

PD04

Making of a Stat Programming Project Manager

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- The context for this presentation
- What it takes to make a good Stat Programming Manager
- Contrast: what we expected from the PM, vs. what the prospective PM aspires for
- How to manage the contrast, and how to mentor contenders
- The Mentee and the Mentor – what they need to do
- Recipe for turning out an effective PM
- Conclusion

Background and Context



- India; FSP team; Focus on Biostat and Programming
- Experience gleaned from building a 130+ team
- Programmers eager to quickly become technical leads and managers
- Most important client expectation: stability and independence
- Client expectations vs. programmer aspirations: interesting contrasts

The good PM, according to us (us = management and client)

- The Belbin® Team Roles:
 - Action-oriented Roles
 - People-oriented Roles
 - Cerebral Roles
- Gets things done, makes own decisions (and right ones!)
- Makes assumptions, validates them and acts
- Takes accountability
- Manages Team, but also does first-hand work! Perhaps as much as 70%!
- QC's the team's work. Doesn't let errors slip through.
- Manages newbies and turn them into stars. That's what good PMs are for!
- Does effective HR management of team

The PM, according to the PM

- Juggling multiple responsibilities – desirable but daunting
- Hierarchical position is important
- Get work done by team, own deliverable minimal; ideally none!
- Seeks variety of exposure in quick time
- Is in direct contact with client staff
- Wishes to multitask across assignments / studies
- A peek inside the PM's mind



The contrast of expectations

Attribute	What we (client/management) expect	What the aspiring PM wants
Job Role	Steady and fixed for a considerable duration: typically at least 2-3 years.	Fast-track change into Lead or Manager labels and positions, because this is perceived as career growth
Work Content	Sustained work in a specific area. Makes for greater depth of expertise, that translates to productivity gain.	Urge to experience variety early. Desire to evolve / change work content typically as often as once a year
Multitasking	Focus on specific specialist tasks. Provide best productivity out of increasing knowledge and skill	Be able to taste variety of tasks in parallel. Aimed at both – gaining a rapidly growing repertoire of skills, and also minimizing repetitiveness and tedium
First-hand work delivery	Considerable amount of time: ~50% should be on direct deliverables. Important because the learning curve and productivity gain must be exploited	Majority time for managing the team and the project. A small (ideally none!) amount of time on first-hand deliverables.

The Job Role

- Steady and fixed for a considerable duration: typically at least 2-3 years.
- Desire to evolve / change work content typically as often as once a year

Work content

- Sustained work in one area. Gain depth of expertise, translate to productivity increase.
- Fast-track role evolution - perceived as necessary for career growth

Multitasking

- Hands-on work; Team mentoring; Accountability; Delivery; parallel assignments
- Types of projects/tasks (variety); new skills; automation / reducing tedium

First-hand work delivery

- At least 50%. Necessary for continued technical expertise.
- As little as feasible. Ideally none! Managing team and tasks takes up all the time

The mentee and the mentor

The Mentee

- Technical expertise must
- Broad experience: TAs, clients, type of work
- Tech-savvy and Tools-savvy
- Ability to listen. Between the lines.
- Ability to inspire performance
- Absorb >> Digest >> Estimate >> Plan >> Convince Client >> Convince Team >> Inspire Performance >> Deliver.
- Manage time. Own and Team's
- Effective Delegation
- Managing Conflicts

The Mentor

- Hands-off. Resist micro-management
- Feedback: Continuous, Candid, Swift, Tactful
- Step-in to handhold on live projects



Making of a PM: the metamanager's Recipe and Timeline

Grooming Stage	Typical duration (years)	Steps to take to groom the prospective manager
A Tech skills	Throughout the career	Continuous addition to technical skills. Stay abreast of the latest. Stay fresh and current
B Assess Potential	2 years	Identify candidates for potential PM. Test capability and interest. Discuss and define roadmap.
C Tech Leadership	2yr – 3yr	Provide small but growing opportunity of technical leadership of a small team.
D Communication	2yr – 5yr	Develop communication skills on multiple dimensions. Both client-side and team-side. Voice, Email, Documentation, Specifications, Issues and Resolution, Tasklists, Assessment and Feedback
E Formal Lead Role	Around 3 years	Technical Leadership with formal responsibility
F PM Training	4yr – 6yr	Formal project management training. Estimation, planning, monitoring, control, execution and closure.
G Shadow PM	5yr – 6yr	Allow candidate to conceptualize, design, define and partly execute the tasks of the PM, under the wings of actual PM.
H HR management	5yr-8yr	Team Management begins to include Performance Assessment, Defining KRAs and goals, Work allocation

Making of a PM: Timeline

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	8+		
										Technical skill-building

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										Communication Skill Dev
										Formal Lead Role
										Project Management Training
										Shadow PM responsibility
										Team Management, HR

- Making of a PM an 8+ year project.
- Identifying potential candidates: attributes to look for
- Defining stages with specific focuses
- Managing contrast of expectations
- Channelizing the aspirations
- Skills needed of the Mentor / Metamanager

Questions?

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