# Project and people management

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***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims at providing students with a comprehensive knowledge regarding the rationale, models, and techniques behind the management of complex projects and of people in work and project settings. The underlying logic is that managing project (activities) and human resources (people) can be separated only analytically, requiring an integrated approach in practice in order to swiftly execute projects and reach excellent results.

The course aim is to let students learn and discuss the basic principles and models that form the pillars of Project Management. Furthermore, the course is intended to provide the basics of people’s behavior within projects and organizations, with a focus on the project team level. To this aim, the course is intended to be a primer on how to develop behavioral competencies both in self-management and in managing others, that are needed to work in complex projects and organizations.

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

* Understand the importance of planning, managing, executing projects and learn principles of people management within projects, and a swift execution thereof.
* Acquire knowledge on the most internationally spread techniques of Project Management.
* Learn the relevance of people’s attitudes and behaviors for well executed projects and results thereof.
* Diagnose basic issues in managing projects and people, and devise the required actions in order to attain outcomes such as people’s engagement, swift execution, high quality output, and balanced cost management, ultimately delivering excellent results.
* Apply their knowledge and skills in order to address issues and devise solutions in managing projects and people.
* Effectively share their knowledge on project and people management and communicate their considerations on how to deal with project management issues.
* Progress autonomously in learning advanced knowledge on project and people management.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course starts with an execution challenge, aimed to let students touch with hands the complexities of project management and coordination of people within a project aimed to achieve a negotiated outcome. Then, the course moves to provide in-depth familiarity with Project Management principles and techniques for swift planning, execution, and reporting of complex projects.

The second part of the course is devoted to let students understand the complexities of managing people in challenging contexts, where pressure on time and results is high, and excellence in delivering outcomes is a must. In the people management module, topics such as self-management capabilities, competences for managing others, and effective leadership are discussed.

Both modules give the chance to observe and ‘approach’ project and people management experiences in a company environment.

The last session is devoted to the presentation of a ‘Masterwork Project’ developed by students. Such task allows them to apply the knowledge and to train the behavioral competences developed throughout the course.

More specifically, sessions are dedicated to:

* Execution challenge: building prototypes under tight customer requests.
* Project Management methodology and tools.
* People Management: Human Resource Management practices and managerial leverages to manage employees.
* People Management: self-management and drivers for personal improvement.
* People Management: employee motivation and team work.
* Integrating Project Management and People Management: drivers for delivering excellent results.
* Presentation of the team assignments

***READING LIST[[1]](#footnote-1)***

*Attending students:*

Slides, cases, and readings provided by instructors.

Complementary book (not mandatory): M. Fenzi-D. Pinto-E. Fregnan, *Project & People Management*, McGraw-Hill, 2012.

*Non-attending students:*

Mandatory readings for non-attending students:

M. Fenzi-D. Pinto-E. Fregnan, *Project & People Management*, McGraw-Hill, 2012 (whole book).

J. R. Meredith, S. J. Mantel Jr., S. M. Shafer, *Project Management: A Managerial Approach*, 9th Edition International Student Version, Wiley, 2015 (Chapters 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11. The section: ‘Project management in practice’ of chapters 1 and 6 are suggested readings. The same section of the other chapters is not included in the program).

***TEACHING METHOD***

Teaching is based on an interactive and involving approach. The whole course revolves around an inductive, hands-on approachbased on several tools such as role-playing, simulations of real organizational situations, guest lectures, case studies, business challenges and games.

Collaborative learning, through frequent teamwork activities, is a pillar of the course.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

*Attending students:*

Students’ evaluation method is coherent with the goal of developing knowledge as well as problem solving skills. To this aim, a final individual exam is the key moment for assessing the students’ understanding of the course topics, their ability to organize the set of knowledge, and their ability to apply that knowledge to solve real problems related to managing projects & people. Moreover, team assignments will stimulate students to practice collaborative learning and consolidate the acquired knowledge.

More specifically, the course evaluation will be based on:

Final exam (70%): closed-books exam based on the topics covered in class. Students will be required to aptly refer to class activities (e.g. simulations, case studies, etc.) in order to reach excellent grades.

Team assignment (30%): students will be required to carry out an assignment in team, which will give them the opportunity to reflect on the meaning of the topics and the approaches covered in class and their managerial implications.

*Non-attending students:*

Non-attending students will be evaluated on their knowledge of the topics covered in the books listed in the readings list. The exam will be composed of open questions referring to the books theories and approaches.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Students are required to possess a basic knowledge of the principles of management and of organization theory and design. Those who do not, are advised to carry out a preliminary alignment activity, by resorting e.g. to the following texts:

A.L. Cunliffe, *A Very Short, Fairly Interesting and Reasonably Cheap Book About Management*. Sage Publications, 2014.

S.P. Robbins& T.U. Judge, *Organizational Behavior* (18th global edition), Pearson (Chapters 7, 8, 9, 10, 12).

J. Roberts, *The Modern Firm: Organizational Design for Performance and Growth,* Oxford University Press, 2007.

1. The texts listed in the bibliography can be purchased from the University bookstores; they can also be purchased from other retailers. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)