

Acquiring, Developing, and Retaining Project Talent: How the Right Talent Improves Project and Business Success.

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Introduction

This article builds upon an article I wrote in 2008. I explore three stages of Talent Management: *acquisition, development, and retention*. Finding, developing, and managing project talent is a serious challenge and a great opportunity. Project (and Program) Talent is essential in two project dimensions:

- Application Area talent in the disciplines needed to deliver the project's product;
- Project Management talent, in three flavors, needed by all parties to leverage that talented team.



A Talent Scout Story: I once worked with a Human Resources group from a major Defense Contractor. They wished to apply more-effective Project Management methods to their daily project activities.

One of this group's primary responsibilities was to recruit qualified program managers and engineers. Early in our sessions, I observed that they are Talent Scouts, and the phrase struck a chord with them.

The most-savvy Talent Scouts go beyond discovering and recognizing talent. They also amplify it, nurture it, and reward it. To do so, they work with resource

managers to use the entire progression of learning. That progression begins with Knowledge, and increases needed Skills, Attitudes, and Competence. The outcome: to achieve Project Performance.

Talent From Then To Now

In ancient Egyptian, Greek and Roman times, Talent was a term for measures, often related to value. You may recall historic mentions of Forty Talents of Silver, either in Akhenaten's Tomb (on a translated copper scroll) or other sources. As often used, a talent was the weight of the water or wine contents of an amphora; about 60 pounds (a significant amount!). Even then, a broader definition was forming. Dictionary.com notes: "*a power of mind or body considered as given to a person for use and improvement.*" citing the Bible's New Testament.

Today, regardless of the venue, talent is a term that describes either a person's natural abilities, or their experience-based competence, or both. Talent is highly valued, whether that person is an actor, a politician, a parent, or a project engineer. The new 4th edition of IPMA¹ Individual Competence Base-line lists the Talents of Project and Program Managers, which we believe to be *even more valuable* than the silver of old. Well, IPMA calls them the Competence Elements, but we all know they are Talents!

In the new millennium, we are obsessed with Talent, an increasingly popular attribute; Talent Management has spread across multiple sectors and industries. I see interest in the topic in general management, academia, human resources, line managers, and project executives. Typically, Talent Management includes Talent Acquisition, Talent Development, and Talent Retention, as shown in the diagram at the right.



What Is Talent?

We frequently see the word *talent* in the business-related press. Over the last 15 years books, magazines, websites and articles increasingly use it. *Talent* appears in everything from Human Resources to strategic planning, to managerial traits. For projects, “talent” is a nicer label for the quality and experience of people you and I seek to help our projects succeed. The term is preferable, compared to staff, resources, or even team members.

Talent, from our perspective, is the right combination of innate abilities, plus the knowledge, skills, attitudes, experience and competence **needed to deliver performance** for a specific situation. In the workplace, talent ranges from multiple intelligences and interpersonal skills, to “street-smarts,” savvy, and other factors. In today’s most successful enterprises, talent directly relates to Competence, a topic about which I frequently publish². Of course, competence is a crucial step on the path to Performance, the goal we all seek to achieve. Where do you find this talent? Context considerations, such as the nature of your industry or your enterprise culture can make it difficult to transfer talent from other environments. The search can be difficult indeed.

Talent Management Area 1: Talent Acquisition

That Human Resources group I worked with is not the only one seeking Project Talent. Competition is fierce for the most dearly needed talents. And the Talent targets move. In the 1990’s experienced Internet developers were among the most sought-after talent. Today an emerging talent target is **Competent Project Managers**. And yet, projects need more than talented project managers; the entire team is only as strong as its weakest link.



To find project talent, you must know what you are looking for. This is not easy, because while resume keywords and searchable online databases can help with screening, finding project talent comes down to two key steps:

1. Analyze and communicate what you are looking for, including the roles these persons must fill, and the qualifications (knowledge, skills, attitudes and competences) needed to fill those roles.
2. Observe and recognize those needed talents in the candidates you interview. Note that most hiring managers rely on interpersonal interaction to verify their judgment that the candidate demonstrates the needed talent.

Talent Acquisition for projects goes beyond filling project manager positions; as mentioned above, each project is only as successful as the Role-Competences of your weakest links. Every stakeholder in a project, from Sponsor to Resource Manager, from internal Customer to Team Member, must demonstrate his or her needed Role-Competences. Those who are best at Talent Acquisition use a proper Competence Model, that lists all the right criteria and appropriate performance levels for each of your roles.

Desperately Seeking Project Talent

Does talent matter more in Projects, compared to general operations? In our opinion, yes! For several reasons:

- Operations maintain the status quo; projects *change* the status quo. Projects thus need much more power;
- Operations tends to de-skill the roles, to homogenize processes and results; projects must high-skill the roles.
- Operations are repetitive, with time for adjustments; with projects, you have only one chance to get it right;
- Projects require very high levels of communication, engagement, emotional support, and knowledge transfer.

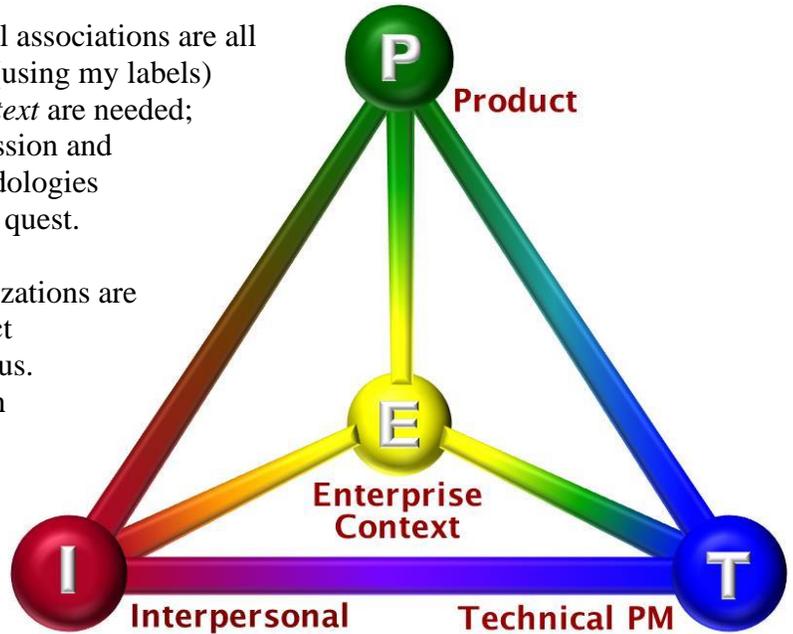
Project Talent is not one “bucket;” it has multiple dimensions. Each dimension has 20-40 elements of specialization. Note that one project manager cannot possibly demonstrate all these talent areas and elements. The successful team includes a range of high-performers who can demonstrate each Talent and element, when needed. Thus, project success requires talent from Executives, Sponsors, Resource Managers, Internal Customers, Project Managers and Team members to deliver the needed results. Any role shortfall is a significant project risk.

The Talent Areas of Greatest Importance

Let us explore the needed Project Talent areas, with some of their elements, so we can all better apply them in projects. Some, until recently, held tightly to the belief that technical project processes were all we need for success. Our long-held position (since the 1980s) is that yes, project management processes are important, **and** two other factors have more impact on project and business success. Those factors are *leadership and interpersonal skills* in the team, and *strategic linkage* with the enterprise context³. Recently, PMI⁴ has added a “Talent Triangle” to reflect their newfound realization about our prerequisites to business success with projects.

But wait, there’s more! Now that the professional associations are all on the same page, consider this: the Talent Areas (using my labels) *Technical PM, Interpersonal, and Enterprise Context* are needed; but one area is still missing. I recognized that omission and added it to my company’s PM training and methodologies in the 1980s. So I now add *Product* Talent to your quest.

The omission was logical. Our professional organizations are involved in training, guiding, and certifying project managers in project management. That is their focus. In our project and program consulting, I work with the entire enterprise, seeking ways to improve their success rates. I recognized that we needed representation from the *Product* area, to truly help our customers achieve business success through projects and programs. Now, I offer **the Talent Tetrahedron** at the right.



Product Talent, Specific to the Application Area

Product Talent adds roles and responsibilities—and needed Role-Competences—for project Sponsors and other key businesspeople—with the right training and coaching. The solution developers on the team need project management skills, but even more important are their skills in the product disciplines, and their solution delivery expertise. I was happy, 20 years later, when IIBA and other organizations realized the need for Product Talent, and recognized the role of Business Analysts.

The chart at the right shows some of the competences needed in each Talent Area. Each competence requires 1-6 or so Learning Outcomes. Today, most of the professional associations agree on the Technical PM, Interpersonal, and Enterprise Context areas, and that is a very important improvement. And yet, how successful will your next project be if the Product competences are missing?

This Product Talent gap remains in many projects today. Clearly, someone is performing many of those actions; but who is taking responsibility for finding the talent needed to work most-effectively in those areas? Who is prioritizing the most-skilled talent for **your** highest-strategic value projects?

<p>Product</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives Business needs; requirements Problems & opportunities Organizational change mgmt. Know-how/work area expertise Testing, validation & verification Documentation & training Solution delivery, acceptance Evaluating business results 	<p>Enterprise Context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic alignment Formal/informal organization Power navigation Prioritization & resourcing Benefit realization Cultural, values appreciation Alliance-building Supplier, contractor relations Political savvy
<p>Technical PM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project & resource planning Scope & talent management Quality assurance & control Risk & issue management Delegation & estimating, Scheduling, cost control Contracting & procurement Reviews, change control Status tracking & reporting 	<p>Interpersonal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership & Influence Sustaining the vision Relationship-building Personal communication Conflict, crisis management Results orientation Engagement & teamwork Emotional intelligence Stakeholder engagement

Summarizing Talent Acquisition

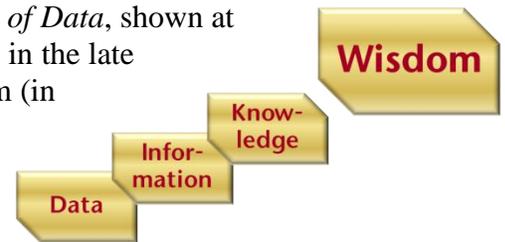
To acquire Talent, you must clearly understand what you are seeking. Acquiring Project Talent is more challenging than finding operations talent, because of the unique nature of projects. You seek more than a checkbox that says “project manager,” and a bunch of buzzwords. Instead, you are seeking a range of roles, perhaps from inside your organization, fresh from Universities, or from your competitors. You are seeking dozens and dozens of competences. The right role definitions, together with clear understanding of the specific competences you seek, will help you find fresh talent—and can also help you to recognize the talent you already have.

Talent Management Area 2: Talent Development

Can you develop talent in others? Yes, as long as your people already fulfill some of those innate aspects of Talent that I mentioned earlier. Talent alone is not enough; Charles Koch, the billionaire investor, says that Values are even more important than Talent—he judges Values higher than Talent in job seekers. So yes, given the right potential, you can develop talent. Whose job is this? I believe that the answer depends on each situation, but it is usually some combination of Resource Managers, Project Managers, and Human Resources Managers.

Our First Insights into the Stairway to Talent

In the late 1970s, I sought to improve decision-making through use of management information. I applied a concept from an article I had read. I introduced *the Taxonomy of Data*, shown at the right. I presented it to managers, to associations, and other audiences, in the late 1970s. I had one problem: Note the gap between Knowledge and Wisdom (in that era, Wisdom was our ultimate objective). I post a bit more about this Taxonomy of Data in my blog: [does-knowledge-want-to-be-managed/](#). The context is a Knowledge Management article, with recent references to the topic by the legendary Max Wideman.



◆ Codified, written, transmitted or shared; understood by others

◆ Experience-based, internal, difficult to transfer to others

For a dozen years, I failed to find ways to close that gap between Knowledge and Wisdom. Then, in the 1990s, when Knowledge Management (KM) emerged, I had an insight. The KM movement defined two types of knowledge: Explicit and Tacit, as shown in the diagram at left. I had focused on Explicit Knowledge. Takeuchi and Nonaka, in a great book⁵, showed how transfer of Tacit Knowledge **held the secret to closing that gap**. This insight verified everything I knew to be true about learning, especially for adults.

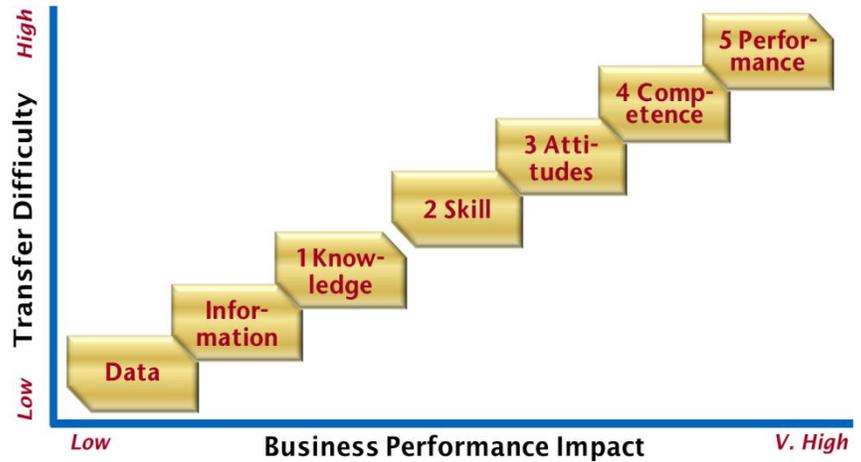
The Role of Training in Talent Development

Training (or Learning, as I call it) has a clear role in developing talent. It helps develop the Knowledge foundation for Talent Development, but **it does not instill talent**. Why not? Different roles have different learning needs, different levels of current grasp, and different expectations from their learning. I have found a proper competence assessment to be the smartest way to assure that improved business results come from any training. A smart follow-on is to understand the Learning Objectives (learner outcomes) for each competence, and identify the level of outcome you require. Bloom’s Taxonomy, as revised in 2001⁶ is very useful in this targeting.

The actual training must be well structured to maximize its potential. It must move beyond “the talking head, pedagogical lecturer,” to include learner-centered in-session and post-session application. For example, in the classroom there must be exercises, or even better, case studies, scenarios and simulations. Post-class, **there must be on-the-job application**, ideally with coaching and guidance, on real-world problems. So, while it is an essential starting point, training merely builds a decent foundation for Talent development. There is another challenge to knowledge-without-application, that too few people understand: New Knowledge, consistently and properly applied, moves to Skill. Knowledge that is *not applied* has a **half-life of two weeks**.

Talent Transfer versus Business Impact

So yes, the right training can indeed build the foundation for learning. The challenge, as shown in the model at right, is moving beyond short-term acquisition of facts and knowledge; **minding the gap**, as it were. This is an important step to understand, because the greatest benefits come from the *application* items on the model, Skill: Attitudes, Competence, and Performance.



Note that we now see two axes in the model introduced earlier. The vertical axis, *Transfer Difficulty*, reflects how hard the Talent is to transfer. On the horizontal axis, the items below the gap have very little *Business Performance Impact*.

Readers who are involved with Learning will recognize some of the new levels on the chart. For example, levels 3, 2 and 1 reflect the familiar ASK items. These are the Attitudes, Skills, and Knowledge, the focus of effective learning. For those who are familiar with Bloom’s Taxonomy (the 2001 version is more relevant for Adult learners), it builds upon the ASK items, adds measures, and moves into beginning aspects of true learning, impacting levels 1-4 on the chart. Finally, the model evokes Kirkpatrick’s Class Evaluation method, which progresses from classroom “smile sheets, through on-the-job application, to Performance; reflecting levels 1-5. The resulting model spans from raw data to business performance, and provides a roadmap for talent development.

A “Driving” Example of Talent Progression

Do you remember learning how to drive? The graphic below shows how our model applies to that experience. It begins with getting a Driver’s Manual, and studying it thoroughly. Then you take an exam, to show that you understand the basics. This step is much like an exam-based certification in any discipline. At this point, passing a written test shows nothing about your capabilities as a competent driver.

Next, you cross the *application* gap between steps 1 and 2, Knowledge and Skill. You use the Knowledge **Learner Permit** to practice the key actions that you must demonstrate to a driving test examiner. Of course, the examiner still cannot verify that you are a competent driver—only that you demonstrate enough of the key driving skills that you will not hurt yourself, or other drivers. This driving test demonstrates that you are now “in the game” to drive.



You then gain a range of experiences in your daily driving, including establishing attitudes that make you a safe and courteous driver: *No texting while driving* is a smart attitude, that will help you avoid tickets in most states. **Are we there yet?** No, you are not yet a competent driver. If you learned to drive with an automatic transmission, can you drive a “stick shift” and clutch? Can you drive large *and* small cars? Can you drive in heavy traffic? In ice and snow? Can you drive an 18-wheeler semi-truck/trailer? It is the application of your knowledge, skills and attitudes in a wide range of different situations that begins to develop your competence as a driver. You have probably guessed that, at each successive level of our model, there are fewer people who qualify: Skills, Attitudes and Competence. So what about Performance; how do we achieve that ultimate level?

Achieving Performance

You will note that everything I have talked about so far, in the progression from the gap into levels 2-4 involved action. Learning is kinetic (active; application); there are measurable indicators along the way that you can use to track your progress. They are all moving you toward the top-right end of the model, which may offer different **results** for different people. For myself, in this driving example, I went through the progression, and at Competence, I was driving everything from motorcycles to off-road pro-rally cars, to semi-trucks and trailers, to racecars. Performance in this progression meant **winning races**. Yes, that’s me at right, on a Victory Lap at Seattle International Raceway, in 1978.

This was amateur sports car racing, on the West Coast, setting lap records on every track I raced, and winning every race in my last three years. You can see why I focus on performance, and why I understand the ingredients and actions needed to achieve it—in racecars, and in projects. While few everyday drivers achieve full Competence, even fewer achieve winning levels of Performance—and the same is true with projects.



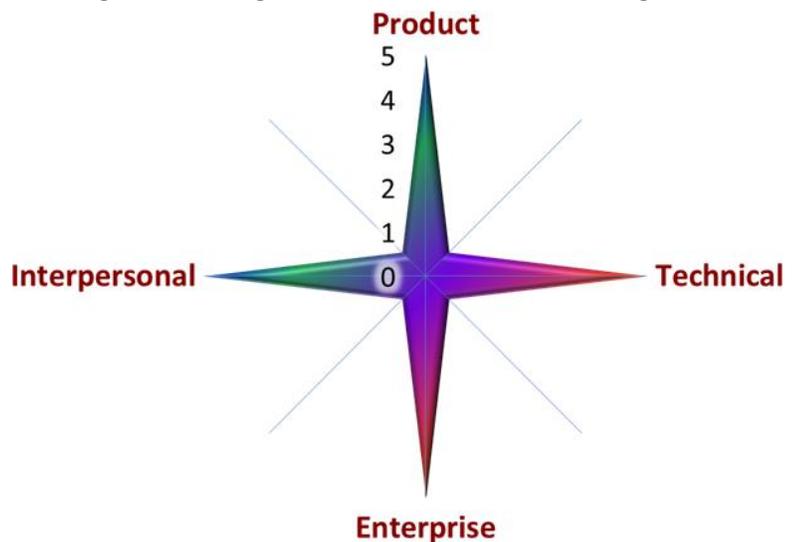
Beyond the driving analogy, my experience in business is that, for projects, the progression from Skills to Attitudes mastery offers at least a 2x increase in results; another 2x when you move from Attitudes to Competence mastery; and again, another 2x when you progress from Competence to winning levels of Performance. Recall that I cited the driver’s manual exam and learners permit as a Knowledge-based achievement. Would you rather have a Knowledge talent level 1 for all your project and program managers, or a full assessment of Competence, level 4? Of course, a winning level 5 in project and program **performance** would be even better!

Talent Management and Competitive Advantage

The reader can clearly see the benefits of the closely-held competitive advantage of my enterprise customers that have applied these insights. And, as professional associations poll executives about what is needed to improve delivery of business success through projects, the rest of the world is now catching on to those secrets. That’s great! Let us look at several aspects of implementing this scoring of the levels of Talent Management.

The ideal project team scores at the maximum in each Talent Area, as shown at right. It does so with members who are at the needed Competence or Performing levels *for each element* in each Talent Area—I showed examples of those elements in the Talent Acquisition section. You can see how difficult this can be in a small project team, which is another reason why “lean teams,” a scourge and management malpractice for decades, is such a poor idea.

Team members with the right talent in their disciplines are the “secret sauce” to successfully delivering the project. Yet each project is as successful as its lowest Talent Area Score: the weak link in the chain. If, for example, your Product Talent score is only 2 (Skill), who wins? No one! So we continue to hear that X% for each billion dollars spent on projects is wasted.



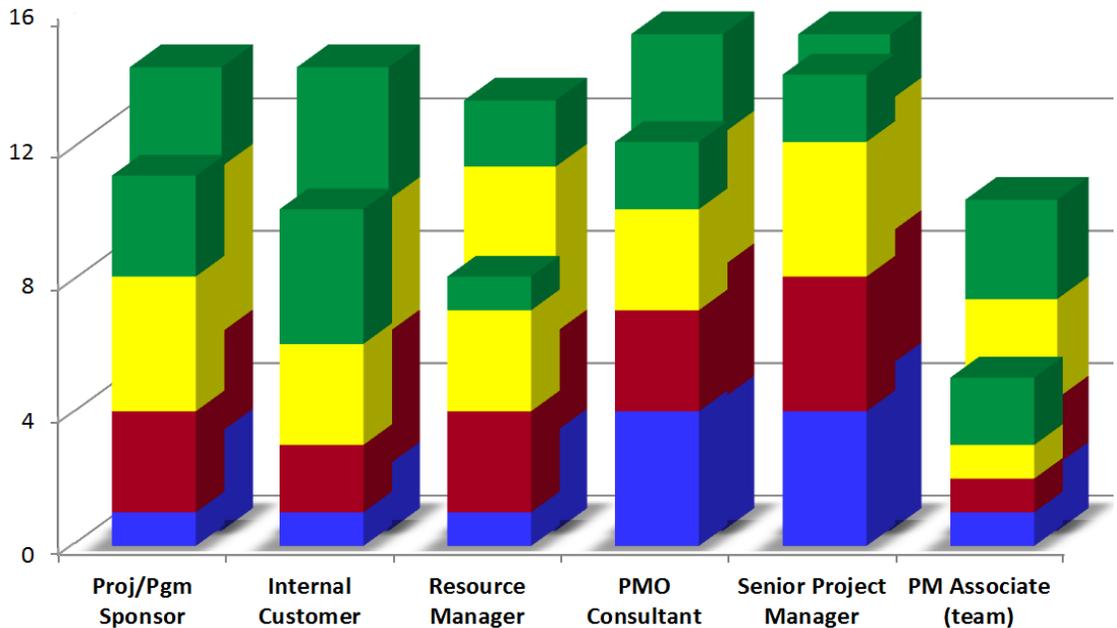
Role-Competences: The Dimensions for Talent Development

Whose job is it to assure that every project and program has the right talent, at the right level? I assert that Sponsors and Resource Managers are responsible for maximizing that Project Talent score. By now it should be clear that it is not just project manager talent we seek; all team members, and those who manage them, must demonstrate the appropriate talent for their roles. Sponsors and Managers thus have two areas of responsibility:

- a. To assure that the project gets needed talent, at the right times, and in the right level of engagement;
- b. To contribute their own strengths and time where their Role-Competences are required.

Review the chart at the right. It reflects the five-point scale for each Talent Area, with both the **targets** (at back), and the **average scores** (in front) of each key role stacked in a bar chart.

With four talent areas, and five maximum points per area, the maximum possible score is 20 points. A minimum desirable score would be 10.



The colors reflect the four talent areas: Blue = Technical PM; Red = Interpersonal; Yellow = Enterprise Context; Green = Product Talents. Based on your review, answer these questions:

- a. Can a strong Senior Project Manager “save” this project?
- b. Which roles require the most development (or talent replacement) to “carry their weight” on this project?
- c. Which role is the greatest source of Enterprise Context Talent, and which one *should be*?
- d. What would you do if this were **your** project?

This sample of a role-competence assessment is not from a real project; many are far worse. Few organizations can even provide the accurate assessment data needed to produce this chart. A typical report from an effective competence assessment shows a list of gaps and strengths of each stakeholder. This *aggregated roadmap* for Talent Development is valuable both for project risk management, and for longer-term talent management.

Summarizing Talent Management Step 2, Talent Development

You will note that I have not discussed the steps of *actually developing Talent*: This involves talent teaming, coaching, pairing, recognizing, sharing, and evaluating. Other authors have covered those topics in detail, with excellent insights into actions beyond the classroom—in the workplace, where the true business impacts develop. Instead, I have explored and explained a framework for understanding and tracking the precious nature of Project Talent. I will assert that most current project and program-oriented Talent Development approaches fall far short of the business needs. To a great extent, this shortfall is the result of too-frequent cases of spending the majority of project learning funds in short-term memory, knowledge-retention courses, rather than launching participants on the talent trajectory to higher performances, as I have discussed.

Talent Management Area 3: Managing and Retaining Talent

Clearly, recognizing and rewarding talent is key to growing it. It is also one of the keys to retaining it. In an era when every enterprise has Talent Scouts on the search for *your* project talent, savvy enterprises apply consistent strategies for retaining it—protecting your investment. This is especially important if your enterprise is one that is experiencing the outflow of talent resulting from retiring baby boomers. Consistent, enterprise-wide Talent Management strategies (also called Human Capital Strategies) are also important if your Project Culture includes conflicting priorities, unrealistically tight deadlines, limited resources, and unavailable talent—with project progress based more on pressure and heroics, than on competent and performing PM practices.

Difficulties in Managing Project Talent

It is not easy to manage top talent. Top talent can be finicky, temperamental, and sometimes prima donnas. Just look at young celebrity talent (or sports talent) to see how difficult it can be. This view may provide clues for managing your enterprise’s talent. One key to managing talent is to continue to provide new challenges. **Otherwise, those who are “topped out” in their roles may choose to find new challenges in other companies.** So keep those challenges, and the resulting learning (and rewards and recognition), coming.

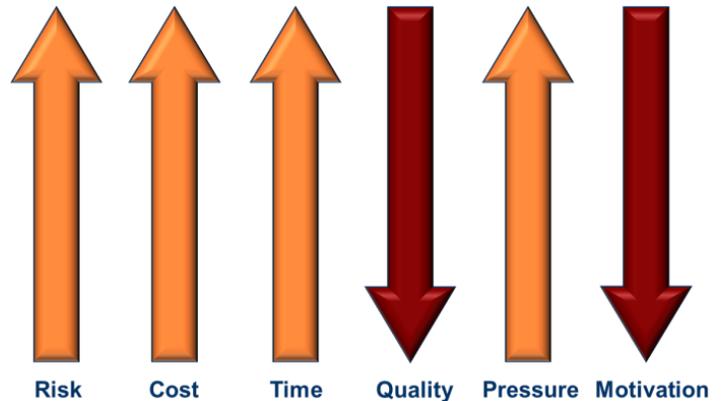
A distinguishing characteristic between potentially great talent and others is their *eagerness to learn*. Some Social Styles assessment tools call this Flexibility. This eagerness to learn also relates to a trait that helps some people thrive during organizational change, while others struggle with it. If you think you are providing all the needed challenges and learning opportunities, are you sure you are still getting maximum results?

Retaining Project Talent begins with institutionalizing four simple actions:

- Responding to needs quickly and correctly
- Maintaining team motivation and morale
- When losing Talent, act decisively and wisely
- Apply proper PM practices in Talent Management (“Eating our own dog food”)

Responding to needs quickly and correctly

The diagram at the right shows the typical sequence of events when a project loses talent. Risk, Cost and Time go up. Quality always goes down. Well-meaning, but not yet-competent Managers put Pressure on the team to “catch up.” Why shouldn’t they? It worked last time! Team Motivation goes down. Risk, Cost, and Time go up even more, and Quality also goes down further. There are far smarter ways to manage a situation like this, yet the actions typically taken do more damage than doing nothing at all.



Of course, a high-performing project team will tell their managers exactly what support they need, and the project and business consequences of receiving it, versus not receiving it. Even then, some not-yet-competent managers will ignore the team’s advice.

Maintaining Team Motivation and Morale

Herzberg’s Hygiene and Motivation factors still apply today. Make sure you are applying them! We have mentioned recognition and rewards, and the rewards need not be monetary. Teams need rapid response to project needs, with 360° communication; your visible presence, plus personal “Thank You’s!” Add a barriers-buster mentality, consistently demonstrated. Serve as an “Umbrella” for unbearable pressures from above. Show open-ended commitment: “How else can we help?” These are the messages that great leaders share with their teams.

When Losing Talent, Act Decisively and Wisely

Dealing with the issue of Talent Loss is basic risk management. We must plan for, and act, just as we would with any other project risk. So we establish *Prevent* actions: **Hedge** for Talent Capture. *Intervene* actions: **Act** for Talent Transfer; and *Recover* actions: **Scavenge** to mitigate. In all cases, we rely on Talent Collateral: The verbal and written documentation (see the starting-point list at right) that reflects escaping Explicit Knowledge, in the case of losing or lost Talent. Note that this list suggests that we need to assure adequate and appropriate governance; some teams disdain documentation that does not help them deliver their results.

Talent Collateral

- a. Interviews, Meetings
- b. Partnering (Shadowing)
- c. Plan vs. Actuals
- d. Inventorying Collateral
- e. Project Documents
- f. Product Documents
- g. Emails, Correspondence
- h. Change Orders/Requests
- i. Assumptions, Risks, Issues, Lessons Learned

A question I addressed in a recent web conference session on this topic was: When we lose team members, how do we: a) Transfer knowledge; b) Maintain motivation; c) Keep momentum? I listed scenarios for typical project Talent Losses:

- a. Internal Customer on team re-assigned elsewhere;
- b. Project Manager of strategic project leaves company;
- c. One-third of the team moved to a “higher-priority” project;
- d. A key developer in a Scrum-based Agile team leaves;
- e. Project Sponsor promoted; she/he leaves your division.

What would these do to your project? How would you respond? Would the project survive? I supplied a series of suggested actions for each situation. Taking the *Internal Customer* loss, here was the impact, and my suggestions:

Talent areas lost: Product, Enterprise Context, and Interpersonal *Actions to consider*

- Replace with another savvy customer; assign the new member’s other job responsibilities to another qualified person from their workgroup;
- Manage several weeks’ overlap (not always possible, but smart);
- Establish rapport, and perform teambuilding for fast onboarding;
- Review & Discuss: Business Requirements, Validation Plan, Organizational Change Management status, Benefits Realization, Stakeholder Management Plan.



Manage risks before your Talent ‘goes out the door’

Each of the scenarios and recommended responses evoked great interest and questions from our participants.

A Talented, Appropriate, Recovery Action

My wife Rose suggested a very common sense response to project Talent loss. She is also a project manager. In a review of one of our PM methodologies many years ago, she pointed out that most organizations use Project Change Control whenever Scope changes. She asked, why don’t they use it **any time** any of the project vital signs change? Brilliant! I had presumed that this was already happening; but even with my clients, I found that, because so much emphasis was on scope control, that is mostly what they focused upon. So I established fresh guidelines to reinforce this insight: Use change control to manage talent, **and all other changes. Bravo, Rose!**

- Treat talent changes like any other project change;
- Manage them with your Change Control processes;
- Evaluate the impact; and where needed, reverse changes;
- Use our own tools to manage the risk of changes;
- Help us practice what we preach!
- Imagine what this can do for team motivation!

Conclusions

Begin your project and program Talent search internally in your enterprise, based on Role-Competence requirements. Note that the requirements vary with the size and management complexity of each initiative, so the requirements vary. Continue your search into the open market, other organizations, other locales and then other countries. And here is an irony: Some enterprises appear to use exactly the opposite sequence. They fail to recognize their Talent within.

Once you seek, find, and acquire your Project Talent, continue developing *all* the participants in your project teams. You are not merely developing project managers. In many cases, others have far greater Role-Competence gaps. These other roles are your target for the most powerful project improvement you can achieve.

Focus especially on improving Middle Manager Talent: the impact they have on project success is massive, whether beneficial or detrimental. Also look at your Sponsors' role-competence requirements. Many Sponsors that I have worked with have no clue what a Sponsor should do—or how much of their time a project of a certain size should require. These two role-areas often show the potential for great improvements in project and program performance. Manage all your talent effectively to maximize your yield, and continue developing them. Your own Talent Scouting improvement adventure begins here, and now, using the insights you have gleaned from this article. Your continued project success depends upon it!

Related Content

Our original 2008 article on Talent Management remains available at our website. Since that article, we have continued to explore the relationship of knowledge management, talent management, and project management in a series of articles, keynotes, and major industry presentations. The three disciplines appear to be not only complimentary, *but essential*, in achieving business success through projects.

We presented parts of these insights in a December, 2015 12,000-participant PMI® Talent Management Virtual Conference. A recording of that presentation is available to PMI members through ProjectManagement.com. In that session, we focused on Talent Retention, with some discussion of Acquisition and Development. We also shared our Talent Tetrahedron and Talent Level models.

This updated article was published as a Featured Article in the January, 2016 PM World Journal. It was the subject of the February, 2016 IPMA-USA Dialogue Webinar Series event, and the recording of that webinar is now available. See the IPMA-USA.org website. And, Max Wideman spotted the article, made a few improvements, and posted it in two parts on his website, MaxWideman.com, in May-June, 2016. We've integrated Max's improvements; thank you Max!

PM related journals in China and Russia also translated and published this article in 2016-17.

In addition to making our articles and webinars available to you, we also offer custom onsite versions of these presentations, and the concepts behind them. *How are you improving your talent management?* Let us know!

About the Author

STACY A. GOFF, the *PM Performance Coach*, has coached and inspired tens of thousands of project and program managers, and hundreds of organizations, on five continents, for over forty years. A Project Management practitioner since 1970 and consultant since 1982, he has also been a strong contributor to professional organizations such as IPMA® and PMI® since 1983.

He is a co-founder and past-president of IPMA-USA, and 2011-2014 Vice President of Marketing & Events for IPMA, the International Project Management Association. In September, 2015, he was named an IPMA Honorary Fellow.

Goff's interest in project competence and performance began with establishing a PM Competency Center for a nuclear power plant in the early 1980s. It continued with international engagements during the 1980s and 90s as he helped organizations assess and improve their project and program performance. Today, he coaches, speaks and performs keynote speeches at major project-related events. And, he continues to pursue his interest in individual, project team, organization, and national and international PM performance.

Mr. Goff brings a results-oriented approach to Project Management coaching, consulting, and training. His insight for the needed PM Competences, and his delivery of effective training translate to improved project performance. In his working life, he combines his Project experience with sensitivity for the interpersonal skills areas—the human aspects of projects.

In his papers, presentations, workshops or in consulting, he combines his project experience with strategic linkage for all projects and programs. His insights and experience have provided competitive advantage for his clients for over 40 years. His business result: measurably increased **PM Performance**.

Contact Stacy at +1.719.488.3850, email: Stacy.Goff@gmail.com. His website is <https://StacyGoff.com>

References

- ¹ IPMA® is the International Project Management Association. Learn more about IPMA at www.ipma.world.
- ² See our 2006 IPMA China World Congress paper, *Distinguishing PM Competence in Training and Development*, in the Articles section of our website.
- ³ One reason why the author embraced the model of the International Project Management Association (IPMA®, at ipma.world) is because they (as the world's first professional project management association), understood the same need for advanced competences, and embraced the behavioral and contextual competences in the 1990s.
- ⁴ PMI® is a US-based, global professional association for project management. Learn more about PMI at www.pmi.org.
- ⁵ A great book, *The Knowledge Creating Company*, by Takeuchi and Nonaka, goes a long way in helping to understand the leap from explicit to tacit knowledge, and the methods for transferring between them.
- ⁶ Bloom 2001 refers to *A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching and Assessing*, by Lorin W. Anderson & David R. Krathwohl, an intern forty-five years earlier for the original 1956 Bloom's Taxonomy edition. Published by Longman, 2001.



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