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Communicating for Project Management Success: Pro-tips from Accidental Project Managers

Annie Bélanger
Grand Valley State University, belange1@gvsu.edu

Preethi Gorecki
Grand Valley State University, raop@gvsu.edu

Jesus Espinoza
The University Of Michigan

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Communicating for Project Management Success

Pro-Tips from Accidental Project Managers

Annie Bélanger @annie_belanger
Jesus Espinoza @hayzeus89
Preethi Gorecki @helloitspree
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MiALA

Session Overview

What is Project Management? A Whirlwind Intro

Initiating Projects – Proposals & Charters

Skills and Tools to Plan and Manage Projects

Knowing How to Wrangle Tasks that Make Up Project

What is Project Management?
A Whirlwind Intro

What is a Project?

- Time-limited
- Unique goal or result
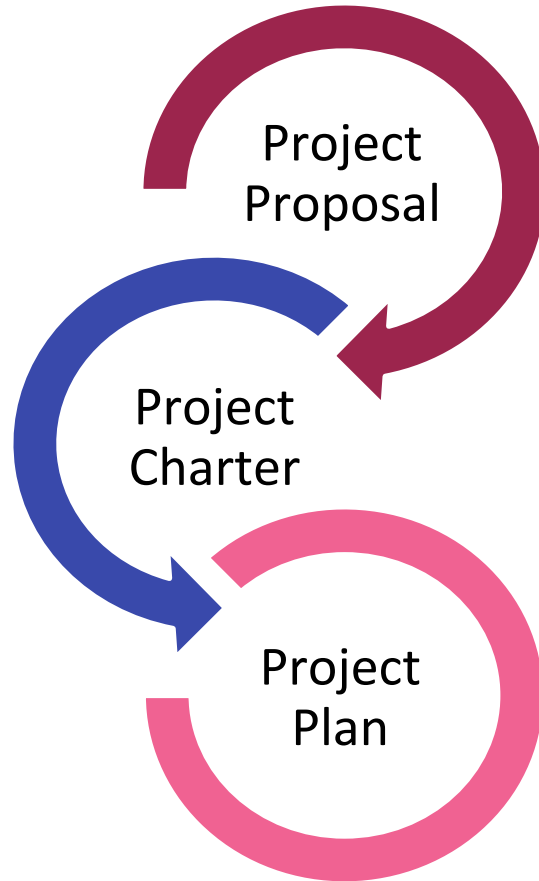- Group effort
- Specified support
- Cross-functional

project management

[*noun* **proj**-ekt **man**-ij-m*uh* nt]

1. the application of skills and techniques to initiate, plan, and implement projects efficiently and effectively.

Components of Project Management

- Is the public face of the project and initiates it
- Outlines the **why, what** and **broadly how, who, when**

Project Proposal

- Initiates consideration of a project
- Seeks administrative support
- Explores the **why** and **what**

Project Charter

Project Plan

- Establishes all activities and steps of the project, responsibilities, timelines, etc.
- Details **how, when** and **by whom**

Approaches to Project Management

Linear	Iterative
- has a low risk of shifting priorities - has a clear and consistent end goal - will not solicit input during project implementation	- has stakeholders with competing priorities - has "moving targets" - solicits input throughout project implementation

Different Projects = Different Approaches & Tools

What's wrong with this picture?

- Each project is different
- Certain project management tools make sense for certain projects
- There is no such thing as a "one size fits all" project management tool

Initiating Projects
Developing Proposals & Charters

Project Proposal

- Initiates consideration of a potential project
- Seeks administrative support for the project
- Explores why a project should be undertaken
- Serves as the elevator pitch

Always articulate strategic alignment in pitching a project!

Writing a Project Proposal

This needs to include...

- an overview - **What** is the project?
- context - **Why** is this project being proposed?
- stakeholders - **Who** does the project affect?
- timeline - **When** will the project take place?
- resourcing - **How** will the project get done?

Project Proposal Hints & Tips

Getting to yes:
- Facts, not opinions
- Learn from successes & failure
- Consultation with key stakeholders

If it's not accepted:
- Timing – it's everything!
- Edit and try again

Project Proposal Hints & Tips

Resourcing
- Include:
  - time,
  - money,
  - people, and
  - upskilling
- Review project documentation for other projects similar to yours

Developing a Project Charter

The Proposal is basis for the Charter

- **Why**: Background, Context & Strategic Alignment
- **What**: Scope & Deliverables
- **Who & How**: Resources
- **When**: Timeline

Background & Context

- Why are we doing this project?
- Why is it important?
- What are we trying to solve by doing this?
- Which stakeholders support this project and why?
- Do any stakeholders oppose this project and why?
- Spell out any assumptions

Scope

- Explains what the project is
- Outlines what the project will do

AND...

- Prevents scope creep...

Scope Creep

The tendency for a project to change and grow into an uncontrollable monster

Deliverables

- Explains what the project will create
  - Tangible outcomes, such as a communication plan
- Organize in the order the work will begin

Include milestones:

- Use a range if you are unsure of the duration
- Consider time for task as well as timeline
- Break up large projects into phases

Project Team & Roles

- Project team members
- Roles and accountabilities
- Time commitment expectations

Roles include:
- Sponsor
- Lead / co-Lead
- Members
- Advisors

Skills and Tools to Plan and Manage Projects

Creating a Project Plan

- Outlines steps needed to accomplish each project goal
- Assigns responsible party to each step
- Includes timeframe for each step
- Charts dependencies and overlaps

Project Plan – Simple Gantt Chart

	January	February	March	April	May	Beyond
Establish desired resources	🟨	🟨	🟨	🟨	🟨	🟨
Establish license allowances	🟨					
Identify pay-per-view access	🟨					
Identify OA resources						🟨
Review ezProxy config		🟨				
Establish feasibility of restriction			🟨	🟨		
Review possible restriction methods				🟨		

Assemble the Team!

Norming & Collective Engagement

Leading the Team

- Lead as well as manage
- Acknowledge success
- Respect & appreciate
- Be a straight shooter
- Open relationships with mutual respect
- Ask questions
  - Assume as a last resort
- Think in terms of big picture & details
- Focus on solutions

Managing Projects – Communications

- Project manager = Communicator
- Tailor to target audience(s)
  - Medium
  - Format
  - Delivery
- Sponsor(s) can't help if they don't know

Decision Logs

Include:

- description of the decision
- decision date
- who helped make the decision

Decision Log Example

Date	Description	Agreed by
10/07/2018	The call center will be refurbished during December	Customer Service Director
11/10/2018	All the software elements deployed as part of this project must be web-based	Project Board
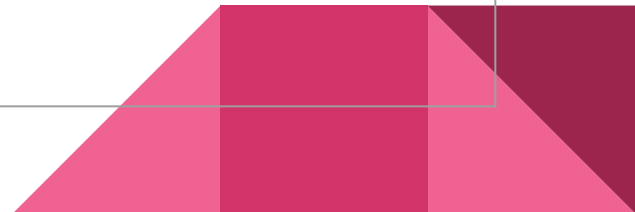
Knowing How to Wrangle Tasks that Make Up Projects

Work Time vs Duration

Work - time needed to do task (8 hours of work)

Duration - span of time needed for the task to be completed (8 days of 1 hour of work)

PERT Method

Optimistic time: 10 days

Most likely time: (based on input, research, experience, etc): 17 days

Pessimistic time: 30 days

expected time = (optimistic + 4 x most likely + pessimistic)/ 6

N = (10 + 4x17 + 30) / 6

N = 18

Ownership of Tasks

When deciding upon ownership of tasks, consider the following:
- Who has the knowledge, skills, expertise, information, or experience to complete this task?
- Who needs to approve, commit to, or review the task before it is executed?
- Who will provide the resources (such as facilities, equipment, materials, supplies, and special requirements) needed to complete the task?

Task Logs

Include:

- task description
- person assigned
- suggested completion date

Jira for Project Management & Communication

Jira for Project Management & Communication

Embracing the Chaos (or My Methods)

Gmail "labels" - Action Needed

Google keep - reminders, notes,

Tasks (in gmail) - to do lists (longer term, multi-step, iterative, on-going tasks)

Calendar - blocking off time, prep holds, co-working meetings, deadlines

IRL To Dos - daily task lists, "transfer" anything not finished

Slack - team communication

Embracing the Chaos (or My Methods)

Building Strategic Habits

Commit to doing something everyday (or on designated days each week) that will help you meet long-term project goals.
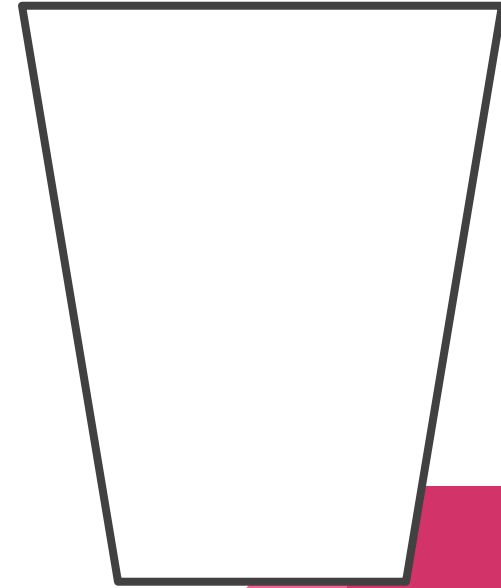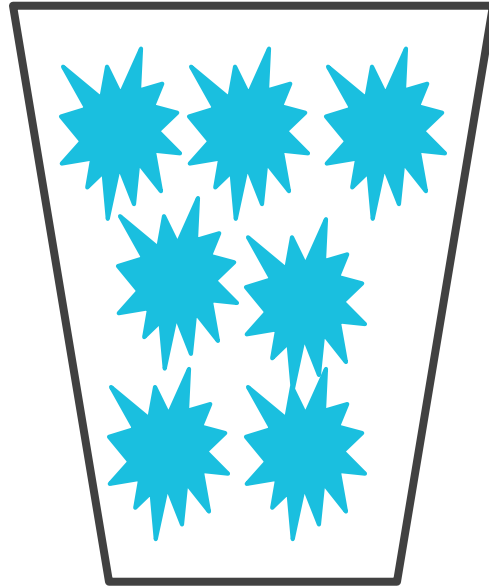
- respond to X number of emails per day
- schedule 15 minutes travel-time between every meeting
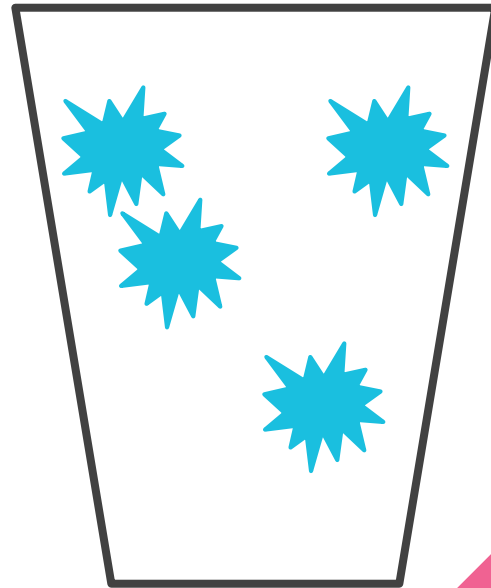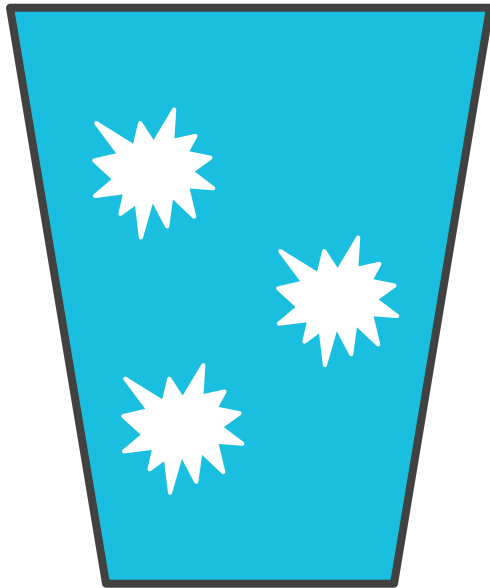- update website content at 9:30 AM every M W F
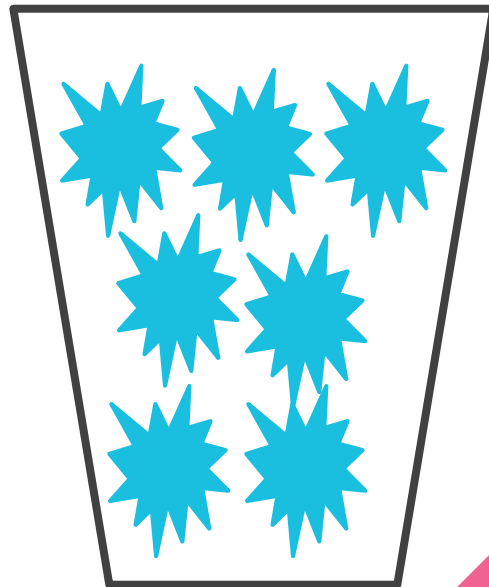
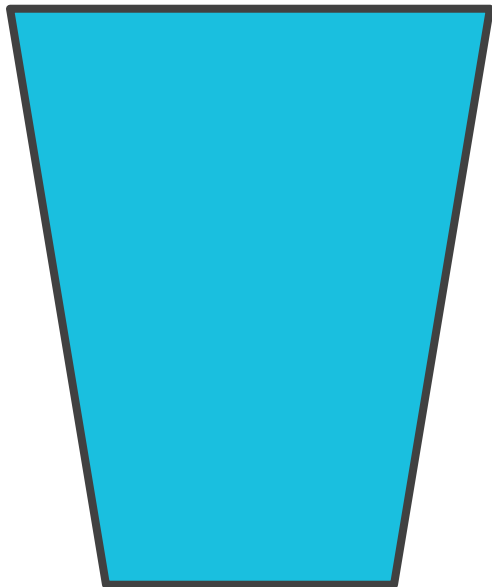# Gamifying Boring Tasks

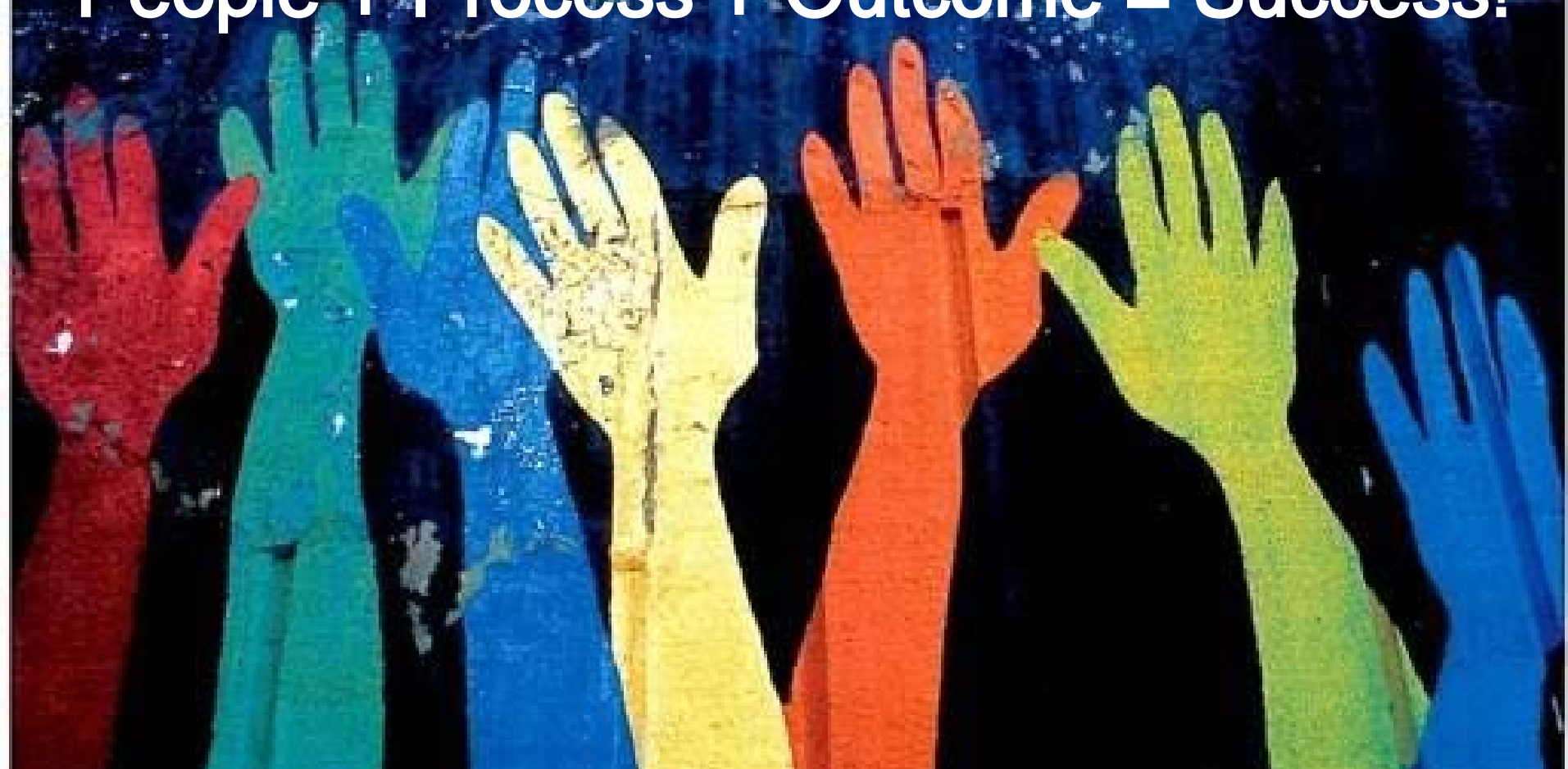"The Tale of Two Jars"
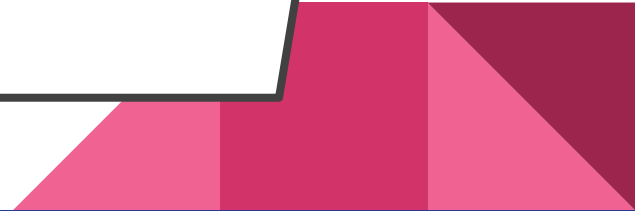
Progress

Victory!

People + Process + Outcome = Success!

Questions?

Slides will be available at
scholarworks@gvsu.edu
soon

Annie Bélanger
annie.belanger@gvsu.edu
@annie_belanger

Jesus Espinoza
ejesus@umich.edu
@hayzeus89

Preethi Gorecki
preethi.gorecki@gmail.com
@helloitspree