Challenges in Project Leadership/Management

Velimir Srića
A Few Questions

- Why do most projects fail? Is it because we failed as professionals, or because we failed as humans?
- Are you a rational decision-maker?
- What is an α-team? Is it the best or the worst possible team?
- How is a project leader typically appointed? Is such a routine good or bad?
- Do we hire project team members for knowledge/skills or for attitude? Which is more important for success?
- How many people are familiar with the company strategy?
Why Most Projects Fail?
Come up with your team’s ranking

• Reward management
• Fear of bosses
• Fear of changes
• Poor teamwork
• Lack of common vision
• Lack of technical skills
• Lack of funds
• Lack of time
• Poor motivation
• Lack of patience
• Personal interests
• Poor task delegation
• Poor infrastructure
• Poor communication
• Mistrust in leadership
Key Project Management Skills

• **Professional Skills** (dependent upon the project goal)
• **Human Systems Management Skills** (leadership, teamwork, communication, conflict resolution)
• **Planning Skills** (feasibility study, vision, mission, plans, goals, objectives)
• **Financial Skills** (cost-benefit, project accounting, cash management, auditing)
• **Organizational Skills** (time management, delegating, priority setting, coordination, decision making)
• **Project Management Software Skills** (e.g. MS Project)
• **Marketing and Sales Skills** (promotion, presentation)
What Skills Seem to Be Missing in Your Project Environment?

- **Around the table contribution** – each team will prepare a short comment on the issue
Social or Professional Skills

IQ

Professional Competence (Knowledge and Skills of the Trade)

EQ

Emotional Competence (Social Skills)
Scenario X or Y!

- Morning film
- Satisfied employees produce 40% better results
- Think positive!
- Organizational optimism (two bank outposts)
Hire for Attitude, Train for Skills!

- Knowledge
- Skills
- Attitude ("talents")
  - motivational (striving) talents
  - thinking talents
  - relationship talents
Motivational Talents

- Why we work, do we just want to be liked, need to be on stage, need to be of service, need to achieve?
- What makes us move? Are we competitive or not? Are we altruists or egoists? Why something works for us or doesn’t?
- What are we prepared to fight for? How much we depend on love and support of others? Do we need to be publicly recognized or not?
- Do we enjoy serving others or are self-centered? Do we aim high or don't care what happens to us?
Thinking Talents

- People differ in terms of choice, speed and ease with which they make decisions
- We are directed towards a single, or multiple goals. We are superficial, or perfectionists
- We are focused and disciplined, or not. We prefer predictability or surprise
- We do, or don't, think strategically. We seek risk, or avoid it
- We analyze options before a decision (what if), or we just impulsively go with the flow
Relationship Talents

- We build interpersonal relations by deciding who should be trusted, and who shouldn’t, whom we ignore, whom we respect
- Do we see others as competitors, or collaborators
- We may be in conflict with most people, or avoid all conflicts
- We may like, or resent, foreigners. We may be globalists, or nationalists
- We may believe in goodness of all people, or be sceptical and cynical about human nature
The Good Team-mate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OLD PARADIGM</th>
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<th>NEW PARADIGM</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTELLIGENCE</td>
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<td>PASSION</td>
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<td>DILLIGENCE</td>
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Professional attitude

Emotional attitude
Project Team Formation

- Leader
- Team members
- Leader
- Team members
- Leader
- Team members
Administrators - Leaders

- Project management is rational
- Project leadership is emotional
Building New Mental Models

• If you want to make minor improvements, work on behavior and attitudes.
• If you want to make quantum improvements, work on paradigms.
• A paradigm is like a mental model or a map.

» Steven Covey
Be Ready to Learn and Unlearn!

• A wisdom by Nan-in
• How much do you know about our topic?
Learn or Unlearn?

• The problem is never how to get new, innovative thoughts into your mind, but how to get the old ones out!
Project Management Mental Models

- Conceptual truths describing project management
- Einstein: Nothing is more practical than a good theory
- Mental models are a basis for action
Let’s split into teams again!

- Which Road to the Airport?
Lessons Learned

• You have a right to be different!
• Risk-takers, safe-players, perfectionists...
• Types of leadership
• Majority rules!
• Spontaneous “conservativism”

• Are you rational decision-makers?
• Ex post rationalization
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information society</th>
<th>Communication society</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>TECHNOLOGY</td>
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<td>STORIES</td>
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<td>PRAGMATISM</td>
<td>VALUES</td>
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<td>PHYSICAL COMFORT</td>
<td>SPIRITUAL CONFORT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rational intelligence</td>
<td>Emotional intelligence</td>
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</table>
Everybody is a Salesperson

• The job of all jobs is to attract new customers and to retain the old ones
• A blindman and a marketing expert
• Everybody sells (Toyota 1967)
• Selling is communicating
• Communication is your personality
“Selling” with Integrity

• Client – consultant relationship
• Win-win relationship
• Become a partner, protect your client’s interest, share information
• Develop a friendly relationship based on trust

The value you get depends on the value you give!
Few Communication Rules

• Learn from anatomy
• Thoughts obey gravity
• Up to 30 percent news
• Show me emotion
• Humor and enthusiasm
• Leader speaks last
• Active questions
Communication obeys gravity!

• Head to paper?
• Paper to head?
• Communication – ballistic curve
The power of positive thinking

Handshake and compliments exercise
Successful Team Basics

• **Purpose**
• **Empowerment**
• **Relationship**
• **Flexibility**
• **Optimal Performance**
• **Recognition**
• **Morale**
“Communicational Bike Ride”

- Agressive communication
- Assertive communication
- “Paying-respect” communication
Project Team Meetings

• Call a meeting only if necessary
• Have a clear goal in mind (informing, decision-making, idea generation, socializing, presentation...)
• Good planning (time, participants, scenarios...)
• Conclusion must lead to action
• First try to understand, then try to make yourself understood
• Common trust is the key
The corporation as we know it, which is now 125 years old, is not likely to survive the next 20 years. Legally and financially yes, but not structurally and economically.

Peter Drucker

It is still based on the same principles devised by Taylor, Fayol, Max Weber... intended to make people do repetitive, boring and tedious jobs in times of early industrialization!
The New Corporation

- Instead of organizations based on fear: Organizations based on love
- Instead of hierarchies, cubicles, pigeon holes, SOP’s...: Self-organized teams, based on friendship, partnership, common vision, mutually agreed values...
- Instead of leaders and teams appointed by senior management: Leader is the person who calls the meeting and people show up, teams are self-selected
- Instead of leaders being responsible, the goal attainment being based on command and control: Everybody is responsible; nobody is allowed to give orders in a team
MBA Crisis

- analytical, pragmatic, rational, structured and organized.
- accustomed and trained to search for *clear images*,
  - to plan, to organize, to control and to evaluate (a project) in a well structured and standardized way
MBI (Master of Business Innovation)

- *attitude* of leadership, creativity, reengineering, innovation, harmony, social and emotional intelligence, multiculturalism
- Masters of change
- Innovators
- Reengineers
- Charismatic
Internet as an MBI Metaphor

- Endless creativity
- Full adaptability
- Inspirational environment
  - Ideas compete on equal footing
  - Hackers are heroes
  - Tasks are selected, not administered
  - Authority is not based on position
  - Hierarchies are natural, not imposed
  - Teams are self-organized
  - Leaders serve
  - Resources are attracted and not budgeted...
Project Team of the Future

- Endless creativity
- Full adaptability
- Inspirational environment
  - Organizations based on love
  - Ideas compete on equal footing
  - Freaks are heroes
  - Tasks are selected, not administered
  - Authority is not based on position
  - Team structure is natural, not imposed
  - Teams are self-organized
  - Leaders serve
  - Resources are attracted and not budgeted...
Be aware of the goals

• **S**pecific
• **M**easurable
• **A**ttainable
• **R**elevant
• **T**rackable

KISS - Keep it Simple and Short!
Simplicity, Simplicity, Simplicity

• Sacra simplicitas
• What’s the business of Rolex?
• Mission - Black & Decker
• Churchil, Kennedy, Armstrong
• Missions - Ford and Gates
• KISS (Keep it Simple and Short)
Win-Win Negotiating:

• Where to go - Summer vacation exercise
Key Idea = It all Depends!

• A perfect leader (person) is most often a combination of imperfect talents that perfectly fit together!
• Situational leadership – Napoleon and a man on guard
Leadership = Winning

In principle:

• Successful systems are headed by good leaders, winners.
• Less successful systems are headed by average leaders.
• Bad systems are headed by poor leaders, losers.
Leadership = Love

• Leadership is all about love!
• Passion, Enthusiasm, Appetite for Life, Engagement, Commitment, Great Causes, Determination to Make a Damn Difference, Shared Adventures, Bizarre Failures, Growth, Insatiable Appetite for Change...
• Otherwise, why Bother?
  » Tom Peters
Leadership = Change

• ISO guys (MBA) and ISO guys (MBI)
• Organizers and disorganizers
• Leaders are needed to alter a course (managers are needed to stay on course)
• Leaders are innovators, risk takers, fighters for change (managers are administrators, analysts, optimizers)
Seek Consensus!

Before

After

51

49

2
Think Big – Be Ambitious!

• You don’t know what you are capable of until you try!
Think Big – Be Ambitious!

• Where do you see yourself in five years?
Learn to Become a Winner!

• Winners have a goal
• Winners are persistent (Persian sultan and his horse)
• Winners “can stand a second longer”
Shaolin – A Winner Factory

- Shaolin – Li Xiaolong
- Defeat the enemy inside
- Crisis = Opportunity + Threat
- Kairos - God of Opportunity
See a Crisis as an Opportunity!

• What “crises” in your environment might become “opportunities”?
• How could you make use of it?
Let’s split into teams again!

• Earn a Fellowship!
Fellowship Game

- You can win a management education fellowship depending on a number of points you get in a simple game.
- The game is played in couples/pairs.
- The task of each player is to write either A or B in his/her column.
- **Important rule**: Play first, talk later! Do not discuss how you should be playing the game!
Keeping Track of the Score

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<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>first loses 5</th>
<th>second loses 5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>first wins 15</td>
<td>second wins 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>first wins 0</td>
<td>second wins 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>first wins 10</td>
<td>second wins 10</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Interchangeable playing:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>player 1</th>
<th>player 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
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</table>
Fellowship Game Rules

- 100 points and more - Harvard Ph.D.
- 80 - 99 points - Columbia MBA
- 60 - 79 points - Chattanooga College BBA
- 40 - 59 points - Lower East Side high school
- 20 - 39 points - Bedrock elementary school
- below 20 points - South Bronx kindergarten
Possible Strategies

- BB - “full cooperation”
- AA - “total conflict”
- AB, BA - “scratching backs”
- AB, BA, AA, BB - “mixed strategies”
- BB and then A - “misusing the situation”
Discussion

- Does the score depend on how you perceive the other guy (partner or opponent)?
- Can you cooperate or fight with anybody you choose?
- What would you do if you could play once again?
Abundance/Scarcity Mentality!

- Limited resources theory
- Swedish table example
Win-Win Attitude!

• Little Prince and a King
• Are you ready to give up on your proposal, I’ll give up on mine, in order to search for a proposal which is better than either of ours?
Kaizen Mentality!

• It is no good. We have to change it!
• It’s good, but can be better!
Kaizen!

• Role Playing:
  1. Criticize the existing organization and then propose the new one
  2. Praise the existing organization and then propose the new one
Leaders Delegate

• The key outcome of good leadership is an excellent team performance...
• ... when the leader is there...
• ... and, more importantly, when the leader is NOT there!
From Directing to Delegating

- **Directing** – leader instructs and controls, giving neither freedom, nor independence
- **Supervising** – leader acts as a supervisor, giving a degree of “deserved” freedom
- **Supporting** – leader is there for the subordinate, supporting whenever needed
- **Delegating** – leader can delegate most tasks to a subordinate with full confidence
All Is in Your Head!

• School desk example
• Self-fulfilled prophecy
• If you think you can, or if you think you cannot, you’re right!
• Success out of handicap
• Nobunaga
All Is in Your Head!

• What ideas about myself I must get rid of?
• What ideas about myself I must try to “implant”? 
See the Big While it Is Still Small!

• Every opportunity was once small
• Every problem was once little
• Extinguish a spark in order to avoid huge fire!
See the Big while It Is Still Small!

• What opportunity is today easy to benefit from, but tomorrow will be hard?

• What problem is today small, and tomorrow will be big?
Team Leadership in Four Steps!

• Margaret Thatcher: Leader = Lady
• Interpretation - Explanator
• Conceptualization - Visionary
• Mobilization - Mobilizer
• Inspiration - Motivator
Team Leadership in Four Steps!

- Explanator: Where is your project?
- Visionary: Where is it going?
- Mobilizer: How to mobilize all?
- Motivator: What incentives to use?
Do the Right Stuff!

80% problems have 20% importance, and 20% problems have 80% importance!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relevant</th>
<th>Irrelevant</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Action area</strong></td>
<td>Ignore, pay little attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adjustment area</strong></td>
<td>Adapt, pay little attention</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Success Depends upon:

- Skilled leader
- Favorable environment
- Followers
Successful Projects

- On time
- Within a budget
- Meeting the goals
- Accepted by the clients

- Make us proud and fulfilled
- Help us grow and develop
- Provide happiness
- Build self-confidence...
See the Whole!

- Blindmen and elephant
- Airplane fixing case
- Sinergy (optimum of the whole is a sum of suboptimums of its parts!)
Project Leadership Model

**Spiritual Harmony**
(faith, love, hope and courage)

**Cognitive Harmony**
(values, emotions, thoughts and feelings)

**Strategic Harmony**
(vision, mission, goals and tasks)

**Operative Harmony**
(productivity, independence, solidarity, acceptance)

Leader is proactive, ethical, persistent, effective, determined, time sensitive, aware of priorities, stress-resistant...

Leader:

**Explanator:**
where we are
Leader is willing to learn, able to sell, good listener, simplifier, holistic, globalist, organizer and disorganizer

**Visionary:**
where we are going
Leader is futuristic, intuitive, likes initiative, hates paperwork, entrepreneurial, spends in order to earn

**Mobilizer:**
why are we together
Leader delegates, manages conflict, selects people, consensus-oriented, flexible, learns from mistakes

**Motivator:**
what's in it for us
Leader promotes competence, able to motivate and thrill, praise and criticize, uses power, innovation-oriented
Project Team Member

- Decides when, where, with whom to work
- Selects his team
- Treats everybody else as a client
- Does not let formal organization run his life
- Wants to be taken seriously
- Asks from a boss to serve and inspire
- Actively participates in strategy setting
- Works without control because he loves the work
- Does at work what he does the best
The Project Management Process

• Defining – what we want to do
• Planning – who, what, when
• Organizing – preparing for the above
• Motivating – finding WIIFM
• Controlling – how it is being done
• Reviewing – learning and analyzing
Project Success Rules

- Set a clear GOAL
- Determine the project OBJECTIVES
- Determine ACTIVITIES, RELATIONSHIPS, TIME ESTIMATES and MILESTONES
- Organize a project TEAM
- MOTIVATE people and ensure commitment
- Keep everyone INFORMED
- Build MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITY
- EMPOWER all team members
- Encourage RISK-TAKING and support CREATIVITY
Why Projects Fail

- Goals
- Teamwork
- Project team organization
- Project planning and management
- Resistance to change
- Methodological problems (innovation, reengineering...)

Why Projects Fail - Goals

• Clear goals
  – Declared vs. Real goals
  – Good intentions are not enough
• Measurable and specific goals
• Goals not too high or too low
• Avoiding too many goals
• Motivation for goal attainment
Why Projects Fail - Teamwork

• Building a team (goals, responsibility, synergy, consensus, common approach...)
• Team composition (professional (IQ) and EQ aspects)
• Team leader determination
• Working environment and encouragement
• Learn and grow experience
Why projects Fail - Organization

• Clear project organization – independent project team with full responsibility

• Individual project organization – team leader is just a coordinator, members belong to many teams

• Matrix organization – members belong to both, functional and project teams
Why Projects Fail - Planning

- Planning is formal and bureaucratic
- Planning is low priority activity ("life is unpredictable anyway...")
- Project management methodology and technology are not applied
- Lack of anticipative control
Why Projects Fail – Resistance to Change

• There is no strategy of change implementation
• There is no leadership example
• Training for adopting change is missing
• Change is imposed instead of discussed
• Barriers to change are not observed
Why Projects Fail - Methodology

• Reengineering issues
• Innovation management issues
• Quality management issues
• Project management software issues
Final Assignment: Why should anybody be led by you?

- Each team will prepare a presentation of key suggestions and proposals for your organizational culture.
Any comments, questions, suggestions?

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