View from the Top

Paving a Smooth Road to Your Organization's Vision

As the image above illustrates, execution is the foundation for your organization's mission. While the vision is where you want to be in 3-5 years and the strategy is the map for how to get there, portfolio and project execution is the action that drives us to the vision. And so success of the vision and strategy rely on effective execution.

So how do we make for a smooth ride to your organizations desired future state?

Well you have to remove the roadblocks in execution—project failures. There are four points throughout projects that regularly set projects up for failure. The good news is that these are predictable points of resistance that you can mitigate with a bit of preparation:

- **Scope Definition:** Involve subject matter experts (SMEs) in the definition process; "commit" management and stakeholders to the project instead of letting them provide the resources and leave everything else to the SMEs.

- **Initiation:** "Front-end the pain" of projects by taking the $100 precaution in the Planning phase that prevent $1M problems in the Development Phase.

- **Execution:** A large project becomes a year late one day at a time. Remain proactive by keeping *tangible* control over a project (monitor, revise the plan, re-baseline, plan contingencies, keep stakeholders updated on satisfied completion criteria, etc.).

- **Closeout:** Understand the Project Completion Criteria; follow up on out-of-scope activities; handoff to stakeholders.

Project failures generally derive from one of these four areas, so anticipating and preparing for them will keep your project driving the strategy without stalling. Once you remove these roadblocks to project success, your execution will provide a smooth road to organization success .

To learn about our upcoming webinar that will cover these "Defining Moments" for a project more in-depth, click here.

Webinar

Title: *Leadership Is Taken, Not Given: Defining Moments for Projects and Their Leaders*
Date: Wednesday, October 4th

Time: 3pm

Project managers face a leadership paradox. They hold no tangible authority, yet they are ultimately responsible for controlling projects. In the fourth installment of Project Assistants' 2013 Webinar Series, President and CEO, Gus Cicala, will address *Leadership Is Taken, Not Given: Defining Moments for Projects and Their Leaders*.

On Wednesday, December 4th at 3pm, Gus will present a free, live broadcast of the acclaimed presentation he has toured for much of this year. This is a great opportunity for those who have been unable to attend the speaking events where Gus has presented.

He will use real-world, high-stakes scenarios to demonstrate crucial leadership moments in the world at large. Then, those concepts will be applied to leadership in project management. Managers will learn to establish an objective control over projects through the perspective of cadence and rhythm.

Next, Gus will cover how to maintain and regain this control throughout the life of a project. There are "defining moments" throughout projects—that is, predictable points of resistance for which a project managers can prepare themselves by understanding the difficulties that arise and the sacrifices that might have to be made.

Finally, Gus will provide practical methods for resolving the inevitable issues that

materialize when projects enter the real world.

Or, learn about The Keys to Our Success, which features 25 of the top Project Managers in North America, including a chapter from Gus on project leadership.

Case Study
Project Assistants Develops PMO for IT Organization

A recent success for Project Assistants was a senior-level engagement with the IT leadership of a software and service firm that is focused on global product data management and data synchronization networks.

When they hired Project Assistants, they were merging two IT organizations. Both organizations had project management needs and neither had a Project Management Office. As part of the merger they wanted to build out and design a PMO that they could roll out to their global IT organization.

The key to the project's success was planning the implementation of the

News
Project Management Using Microsoft Project Management 2013 Officially Available

Project Assistants has been providing Project Management Theory and Microsoft Project training material for our training courses since the release of Microsoft Project version 3 (1993). Prior to the release of Microsoft Project 2013, we were surprised to find that there were no hands-on training manuals available for Microsoft Project 2010 that also covered the enterprise features used in Microsoft Project Professional and Project Web Application.

PMO. To do this, we delivered our [Assessment/Vision/Roadmap](#) service. Project Assistants is currently in the process of **Implementing** the roadmap with the client.

The organization has already shown several benefits from our engagement. The PMO we have put together has led to higher control and vision to active projects. There are also project management standards for the organization that facilitate repeatable project successes. These benefits have driven improved project execution across the organization.

[To learn about other successes, click here.](#)

Or, [learn more about the gambit of solutions](#) we provide for organizations looking to improve their project-based results.

Events

Project Assistants to Present at PMI-NYC's Annual Symposium

Gus will be presenting *Leadership Is*

This guide has been created to serve as that comprehensive reference and training guide, assembling content and best practices honed over 20+ years of Microsoft Project and general project management training.

Many training guides on technology are primarily manuals on features and functions of the software. The goal of this book is to show why those features and functions are important from a project management standpoint (based on PMI's Project Management Body of Knowledge, PMBOK), and then demonstrate how to effectively

Taken, Not Given at the 2013 PMINYC symposium. His presentation will be on Friday, November 1st from 10:10-11:10am.

[Click here to register](#)

leverage that value. When used cover-to-cover, this text serves as a comprehensive guide to running a project from initiation to closeout, with technical guides along the way for how to use Microsoft Project to facilitate those processes.

The text covers Microsoft Project 2013 Standard, Microsoft Project 2013 Professional, Microsoft Project Server 2013, Microsoft Project Web Application 2013 (PWA) and Microsoft Project Online 2013 for Office 365.

[To purchase the book, click here.](#)

[To learn about our training offering, click here.](#)

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Add us to your address book

Project Assistants integrates your People, Processes, Technology and Governance to more optimally reach your organizational goals by delivering better, faster and cheaper project-based results.

Founded in 1996, Project Assistants is headquartered in Wilmington, Delaware with international delivery capability. A long-time member of Microsoft's Partner Network and Microsoft Office Project Premier Partner, Project Assistants was recognized in Inc 500 as one of "America's Fastest Growing Private Companies." On average, each member of our consulting team has over 20 years of project management and related business experience. The team also includes a significant number of published authors of the best-selling Microsoft Project publications and other leading Project Management publications. For more information about Project Assistants, Inc., please go to www.projectassistants.com or call us at 1-800-642-9259.