

13 MARCH 2009



### Next Level Up

## 5 Points You Can Use to Show Why Project Management is Indispensable in Turbulent Times

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As companies try to cut costs in these tough economic times, few business areas seem safe. Project management can be under pressure as well, as some may consider it to be unnecessary overhead and question its importance.

While your gut instinct might be to lie low, this is actually a time to be proactive and articulate why project management is indispensable, especially in today's turbulent environment.

Here are 5 points you can use to explain the importance of project management to executives and senior managers. These points directly address current challenges facing organizations in today's economic climate. They are not listed in order of priority but are simply arranged in a way that is easy to remember with the mnemonic, **PM SOARS!**



**Savings** – One of the current priorities is cost savings. Savings can be illustrated through **cost savings** with lower costs or fewer resources used, or through **cost avoidance** with successful execution including less rework, or greater reuse, or both.

It is not enough to say that your project was completed under budget; you need to **show how much you saved**. Calculate how much money was saved due to the application of sound project management practices. Translate and quantify the value of timely and efficient execution.

For example, **the difference in time between when the customer requested project completion and when the project manager delivers can be translated into real money and improved opportunity** to do additional projects with remaining budget.

**Optimization** – As the pressure increases to do more with less, project managers have to apply optimization techniques to maximize the utilization of resources. More importantly, you have to show how project management techniques help you get more done with the same or even fewer resources.

**Accountability and Governance** – There is a need for greater accountability and governance at every level. Explain how project management provides a framework for a project lifecycle with appropriate stage gates and standard processes that lead to greater accountability. When you engage in program and portfolio management, accountability and governance can be greater yet.

**Risk Management** – We have to consider the role of risk in different aspects that lead up to the economic crisis. Emphasize that the risk management knowledge area of project management creates **a culture of proactive risk management** by identification and management of threats as well as opportunities.

**Selection and Prioritization** – The challenge in a turbulent environment is to focus on the right things and prioritize limited resources. [Portfolio management principles](#) provide a framework for your organization to prioritize and select the right projects, and focus on key initiatives that will support a rapid economic recovery.

You can use the above points to craft your own elevator pitch that will help you to better articulate why project management is indispensable to your organization.

In the opening chapter of his book, "Managing in Turbulent Times," management guru Peter F. Drucker wrote: In

turbulent times, an enterprise has to be managed to withstand sudden blows and avail itself of sudden, unexpected opportunities. This means that in turbulent times, the fundamentals have to be managed, and managed well<sup>1</sup>.

Indeed project, program and portfolio management provide the fundamentals to survive the tough times and position your organization for the future. Now more than ever is the time to talk it up.

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<sup>1</sup> Drucker, Peter F. 1980. *Managing in Turbulent Times*. New York: [HarperCollins Publishers](#).