

## What is expected from a sponsor?

The project manager expects the sponsor to:

- ▶ **Give enough of your time**  
This means time to review documents, chair key meetings, consider and address escalated issues and to actively champion the project
- ▶ **Be an effective champion**  
Believe in the project and inspire those whose commitment is required. It is likely to involve formal and informal communication and must work in concert with the project manager
- ▶ **Make the necessary decisions**  
When issues are escalated it is for a reason, usually that the project manager cannot resolve them and needs help
- ▶ **Delegate clear authority**  
The Project Manager needs to understand what s/he can do and what should be escalated
- ▶ **Protect the project from politics**  
The team needs stability if they are to work well. This starts at the top.
- ▶ **NOT micromanage**  
Let the project manager do their job.
- ▶ **NOT undermine the Project Manager by word or deed**

## Some tips on being a good sponsor

Projects are by definition original activities and outcomes are never certain. Here are some tips that will make success more likely:

- ▶ Make sure you are **engaged** from start to finish
- ▶ Do not rely on **untested assumptions**
- ▶ Understand the **sensitivities** in the project; ie what presents the greatest risk to success
- ▶ **Use your project manager** and best practices
- ▶ Don't set **unreasonable timetables**
- ▶ Make any **required decisions** in a timely manner, undue delay usually adds to the project difficulty.
- ▶ **Communicate**, communicate, communicate and **listen**
- ▶ **Believe** and be seen to believe in the project and the solution; if you don't why should anyone else?
- ▶ **Support** the project team

## Being a Project Sponsor! What does it mean?



This guide provides you with an outline of:

- ▶ what is expected of you as a sponsor;
- ▶ what a project manager does; and
- ▶ what you can and should expect from a project manager.

It is intentionally brief, but should facilitate discussions between you and your project manager.

## What does it mean to be a sponsor?

Project sponsorship is about leading the delivery of benefit to the organisation. Change alone is not enough!

The sponsor “**owns**” the business case and champions it amongst their peers, the business and the project team

To achieve this, a sponsor will:

- ▶ Set the **high level objectives, scope, anticipated benefits, budget constraints, and timing**; approving the project **Terms of Reference**
- ▶ **Lead/Chair** the Stakeholder group/Steering Group
- ▶ Ensure the necessary **business resources** are made available
- ▶ **Monitor** project progress, meeting regularly with the project manager
- ▶ **Resolve** escalated **issues**
- ▶ Make **necessary decisions**
- ▶ **Report** to the Executive when required
- ▶ **Liaise** with other key managers ensuring ongoing support from the business
- ▶ Formally **close** the project and ensure effective handover into Business As Usual (BAU)
- ▶ Lead the **rightful celebrations!**

## What does it mean to be a project manager?

Project management is the application of a broad set of skills to properly initiate, plan, execute, control and close a project.

The primary skills are:

- ▶ **scoping** (i.e. describing and agreeing on project objectives and requirements),
- ▶ **scheduling** the work required to deliver the agreed change(s),
- ▶ **estimating** all the resources (time, materials and people) required by the project,
- ▶ **managing risk and uncertainty** to help the project deliver to stakeholder expectations
- ▶ **managing quality** to ensure that the deliverables are fit for purpose,
- ▶ **communicating and collaborating** with others, including suppliers of goods and services and everyone else who works on or is affected by the project.

**Please note:** this does not mention the “doing” of projects. Project management is not to be confused with business analysis. In practice, for smaller projects, the same individual may provide both project services, but the sponsor must ensure that enough attention is given to project management.

## What can a sponsor expect from a project manager?

A project manager should provide the sponsor with:

- ▶ **Advice and guidance** on the management of change in line with prevailing best practice
- ▶ **High quality information** and documentation to support the approval, planning and execution of the project
- ▶ **Management** of the project resources in executing the plan
- ▶ **Honest and effective communication** on progress and the risks and issues relating to the project
- ▶ Assurance that deliverables are of the **appropriate quality**
- ▶ **Forecasting** of future costs and dates, based on experience and evidence
- ▶ **Escalation** of issues/items outside the control of the project manager and recommendations on appropriate actions
- ▶ **Support** in communicating to stakeholders including the Steering Committee