



The "Perfect Project" Preconstruction Resource Guide

A Practitioner's Handbook for Preventing & Mitigating Avoidable Change Orders and Delays in Commercial Construction Projects



Presented by
Chris Humphries

Presented to
Confidential Client

The Project Master Mindset

This resource is about mindfulness techniques you can use to "master" day-to-day interactions with your project team and others.



But before we start calling people grasshopper or saying "san" after everyone's name, let's take a look at some tips that can tune up our information sharing and problem-solving game and get the most out of that bandwidth we worked so hard to preserve.

As project professionals it is all too common to find ourselves going from meeting to meeting, fielding urgent phone calls on the road in-between and by the late afternoon wondering - where did the day go? More importantly, when are we going to get our work done? But we are working. Hard. So, what can be done?

This post highlights techniques you can use to increase your effectiveness in meetings and negotiations. If we can make the most out of these important communications, we get the decisions and commitments we need faster, expediting the project schedule and revenue. Plus, consistently having a good plan and executing on it provides momentum, attracting more efforts from the team around you, and as they say, many hands make light work. At the very least we won't feel like we "wasted" our time and certainly won't need to find time for another meeting to deal with all the items that got "tabled".



Use these tips to prepare and remain present for all of your meetings and negotiations:

- 1. Agendas are power.** The person that creates the agenda dictates the flow and content of the conversation. Taking care to make sure all the important issues are included, establishing accountability for action items and setting deadlines puts you in charge. Even when you don't get to write the agenda, set specific goals for every meeting or important conversation. If (and when) focus start drifting - knowing why you are there and what you need increases your chances of a successful outcome.
- 2. Focus on the right questions.** Project teams have lots of subject-matter experts but too few expert problem solvers. The best way for a project manager to contribute is to formulate good questions and make sure they are asked and answered. When we ask really good questions, subject-matter experts give good answers, suddenly the solution becomes obvious, and everyone seems to buy in immediately.
- 3. Use the (right) room.** When we are busy, wherever we are can seem like a good place to try to get something done. But where we are and who is there matters and it will affect the outcome if you get it wrong. Always consider the ideal location, format, participants and time of day for the meetings or important conversations you need to have. Privacy is important for difficult conversations; daylight is important for dangerous conversations.

The Project Master Mindset

4. **Leverage your calendar tools.** Many of the tasks, procedures and meetings for projects are cyclical (every day, week or month) and repeated (planning, review and communications). Despite this fact, time gets away from us and we end up either participating unprepared or having to postpone. When you schedule recurring tasks and meetings in outlook, attach your template and use the reminder feature to keep it from sneaking up on you and focused on the outcome you want.

5. **Anger danger.** As a project manager you are counting on everyone, all the time and when someone doesn't cooperate, is dishonest or unreliable, it stings. Some people get angry so often they don't even notice. Write notes to yourself on your copy of the agenda to stay cool on volatile agenda items and remind yourself what you are there to accomplish. Keep in mind that the solution often needs to come from the person we are (trying not to be) frustrated with.

6. **The feels are real (important).** Our long-term success is dictated by the quality of our relationships and our reputation. Years later we don't remember the issues but we remember how people left of feeling. A project master leaves people feeling heard, valued and respected. Find a way to remind yourself of this every day and incorporate this style into your agendas and work style. Well placed post its or calendar reminders are good ways to keep these positive suggestions front of mind throughout the day.



The Project Master Mindset

The Project Master mindset applies these techniques in context. To succeed in this journey toward excellence requires awareness, opportunity, commitment and repetition. By awareness I mean we need to execute the right technique at the right time. For example, we need to be thinking about the right room when we schedule the meeting. By opportunity I mean we need to take the time to implement the technique properly. You can't create an effective agenda as you are walking into a meeting - or during another meeting. Taking advantage of the technique means committing time to focus on getting it right.

Commitment is perhaps the most important predictor of success when creating a new habit. The real goal of these techniques is to help us be purposeful and prepared. Maybe we don't have time to create an agenda on our way to the meeting, but we do have time to come up with a specific goal for the outcome and write that down. Then we can use that central goal to ask good questions and guide the discussion.

Any or all of these techniques can be implemented without running afoul of any political or procedural requirements. To the observer you will simply seem better prepared, in better control of your emotions, and effective. These qualities inspire confidence, confidence leads to buy-in, which in turn leads to success. Are you on board yet?

Consistently using these techniques or others with the same goal will be noticed by both your leadership and proteges. People recognize mastery when they see it and will want to understand and emulate what they see working. When your entire team or company starts using these techniques, expect great things.

I would love to hear about the techniques you are using to improve the quality of your meetings and important conversations. If there is anything I can do to help integrate any of these mastery techniques into your business processes or company culture - please reach out.



2R ***Project Master Mindset Resources:***

There is a saying that followers read the news and leaders make the news. These resources are designed to assist the project team to utilize soft skills and procedures that encourage teamwork and get results.

- ***The Project Master Mindset Agenda*** - An example routine to incorporate the Project Master Mindset strategies into your project and career. [Click here](#)
- ***Technical Support*** - Get 3cd to help you identify strategies and procedures to help develop the skills you need to achieve a Project Master Mindset. [Click here](#)