IT Services & Support
COMMUNITY

Project Manager
Project management is for creative people and problem-solvers. In this highly sought after career, project managers are asked to solve problems, set deadlines, bring in the right people and spend the project funds effectively. All projects benefit from effective management, making this one of the business world's most in-demand skill sets.

Responsibilities
Project managers determine the size and scope of a project and create a plan for execution. Sometimes setting the parameters is someone else's job, which means the project manager must plan, coordinate and deliver a final product based on someone else's specifications and deadlines, all while keeping the project within budget.

Aptitude
Project managers must be at once detail oriented and able to see the big picture, while offering direction and guidance to the people working on the project. Project managers are creative, resourceful and great at time management.

On the job, successful project managers:
- Define the project's missions, goals and tasks, while identifying key performance indicators for the project, like sales goals and website traffic.
- Plan the project from kick-off meeting to ribbon cutting.
- Identify who can take on key roles and build teams of people from various departments — marketing, sales and IT, for example.
- Create and manage a performance budget.
- Use excellent communication skills.
- Keep people on task and on track with regular progress reports
- Create plans and presentations to illustrate the project, whether they're directed toward key project members, the public or the board of directors.
- Manage all phases of the project, from design to testing.
- Manage conflicts within and between projects and functional areas.
- Develop methods to monitor projects and progress, and provide corrective supervision if necessary.
- Prepare performance reports that explain how the project went, and ways to improve without spending more money.

- Advocate for the team and the client, while staying in good graces with your advisors. Project managers handle a lot of the go-between work, so being a people person is a plus.
- Creatively solve any project-related problems that arise.

BEGINNER	INTERMEDIATE	EXPERT
0 - 2 YEARS	3 - 5 YEARS	6+ YEARS
$60,000 - $70,000	$75,000 - $90,000	$110,000 - $130,000

Salaries

Excellent project managers earn their keep. Salaries range from $60,000 to $130,000, depending on the level of expertise and geographic location. People living in London, Manhattan or San Francisco will have significantly higher salaries than those living in less-populous regions.

Educational Paths

For a comprehensive introduction to project management, earn a four-year degree in:

- Business
- Information Technology
- Construction
- Engineering

Direct Paths

Certification validates the communication and business skills you need to lead projects with confidence, complete projects on time and make sure you stay within budget. Here are some popular certification and training programs for each level of a project manager's career.

Beginner

CompTIA Project+ Certification
PMI Scheduling Professional Certification
Prince2 Foundation Certifications

Intermediate

Program Management Professional Certification
PMI Risk Management Professional Certification

Expert

PMI Certified Associate in Project Management Certification
Prince2 Qualified Practitioner Certification

Career Flexibility

Choosing project management as a career can lead to lots of outcomes. Here are a variety of jobs you may be qualified for throughout your career:

- Project Manager
- Senior Project Manager
- Accounting Manager or Senior Manager
- Contraction Manager
- Product Manager
- IT Manager
- IT Director
- Chief Information Officer
- Senior Engineering Manager
- Account/Program Manager

Social Skills

It's not all technical — a successful project manager needs to coordinate a lot of people while staying on top of the schedule and budget. A good project manager will:

- Create an environment that encourages innovation and risk.
- Possess great organizational skills.
- Display sound interpersonal and communication skills.
- Manage conflicts efficiently.
- Grow trust within a team.
- Establish contacts, relationships and a network in and outside the company.
- Positively interact with internal and external teams.
- Take ownership and deliver on promises.
- Commit to principles and ethical actions.

Technical Skills

A beginner with zero to two years of experience will be expected to:

- Use knowledge of the group's mission and core strategy as a basis to develop specific objectives and goals.
- Keep the project on course using win/win negotiation.
- Strategically position the project within short- and longterm goals.
- Provide leadership, vision and direction for both the project team and your stakeholders.
- Work with stakeholders in a persuasive manner and contribute to stakeholder meetings.
- Identify issues with scope creep.
- Interpret project management steps.

An intermediate with three to five years of experience will be expected to:

- Develop detailed project management steps and execute plans according to industry standards.
- Recruit, hire, retain and manage a diverse workforce.
- Exert strong influencing skills to impact choices on immediate and longterm directions at the middle management level.
- Manage a group of project coordinators and novice project managers.
- Resolve conflicts among team members and clients.
- Recognize how corporate culture impacts the success of the project.
- Understand and effectively use established policies and procedures.
- Resolve typical scope creep issues.
- Act decisively in critical situations to circumvent potential problems.
- Conduct follow-up sessions at the close of a project.

An expert with six or more years of experience will be expected to:

- Provide leadership, vision and direction for both the project team and your business partners.
- Develop and implement strategies that significantly mitigate risk, improve customer satisfaction and improve profitability.
- Bring an array of resources to bear on improving project effectiveness.
- Design solutions for varied internal/external clients.
- Act as a resource for others, with strong and current awareness of external trends and best practices.
- Manage a large group of project coordinators and novice or intermediate project managers.
- Provide best practice recommendations to management and project management team.
- Provide leadership, vision and direction for both the project team and your business partners.