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# Project Management Career Questionnaire

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## Background

This questionnaire is intended to help you assess if a Project Management career is for you.

The questions have been intentionally framed to be more behavioral in nature, to understand your personality and character fit for a PM career.

Take some time to honestly answer the questions and at the end of this document you will get an assessment as to whether a PM career is for you.

## Questionnaire

No.	Question	Answer (Choose One)
1	Your work desk is in a mess. Do you:  A) Clear it up immediately. B) Record "Clean work desk" as a task in your to-do list and do it sometime later. C) Just ignore it.	
2	You see a colleague disagreeing loudly with another colleague and not able to progress in the piece of work they're doing together. Do you:  A) Ask them to keep quiet as everyone is trying to work and they are creating a nuisance. B) Walk over and try to find a workable solution for them. C) Carry on with your work.	
3	You are facilitating a meeting on business requirements for a banking system. Your business users have been discussing how the bank computes and credits interest for the past half an hour. The discussion doesn't seem to be going anywhere. Do you:  A) Be upfront with the business users and force them to come to a conclusion or else the team make assumptions on the requirements. B) Defer the business requirements discussion to another time. Meanwhile all business users should convene offline and get a conclusion to the interest computation topic. C) Let the business users carry on, hoping they will come to a conclusion eventually and your Business Analysts can document the business requirements.	



4	<p>During a casual conversation with one of your project's key stakeholders, he or she mentions the initiative you're managing is doomed and won't add much value to the company. Do you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A) Express your disagreement immediately and explain the benefits of the project to this stakeholder.</li><li>B) Note down this stakeholder's comments and escalate the situation to senior management.</li><li>C) Dismiss his or her comments as "noise" and ignore them.</li></ul>	
5	<p>During a critical system implementation cutover weekend, your Deployment Team tells you the new system's test cash balances do not reconcile with the existing system. The system Go-Live will likely need to be called off. Do you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A) Raise the alarm, call an emergency meeting, get all stakeholders involved and make the team analyze the root cause to solve the problem.</li><li>B) Allow your Deployment to troubleshoot the problem for another six hours, before calling an emergency meeting and getting all stakeholders involved.</li><li>C) Call off the system Go-Live and ask for an extension to properly test the system.</li></ul>	
6	<p>You're the Project Manager of a critical Business Transformation program for a leading insurance company. You're mid-way through the project and everything is on track – your team and you have worked long nights to achieve this. Do you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A) Talk to your stakeholders and team members even more, to fish out whether there are any hidden risks you don't know about. Everything appears to be too smooth sailing.</li><li>B) Just continue your day-to-day standard project management activities like you've done so far.</li><li>C) Relax, have a drink and rejoice in the fact that everything is on track.</li></ul>	
7	<p>You're about to start work as a Project Manager implementing a Private Banking system for a leading global Private Bank. You have very little knowledge of the Private Banking industry – your boss picked you to lead this project because of your strong project management skills. Do you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A) Assemble a very strong Business Analyst Team to help you out – they can be the domain experts.</li><li>B) Take up a course on Private Banking in your spare time to beef up your domain knowledge.</li><li>C) Just "Go With The Flow" – there's no need to understand Private Banking. You believe that things will work out once you've started the project.</li></ul>	



8	<p>You're negotiating with a vendor on a system Change Request to develop a new batch job for calculating management fees in a fund management system. The vendor quotes a ridiculously high price for the Change Request. Do you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A) Be very firm with the vendor and express your displeasure at the high price.</li><li>B) Gather statistics on past, similar Change Requests and argue that the price of current Change Request is too high in comparison.</li><li>C) Accept the high price point quoted by the vendor, as you know you likely have no other alternative.</li></ul>	
9	<p>You've been put in charge of organizing a team event for your project. This is a good opportunity to have fun, introduce new team members to everyone else and also brief the team on project progress. How do you feel about this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A) Relish the opportunity to organize the event and excitedly check out places the whole team can go to</li><li>B) Not being very good at organizing team events, you go about this as "just another task" to check off your To Do list.</li><li>C) Be secretly angry that you've to organize such an event when the team is already behind schedule.</li></ul>	
10	<p>A team member in charge of an important deliverable has produced very poor quality work. There are obvious spelling errors and formatting problems in his report – you cannot allow the document to be released to your stakeholders in its current state. Do you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A) Confront your team member in a firm tone and tell him or her such work quality is totally unacceptable. Ask him or her to correct the work immediately to a proper level of quality.</li><li>B) Speak to your team member in a nice tone and try to understand why he or she delivered poor quality work. Ask him or her to correct the work immediately to a proper level of quality.</li><li>C) Sigh and tell yourself if you need quality work done, you basically need to do it yourself, then proceed to clean up the document on your own.</li></ul>	
11	<p>It's just another day for you as a Project Manager on Project X. You have some free time in the afternoon. Do you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A) Seize the opportunity to grab coffee with one of your key stakeholders and do a catch up.</li><li>B) Do up paperwork and administration stuff you've been putting off.</li><li>C) Call it a day and go home early.</li></ul>	



12	<p>In a board meeting, a member of senior management mentions that your team has not contributed much to the success of the business, despite having delivered Project X.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A) Stand up and object to the idea, saying that your team has delivered huge benefits and categorically list them out for all to hear.</li><li>B) Take note of the comment and schedule a offline meeting with all attendees in the board meeting to clarity that your team has in fact contributed a lot.</li><li>C) Ignore the comment and move on.</li></ul>	
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## Assessment

Refer to the table below to understand how you've scored. For each assessment outcome, a number of action steps are suggested, which you may want to try out on your own.

To find out more about a Project Manager's career path, check out [my article](#) here.

And if you have any questions at all, feel free to [drop me a note](#). I'd love to hear from you!

Question	Answer	Score
1	A	3
	B	3
	C	1
2	A	2
	B	3
	C	1
3	A	3
	B	3
	C	1
4	A	3
	B	2
	C	1
5	A	3
	B	2
	C	1
6	A	3
	B	2
	C	1
7	A	3
	B	2
	C	1
8	A	3
	B	3
	C	1
9	A	3
	B	2
	C	1
10	A	3
	B	3
	C	1
11	A	3
	B	1
	C	1
12	A	2
	B	3
	C	1



Total Score	Assessment
28 to 36	<p><u>Overview</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You are likely a driven, no-nonsense and outcome focused person.</li><li>• You like to “get it done immediately” – if something in the project can move forward, you’ll make sure it moves forward.</li><li>• You don’t like to see people sitting around idling.</li><li>• You will clarify expectations upfront.</li><li>• You truly embrace projects and take ownership.</li><li>• You’re slightly maniacal about detecting and mitigating risks in your project.</li><li>• You recognize you can’t do it all and value the diverse skill sets your team brings.</li><li>• You may run projects based on emotion rather than logic at times.</li><li>• You love and feel excited about organizing team events.</li><li>• You cannot accept poor quality work from your team members – and are likely to dismiss them as poor performers.</li><li>• You believe in over-communicating with your project stakeholders.</li><li>• You will stand up for your team if anyone doubts the contribution they’ve made.</li></ul> <p><u>Is A Project Management Career For You?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You are very suited for a Project Management career.</li><li>• Your character traits are in line with a Project Manager’s mindset – driven, commitment to timelines and budget, and making sure things get done.</li><li>• You tend to manage through a more emotional and “get it done now” approach.</li><li>• You are firm with poor performers and generally like to lead and organize teams.</li></ul> <p><u>Suggested Action Steps</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If you’re not already in a Project Management role and are interested in one, you can consider the following action steps.</li><li>• Look out for opportunities to lead teams and deliver as a Project Workstream Lead (e.g. as a Lead Business Analyst, Test Manager).</li><li>• Once you’ve racked up some experience as a Project Workstream Lead, you can start asking for Junior Project Manager roles.</li><li>• After some experience as a Junior Project Manager and running a number of small projects, you can aim for full-fledged Project Manager roles.</li><li>• From there, move on to Project or Programme Director roles.</li><li>• You can also branch out to C-level positions (e.g. COO), Sales or Senior Delivery Roles.</li></ul>



Total Score	Assessment
16 to 27	<p><u>Overview</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are likely a more reserved and analytical type of person.</li> <li>You like to take time to analyze things before acting on them. You will still push things forward in a project, but are likely to do it in a more measured manner.</li> <li>You don't like to see people sitting around idling.</li> <li>You do clarify expectations but are unlikely to do it upfront. You prefer to do it "offline" or through separate meetings.</li> <li>You embrace projects and take ownership – though not "with your life and a fire in your belly".</li> <li>You are likely to "follow the plan" and prefer to steer the project and avoid risks by following guidelines, protocols and methodology.</li> <li>You may sometimes take over the work and do it yourself if you feel your team cannot do it.</li> <li>You tend to run projects based on logic rather than emotion.</li> <li>You may not like to organizing team events, being a more reserved person.</li> <li>You cannot accept poor quality work from your team members – but will try to help them improve.</li> <li>You know it important to communicate with your project stakeholders but you sometimes do not do it enough.</li> <li>You will stand up for your team if anyone doubts the contribution they've made.</li> </ul> <p><u>Is A Project Management Career For You?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are quite suited for a Project Management career.</li> <li>Your character traits are somewhat in line with a Project Manager's mindset driven, commitment to timelines and budget, and making sure things get done.</li> <li>You tend to manage through using a measured, methodology based approach.</li> <li>You are firm with poor performers and want to help them improve. You may not like to be in the limelight, leading and organizing teams – but you exert influence in your own special way.</li> </ul> <p><u>Suggested Action Steps</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you're not already in a Project Management role and are interested in one, you can consider the following action steps.</li> <li>You should look out for opportunities to lead teams and deliver as a Project Workstream Lead (e.g. as a Lead Business Analyst, Test Manager). As you're a bit more reserved character-wise, you'd likely start off as a Project Workstream Team Member first, instead of a Lead. Once you've racked up experience you can naturally become a Lead*.</li> <li>Once you've racked up some experience as a Project Workstream Lead, you can start asking for Junior Project Manager roles.</li> <li>After some experience as a Junior Project Manager and running a number of small projects, you can aim for full-fledged Project Manager roles.</li> <li>From there, move on to Project or Programme Director roles.</li> <li>You can also branch out to C-level positions (e.g. COO), Sales or Senior Delivery Roles#.</li> </ul> <p><i>* This is how I started my Project Management career – from Business Analyst, to Lead Business Analyst, then to Project Manager.</i></p> <p><i># In fact, you'll realize that the career path for a Project Manager is quite similar between this Scoring Tier (16 to 27) and the previous Scoring Tier (28 to 36). The most important distinction here is that in this Scoring Tier (16 to 27), a Project Manager has his or her own style of managing a team. Perhaps a bit more reserved or behind the scenes – but these can be equally if not more effectively than a "fiery and emotional" type of Project Manager.</i></p>





Total Score	Assessment
12 to 15	<p><u>Overview</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are likely not a very driven and outcome focused person.</li> <li>You believe that things will “get done on their own time”. You’re unlikely to force things to move forward and are ok to let tasks sit around for a while.</li> <li>You don’t mind having people sitting around idling.</li> <li>You may hear others’ viewpoints which you disagree with. However, you think it takes too much energy and time to clarify what you think – so you leave it be.</li> <li>You don’t really embrace projects and take ownership. You’d rather be doing something else. If the project fails, no problem – what’s the worst that could happen, anyway?</li> <li>You don’t stress over potential risks that may be affecting in your project. You’ll deal with things “as they come”.</li> <li>You often think you are the best and that your team members’ skills can’t measure up. You tend to just hunker down and do things yourself.</li> <li>You may not like to organizing team events, thinking it distracts from doing actual work.</li> <li>You cannot accept poor quality work from your team members – but don’t let your team members know that they did wrong. You take it upon yourself to correct the errors your team members made.</li> <li>You don’t think it is important to communicate with your project stakeholders and cannot be bothered to do it.</li> <li>You will not stand up for your team if anyone doubts the contribution they’ve made.</li> </ul> <p><u>Is A Project Management Career For You?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are not really suited for a Project Management career.</li> <li>Your character traits are not in line with a Project Manager’s mindset – you take things easy, “Go With The Flow” and deal with issues as they arise. Even if the project fails, you’re not too worried.</li> <li>You tend to believe you’re better than your team members, often just doing it yourself because “others just can’t get it right anyway”.</li> <li>You don’t feedback work performance to your team members. You also may not like to be in the limelight, leading and organizing teams – and cannot be bothered to go an extra mile to exert influence.</li> </ul> <p><u>Suggested Action Steps</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you are in this Scoring Tier, it is likely you will not enjoy being a Project Manager.</li> <li>A Project Manager is very serious about delivering a project on time and on budget. If something deviates from the intended project plan, he or she takes it very seriously.</li> <li>If you think your commitment to a project is not at that level, then you should seriously think if you want to be a Project Manager at all.</li> <li>That being said, don’t think that all Project Managers work like ultra-efficient machines to drive project timelines. Most Project Managers will also “take it easy” here and there, and not fight passionately about timelines, scope or budget. However, the underlying passion to deliver the project will be there. And that is the ultimate criterion which determines if you will succeed – does the success and failure of the project matter enough to you? If it does not, you’re likely not suited to be that project’s PM.</li> </ul> <p><i>* An example would be myself – when I started as a PM, I hated to regularly go up to stakeholders and update them on status. It was very tiring, listening to them bicker about their work, bringing down your project, etc. But over time, I learnt to accept that stakeholder management is one of my key PM responsibilities and I slowly trained myself to be better at it. These days, it is second nature to me.</i></p>