

LITTLE BOOK OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT



The Creative Services Team has looked at the value of Project Management across the industry from large corporate agencies to smaller hot shops.

The aim is to hopefully give you some food for thought and encourage further investment and support for this increasingly important and challenging role. Before we start, here's what other people think.

**Marc Nohr – Chief Executive Officer,
Kitcatt Nohr Digitas.**

Previously, our Account Management team performed much of the role of a Project Manager and were often inward facing. Now our Client Service teams have the support of Project Management teams, they spend more time representing the agency and developing client relationships, which is far better for business.

Our Project Managers manage a project from brief to final delivery. They scope, traffic and produce. They are production specialists with all the other skills required to eliminate scope creep, interdepartmental issues, poor quality work, late delivery and, in doing all these things, loss of profit.

In my experience, business without Project Managers is less focused and less efficient.

Joseph Petyan – Executive Partner, JWT London.

Project Management is central to our creative product. From resource and time management to budgeting, production and integrated creative in a multichannel environment, never has the role been more important in the delivery of outstanding creative solutions.

**Ian Pearman – Chief Executive Officer,
Abbott Mead Vickers BBDO.**

Project Management is the air traffic control of any agency, ensuring the prompt departure and safe landing of all projects. They are our process guardians and are our link from account teams to all internal departments.

Giles Hedger – Managing Director and Chief Strategy Officer, Leo Burnett.

Agencies are only as good as their product and the factory of advertising is today more complex than ever before, with more deliverables, more stages per deliverable, and more people per stage per deliverable.

Tracking and guiding creative work through development and bringing diverse and interrelated strands of production together on time, on budget and on brief, is part of the invisible art of a successful and profitable creative agency. For some time now, Project Management has been identified as a distinct role inside an agency, and it is high time that the broader community embraced this as one of the skills pillars of the industry.

Paul Brazier – Executive Creative Director, Abbott Mead Vickers BBDO.

As ECD I work very closely with Project Management. The head of Project Management and I work tightly as a team. Over the years we've developed a trust, respect and instinct for what we both need.

I rely on Project Management to help me manage workflow timings and process. Making everything tick. It's also important to get casting just right. Get the right brief into the right hands and I am halfway to the solution.

I also ask Project Management to work closely with Planning and Account Management to help plan ahead and ensure the fluidity of information, creative development and output.

Basically the left hand needs to know exactly what the right hand is doing.

It's a big ask. But somehow they do it.

Project Management can mean many things to different people and can vary depending upon your agency, your structure, processes and your clients' needs. But that's no bad thing, providing it has a positive perception and the agency itself understands and respects the importance of the role. It would be a mistake to try and force Project Management into one succinct industry-wide job spec, as the skills and requirements are so broad and naturally vary.

Where there is a consistency across the industry is in its proactivity – it is a department that plans and facilitates each part of an agency's process, looping in the relevant departments and skills required along the way to achieve pre-determined goals. In short, Project Managers become the guardians of how an agency works, linking process and delivery to the agency's profitability.

What is also clear is that Project Management should be an independent department working with, not for, other agency departments... the aim being that you have an agency best practice instead of a hard dictatorial process that no one has ownership of.

Should you be billing Project Management time in a different way? That is of course your call. Some clients haven't been educated about the value of Project Management and it can be hard to restructure it into how you charge and negotiate the money side of things.

Traditionally, the Project Management role is thought of as having nothing to do with an agency's clients and therefore not something that could be charged for. But as the industry evolves, Project Management is fast becoming a role that is and should be recognised by clients. At the very least, clients should understand the need of effective resource management ensuring correct casting over availability.

A creatively driven Project Manager will have an insight into the strengths of the Creative Teams and be in a position to work with their Creative Services Director (or whoever is responsible in Creative Services for allocation of briefs) to suggest the right team for the right job. Getting the team right the first time avoids delays and the need to brief the job out again, saving time, resources and positively influencing profitability.

And lastly, we'd love you to take something positive away from this book and think about how you should invest in the best possible Project Management department that suits you and your clients.

As our industry evolves, so too must the structure of our agencies and the skill sets of those who work in them. At the moment, Project Management training might be less formalised than for other disciplines, but this is an issue that the IPA is going to address and which will naturally improve as Project Management becomes a more established, recognised function in agency life.

At the moment, a great place to start is with your existing Creative Services teams – they already have many of the skills needed, and investing in developing their skills is a more cost-efficient way of building up your Project Management department than recruiting from scratch.

Think laterally when hiring and investing in training for Project Management teams. A Project Manager who truly adds value to projects will do so through their appreciation of creativity as much as through delivering the project smoothly.

As the Project Management discipline evolves, it should definitely be considered an interesting and alternative career option to Account Management and Planning and some agencies have had great success with new Project Managers coming through as part of the same traditional graduate intake.

Thank you for your time.

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