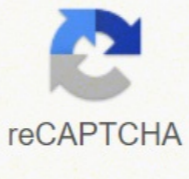




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What is the difference between project manager and project director

When it comes to project management, there are plenty of definitions available. You need to be able to understand these definitions to get a feel of understanding how projects of all sizes are handled in an organization. For example, you need to understand the difference between a project director and a project manager to understand how a project is handled by professionals in different roles. Remember, for successful and timely delivery of projects, it is important that right people are selected for the right positions and for right programs or projects. This is where understanding the difference between a project director and a project manager is important. Understanding the Concept - Project Director vs Project Manager Mature project executives and organizations that have an excellent project accountability track record, generally make use of complementary roles in all possible combinations. The idea behind this concept is to achieve desirable project outcomes and manage cost effectively. Accordingly, some of the roles that may be created in an organization are - Program Officer or Program Coordinator, Program Director, Project Officer or Project Coordinator, Project Manager, and Project Director. Let us now look into the roles of a project director and project manager separately to get an insight on how projects are handled differently in an organization. Role of Project Director When you are selected for the position of a project director in an organization, you are basically taking on the role of a true leader. However, this role is basically at a tactical or strategic level. There are quite a few things a project director understands and takes on as a part of his/her role. Understanding these things will help you know the difference between the role of a project director vs project manager even better. Among different things a project director needs to understand are the context of the organization in a broader perspective and all the changes that take place outside the realm of the operational area and the program. Also, as a part of the role of a project director, he/she needs to have the project approach, timing, and impact all aligned properly simultaneously. Usually, these roles are given to experienced and proven project leaders that have project implementation experience. Ideally, this professional also has to be one who provides advisory services when required. Being an experienced leader, the executive team does not need to supervise or provide direction to the project director. In fact, the project director takes upon himself/herself to provide coaching, guidance, direction, and leadership to the project team and project manager in relation to various issues, risks, activities, general management, and project approach. Role of Project Manager A project manager, on the other hand, is the one who looks after the management side of a project or project team. In this role, the manager is required to implement agreed approaches and defined plans, without necessarily taking on the responsibility of ongoing refinement. Normally, you'll find project managers working with Gantt charts that comprise various tasks and templates for monitoring the progress of projects against the set plan. In addition to this, it may contain additional documents like status reports, project initiation document, project closure documents, and project plans. Unlike project directors, project managers may need executive guidance, coaching, and reviewing after initial drafting. Understanding the different roles in an organization gives one a clear idea of how activities are organized and how reporting relationships work. This clarity is imperative for the successful execution of any role. A project is an undertaking by one or more people to develop and create a service, product or goal. Project management is the process of overseeing, organizing and guiding an entire project from start to finish. Here are more facts about project management. Project Management Helps Teams Work Together A competent project manager pulls together all of the people involved in a project to ensure that tasks are done cooperatively and with regard to the tasks' effects on other people's project outcomes. For example, when a new building is being constructed, a project manager will schedule electrical wiring installation before scheduling installation of light fixtures and electrical equipment. If the lighting crew is scheduled before the structure is wired, the lighting crew wastes time arriving on site only to find they can't perform their work. Project managers also schedule meetings between various teams to foster cooperation and increased communication about projects. In the example above, the project manager may schedule a meeting during which the electricians explain the wiring, wall-switch operation and receptacle layout to the lighting contractors. Both teams communicate their needs and concerns to help the project move forward without delays. Project Management Performs Vital Processes According to the Project Management Institute, five main management processes are used to see a project through to completion. The five processes are: Initiating Planning Executing Monitoring and controlling Closing At the initiating phase, key individuals share ideas about a proposed project. In the planning stages, the project is defined and schedules are created to complete the project in a defined time frame. Execution of the project requires organizing and scheduling supplies, materials and workers to complete the project. Monitoring and controlling in project management is the process of inspecting work, crunching budget numbers and keeping track of deadlines. Closing the project involves site cleanup, turning over the project to the owner, collecting payments and scheduling meetings to discuss the lessons learned from a project. Project Management Focuses on Key Areas of Knowledge Project management draws on a diverse set of skills. While project managers don't need to have in-depth knowledge of all key skill areas, they do need to have a basic understanding of the limitations and concerns of each knowledge area. Project managers need to view a project in its entirety and understand the relationships between costs, quality, supply procurement, human resources, communication, risk management and stakeholder management. Project Management Requires Document Management A competent project manager organizes all documentation including invoices, e-mails, bids, proposals, permits, and project changes. The project manager ensures documents are submitted on time and to the correct businesses, agencies or individuals. The project manager is also responsible for secure storage of all project documents. Project Management Helps Meet Goals Project management is a relatively new field of practice and study but has become a proven method to meet lofty goals and bring diverse groups of people together for a common purpose. MORE FROM QUESTIONS ANSWERED.NET Jeannette is the CEO of Lurdez Consulting Group. She brings over 20 years of project management success to her work helping companies. getty Project manager versus project leader: Have you ever heard about these roles and thought they were the same? Well, although these positions are often considered interchangeable and they can be assumed by the same person, they are different and each one plays an essential role within a project. It is crucial to distinguish one from the other and understand their unique characteristics to enable better management and development of a project. So, why are these roles both important for a project's completion and what are their distinctive features? A project manager is essentially a technician. They focus mainly on solving problems and guaranteeing the correct and effective functioning of the process in and of itself. Because they must gain and retain the trust of the project stakeholders, they are in charge of dealing with sponsors, clients, senior management and their teams. Project leaders go beyond the mechanics of managing a project. They face the challenge of being strategists, setting a project's direction, aligning people and motivating the team. They need to develop people-oriented skills because their goal is to influence the team to accomplish the project's objectives in a manner that meets or exceeds expectations. Their intervention can enable change, innovation and the creation of new products, systems and services. Thus, their constant presence and motivation helps team members become agents of change and encourages them to have innovative ideas. Let's explore five differences between project managers and project leaders: 1. Project managers are specialists, whereas project leaders are generalists. The project manager is responsible for coordinating and keeping the team organized, as well as preventing potential risks and bottlenecks. That is why they need to be more analytic and detailed in their work. On the contrary, project leaders focus on the big picture. Their goal is to create a vision around the project to provide team members with a sense of purpose and motivation and to influence their performance to achieve success. 2. Project leaders make plans, while project managers solve problems. Project leaders are strategists. Through their inspiring attitude, they help generate long-term plans and ideas that stimulate the people involved in the project to achieve their goals. Project managers have an outline for what they need to do. They are attached to the schedule and, in that sense, they have to manage every unexpected issue that may arise during the process. 3. Project managers focus on the task at hand, whereas project leaders focus on the people. Project leaders, like project managers, want to reach milestones, but they also want to find ways to improve team performances and set team goals. In that sense, they create an atmosphere that brings out the best in their employees. 4. Project leaders motivate their teams, while project managers direct them. Project leaders are focused on lifting every team member up, they are more empathetic and friendly, and they aim to connect with the project team on a personal level. They aspire to influence them and make sure every team member aligns their personal interests and objectives to those of the team and the project. Project managers direct team members and assign them different tasks depending on the issues and necessities that may arise during a project. Plus, they have the authority to demand their teams complete their jobs in a fast and appropriate manner, as they are in charge of the project's schedule. 5. Project managers aim to maintain the status quo, whereas project leaders take risks. Project managers aim to maintain the status quo and ensure everything goes according to plan. They manage the schedule, budget and quality of a project and must direct team members through their tasks in order to respect those resources. That is why they are specialists and their attention is focused on technical and logistical issues. In contrast, project leaders are always thinking ahead and setting goals. They strive to find new ways of doing things and motivating their teams and lead for innovation and constant improvement. Their aim is to promote change to gain efficiency. Both roles are foundational to a project because they are different but complementary action systems. It is crucial that an organization contemplates these characteristics and functions when choosing or designating a person to play either of these roles, as it will surely contribute to the success of the project as a whole. Forbes Business Council is the foremost growth and networking organization for business owners and leaders. Do I quality?

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