

EIGHT DUMB PROJECT MANAGEMENT BELIEFS

All of these statements are false!

Strong leadership is a prerequisite for consistent success.

1. If you don't lead project members, they will lead themselves.

Most project members require someone to direct them in creating plans, tracking progress and mitigating problems. People and teams typically do not function as effectively as possible when left to their own initiatives.

2. Run the project by agreement.

Consensus management often reduces the personal level of accountability across a team. Members hide behind the facade of the team. The best decisions are often sacrificed for decisions that everyone can live with. Instead, manage through the concept of benevolent dictatorship: actively soliciting information and opinions from team members and others; listen and demonstrate the leadership, courage and boldness to personally make the right decision; then stand accountable for that decision.

3. If you treat others with respect and dignity, they will respond in kind.

Most people will, but there are a few rotten folks out there who defy civil norms. The sooner you recognize this to be true, the quicker you will be able to deal with these vermin.

4. You can trust the planning and reporting of your project members.

Never blindly "trust" anyone on a project. Inspect what you expect from others. It's not personal; it's business. Require progress metrics that are tracked against a plan to support a claim. Fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, *shame on me!*

5. Manage your day by the plethora of interruptions that come your way.

Instead, manage your day by focusing on your top three priorities with the importance and urgency that they require. Your contributions, your success, your career are defined by how well you manage your top priorities daily.

6. Committed dates are fixed.

Commitments should be viewed as sacred ground. However, if a person believes that a commitment cannot ever be revised—and the promise is in jeopardy—then the tendency is to deny or ignore that there's trouble and, thus, avoiding corrective action.

7. The grass is greener elsewhere.

If you believe that management is the root cause of most problems, then you may look for greener pastures to graze. You will likely find the grass not to be as green as you thought because the problems are most likely related to you. If you are not willing to dig in and be the leader required of you, you will bring the same problems to your new organization or company.

8. Project culture is the responsibility of management.

The project will be planned, tracked, communicated and nurtured according to the best practices that the project manager employs. No one is in a better position to shape the culture than the project manager.

"Ideas to help you become more successful."

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Many of these tips are discussed in the book, *Neal Whitten's No-Nonsense Advice for Successful Projects*.

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