

- A project (home) office
- A project team

Generally, project office personnel are assigned full-time to the project and work out of the project office, whereas the project team members work out of the functional units and may spend only a small percentage of their time on the project. Normally, project office personnel report directly to the project manager, but they may still be solid to their line function just for administrative control. A project office usually is not required on small projects, and sometimes the project can be accomplished by just one person who may fill all of the project office positions.

Before the staffing function begins, five basic questions are usually considered:

- What are the requirements for an individual to become a successful project manager?
- Who should be a member of the project team?
- Who should be a member of the project office?
- What problems can occur during recruiting activities?
- What can happen downstream to cause the loss of key team members?

On the surface, these questions may not seem especially complex. But when we apply them to a project environment (which is by definition a “temporary” situation) where a constant stream of projects is necessary for corporate growth, the staffing problems become complex, especially if the organization is understaffed.

4.1 THE STAFFING ENVIRONMENT

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To understand the problems that occur during staffing, we must first investigate the characteristics of project management, including the project environment, the project management process, and the project manager.

Two major kinds of problems are related to the project environment: personnel performance problems and personnel policy problems. Performance is difficult for many individuals in the project environment because it represents a change in the way of doing business. Individuals, regardless of how competent they are, find it difficult to adapt continually to a changing situation in which they report to multiple managers.

On the other hand, many individuals thrive on temporary assignments because it gives them a “chance for glory.” Unfortunately, some employees might consider the chance for glory more important than the project. For example, an employee may pay no attention to the instructions of the project manager and instead perform the task his own way. In this situation, the employee wants only to be recognized as an achiever and really does not care if the project is a success or failure, as long as he still has a functional home to return to where he will be identified as an achiever with good ideas.

The second major performance problem lies in the project–functional interface, where an individual suddenly finds himself reporting to two bosses, the functional manager and the project manager. If the functional manager and the project manager are in agreement about the work to be accomplished, then performance may not be hampered. But if conflicting

directions are received, then the individual may let his performance suffer because of his compromising position. In this case, the employee will “bend” in the direction of the manager who controls his purse strings.

Personnel policy problems can create havoc in an organization, especially if the “grass is greener” in a project environment than in the functional environment. Functional organizations normally specify grades and salaries for employees. Project offices, on the other hand, have no such requirements and can promote and pay according to achievement. The difficulty here is that one can distinguish between employees in grades 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 in a line organization, whereas for a project manager the distinction might appear only in the size of the project or the amount of responsibility. Bonuses are also easier to obtain in the project office but may create conflict and jealousy between the horizontal and vertical elements.

Because each project is different, the project management process allows each project to have its own policies, procedures, rules, and standards, provided they fall within broad company guidelines. Each project must be recognized as a project by top management so that the project manager has the delegated authority necessary to enforce the policies, procedures, rules, and standards.

Project management is successful only if the project manager and his team are totally dedicated to the successful completion of the project. This requires each team member of the project team and office to have a good understanding of the fundamental project requirements, which include:

- Customer liaison
- Project direction
- Project planning
- Project control
- Project evaluation
- Project reporting

Ultimately, the person with the greatest influence during the staffing phase is the project manager. The personal attributes and abilities of project managers will either attract or deter highly desirable individuals. Basic characteristics include:

- Honesty and integrity
- Understanding of personnel problems
- Understanding of project technology
- Business management competence
 - Management principles
 - Communications
- Alertness and quickness
- Versatility
- Energy and toughness
- Decision-making ability
- Ability to evaluate risk and uncertainty

Project managers must exhibit honesty and integrity to foster an atmosphere of trust. They should not make impossible promises, such as immediate promotions for everyone if a follow-on contract is received. Also, on temporarily assigned activities, such as a