

# Seven Rules for Project Success



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# Background

- In today's competitive workplace it's important to be the **best project manager** you can be.
- Senior Design Project is the most important experience of becoming a successful **project team member**
- Outlines of Seven (7) rules for **project success**.

# Rules 1 & 2

## 1. KNOW THE PROBLEM/REQUIREMENTS/DELIVERABLES

- Focus on your end goal and talk it up with other team members.
- Think smart: in **s**pecific, **m**easurable, achievable, realistic, and **t**ime-set terms.
- Be clear on what you must do.
- Ask your supervisor (advisor) to clarify details if necessary.

## 2. CREATE TEAM ( = Together Everyone Achieves More) ENVIRONMENT .

- Combine diverse people with different abilities.
- Create an environment that encourages teamwork.
- Create an open atmosphere, be fair and straightforward, show respect, be enthusiastic, give a lot of praise, and trust team members.
- But do not demand; but provide.

# Rules 3 & 4

## 3. KNOW THE SUBJECT

- Before you even begin, ask yourself if the project is realistic.
- Make sure you have the needed technology, resources, organizational support, and funding.
- Study the content subject knowledge

## 4. PLAN, PLAN, PLAN

- Good planning and knowing where you're going is 80 percent of your project's success, while the other 20 percent is the actual work.
- The planning phase should include a project map with a list of all team members, individual responsibilities, their contact information, and whom they report to and when → Team Contract
- Plan for the winter break: will make or break your project ----- Class Activity TODAY

# Rule 5

## 5. MEET OFTEN BUT EFFECTIVELY

- Book your meetings on your calendar.
- Schedule your meetings on the same day of the week, in the same place with the same people, although it is occasionally useful to invite others to gain different perspectives.
- Keep meetings to one hour at most.
- Keep the meetings simple.
- Use templates for agendas and reports, and distribute meeting minutes immediately.



# Rule 6

## 6. BE A ROLE MODEL

- Lead by example.
- Having a spirited team helps because happy people ultimately do more work.
- You should be goal-oriented, flexible yet firm, and realistic.
- You also should communicate effectively and be a good planner.



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# Rule 7

## 7. REVIEW THE LESSONS LEARNED

- Don't let it just wander off; draw conclusion and closure and mark a period in every step.
- Celebrate the results if you're successful or discuss how to do better next time if you fail.
- Always review lessons learned with your team members.
  - How did we do?
  - What worked well?
  - Any advice for the next project?
  - Why did we fail?
  - Was it us or was it something we could not foresee?

## Lesson from Business World – with a grain of salt

- Bloomberg BusinessWeek November 8, 2011

**Bloomberg  
Businessweek**

The Innovation Engine November 08, 2011, 2:28 PM EST

- “Three Types of People to Fire Immediately – Want a more innovative company? Get rid of these folks, today” by Michael Maddock and Raphael Louis Viton
  - The Victims
  - The Nonbelievers
  - The Know-it-Alls

# The Victims

- “Can you believe what they want us to do now? And of course we have no time to do it. I don’t get paid enough for this. The boss is clueless.”
- Those who see problems as occasions for persecution rather than challenges to overcome.
- They aren’t looking for opportunities; they are looking for problems.
- They can’t innovate.
- **What’s your thought?**

# The Nonbelievers

- “Why should we work so hard on this? Even if we come up with a good idea, the boss will probably kill it. If she doesn’t, the market will. I’ve seen this a hundred times before.”
- The difference between the winning team that makes industry-changing innovation happen and the losing one that comes up short is a lack of willpower.
- Henry Ford: “If you think you can or think you cannot, you are correct”
- **Your thought?**

# The Know-it-Alls

- “You people obviously don’t understand the business we are in. The regulations will not allow an idea like this, and our stakeholders won’t embrace it. Don’t even get me started on our IT infrastructure’s inability to support it. And then there is the problem of ...”
- The best innovators are learners, not knowers.
- “In school, the one who knows the most gets the best grade, goes to the best college, and gets the best salary. On the job, the person who can figure things out the quickest is often celebrated. And unfortunately, it is often this smartest, most-seasoned employee who eventually becomes expert in using his or her knowledge to explain why things are impossible rather than possible”
- The folks at Blockbuster didn’t see Netflix’s ascendancy. The encyclopedia companies didn’t see Google coming.
- **Your thought?**

# Plan for the Winter Break

- **Draw** the product (Solution, design, blueprint, model, prototype, etc) your team would make by the first week of January 2012. → **Visualization helps!**
- **Plan** to achieve the goal (the product) for weekly activities:
  - December 12 - 17
  - December 18 – 25
  - December 25 – 31
  - January 1 – 7
- Submit (1) Drawing and (2) Weekly Plan