Steaming Kettle Consulting's One-Page Guide to Project Management

Steaming Kettle Consulting

1: Stakeholders

Prime Directive: find out who matters, understand their needs.
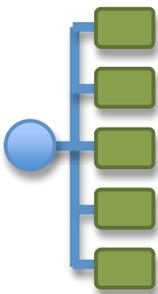
Key / **Casual**

- Who gets the project benefits?
- Who is most critical to project success?
- Who has power?
- How does information flow among these people?

Caution: the most important stakeholder may shift with time.

2: Scope

Prime Directive: publicly and with documents, get clear about the purpose of the project.

In **Out**

- What's the problem statement?
- Who must participate?
- What's out of bounds?
- Are there high-level constraints on time/money/quality?

Caution: if there isn't enough agreement, or if people won't sign a document, don't move ahead.

3: Deliverables & WBS

Prime Directive: define what must be produced for the project to succeed.

- Focus on nouns and objects.
- Is there an actionable level of detail?
- Are we listening to the stakeholders?

Caution: resist the urge to jump ahead and start executing. Collaborative effort here pays off.

4: Planning

Prime Directive: create detailed cost and schedule estimates.

Budget, Gantt…

- What activities create deliverables?
- Resources: Enough? Timing? Quality? Contingencies?
- Is there a change control process?

Caution: don't fit deliverables to available time and money. That's almost always a blueprint for disaster.

5: Stewarding A Team

Prime Directive: assess fit and identify gaps; grow or hire what the project needs.

- Have we established trust?
- How must people change to succeed?
- How does this project improve their resume for the next project?
- Will the project upset their world?

Caution: If you create fear, contributors will shut down and will leave you in the dark.

6: Risk

Prime Directive: be proactive about the most likely and most impactful possibilities.

Med.	Crit.
Low	High

- What's the response strategy? Avoid? Transfer? Mitigate? Accept?
- Multiple strategies?

Caution: A very simple analysis repeated during the project is better than a single, deep analysis at the project launch.

7: Execution & Monitoring

Prime Directive: walk the process, listen, and eliminate barriers to success.

What's happening?

- Give simple, frequent status reports:
  - Accomplishments
  - In progress
  - Outstanding questions

Caution: don't let project management tools become a barrier to communication.

8: Troubleshooting

Prime Directive: work like a doctor, not like a mechanic.

- Address the biggest issues first
- Diagnose symptoms, identify root cause when it makes sense

Caution: no matter how much you think you know about the trouble, keep an open mind to new facts as they arise.