

Training Description
MANAGING PROJECT CRISES

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Status: Final

Managing Project Crises

To act as a project crisis counselor, one has to know the own crises history and pattern.

The background

A project crisis is a situation where the delivery of the intended work product can only be achieved by significant changes of either the goals, the involved resources or the organizational support.

Our experience shows that there are **three major root causes** for a project crisis:

- a weak project set-up
- insufficient capabilities or incompetence and
- a lack of leadership in the project or the organizational context to support the project.

A fourth factor is the influence from the project outside e.g. economic factors or changes in the organizational context such as mergers and acquisitions. Compared to the other three causes we see it as relative marginal influence.

During a project crisis, the involved individuals live through a crisis process that is comparable to the one of a personal / traumatic crisis. They feel exposed and weak and often narrow their mindset instead of opening up, looking for creative solutions and heading for the big picture.

Supporting factors to break the negative spiral are, amongst others, self reflection, spending time with project externals and the exchange with personal coaches.

Concerning the organizational context, we experienced that organizations with a very hierarchic or chaotic leadership culture face a significant higher probability to develop project crises than organizations with a more balanced approach. Furthermore, it is likely that a project crises pattern occurs several times in an organization. It appears that there are well developed «defensive routines» preventing the organization to overcome this pattern.

There are two types of interventions to cope with a project crisis: **Direct interventions**, such as stopping the project, exchanging individuals, versus indirect or **supportive interventions**, such as coaching, training, etc.

In the seminar both types will be discussed and practiced.

Seminar - Managing Project Crises (2 Days)

Objective

The participants

- understand symptoms and root causes of project crises
- understand how they as an individual react and cope with crises
- discover their personal "crises history", which is an important starting point to understand the own coping strategy and capabilities in case of a crisis
- learn what their selection criteria for a crises manager or project manager are
- are able to act as a "crises advisor / counselor" in their professional environment

Target Audience

- Experienced Project Managers who would like to broaden their capability in crises management
- Executives and Managers, who want to get a better sense on who fits to what kind of projects
- HR Managers and Coaches, who want to better understand mechanisms during project crises and how they can support in their role

Content

Day 1

- Crisis, symptoms, definitions
 - o Crises in general, our understanding, differences between project crises and personal crises, when do we call a crisis a crisis - collection of criteria, examples, escalation steps
- Root causes of (project) crises
 - o Discussion of own experiences in terms of causes of crisis, where did these causes get built in / generated, do we see any pattern in terms of organization or culture
- Crisis management
 - o What is crisis management, what is needed in terms of competences and technique, discussion
- The personal crisis history
 - o Which major crises did I face as an individual? How intense did I experience the crises and why. What was my approach to cope as an individual with crises in my personal environment, discussion of findings

Day 2

- Personal crisis pattern
 - o Based on the crisis history we analyse our own pattern based on a questionnaire followed by a discussion with peers
- Approaches to avoid or to recover from project crises
 - o What are direct and indirect interventions to cope with crises, in what role do I perform these interventions, examples, how do these interventions feed back to me, indirect interventions such as coaching, intervention
- Case study of a real project crisis
 - o Presentation of an example (brought in by participants or an example presented by the trainer), analysis of the development, possible root causes, own energy and frustration level, coping strategy

Style of Training

- 2 day training in English in an external seminar facility
- Frame and theory input is provided by november ag
- It is expected that the participants bring in their own expectations and experiences
- november ag ensures fair discussions and that the overall objective is achieved
- Role plays to simulate real situations are used
- We discuss crises, adequate interventions and personal behavior - participants might be challenged
- The quality of the seminar depends on openness in personal matters (Non disclosure agreement has to be signed at the beginning of the seminar)

Contact

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