Applied Software Project Management

Management and Leadership

Responsibility, authority and accountability

- A person has *responsibility* for a task if:
  - ▷ He is given sufficient *authority* to perform it
  - ▷ He is *accountable* for its completion
- A person has *authority* to perform a task only if he is has adequate control over the resources necessary to complete the task.
- A person is *accountable* for a task if failure to adequately perform that task carries professional consequences.

Delegation

- Delegation is assigning responsibility of a task to a team member.
- When delegating a task, the project manager must ensure that the team member has the authority to perform it and is accountable for the results.

Transparency

When the project manager creates a document, holds a meeting of interest to others, or makes an important project decision, all of the information produced should be shared and used with everyone involved in the project.

Transparency

■ All work products should be public

▷ All team members, senior managers and stakeholders should have access to every work product produced for the project.

▷ Project managers and team members benefit because they make more informed decisions.

▷ Senior managers and stakeholders are always kept informed.

Transparency

- Decisions should be made based on known guidelines
  - ▷ Published *standards documents* help others understand the way certain roles must be filled.
  - ▷ Documents should be based on *templates* when possible.
  - ▷ *Process documents* ensure that each project is done using a repeatable process.
  - ▷ Use *performance plans* to set expectations for individual team members.

Manage the Organization

- Prevent senior managers from seeing software projects as a cost burden
  - ▷ A project is successful if its costs are justified by its benefits.
  - ▷ Establishing a track record of successful projects is the most effective way for a project manager to reverse dangerous attitudes in senior management.

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Manage the Organization

- Show senior managers the impact of their decisions
  - ▷ Decisions are frequently made based on gut feelings instead of objective analysis.
  - ▷ The people making decisions about the project need to understand the details.
  - ▷ Show senior managers that improving project management practices will help them meet their goals.

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Manage the Organization

■ Don't confuse flexibility with always saying yes

▷ Don't agree to an unrealistic schedule.

▷ Change your approach when necessary.

▷ Don't confuse "easy to describe" with "easy to implement."

Manage Your Team

■ Avoid common management pitfalls

▷ Don't manage from your gut.

▷ Don't second-guess estimates.

- Remember Brooks' Law: "Adding manpower to a late software project makes it later."

▷ Don't expect consensus all of the time.

▷ Make your mistakes public.

▷ Accept criticism.

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Manage Your Team

■ Avoid micromanagement

▷ Don't expect to review everything

▷ Don't fall into the "hands-on manager" trap

▷ Use transparency to your advantage

▷ Don't be afraid to let your team members make mistakes

Manage Your Team

■ Address performance problems early

▷ Work with each team member to develop a *performance plan*.

▷ Set standards that are fair and attainable.

▷ Measure each team member's progress against known and agreed-upon goals.

▷ Correct performance problems as early as possible.