

Managing Matrix Projects

Working on matrix teams with dual accountabilities and reporting structures is one of the most challenging yet most agile and efficient approaches to serving client's needs. There are higher levels of ambiguity, competing goals, accountability without control, and influence without authority become the norm. Decisions and collaboration become more complex. Here is a high-level roadmap for surviving - and thriving, in your matrix team environment:

Start: Establish the Project Vision and Purpose

- Establish the goal of the project with a story about what an ideal outcome looks like.
- Delegate the role expected of each team members' performance by describing the accountabilities and expertise needed by each.
- Identify major project milestones and assign explicit due dates for deliverables based on the project milestones dates.
- Open the floor for feedback from team members, get insight into what will be challenging and what to keep an eye on as the project goes on.
- Make sure that team members feel comfortable with their roles and feel capable of handling what is expected of them. If they do not, find out why through open and accepting dialogue.
- Use this 1-10 check-in to start the conversation and find out what resources are needed to get each team member to a 10 at the start of the project.

Launch the Project and Send Reminder Milestone Meetings Invitations

- Follow up at the beginning to make sure your team is clear on due dates with emphasis on your first major milestone.
- Check-in using the 1-10 to ensure the team is on the same page in terms of deliverables and first due dates. Is everyone still at a 10? Were there any unforeseen challenges that have arisen?
- Does each team member understand what is expected of them to help the group get to the first milestone? If not, find out why.

Plan a Post-Project Meeting at the Completion of Every Project

- A post project meeting date should be established as early in the project as possible,
- Prioritize this post-project meeting for every project and follow a similar structure each time.
- Recap the group on what was accomplished in a general sense but allow members of your team to get into specifics.

- Ask the team to share what they think are the successes and the setbacks of this project and discuss each.
 - What was a strength?
 - What can we do to take this strength into the next project?
 - What were the challenges?
 - How could we have controlled it better as we went through the project?
 - How can we take that wisdom into our next project as a team?
- Take this opportunity **to thank your team** for their work and invite any questions or comments to a sidebar if needed.