Assessing Project Management Skills

Gina Abudi, MBA
VP, Strategic Initiatives
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What You Will Learn

- Why you should assess project management skills
- What are competencies and how should you develop them
- How to use assessments to assist in developing or measuring against competencies and developing career paths/talent management
- Methods for assessing skills
- Examples of organizations that have used a variety of methods to assess skills against competencies
Why Assess Project Management Skills?

- To create job profiles to assist in identifying resource requirements
- To build an understanding of the department or organizational knowledge and skills
- To identify skills gaps within the organization
- To develop an ability to create strategic training and development plans
- To implement a development plan that is focused on increasing the organization’s profitability
- To assist in developing competencies for project managers
- For talent management
Competencies

- Competencies are a set of behaviors defined by:
  - **Skills**: What you are able to do
  - **Knowledge**: What you know
  - **Attributes**: How you interact

- Competencies describe a “highly-successful performer” within the organization
What are Competency Models?

- Used as a single reference source to define superior performance
- Based on observable and measurable behavioral factors
- Created to fuel human development activities that assess, develop and measure an organization’s performance
- Developed and customized to reflect the goals and values specific to an organization
PM Competency Model Categories

The project management skills and knowledge required to successfully manage a project or to complete project related activities.

TECHNICAL (PMI)

Those personal characteristics that underlie a person’s capability to manage a project.

PERSONAL (PMI)

PROJECT MANAGEMENT SUCCESS

The big picture/context skills that enable project managers to link any given project to the relationships, resources and/or infrastructure of the organization.

BUSINESS & LEADERSHIP (CorpEdGroup)
PM Competency Model – One Slice

CLUSTERS
C.2.1. Industry Awareness
C.2.2. Business Operations Knowledge

ELEMENTS
C.2.2.1 Interprets the business and developments within it relative to the project
C.2.2.2 Communicates and responds to business changes or developments

COMPETENCIES ARE "RATED" AT THIS LEVEL

UNITS
C.1. Enterprise View
C.2. Business Acumen
C.3. Productive Work Environment
C.4. Organizational Savvy

CATEGORY
C. Business & Leadership

PROJECT MANAGEMENT SUCCESS

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
C.2.2.1.1 Provides project team with context regarding the history and key success factors of the business.
C.2.2.1.2 Actively participates as a partner in the business, such that overt and subtle developments are identified and their impacts on the project are communicated.
How are Competencies Used in Organizational Assessment?

Competencies Evaluated: scope management, team building, etc.
PM Competency Development Process: Individual Level

- Complete once for an individual’s position and then repeat at a frequency determined by that individual (e.g., new project, added level of responsibility)
- Can set proficiency standards based on role expectations in conjunction with individual’s manager

Competency Assessments, Development Planning, and ongoing Progress Measurement completed at intervals as needed, for the individual against the personalized profile.
PM Competency Development Process: Organization Level

- One profile for a role or group of positions, or
- One profile per level in organization, or
- One set of competencies with different Proficiency Standards per level
- Remains as standard for assessment that remains in place unless the breadth or depth of the role changes dramatically

Competency Assessments, Development Planning, and ongoing Progress Measurement completed at intervals as needed, for project managers against the personalized profile.
Assess Project Management Staff

- Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)
- Subjective and objective assessments
- Group and one-on-one interviews
- Surveys of managers and other stakeholders
- Data from internal resources on projects
Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)

- Assessment to measure psychological preferences in how people perceive the world and make decisions based on those perceptions
  - Based on research that shows individuals develop preferred ways of thinking and acting
- Four dichotomies (16 personality types):
  - Attitudes: Extraversion (E)/Introversion (I)
  - Functions: Sensing (S)/Intuition and Thinking (T) /Feeling (F)
  - Lifestyle: Judgment (J)/Perception (P)
Subjective Assessments

Example Competency Element: **Perform an initial project feasibility study and analysis.**

Example Performance Criteria:

- Utilize project selection methods/decision methods, including benefit measurement methods and constrained optimization methods
- Evaluate historical information for projects involving similar products and services
- Perform high-level assessment of the organizational resources for the project
- Perform high-level assessment of the technical and non-technical requirements of the project
Example Competency Element: Creates a common understanding of the desired outcome to serve as a compass for the work

Example Question: You have taken over a project in the middle of the development phase, and you notice that various team members are confused about the project objectives. You should:

- Remind the team members that the requirements are fixed and they should look them up.
- Form a committee and look for a compromise solution.
- Organize a team-building social event.
- Meet with the team members and articulate the project objectives.
Sample Assessment Output

PM Rolled Up Assessment Results

- Project Integration Management
- Project Scope Management
- Project Time Management
- Project Cost Management
- Project Quality Management
- Project Human Resource Management
- Project Communications Management
- Project Risk Management
- Project Procurement Management
- Business and Leadership Competencies
- Enterprise View
- Business and Leadership Competencies
- Business Acumen
- Business and Leadership Competencies
- Organizational Savvy
- Business and Leadership Competencies
- Productive Work Environment
Group and One-on-One Interviews

- Use to gather further information
  - Deeper dive
- Probe further based on responses to online assessments, plus gather additional information

How are projects managed today?
What support or barriers do you have to performing your role?
Surveys

- Survey managers and other stakeholders
- Gather perspective of those not actually performing the project management role

What are the business challenges or areas of concern?
What level of expertise is required?
If training desired, what is the driving need?
What is the end goal – how does this organization, as it relates to project management, look in 3 – 5 – 10 years?
Gather Additional Data

- Look at past projects
  - Successful? (What does that mean?)
  - On time? On budget?
  - Reduced time-to-market with products/services?

- What is the project selection process?

- What is done informally throughout the organization as it relates to managing projects?

- Who on the executive level is involved in project management in any form?
Continuous Learning

- “Knowledge Cloud”
  - Tools/templates
  - Discussion forums
  - Library
  - Portal and collaboration
  - Blogs
  - Expert panel – availability for support

- Mentoring/coaching program

- Career paths

- Support for certifications
  - Company-sponsored study groups
Client Examples

- Investment company
- Electronics company
- School district
- Pharmaceutical company

Each had a different goal and used a different approach to assess skills of their project managers and develop competencies to ensure long-term strategic growth for their organizations.
Summary

➢ Determine why you are assessing skills of your project managers so you can determine the best assessment approach
➢ Communicate what you are doing and why
➢ Plan the process just like any project
➢ Provide a way for individuals to grow personally and professionally
➢ Repeat the process at regular intervals