

Leadership concepts in software project management

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"Inventories can be managed, but people must be led" (Ross Perot).

Globalization and increased competition require that software products are introduced to the market as early as possible. Hardly any companies can afford to release their products late.

As a consequence many organizations feel the pressure to streamline their operations on ongoing bases to reduce the duration of the product development cycle. They continuously refine their processes and standards in order to reduce their time to market. As part of this course of action companies often forget to account for the human factors in this effort. Human factors are the fundamental component of human actions that affects organizational performance and therefore projects that take place in or across companies. Projects are typically executed in team settings that require team members to interact with each other. Project leadership creates either an environment that embraces or deteriorates the impact of human factors. Poor leadership can significantly contribute to or cause project failure.

This presentation/paper explains what leadership means to projects. It focuses on the leadership role of the project sponsor and project manager throughout the entire lifecycle of a software project. Each project phase requires a specific set of leadership skills and responsibilities of the project leader. Therefore the project leaders have to acquire certain versatility in their leadership style. "Leaders aren't born, they are made" (Vince Lombardi) and project leadership can be acquired by any organization.

Biography:

Sonja Koppensteiner, Ph.D., is the founder of InterGlobe Consulting, where she develops and delivers project and program management solutions and trainings customized to clients needs within the US and Europe. Some of her clients have been Siemens, Cypress Semiconductor, LogicVision and Pathway Health. Sonja has also been an instructor for project management and business operations classes at UC Berkeley, San Jose State University, Notre Dame de Namur University and SAP Business School Vienna.

Sonja is also author of several global project management conference papers and speaker at project management and software conferences.

Sonja Koppensteiner obtained her Master degree in Electrical Engineering (MSEE) from the Technical University of Vienna, Austria; her Master degree in Management from Notre Dame de Namur University (NDNU), California; and her PhD in Computer Science from Johannes Kepler University, Austria. Sonja also obtained a project management certification from UC Berkeley, is a Project Management Professional (PMP) and also certified SCRUM master. Sonja was evening program director of the PMISV chapter from 2002 to 2004, and PMISV chapter president in 2005.