



# From Glimmer to Delivery: The PM Path

## What is a Project?

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# A Glimmer in the Dark

## The Origin of Projects

Every project starts with a spark—a fleeting idea or a sense of possibility. This initial glimmer is the rawest form of creation, a question or hope that precedes any plan or budget. It's the seed that grows into something tangible.

## The Emotional Core

This spark is deeply personal and emotional. It's the feeling that drives innovation and change. It's the moment when a vision begins to take shape, often inspired by a 'what if' question that challenges the status quo.

## The Journey Begins

From this tiny spark, a journey unfolds. It's a path filled with uncertainty but also potential. This initial inspiration is what sets the stage for everything that follows in a project, making it the true starting point.

# More Than a To-Do List

Projects are not just lists of tasks to complete. They are dynamic journeys that involve creativity, struggle, and transformation. Each project is a unique path from idea to reality, filled with both challenges and opportunities.

**Projects as Journeys**

The process of turning an idea into something real is what defines a project. It's not just about completing tasks but about evolving and adapting. Projects are about growth and discovery, making them far more than simple to-do lists.

**The Evolution of Ideas**

# My Grandfather's Olive Tree

01

## A Personal Project

Projects can be deeply personal endeavors. My grandfather planted an olive tree as a boy, not for profit but for the future. This simple act was a project with a unique goal—growth and legacy.

02

## The Essence of Projects

Though he didn't call it a project, it embodied the core elements: a finite effort with a specific goal. It was a deliberate action taken to create something lasting, driven by a vision of the future.

03

## The Human Element

This story highlights the human aspect of projects. They are driven by personal motivations and emotions. The olive tree was planted with hope and care, illustrating the personal investment in projects.

04

## Legacy and Impact

The olive tree grew to provide shade and beauty, symbolizing the lasting impact of projects. It became a legacy, showing that projects can leave a mark on the world, even in small ways.

# Defining the Undefinable



## The Formal Definition

A project is formally defined as a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result. While this definition is precise, it captures only part of what a project truly is.

# Temporary, Not Forever

## The Importance of Temporariness

Projects have a clear start and end, distinguishing them from ongoing operations. This temporariness gives projects a sense of urgency and focus, helping teams stay motivated and committed.

01

## Special Missions

Projects are special missions with defined lifespans. They are not routine tasks but unique efforts aimed at achieving specific goals. This makes them both challenging and rewarding.

02

## The Finish Line

Knowing there's an end date is crucial. It provides a clear target and helps teams push through tough times. The temporariness of projects gives them a unique rhythm and purpose.

# Unique Like a Fingerprint

## The Uniqueness of Projects

No two projects are identical. Each project is shaped by its people, context, timing, and challenges. This uniqueness is what makes projects so dynamic and interesting.

## A One-of-a-Kind Endeavor

Even projects with similar goals are distinct. The specific combination of factors makes each project a one-of-a-kind endeavor, much like a fingerprint or a personal story.

# Product, Service, or Result

## Tangible Outcomes

Projects deliver tangible outcomes such as products or services. These are the physical or experiential results that projects aim to create, leaving a lasting mark on the world.

## Intangible Results

Beyond physical outputs, projects can also deliver intangible results. These might include new knowledge, capabilities, or changes in understanding that have a significant impact.

## The Echo of Effort

The outcomes of projects are the echoes of effort. They are the visible and invisible marks left by the hard work and dedication of teams, shaping the world in meaningful ways.

## Purposeful Creation

Every project is a deliberate effort to create something new. Whether it's a product, service, or result, the goal is to bring something into existence that didn't exist before.

# The Heartbeat: Why We Act

## The Emotional Core

The true driver of any project is the ‘why’—the problem it solves, the joy it brings, or the future it imagines. This emotional core fuels commitment and creativity, often more than any technical blueprint or plan.



# Projects vs. Operations

## ➤➤ Temporary vs. Ongoing

Projects are temporary and unique, while operations are ongoing and repetitive. This distinction is crucial for understanding how to approach and manage each type of work.

### Building vs. Running

Building a new factory is a project; running it is operations. Projects involve creating something new, while operations focus on maintaining and improving existing processes.

### Resource Allocation

Understanding the difference between projects and operations helps in allocating resources effectively. Projects require focused effort and planning, while operations need continuous improvement and optimization.

# Stakeholders: The Unseen Force

01

## The Impact of Stakeholders

Projects affect many stakeholders—funders, users, team members, and communities. These stakeholders shape and are shaped by the project, making their involvement crucial for success.

## Managing Expectations

Understanding and managing stakeholder needs, concerns, and expectations is essential. Their support or opposition can significantly impact the project's outcome.

02

# The PM's Burden and Blessing

## Guiding the Vision

Project managers guide the initial spark through chaos. They navigate constraints, mediate conflicts, and keep the vision alive. It's a role of responsibility and privilege, balancing structure with adaptability.

## Balancing Structure and Empathy

Project managers must balance logical planning with empathy for the human aspects of projects. They need to understand both the technical and emotional dimensions of the work.

## Navigating Constraints

PMs navigate the constraints of scope, time, cost, quality, resources, and risk. They must make trade-offs and prioritize effectively to keep the project on track.

## The Privilege of Creation

Despite the challenges, being a project manager is a privilege. It involves shaping futures and turning ideas into reality, making a tangible impact on the world.

# Constraints: The Walls We Face

## The Constant Balancing Act

Every project operates within constraints: scope, time, cost, quality, resources, and risk. These constraints interact constantly, requiring a delicate balance to achieve success.

# The Illusion of Control

## Embracing Uncertainty

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Despite planning, unpredictability is inevitable. Markets shift, people change, and crises emerge. True control is an illusion; success lies in adaptability and resilience.

### ▶ Learning from Chaos

Embracing the chaos of projects can lead to innovation and growth. Unexpected challenges can provide valuable lessons and opportunities for improvement.

### ▶ The Role of Flexibility

Flexibility is key to navigating the unpredictable nature of projects. Being able to adapt plans and strategies in response to changing circumstances is crucial for success.

# The Messiness of Creation

01

## The Human Aspect

Projects are human endeavors—flawed, emotional, and unpredictable. Delays, disagreements, and mistakes are natural parts of the process. Embracing this messiness is essential for success.

02

## The Creative Fabric

Rather than flaws, these challenges are part of the creative fabric of projects. They shape outcomes in unexpected but often meaningful ways, making each project unique.

# From Idea to Reality: A Bridge

## Connecting Imagination & Reality

A project is a bridge between imagination and reality. It transforms abstract ideas into tangible outcomes through effort, innovation, and perseverance.

## The Structured Path

This bridge is built through a structured process. It involves planning, execution, and monitoring, ensuring that the project stays on course and achieves its goals.

## Turning Vision into Action

Projects turn 'what if' into 'what is.' They take visions and ideas and make them real, creating value and impact in the world.

## The Role of Perseverance

Building this bridge requires perseverance. It involves overcoming obstacles, adapting to change, and staying committed to the vision.

# Rhythm: Predictable or Adaptive



## Different Rhythms

Projects follow different rhythms. Some are linear and predictable, like construction. Others are iterative and adaptive, like software development. Understanding the rhythm helps choose the right approach.

# Lessons from the Scars

## Learning from Experience

Every project teaches—through success and failure. Overruns, near-misses, and breakdowns are not shameful; they are tuition. These experiences shape better judgment and refine instincts.

## Building Wisdom

The lessons learned from projects build the wisdom needed for future endeavors. Each scar is a mark of growth, showing how far you've come and what you've learned along the way.

## Continuous Improvement

Projects are about continuous improvement. Each experience, good or bad, contributes to a deeper understanding of how to manage projects more effectively.

# Beyond the Finish Line

## Measuring Impact

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Completion is not the end. The real impact of a project unfolds afterward. Did the software improve lives? Did the park bring joy? Projects aim for benefits that ripple outward.

## Lasting Value

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The true success of a project is measured in lasting value. It's about creating outcomes that have a meaningful impact, long after the project is complete.



# Thank You

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**"Don't just manage projects—lead change. See you on the field."**