

# MANAGING STAKEHOLDER EXPECTATIONS FOR PROJECT SUCCESS

By Ori Schibi, PMP

## Complexity Attribute Questions

The following is a list of sample questions to consider for each complexity attribute:

Complexity Attribute	Questions
<b>Integration</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Does the proposed governance structure demonstrate adequate support for various project aspects, including: decision support, assignment of roles and responsibilities, representation of stakeholders and access to information?</li><li>2. How satisfied are you with the level and quality of information available for planning purposes?</li><li>3. Is there a change control process in place? Are you satisfied with how formal, effective and robust it is? Do you have control over it?</li><li>4. Is the information required for planning available and do you have the means to gather the relevant information?</li><li>5. Is there a mechanism for cross-project collaboration for high-demand resources?</li><li>6. Do you have an understanding of the project priorities and trade-offs? How flexible are the budget, scope and deadlines?</li><li>7. Is there a clear vision for the project? Have success criteria been identified?</li><li>8. What is the general level of uncertainty in the project?</li><li>9. How much dependence does the project have on other projects' deliverables and resources?</li></ol>
<b>Scope</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. What is the project reach? How many business processes, departments, or parts of the organization will be directly affected by the project outcome and change?</li><li>2. Have all resources and environments been identified and secured?</li><li>3. Has this type of project been done before in your organization (refer to type of technology, size, complexity level, scope)?</li><li>4. Is the project about new technology or proven technology?</li></ol>

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<b>Scope</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>5. Are the requirements considered stable?</li><li>6. Is there an unusual degree of customization required?</li><li>7. How many people are needed for the requirements definition process?</li><li>8. What is the level of detail and complexity of the requirements definition and elicitation process?</li><li>9. Has there been or is there a plan for sufficient involvement of users in validating the business requirements?</li><li>10. Are there any difficulties in defining certain requirements? Is there a requirements definition dependency on other requirements and activities?</li><li>11. To what level are the requirements complete, clear and communicated?</li><li>12. What is the relative size of this project compared to other organizational initiatives?</li><li>13. How much specialization is needed by project resources to perform their work? Is there a heavy dependence on scarce resources?</li></ol>
<b>Time</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. From start to end, what is the expected duration of the project?</li><li>2. How likely is the project to experience time delays? What is the likelihood for changes in requirements, technology, and levels of approval or external factors?</li><li>3. Is the critical path realistic? How likely is it that there will be schedule problems that are driven by non-critical path activities? Is there appropriate allocation for contingency in the schedule?</li></ol>

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<b>Cost</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. What is the total budget request for this project?</li><li>2. How are the cost estimates made? Are they based on a bottom-up set of estimates on the work package level, or top-down approaches based on historical information, parameters and other benchmarks?</li><li>3. To support the project outcome, have the sources of funding been identified and are they committed? Is there authority to spend those funds?</li><li>4. Is the budget realistic? Is there a process and an appropriate allocation for a contingency reserve?</li></ol>
<b>Quality</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Do health and safety requirements add complexity?</li><li>2. Are there any policies, standards or procedures that the project is not aligned with?</li><li>3. Is there a quality plan for the project? Is there a reference to organizational quality policies?</li><li>4. What is the quality of the data and information that pertains to the project (cost and schedule estimates; risk information; quality aspects; stakeholders' disposition, interest and influence)?</li><li>5. Is there a specific or unusual performance quality that is required by the project?</li><li>6. Is testing expected to be stable and is there sufficient attention given to test planning?</li><li>7. Are there any constraints that have no flexibility (could be any of the competing demands, contract or regulatory-related)?</li></ol>

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<b>Human Resources</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. How many people in total are required to complete this project at its peak activity?</li><li>2. Are resources co-located? How dispersed are they? Is there an international component to the project?</li><li>3. Are resources with appropriate skills identified for the project? Is there a concern about relevant resource shortage? Are there any hiring issues related to required resources?</li><li>4. Is the project team stable? Has the team worked together before? What is their disposition to conflict? What is the rate of turnover within the team? How easy is it to get a new resource if and when required?</li><li>5. Are resources fully dedicated to your project or are they shared? If shared, which projects are they shared with? What is their competing priority?</li><li>6. Does the team have the required experience and technical expertise?</li><li>7. Do you have a systematic approach to assign roles and responsibilities in the project? Are there role descriptions available?</li></ol>
<b>Risk</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Are there any environmental or regulatory considerations that may influence the project (including social, industrial or political)?</li><li>2. Is there a risk management plan for the project? How satisfied are you with it? Does it cover all stages of risk management from planning and identification to response and contingency planning?</li><li>3. Is there a plan on how to manage issues? Are there escalation procedures?</li><li>4. Will you be able to work with senior management on the project assumptions on a regular basis?</li><li>5. What is the organization track record in risk management, roles and responsibilities, handling risks and effective responses and recovery?</li><li>6. How mature is your organization in project management and risk management?</li></ol>

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<b>Communication and Stakeholders Management</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Have you conducted a stakeholder analysis? How many stakeholders are involved?</li><li>2. Do you have a communication plan?</li><li>3. How committed is senior management to the project's success?</li><li>4. Will there be an impact on the public? Is there a plan that deals with this aspect?</li><li>5. Have reposting and control mechanisms been defined? Do they reflect what appear to be the project needs?</li><li>6. What is the level of infighting and distractions due to cultural, political and communication-related considerations?</li><li>7. What is the volume of information to deal with in the project? How effectively and efficiently does it flow? Are there any blockages? What is the level of access the project team has to this information?</li><li>8. Is the project manager recognized for his or her leadership skills?</li><li>9. How involved is the sponsor in the project and in its decision making, escalation, support and guidance?</li></ol>
<b>Procurement</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Do you have an understanding of who all the suppliers and vendors are?</li><li>2. What is the level of performance, availability and commitment of each vendor and supplier?</li><li>3. How much dependency does the project have on external vendors and suppliers?</li><li>4. Is the procurement process clear and supportive of your project needs? What is your level of control over supplier selection and terms and conditions of contracts?</li><li>5. How many separate contracts will the project require for its main deliverables?</li><li>6. Are the people who sell, negotiate and write the contract also involved in the project work?</li></ol>

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### Business and Strategy

1. Relative to the average project in your organization, what is the size of the total budget of this project?
2. How many sponsors or funding departments are involved?
3. How well and how clearly does the project align with the organizational mandate and objectives?
4. How important is this project to the organization?
5. Do you have access to the project business case? To what degree does it demonstrate the value of the project to the organization?
6. To what degree are relevant management and involved stakeholders aware of the project and what is the extent of their involvement?
7. What is the extent of the impact the project will have on the organization? Will it fit into current operations or will it change/transform processes?
8. How complicated will the transition of the project into operation be? Is there a clear transition plan?
9. Is there a change plan for what the project represents for the organization?
10. Do the business case and feasibility analysis provide confidence in the project? Are the assumptions that were made valid?
11. Are there other projects that depend on this project's results? Does this project depend on other projects' results? To what degree? Which ones?
12. To what degree do political issues influence the project?
13. Are there any other organizational initiatives taking place in the organization?
14. Is there a clear process for decision making? How many layers of management are involved in the process? How transparent is it? How effective is your organization in decision making?