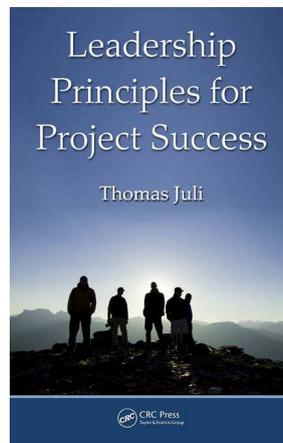


## Leadership Principles for Project Success



### Introduction

We all need and thrive for successful projects. But what exactly does project success mean? Is project success the successful and timely delivery within budget? Or is it the path to glory? Do results always matter the most? What else does project success mean? And what does it take to achieve project success? Does success fall from heaven? Is it limited to a lucky few who happen to be in the right place at the right time? Is it coincidence? Or can we actually plan success?

Thomas Juli’s book “Leadership Principles for Project Success” answers these questions. The book is about project success and it reveals the secret to achieving this success—effective project leadership.

Filled with samples, templates, and guidelines, it covers the five principles of effective project leadership:

1. *Build vision.*
2. *Nurture collaboration.*
3. *Promote performance.*
4. *Cultivate learning.*
5. *Ensure results.*

All five leadership principles combined encompass the core of effective project leadership and build the *Project Leadership Pyramid* (Figure 1).



**Figure 1: The Project Leadership Pyramid**

This article explains the structure of the Project Leadership Pyramid and reveals the secrets inside.

## **Principle 1: Build Vision**

A project vision sets the overall picture of your project. Project objectives qualify this vision, make it specific. Both project vision and project objectives are crucial for project success. Together they set the direction and tone of your project journey. They complement each other. The vision inspires your project journey. It defines the purpose of your project. A project vision sets the overall picture of your project. Project objectives qualify this vision, make it specific.

The key to building vision is that people need to be able to relate to the vision in their daily activities. As a project leader you *must* make sure that both project vision and project objectives are in place. This is the meaning of the first leadership principle. Start with a unified vision and know where you stand before and during your project. Know your environment, know your potential, and identify your limits and overcome them. Build and involve your team and nurture effective collaboration across the board.

## **Principle 2: Nurture Collaboration**

Project success is not about individual accomplishments. It is a joint effort. Effective project leaders understand the value and huge potential of teamwork. This is why they actively nurture collaboration.

Collaboration is necessary for the team to achieve the vision and project objectives. By the same token, the project vision must include the concept of collaboration; it needs to be part of the vision as well as the project objectives. Collaboration is a means to achieve the objectives and thus to come closer to achieving the vision. It is a central element of every project. This is why vision and collaboration go hand in hand. You cannot move from the top to the bottom of the Project Leadership Pyramid without collaboration. On the other hand, collaboration without a common cause leads nowhere.

## **Principle 3: Promote Performance**

Building vision and nurturing collaboration are prerequisites for project success. Alas, they are useless if you cannot move your team to the performance stage. This is why you want to create an environment that helps promote performance. The following rules help achieve this.

1. Be a role model to your own team and others
2. Create the right environment for performance
3. Empower your team
4. Develop a solution-and-results orientation of your team toward problems and risks
5. Invite productive competition in your team
6. Let performance happen
7. Celebrate performance

## **Principle 4: Cultivate Learning**

As humans we all make mistakes. Effective leaders encourage their teams to explore new avenues and to make mistakes and learn from them. An effective leader builds in sufficient time for the team to learn, create, and innovate. Create a learning environment in your team. Set the expectation that you want everyone in your team to join and support you in cultivating learning for the purpose of the project. Understand that for performance to yield the desired results you and your team have to cultivate learning. There cannot be lasting performance without learning, and there cannot be results without performance.

## **Principle 5: Ensure Results**

The fifth principle calls on us to keep the project vision in mind in all our activities and to produce results that benefit the purpose of the project. Project success is not defined by a single product or service delivered at the completion of a project. It is the accumulation of the many results yielded from each and every principle in the Project Leadership Pyramid.

The fifth principle of ensuring results reminds us that we have to make sure the results of the other four principles are aligned with the project vision and objectives. They have to serve the project purpose. *Ensuring results* is thus not an activity focusing only on the final project deliverables. It appeals to us that all of our project activities shall be results oriented, keeping the end deliverables in mind. It is a call for solution- and results-oriented leadership.

## **Dynamic Project Leadership**

No single principle is the most important. It is the combination of all five leadership principles that helps secure project success. Building vision is the principle to start with, but you cannot achieve results if you do not embrace all five principles together as one system. Leadership is not merely the sum of applying the five principles. It is understanding and living the dynamics within each principle as well as all five principles as a unit.

Applying the leadership pyramid in daily project life requires the project leader to practice all five principles constantly and consistently. Project success starts and ends with project leadership. Project success is not about individual accomplishments. It is a joint effort and should be treated and honored as such. Understanding the principles can be the first step toward project success. It is up to you to take this step and move forward.

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Additional information about the book “*Leadership Principles for Project Success*” is available at [www.TheProjectLeadershipPyramid.net](http://www.TheProjectLeadershipPyramid.net).

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