

KM and PM

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15 February 2019

Much of the success of any project relies on the Project Team, which brings with them a wealth of knowledge and experience.

### Information vs Local Knowledge

In projects you learn the value of local knowledge. Story of Langkawi tide times - there are apps available which tell you the times of high and low tides, but this gives you only one standard point. Through local knowledge (speaking to the fishermen), learned that times can vary by an hour at different locations on the same island.

Apps flatten out the variable knowledge and disregard context - local knowledge understands variation and context.

### Theoretical Knowledge vs Experience

In project management you have exposure to various disciplines which gives the opportunity to pick up awareness of different forms of knowledge. Project Managers play a cross pollination role, but for this to work curiosity is important.

Project Managers play a generalist role, brokering different knowledge and expertise. But apart from being curious, PMs need to be self-driven and be prepared to research things on your own; to quickly learn and be up to speed on what is going on, especially when it's in a discipline which you are not so familiar with. And you also have to learn the vocabulary of the different domains.

Project Managers plays an important role in bringing theoretical knowledge together with experience to find a solution to challenges.

How do you help younger ones gain OTJ experience?

Project Managers can help youngsters build their knowledge across projects. e.g. in a construction project, one way is to have them follow the inspector when they do the inspection. Inspectors are normally older experienced personnel and some love to share their wealth of knowledge. PMs can encourage and facilitate these learning moments and knowledge transfer.

### Codes and Regulations

Codes and regulations are wonderful for Project Managers because they structure knowledge and make it easy to complete tasks - but there are so many of them in building conservation projects! Sometimes, there can be conflict between various codes. And, how do we meet or overcome modern building codes (for today's buildings) without ruining the conservation building?

## Networks and Conversations

The Project Manager's ability to sniff out experts through your networks and conversations can be important. Eg. In one conservation project we couldn't find the building plans but through conversations we found a history buff, who remembered having seen the plans somewhere. He searched through various archives and later found that the plans were filed under a different location / address.

Projects rely on other people building deep expertise and knowledge resources. An architect had taken thousands of photos of SG buildings from the 1940s onwards, which was donated National Archives after his death. They were useful in establishing the age and context of the building.

Documentation is important to guide action but it doesn't always reflect reality. Sometimes you have to call on expert knowledge to verify.

In a very code and compliance dependent environment it can be a problem to resolve novel cases where the code doesn't cover it - not clear which authority takes precedence.

## Compliance vs Creativity

There can be tension between compliance vs creativity - managing stakeholders, people with knowledge, codes, authorities - the Project Manager sits in the 'middle' to 'mediate' between various parties and also to mediate explicit and tacit knowledge.

Having codes are great but will give you good product but will it give you a great product? Constraints of codes can be wearying.

Project Managers have to be prepared to dig and inform yourself - sometimes to weave your way between constraints of codes.

Also important to see the bigger picture and anticipate consequences. Big role in removing ambiguity and documenting decisions to provide common picture for everyone.