

Stakeholder Perspectives

Managing subjectivity and complexity

Presented by Bob Newman
Discussion with Bob Newman and Brenda Hales

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Our objectives



To show you a proven way to collect and translate stakeholder perceptions into useful information that can be used to build project success

Bob Newman - Insight Consultancy Ltd



To discuss “how” PMs grow into leaders capable of utilising this kind of complex information

Brenda Hales - Team Animation Ltd

The emphasis is changing

There is a groundswell of opinion that project management should be

“ ... much more to do with the interaction of people, clients and stakeholders and the integration of these aspects.”

Quote from Dr. Martin Barnes, President of the APM, from a 2007 APM Round Table debate.

The *Insight* database

- Range of Stakeholders
- Many sectors
- Projects and programmes to £1bn
- 500 projects reviewed
- 1000 stakeholder interviews
- 250 client organisations
- 25 countries
- 10 years of data



The *Insight* Review Method

Performance Areas (perspectives)

- Ease of Doing Business
- Responsiveness
- Attitude of People
- Competence of People
- Innovation and Creativity
- Delivery Reliability
- Quality of Deliverables & Service
- Business Benefit Realisation

Qualitative Feedback

- Strengths
- Weaknesses/ Challenges
- Impact
- Improvement vision and ideas

Ratings and Scores

Performance v expectations (1-10)

Trend 1 ← 5 → 10

=
Performance Area Scores

+ Ranking (1-9)

Overall Stakeholder Confidence (%)

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Performance Areas - An Example

Ease of “Doing Business”

Clarity of organisation and responsibilities
 Accessibility
 Project governance
 Project processes
 Contracts and commercial processes
 Relationships
 Communication
 etc.

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1. Need to adopt a broader view of project success criteria - a new model
2. Prioritisation gaps between Stakeholders and Project Managers must be understood and managed
3. Managing the different/ opposing Stakeholder views on the same project is complex
4. The PM must be aware of what makes the difference to stakeholder confidence
5. Supporting PMs in focusing on customer understanding and empathy is vital
6. PMs need to be challenged and supported to understand and “work with” stakeholders perspectives
7. PMs are challenged to lead, not just manage

Business Sponsors

- 1 Quality of Deliverables & Service
- 2 Delivery Performance
- 3 Benefit Realisation
- 4 Attitude and Behaviour of People
- 5 Competence of People
- 6 Responsiveness
- 7 Ease of Doing Business
- 8 Innovation and Creativity

Client Project Managers

- 1 Quality of Deliverables & Service
- 2= Delivery Performance
- 2= Benefit Realisation
- 4 Competence of People
- 5 Responsiveness
- 6 Attitude and Behaviour of People
- 7 Ease of Doing Business
- 8 Innovation and Creativity

Quality and delivery are still ranked as top priority, but they are all rated as important

A broader view of project success criteria should be adopted by project stakeholders and management

2. Prioritisation gaps

Business Sponsors

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These gaps should be monitored, understood and addressed as necessary

3. Managing subjectivity

Stakeholder perspectives depend on their

- personal **value system** and **priorities**
- **role** in their organisation / on the project
- degree of **engagement** with the project
- **history of commitment** to the project and associated relationships
- **personal experiences** - project, people and deliverables
- **benefits** and **threats** to their organisation /team/ personally
- **experience of projects** - what it takes to achieve success



This requires recognition, budget, resources, skill development



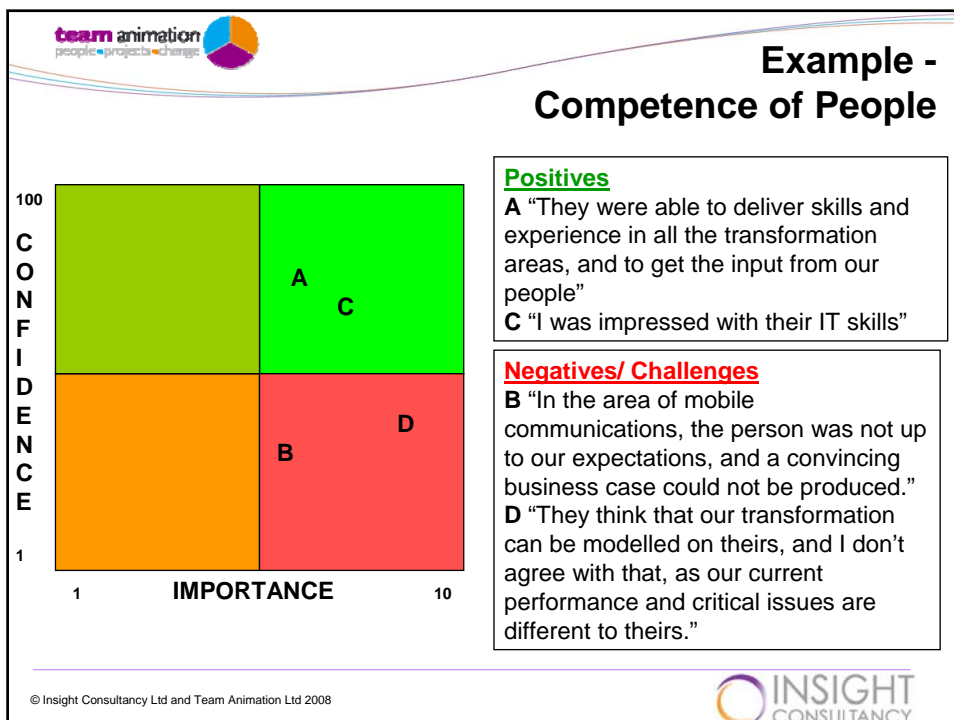
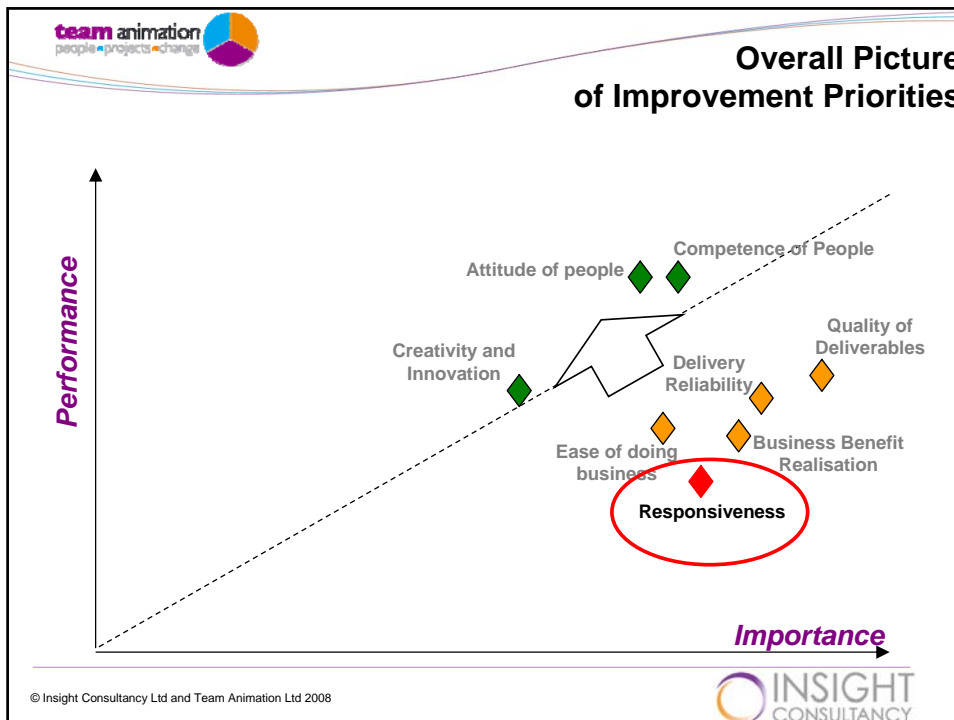
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4. What makes the difference

Differentiators (in the 42 highest scoring relationships)
Client focus and empathy (24)
Good communications (17)
Being trusted and reliable (14)
Having a positive and “can do” attitude (11)
Effective team-working (10)
Being challenging, innovative and inspirational (6)

Table Stakes (not mentioned in high and low performing relationships)
Being helpful, co-operative and courteous
Listening and learning

Example around
“Attitudes and Behaviours”

Detractors (in the 17 lowest scoring relationships)
Lack of openness and trust (12)
Poor client empathy (9)
Commitment problems (7)
Not working as a team (5)
Inflexibility (3)

5. Customer understanding is vital

It drives stakeholder confidence in **Benefit Realisation** and **Innovation and Creativity**, as well as overall stakeholder confidence

“I have been very impressed with the individual members of the project team, both in their knowledge of what we are trying to achieve and their understanding of what we are doing. They have spent time sitting down with people, and have really got into the guts of the business”

“Their understanding of our environment was severely lacking, for example understanding the cost to us ofThe environment was alien to them”

This requires time and investment, and should be built into the project plan and budget

6. PMs need to be supported

- Provide a **structured framework** for evaluating relationships with key stakeholders
- Provide a **comparison with global best practice**
- Enable PMs to learn about key **stakeholder expectations and priorities**, and to keep checking assumptions about stakeholder perceptions. Don't assume yesterday's assumptions are still valid!
- Present **improvement opportunities** - for the PM, the team and the organisation
- Ensure that **project budgets** include allowance for stakeholder relationship management, independent review etc
- Champion **skill development** in support of this

7. PMs need to lead

- Influencing without positional/hierarchical authority - by leveraging stakeholder relationships
- Understanding many organisational models - learning from the stakeholders
- “Selling the vision” - via the stakeholders
- Leading teams that become “greater than the sum of their parts”
- Dealing with complexity
- “Working with” resistance to change



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Thank You