

# THE PRACTITIONER

A monthly newsletter of the Energy Facility Contractors Group's  
Project Delivery Working Group



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## Project Managers: Who Are They and What Do They Do?

**G**reetings, Energy Facility Contractors Group (EFCOG) Project Delivery Working Group (PDWG)! In this month's *Practitioner*, we focus on Project Managers. How are they defined? What are their responsibilities? How would I interview one, if needed? And, if I am a Project Manager, how might I answer the interview questions? Then we'll also look at the various types of major construction projects that a PM might be in charge of.

## Hiring a Project Manager

**A**s demand for project-based work grows, the Project Management Institute projects forecasts that employers are going to need to fill 2.2 million new project-oriented roles each year through 2027.

Most would agree that project managers have a significant amount of responsibility and play a very important role in any project's success or failure. Most would probably also agree they wouldn't want to trade places with the project manager. High risk and headache, with minor reward, and little celebration, given the number grey hairs earned with each project.

— From [Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia](#)

### **Project Manager (PM) Defined:**

A project manager is a professional in the field of project management. Project managers have the responsibility of the planning, procurement, and execution of a project, in any undertaking that has a defined scope, defined start and a defined finish, regardless of industry. Project managers are first point of contact for any issues or discrepancies arising from within the heads of various departments in an organization before the problem escalates to higher authorities, as project representative.

### **PM Responsibility:**

Project management is the responsibility of a project manager. This individual seldom participates directly in the activities that produce the result, but rather strives to maintain the progress, mutual interaction, and tasks of various parties in such a way that reduces the risk of overall failure, maximizes benefits, and minimizes costs.

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# Hiring a Project Manager

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A project manager is the person responsible for accomplishing the project objectives. Key project management responsibilities include:

- defining and communicating project objectives that are clear, useful, and attainable
- procuring the project requirements like workforce, required information, various agreements and material or technology needed to accomplish project objectives
- managing the constraints of the project management triangle, which are cost, time, scope, and quality

A project manager is a client representative and must determine and implement the exact needs of the client, based on knowledge of the organization they are representing. An expertise is required in the domain the project managers are working to efficiently handle all the aspects of the project. The ability to adapt to the various internal procedures of the client and to form close links with the nominated representatives, is essential in ensuring that the key issues of cost, time, quality and above all, client satisfaction, can be realized.

The tools, knowledge, and techniques for managing projects are often unique to project management. For example: work breakdown structures, critical path analysis and earned value management. Understanding and applying the tools and techniques which are generally recognized as good practices are not sufficient alone for effective project management. Effective project management requires that the project manager understands and uses the knowledge and skills from at least four areas of expertise. Examples are PMBOK, Application Area Knowledge: standards and regulations set forth for project management, General Management Skills, and Project Environment Management. There are also many options for project management software to assist in executing projects for the project manager and his/her team.

Most of the project management issues that influence a project arise from risk, which in turn arises from uncertainty. The successful project manager focuses on this as his/her main concern and attempts to reduce risk significantly, often by adhering to a policy of open communication, ensuring that project participants can voice their opinions and concerns.

The project manager is accountable for ensuring that everyone on the team knows and executes his or her role, feels empowered and supported in the role, knows the roles of the other team members, and acts upon the belief that those roles will be performed. The specific responsibilities of the project manager may vary depending on the industry, the company size, the company maturity, and the company culture. However, there are some responsibilities that are common to all project managers, noting:

- Developing the project plans
- Managing project stakeholders
- communication
- the project team
- risks
- schedule

## THE PRACTITIONER

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# Hiring a Project Manager

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- budget
- conflicts
- project delivery
- contract administration

With the PM role defined and a good understanding of their responsibilities, how do I make sure I get the right PM for the job? Read on to find helpful Project Management Interview questions that can help you make your selection.

— Excerpted from [BestJobInterview.com](https://www.bestjobinterview.com)

1. Tell us about your experience in managing different projects. How can this contribute to this position?
2. Describe how you recently managed a diverse project team towards a common goal.
3. Describe the most complex project you have managed from start to finish.
4. How do you determine realistic schedules for the project?
5. Explain your methods for resource allocation.
6. How do you manage suppliers?
7. How do you inform all the stakeholders of the progress of the project on a regular basis?
8. How do you monitor risks to the project and mitigate them?
9. What tools do you use to monitor and control projects?
10. What project management methodologies are you most familiar with?
11. What project software have you used?
12. What change management processes have you used to ensure that change is introduced properly?
13. What are the practices you follow for closing a project and meeting the conditions required to establish closure?
14. What specific training have you had that would be relevant to this project manager job?

## Project manager behavioral interview questions

Most project management candidates handle the questions designed to evaluate their technical proficiency well but tend to slip up on the project management interview questions that explore the behaviors or competencies required for a project manager position.

- team building and team management
- planning and organizing
- negotiation
- problem-solving
- leadership
- adaptability

Finally, here are suggested responses to the some of the questions above that you may find useful in the event you are interviewing to become a PM.

*“Tell us about your experience in managing different projects. How can this contribute to this position?”*

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# Hiring a Project Manager

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- It is important to carefully structure your interview answer because this is a multi-layered and fairly complex question. Start by explaining how you are going to answer the question. This keeps your answer on track and to the point.
- "I will begin by giving you a short description of my last three projects. I will detail the skills and abilities I developed as a result of each project and demonstrate the value of these skills to this position."
- You can then go on to provide a brief but concise summary of each project.
- "I was the project manager for the XYZ project and this involved ..."
- Then describe the skills you acquired during the project.
- "I encountered a number of difficulties on this project that required an innovative approach. I used group problem solving sessions as one of these approaches. This worked well because it helped each team member to clarify their particular project role and responsibility and we were able to develop plans and realistic schedules that the whole project team contributed to ..."
- Demonstrate how these skills will benefit the job and company.
- "Projects now are often faced with tighter budgets and fewer resources. This approach maximizes the available resources and keeps everyone focused and motivated for the duration of the project..."
- Get help with answering project manager interview questions using this complete list of project manager duties and skills [Project Manager Duties, Tasks and Skills \(best-job-interview.com\)](https://www.best-job-interview.com/project-manager-duties-tasks-and-skills/)

*"Describe how you recently managed a diverse project team towards a common goal."*

Focus on:

- your ability to delegate in a fair and practical way
- how you clearly defined project roles and responsibilities
- kept personality clashes and conflict to a minimum
- monitored and fed back to the project team
- Outline your management style and why it worked.

Find out more about [What Makes a Good Manager? \(best-job-interview.com\)](https://www.best-job-interview.com/what-makes-a-good-manager/)

*"Describe the most complex project you have managed from start to finish."*

Provide a comprehensive answer remembering to explain the project as you would to an external client and not to somebody who has been involved in the project.

The more complex a project the more formal processes and techniques are needed to effectively manage the work. Explain the purpose, value, and implementation of the most critical aspects of the project including:

- managing the project work plan
- the project schedule
- the project risks
- the project issues
- closing the project

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## Hiring a Project Manager

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Be enthusiastic about your accomplishments in your project management interview and specify how your experience will benefit the company.

Point out where you made a difference on the project in terms of expenditure, quality, efficiency, customer satisfaction and business and organizational success. Your contribution should be clearly quantified to indicate your actual value to the project.

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# It Is Not One World

## Major Types of Construction

**T**he four major types of construction include residential building, institutional and commercial building, specialized industrial construction, infrastructure and heavy construction.

### 1. Residential Building

The first type of construction is residential housing construction which involves building, repairing, and remodeling of structures for the purpose of housing people, supplies, or equipment. It includes apartments, townhomes, condos, nursing homes, dormitories, etc. Also, garages and outbuildings like utility sheds are considered as residential constructions. As mentioned above, residential construction also involves repair and installation of utilities like water as electricity around the structure.

The design of residential housing projects is usually done by engineers and architects and the construction itself executed by construction companies who hire subcontractors to do the mechanical, structural and electrical work of the project. But for single-family houses, builders usually do all of the phases, both the design and the construction.

### 2. Institutional and Commercial Building

This type of construction encompasses projects schools, sports arenas, shopping centers, hospitals, stadiums, retail stores, and skyscrapers. Like the residential housing construction, institutional and commercial building involves both putting up of new structures and repair and maintenance of existing structures. Typically, a project like a retail store is usually commissioned by a company or private owner. Other projects such as stadiums, schools, and medical facilities are often paid for and managed by both the local and national government.



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# Major Types of Construction

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## 3. Specialized Industrial Construction

The third type of construction is specialized industrial construction which entails building structures that require a high level of specialization as well as technical skills in planning, construction, and design. Typically, this type of construction is carried out by for-profit or industrial corporations. For instance, a chemical industry can build oil refineries, and power generation industry can build structures nuclear power plants and hydroelectric power plants, which are examples of specialized industrial constructions.

## 4. Infrastructure and Heavy Construction

The last type of construction is infrastructure and heavy construction which encompasses building and upgrading of railways, communications, and roads, railways to the surroundings of a city or existing building construction. This type of construction usually done due to the public interest and is often executed by government agencies and large private corporations.

Some other projects that fall under this type of construction include tunnels, bridges, highways, transit systems, drainage systems, and pipelines.

## Bottom Line

These are the main types of constructions we have today. There are many construction experts to choose from depending on the type of project you have. An architect or engineer can help you design your building project while a builder can help you construct the structure. Just make sure that the person or contractor is reputable, reliable and experienced in what he does. With the use of the internet and referrals from your friends and relatives, you can get a good specialist for your project.

— From the [Miami New Construction](#)

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# Just for Fun: August's Notable Events and Famous Birthdays

1 — Explorer William Clark (1770) and national anthem author Francis Scott Key (1779) were born, World War 1 began (1914), the first Six Flags amusement park opened in Texas (1961), and MTV made its debut (1981).

2 — The Declaration of Independence was signed (1776), Pres. Warren G. Harding died (1923), the Vietnam War began (1964), and Iraq invaded Kuwait (1990).

3 — Christopher Columbus set sail from Spain (1492), Calvin Coolidge became president (1923), entrepreneur Martha Stewart was born (1941), the NBA was founded (1949), and **quarterback Tom Brady was born** (1977).



4 — Champagne was invented (1693), and jazz musician Louis Armstrong (1900), President Barack Obama (1961), and racecar driver Jeff Gordon (1971) were born.

5 — The first federal income tax was imposed (1861), the first traffic light went into service in (1914), astronaut Neil Armstrong was born (1930), actress Marilyn Monroe was found dead (1962), and the NBA and ABA merged (1976).

6 — The first execution by electric chair was carried out (1890), comic actress Lucille Ball (1911) and pop artist Andy Warhol (1928) were born, **the first atomic bomb was dropped on Japan** (1945), and African-Americans were guaranteed the right to vote (1965).



7 — The Purple Heart was created (1782), Earth was first photographed from space (1959), and actress Charlize Theron was born (1975).

8 — Actor Dustin Hoffman was born (1937), and President Richard Nixon announced his resignation from office (1974).

9 — Cartoon character Betty Boop debuted (1930), actor Sam Elliott was born (1944), the second atomic bomb was dropped on Japan (1945), singer Whitney Houston (1963) and athlete Deion Sanders (1967) were born, and Gerald Ford became president (1974).

10 — Missouri became the first state west of the Mississippi River (1821), President Herbert Hoover was born (1874), **the electric guitar was patented** (1937), and *Red Dawn* premiered as the first movie with a PG-13 rating (1984).



11 — Wrestler Hulk Hogan was born (1953), hip-hop was created (1973), the longest major league baseball strike began (1994), and actor Robin Williams died (2014).

12 — Filmmaker Cecil B. DeMille was born (1881), the Spanish-American War ended (1898), and *The Wizard of Oz* premiered (1939).

13 — Filmmaker Alfred Hitchcock was born (1899), Cuban president Fidel Castro was born (1926), and baseball legend Mickey Mantle died (1995).

14 — The Social Security Act was signed (1935), comedic actor Steve Martin was born (1945), **the Whiffle Ball was patented** (1953), and basketball star Magic Johnson (1959) and actress Halle Berry (1968) were born.



15 — French emperor Napoleon Bonaparte (1769) and chef Julia Child (1912) were born, the Panama Canal opened (1914), construction began on the Berlin Wall (1961), the Woodstock Music Festival opened (1969), and actor Ben Affleck was born (1972).

16 — The Klondike Gold Rush began (1896), baseball legend Babe Ruth died (1948), TV personality Kathy Lee Gifford (1953) and singer Madonna (1958) were born, the punk rock revolution began (1974), and singer Elvis Presley died (1977).

17 — Lou Gehrig became baseball's ironman (1933), and actor Robert De Niro was born (1943).

18 — Explorer Meriwether Lewis (1774), baseball legend Roberto Clemente (1934), and actors Robert Redford (1937) and Patrick Swayze (1954) were born, and basketball legend Larry Bird retired (1992).

19 — Aviator Orville Wright was born (1871), the first race was held at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway (1909), Star Trek creator Gene Roddenberry was born (1921), Adolph Hitler became president of Germany (1934), and President Bill Clinton (1948) and actors Matthew Perry and Christian Slater (1969) were born.

20 — President Benjamin Harrison was born (1833), the National Football League was organized (1920), and the Soviet Union invaded Czechoslovakia (1968).

21 — Oldsmobile was founded (1897), basketball legend Wilt Chamberlain (1936) and singer Kenny Rogers (1938) were born, Hawaii became the 50th U.S. state (1959), the Ruby Ridge standoff began (1992), and **swimmer Michael Phelps won a record 8th Olympic gold medal** (2004).



22 — The first America's Cup yacht race was held (1851), the International Red Cross was founded (1864), and Nolan Ryan recorded his 5,000th strikeout (1989).

23 — The tire chain was patented (1904), basketball star Kobe Bryant (RIP) was born (1978), baseball legend Pete Rose was banned for life (1989), and the first case of West Nile virus in the U.S. was reported (1999).

24 — Mt. Vesuvius erupted, instantly burying two cities (79), British troops set the White House on fire (1814), **the waffle iron was patented** (1869), and baseball ironman Cal Ripken Jr. was born (1960).



25 — The first person swam across the English Channel (1875), actor Sean Connery (1930) and TV personality Regis Philbin (1933) were born, *The Wizard of Oz* debuted (1939), and Paris was liberated by Allied troops (1944).

26 — Women gained the right to vote (1920), the first televised baseball game aired (1939), and aviator Charles Lindbergh died (1974).

27 — **Mt. Krakatoa erupted in the world's most powerful volcanic blast** (1883), President Lyndon B. Johnson (1908) and Mother Teresa (1910) were born, and the first edition of "The Guinness Book of Records" was published (1955).



28 — Martin Luther King, Jr. made his "I have a dream" speech (1963).

29 — The Soviet Union detonated its first nuclear test bomb (1949), singer Michael Jackson was born (1958), and Hurricane Katrina made landfall on the Gulf Coast (2005).

30 — Baseball legend Ted Williams was born (1918), and Thurgood Marshall became the first African-American Supreme Court justice (1967).

31 — **The first solar-powered car was demonstrated** (1955), and boxing legend Rocky Marciano died in a plane crash (1964).

