The Role of Executive Leadership in Project Success

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Executive Leadership

Engaged Sponsors – Top Driver to Project Success

Why so seldom used?

Executive Review Board
Executive Sponsor
Project Steering Team

Project Manager

Quality

Safety

Engineering

Procurement

Project Controls

Construction
## Executive Sponsor / Project Sponsor References

- CII – OPE (Owners Project Executive)
- PMI – The Project Sponsor – Owner’s Perspective
- Wikipedia: “Senior Executive ….responsible for the success of the Project.”
• Exploring the role of the Project Sponsor by Crawford and Brett - “…Contractor Sponsor…not needed…as the relationship between the owner and contractor is defined by the contract.”
### Executive Sponsor / Project Sponsor - Owner & Contractor Role

- **Reactive**
  - Responds only to Disputes and Problems
  - Figure Head – Attends Ground Breakings and Ribbon Cuttings
  - Shows up at Teambuilders when invited
Project Sponsor - Owner & Contractor Role

• Pro-Active
  • Participates throughout the project on a regimented schedule.
  • Invests in relationships – establishes trust among stakeholders.
  • Addresses issues before they get out of hand, without becoming the Project Manager
  • By example, demonstrates how their team will behave.
ARS Questions

Are you:

1. A Contractor/Supplier
2. An Owner
3. An Other
Does your company use Executive Sponsors in the Executing of Projects/Programs?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don’t Know
How would you classify your company when it comes to Senior Leadership’s engagement in Project Execution?

1. Proactive
2. Reactive
Would your projects benefit from a more proactive and robust Executive Sponsorship program?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not Sure
Executive Sponsorship - Truths

- Projects always have challenges
- Issues do not age well
- Teams do not ask for help
- It's hard to find proactive time
- Stakeholder alignment is difficult
Executive Sponsors:

- Ensure “Nobody Gets Hurt”
- Spend time strategically – “Head Lights Up”
- Tell it like it is and have a sense of urgency
- Respect each stakeholder’s capability
- Strive for a win-win
Project Sponsor Model

- Scalable to project complexity
- Project team leaders sit on Sponsor team
Executive Sponsor’s Goals

- Stakeholder management
- Solutions for escalated issues
- Removal of road blocks
- Creating the environment for success
- Openness
Leadership Expectations

- Ensure relationship consistency
- Build trust and mutual respect
- Remember the 90-95% rule
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