility but comparatively, little authority. Due to this, he needs to negotiate with top management, functional management and other stake holders)

Project Life Cycle

- PMBoK states, “Companies performing projects generally subdivide their projects into several phases for better management control. Collectively, these phases of the project are called the Project Life Cycle”.

- The project phases take their names from the deliverables of each phase.
- Different phases generally involve some handover from one phase to another.

Following are the different phases of the project.

1. Pre-Project Phase:

Projects usually evolve from the work environment or come from the market needs. Some of the following factors contribute towards this phase:

- R & D generating new ideas and innovations.
- Up-gradation of a system to take advantage of new technology. (Spinning machines)
- Market creates new opportunities. (UPS due to load shedding)
- Responding to competitor's new product.
- Expansion of facilities to meet new demands.
- Improving quality, efficiency and effectiveness.
- Recovery from disasters.

2. Concept and Initiation phase:

- Establishing a need or opportunity for the product, service or facility.
- Feasibility of the project is carried out.

Project feasibility Study

A project feasibility study is the analysis and evaluation of the potential of the proposed project. The objective of feasibility study is to analyse the strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities of the proposed project.

Following are the important ingredients of feasibility report:

- To identify all stakeholders and determine their needs and expectations.
- To check the viability of the project in terms of location, logistics, environment, aesthetics, latest trends, target market, supply, demand, competitors etc.
- To evaluate the internal project constraints, like budget, technology, human resource, marketing, training etc.
- To evaluate external project constraints like national and international laws, rules and regulations, material delivery times, vendors, political conditions, climate etc.
- To divide the project into work breakdown structures (WBS) and identify different options/alternatives of achieving them.
- To obtain updated information through books, technical reports, market research, internet, stakeholders and closeout reports.
- To carry out the cost/benefit analysis and see the financial viability of the project.