



Challenges of Remotely Managing a Project

Presented by Jack Smith, Senior Consultant, ADS Financial Services Solutions
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What is remote management?

- Leading a team from a different location or time zone
 - Locate vs. collocate
 - Using resources and skills sets from different geographic areas.




What is the Secret to successful project management?

- LOCATION
- LOCATION
- LOCATION!
- Oh, and follow up and follow through



Remote managers have been around for a long time

- Can you name some?
 - Julius Caesar
 - Alexander the Great
 - Paul the apostle
 - Used epistles




Greater trend toward Remote Project Management

- Internet Presence

- Sales and work Crossing time zones

- Reluctance to Relocate

- More mergers with less relocating



Have you managed a team or project remotely?

- Today, most managers have to manage one or more team members that are remote
 - Many managers feel that better systems (emailing, Webex, video conferencing) can help them manage better
 - Many feel they need different leadership skills
 - Some think that a different approach to planning is needed
 - All are correct



Benefits of Remote Management

■ Advantages

- Team works in causal atmosphere
- Project schedule clearly defines work
- Skills of Team come together without traveling or relocating for work

■ Disadvantages

- Less feel of team cohesion, isolation
- No 'water cooler' meetings
- Harder to monitor team member's progress



Challenges of Project Remote Management

- Effects all phases of the project cycle:
 - Initiation:
 - Defining your high level resources
 - Planning:
 - Defining your team
 - Estimating your tasks (hidden time)
 - Great communication plan
 - Kickoff- live
 - Controlling:
 - Motivating, coaching and reviewing teams
 - Managing Change



Challenges of Project Remote Management

- Effects all phases of the project cycle:
 - Execution:
 - Manage project performance
 - Close Out:
 - Lessons Learned
 - Document Archiving



Challenges of Project Remote Management

- Initiation: Defining your high level resources and project requirements
 - Establish communication media
 - Email, Teleconference, Conference Calls
 - What will be used and when
 - Systems requirements must be rock solid.
 - Should have very strong version controls.
 - Establish the expectation that all personnel using systems are trained.



Challenges of Project Remote Management

- Planning:

- Defining your Team

- Different skill set needed

- Self Starter
 - Excellent writing skills
 - Familiar with all systems you defined in charter
 - Experienced with working remote
 - Require minimum supervisor



Challenges of Project Remote Management

- Planning:

- Defining your Tasks

- Communication adds time into the task

- Must add time into the task estimate

- This time is in addition to the work estimate

- Deliverables will require more time to deliver and obtain signoff



Challenges of Project Remote Management

■ Planning:

□ Great Communication Plan

- Must be very specific and documented
 - Establish clear lines of communication
 - Team member-> Team Lead-> Project Lead->
 - When to use email vs. phone call
- When teleconferences will happen
 - Tie them to milestones, major deliverables
- When personal meetings will happen
 - Reviews, emergency coaching, change controls



Challenges of Project Remote Management

■ Planning:

□ Kickoff LIVE!

- All team members and stakeholders must be there.
 - The same message of systems, teams, roles is delivered to all
 - Best chance to establish team
 - As manager you can link key team members together



Challenges of Project Remote Management

■ Controlling:

□ Motivating, Coaching and Reviewing

- Authoritative style will kill a remote manager
 - One word 'TRUST'!!
 - Teach the team to lead themselves
 - Teach them how to work together
 - Teach them to be proactive with their communications

□ Boundary Manager:

- Control the Input-process-output flow
- Manage the 'noise' for the team
 - External inputs that are non productive
- The project schedule is your 'bad cop'
- Protect the team from higher levels of interference



Challenges of Project Remote Management

■ Controlling:

□ Motivating, Coaching and Reviewing

■ Review in person

- Traveling to the team for one on ones

□ Unscheduled Coaching calls

- Recognize when a team member is having a tough time
- Reach out proactively



Challenges of Project Remote Management

■ Managing Change:

- Change Control is more difficult for remote projects
 - The change is not easy to see
 - Documentation of required changes takes longer to get to process
 - NOTE: Change is implemented without proper process more often.
- You need to stay on top of all potential change
 - Extra contingency may be needed in the planning phase to account for change management
 - This is dependent on the remote experience of your team



Challenges of Project Remote Management

- Execution: Managing Project Performance
 - Proactive!
 - Reach out to team members
 - Conflict resolution will require great communication skills
 - Promote communication between team members and SMEs
 - Introduce team to key external contacts (i.e. Vendors, testing group, business users)



Challenges of Project Remote Management

■ Close Out:

□ Lessons Learned and Archiving

- Include systems analysis in lessons learned
 - Which forms of communication worked best?
 - Which systems were more reliable?

□ Archiving

- Identify central contact point (PMO?)
 - Send all information to the contact that will archive
 - Should be done all through the project
 - Sending all relevant email too!!
 - Presentations are often overlooked
 - Key information for the audit trail



Challenges of Remote Project Management

■ Conclusion

- Different skills are needed for remote work
- Systems are part of the answer
- Manage remotely with visits
- Build a team with trust
- Manage the boundary of the project
- Pay particular attention to Communication Plan



Q and A