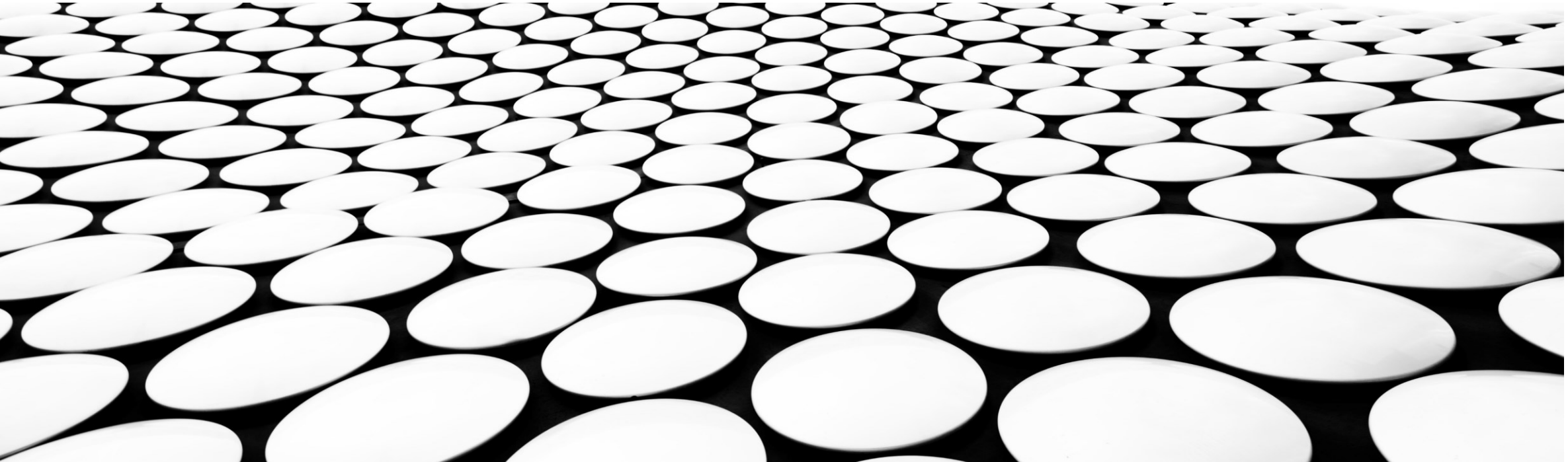


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# EXECUTIVES

HOW TO WIN THE SUPPORT OF TOP EXECUTIVES



# HOW TO WIN THE SUPPORT OF TOP EXECUTIVES?

## Help the Executive fulfilling his/here role

1. Everyone should know what to do / what is expected
2. Thereafter we all should agree and accept what to do
3. The projectmanager can help Executives with clarity about their role (generate the document Organisation and check the attachment). This is the first step to agree on the detailed Roles and Responsibilities. Preferable according the Prince2 Organisation Theme. Most important is an agreement with as little as possible open ends.

Roles and Responsibilities

## Find out the personal and business goals and get commitment

The project board Executive role will be the main decision maker within the project and should have the necessary authority to carry this out. Therefore arrange:

1. Stability, Predictability and Control for the project of the Executive
2. Useful reporting for the Executive
3. No surprises in the Program Board
4. No hidden issues for the Executive

Involvement

Adequate management

## Help the Executive with management tasks (overview and details)

1. Focus on what is important. The projectmanager is able prepare the list of items which are important for the Executive. Generate the items to do.
2. Do the right things. The projectmanager and the board should focus on the right things. Depending on agreed decisions and guided by the projects business case. Assign SMART according agreed Roles and Responsibilities.
3. Do the Things right! On executive level: make the right decisions in time. Focus on who should make what decisions.

## ■ Introduction Executive involvement

It is commonly accepted in the project management community that the support of senior management, particularly the sponsor, is required for success. Not surprisingly, project managers wonder why is it so hard to get executives' attention. Let's take a look at this question.

## ■ Different perspectives on what is important

First of all, a project manager and his or her sponsor view the project completely differently.

- Project management is all about **cost, schedule, and quality**. Project managers must focus on the details.
- Executives do not really care about the details unless something is going wrong. It is all about **control and stability**. They want to be assured that the project is under control and causing as little disruption as possible in the stakeholder groups.

## ■ Different priorities related to the project

The second difference is priorities. The project manager's first priority is successfully delivering the project. Our sponsor's first priority is producing operational performance—he or she must “hit their numbers.” That is all about running the business. From a sponsor's perspective, a successful project will deliver

- better operational performance in the future and allow him to do even better in achieving these goals:
- Growing profit margins,
- Reducing costs,
- Increasing the speed of delivery,
- Improving customer satisfaction

## Four steps to build support

### 1. Keep the project in control and predictable

Always keep in mind what your sponsor thinks is important—which is operational performance, a project under control, and a sense of stability within the stakeholder groups. If sponsors sense a project is out of control, they will begin to put distance between themselves and the project. Everyone wants to be part of a successful team! [The Mercurius Software Tooling can help in getting stability and control by checklists and preformatted documents.](#)

### 2. Useful reporting

Report to your sponsor on progress in delivering the operational benefits, and focus only on the budget and schedule in that context. Agree about the reporting and adapt where necessary! Keep reports adequate and useful. Not too much detail not too little.... [The Mercurius Software Tooling can help in adequate reporting.](#)

### 3. No surprises

Never allow your sponsor to be surprised. This is related to the political environment. There is absolutely nothing worse for a sponsor than being surprised by another executive who says something like, “My people are telling me there’s a problem in your project.” Your sponsor needs to be able to say, confidently, “Yes, I’m aware there are some concerns, but we have a plan to fix that issue. Would you like me to keep you informed as we resolve the problem?” [The Mercurius Software Tooling can help in real-time global and detailed information.](#)

### 4. Don’t hide issues

Never play the game that some project managers do, in which they don’t tell the sponsor about any problems and pretend that everything will work out. Always let your sponsor know about any important issues that arise, and come to him or her with your plans to tackle those issues. This approach will build a relationship of trust between you and your sponsor, and give your sponsor confidence in you and your team. [The Mercurius Software Tooling can help in real-time global and detailed information. Addressing issues where they belong.](#)

## Conclusion,

everyone in business knows that people focus on what their boss deems important. That’s why all project managers realize the importance of senior management in a successful project. Using the suggestions presented here will go a long way in helping you achieve the support you need.