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The Role of Executive Leadership in Project Success



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Executive Leadership

Engaged
Sponsors – Top
Driver to Project
Success

Why so
seldom
used?



Executive Sponsor / Project Sponsor References

- CII – OPE (Owners Project Executive)
- PMI – The Project Sponsor – Owner’s Perspective
- Wikipedia: “Senior Executive
....responsible for the success of the Project.”



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Executive Sponsor / Project Sponsor References

- Exploring the role of the Project Sponsor by Crawford and Brett -
“...Contractor Sponsor...not needed...as the relationship between the owner and contractor is defined by the contract.”



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Executive Sponsor / Project Sponsor - Owner & Contractor Role

- Reactive
 - Responds only to Disputes and Problems
 - Figure Head – Attends Ground Breakings and Ribbon Cuttings
 - Shows up at Teambuilders when invited



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Project Sponsor - Owner & Contractor Role

- Pro-Active
 - Participates throughout the project on a regimented schedule.
 - Invests in relationships – establishes trust among stakeholders.
 - Addresses issues before they get out of hand, without becoming the Project Manager
 - By example, demonstrates how their team will behave.



ARS Questions

Are you:

1. A Contractor/Supplier
2. An Owner
3. An Other



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ARS Questions

Does your company use
Executive Sponsors in the Executing
of Projects/Programs?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't Know



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ARS Questions

How would you classify your company when it comes to Senior Leadership's engagement in Project Execution?

1. Proactive
2. Reactive



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ARS Questions

Would your projects benefit from a more proactive and robust Executive Sponsorship program?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not Sure



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Executive Sponsorship - Truths

- Projects always have challenges
- Issues do not age well
- Teams do not ask for help
- Its hard to find proactive time
- Stakeholder alignment is difficult



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Executive Sponsors:

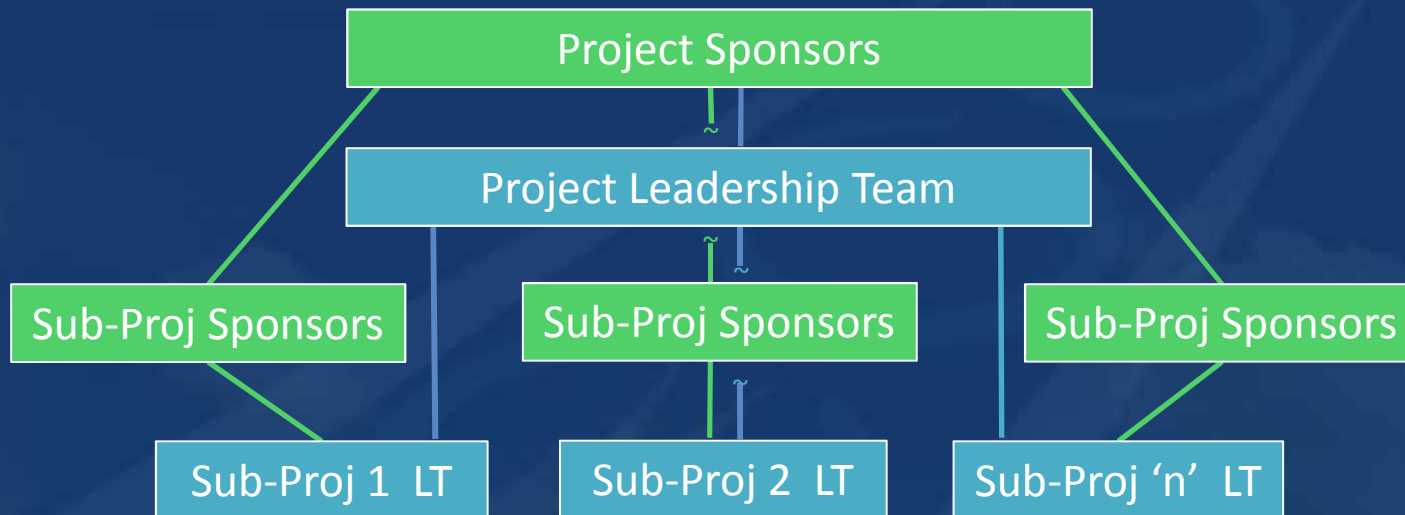
- Ensure “Nobody Gets Hurt”
- Spend time strategically – “ Head Lights Up”
- Tell it like it is and have a sense of urgency
- Respect each stakeholder’s capability
- Strive for a win-win



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Project Sponsor Model



- Scalable to project complexity
- Project team leaders sit on Sponsor team



Executive Sponsor's Goals

- Stakeholder management
- Solutions for escalated issues
- Removal of road blocks
- Creating the environment for success
- Openness



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Leadership Expectations

- Ensure relationship consistency
- Build trust and mutual respect
- Remember the 90-95% rule



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