ISSUE brief

June 2012 8

Issue Briefs are designed for practitioners with limited time and a need to know about the latest industry-based knowledge.

The "Accidental" Project Manager

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SEARCH

Current economic realities are causing hardship at all levels, including:

- **individuals** who are called upon to increase productivity at work, often doing more with fewer resources;
- many **cities** that struggle to manage budgetary shortfalls and still provide critically needed public services;
- **states** that are dealing with financial hardships, which result in major projects being delayed or cancelled; and
- the **Federal Government**, which is embroiled in an important debate regarding how to manage a record deficit and significant national debt.

Throughout the nation, the justice community and public safety professionals are coping with staff vacancies, while still maintaining critical life, safety, and property protection services and balancing the need to effectively manage projects within their organizations. **How does this relate to you?**

Consider this scenario:

> *You're in an important meeting. Your agency has just received funding for a large technology project, but the project manager has just been laid off because of a budgetary shortfall. The chief executive (e.g., police chief, sheriff, communications center manager) turns to you and says, "You've always done a great job managing different assignments. I need you to run with this mission-critical, high-visibility, important project.… We've had some big project failures in the past, but I know you'll do a great job."*

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Welcome to the World of the "Accidental" Project Manager!

This *Issue Brief* will define what the accidental project manager is, why project management matters, and how to effectively manage this reality. It is beyond the scope of this issue brief to teach the process of project management, but you will be introduced to tools that will begin to familiarize you with the steps and important considerations. The intended audience is public safety operations/first responder personnel (e.g., police, fire, emergency medical services [EMS], and public safety emergency communications personnel) with operational expertise, but who may not necessarily have project management expertise.

This brief is also oriented toward common public safety projects such as records management systems (RMS) or computer aided dispatch (CAD) deployments, where the requirements are largely common and well-understood across agencies, and a robust market of available solutions exists. This is not intended for projects such as custom software development, in which there are often unknown user requirements at the start of the project that significantly increase the project risk.

What is an Accidental Project Manager?

> *"The individual called upon to undertake project management responsibilities with little or no preparation….The term has been coined to illustrate the trial-by-fire nature of project management."*[1]

Many individuals in the public sector are called upon to manage projects with little or no project management training, assignment preparation, or formal organizational support. These individuals are often referred to as *accidental project managers.*[2] Public safety professionals frequently manage IT upgrades or replacements of complex RMS, CAD, and emergency communications radio systems, or manage radio tower and other building construction projects as well as a wide array of governance and policy development

1. Darrell, Vanessa, David Baccarini, and Peter E.D. Love, 2010, "Demystifying the Folklore of the Accidental Project Manager in the Public Sector," *Project Management Journal*, December (hereafter, PM Journal article) at www.pmi.org/~/media/PDF/Home/PMJDec2010_ACCIDENTAL.ashx (accessed October 2011); "A survival guide for the Accidental Project Manager," Proceedings from the PMI Seminar, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1992; Jeffrey K. Pinto and O.P. Kharbanda, 1995, "Lessons for an Accidental Profession," *Business Horizons* 38(2):41–50; and Larry Puleo, blog post, "Why do projects take so long?" April 5, 2004, at http://it.toolbox.com/blogs/lpuleo/why-do-projects-take-so-long-686 (accessed October 2011).

2. PM Journal article.

projects. In addition to lacking the necessary training, preparation, and support, these accidental project managers are usually tasked with managing projects part-time, while also balancing their primary job assignments. Accidental project managers typically rely on their management abilities to get things done; however, leading a complex project such as RMS, CAD, and emergency radio systems to success also requires careful planning and a formal process.

The challenges of being an accidental project manager typically impact public safety professionals who lack IT, engineering, or project management experience and training. As we examine common experiences of accidental project managers, it becomes clear that non-technical police, fire, EMS, and public safety emergency communications personnel are often hired, trained, and promoted based on their general management and public safety skills and abilities—not their project management skills.

Accidental Project Manager Strengths

When assigned to this role, **accidental project managers often possess general management skills, interpersonal skills,** and **job-specific technical expertise** in their primary functional disciplines. This technical skill is aligned with the central element of their primary profession (i.e., police, fire, EMS, and public safety emergency communications personnel) and is not technically oriented in terms of IT, engineering, or project management, training, education, or experience.

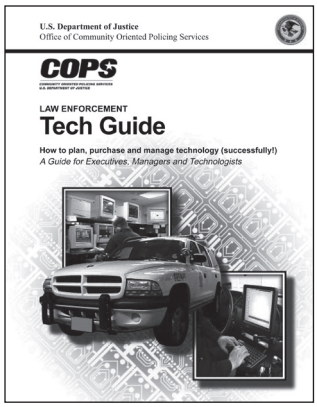
For instance, law enforcement personnel assigned to this role are typically very skilled and experienced as law enforcement managers or heads of their respective divisions (such as criminal investigations, patrol, special operations, or records). This demonstrated job-specific technical and managerial skill is often the reason they excelled in their chosen professions. However, a gap frequently occurs between this job-specific technical skill and the broad and in-depth skills needed to successfully fulfill the role of project manager.

Interpersonal skills are paramount[3] to help ensure broad stakeholder buy-in and support of project management-related endeavors. Key interpersonal skills include communication, conf ict management, team building, negotiation, inf uencing, motivation, relationship management, and problem solving. Fortunately, many assigned to the accidental project manager role possess these skills.[4] These skills are essential because the project manager may not have direct supervisory authority over key members of the project team; this is especially true for multi-agency, multi-discipline projects like regional CAD or RMS implementations. The ability to develop and sustain buy-in and collective ownership of projects rests in large part on the shoulders of the project manager, and his or her ability to effectively use interpersonal skills.

Where Accidental Project Managers Need Support

Accidental project managers often do not possess project management skills and do not receive organizational support. Lacking the appropriate project management skills[5]—including tools, techniques, and know-how—is generally attributed to a lack of project management training, career development, and support for skills development *before* an individual is assigned to manage a project. Many accidental project managers do an effective job without formal training, techniques, and know-how. Individual skill, ability, determination—and even luck at times—contribute to their effectiveness; however, there is often a lack of consistency in results.

Why Does Project Management Matter?



Successful project management involves effectively managing the 10 areas shown in Table 1 (shown on page 4)**.** The working definitions shown in Table 1 are based primarily on a foundational public safety project management resource: The *Law Enforcement Tech Guide: How to plan, purchase and manage technology (successfully!), A Guide for Executives, Managers and Technologists.*[6]

The *Law Enforcement Tech Guide* contains detailed information on helpful project management techniques and methods. **Successful projects require a well-articulated plan of action.**[7] Part of making this plan effective requires the appropriate application of project management knowledge, skills, techniques, and tools.

3. Senge, Peter M., Bryan J. Smith, Richard B. Ross, Charlotte Roberts, and Art Kleiner, 1994, *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook: Strategies and Tools for Building a Learning Organization*, New York: Crown Publishing Group.

4. PM Journal article.

5. See Project Management Institute, "What is Project Management?" www.pmi.org/en/About-Us/About-Us-What-is-Project-Management.aspx, accessed June 2011.

6. Harris, Kelly J., and Williams Romesburg, 2002, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, at www.search.org/programs/safety/techguides/. Hereafter, Law Enforcement Tech Guide.

7. Ibid., 10.

Table 1: 10 Areas of Project Management

1. Build the Foundation
Defined: A decision-making structure for your IT project that:
- provides leadership and accountability;
- defines the business of the agency;
- analyzes technical environments, policies, and solutions; and
- effectively manages projects.

2. Quality Assurance Tests
Defined: Quality assurances are actually tests that ensure the vendor's hardware and software performs according to specification.

3. Human Resources Management
Defined: Processes that organize, manage, and lead the project team.[8]

4. Communication Planning
Defined: Strategies for communicating project status and activities to key stakeholders, and methods for developing historical project records and archives.

5. Scope Planning
Defined: A process to precisely define and document specific activities and deliverables for a particular project.

6. Risk Management Planning
Defined: Risk management is a planning process that prepares the agency to deal with potentially harmful events that could happen in a technology initiative.

7. Project Timeline
Defined: A mechanism to ensure the project is completed on time within the resources available, and avoids delays and associated cost overruns.

8. Procurement
Defined: A structured method for determining the required hardware, software, and services needed to fulfill the project goals and objectives.

9. Estimate Costs and Budget Development
Defined: Estimating initial and recurring costs in terms of people, materials, equipment, and services (both internal and external) to complete and maintain the entire project.

10. Project Integration
Defined: Processes and activities needed to identify, define, combine, unify, and coordinate the various processes and project management activities.[9]

The Triple Constraint: Scope, Time, and Cost. In addition to the guidance above, project managers must understand that all projects are managed and implemented under certain constraints. Traditionally, these include scope, time, and cost—also referred to as the "triple constraint."[10] Represented by a triangle (Figure 1), each side of the triangle represents a constraint. Using an RMS project as an example, the following definitions are provided:

- **Scope** refers to what is included in the project, such as the RMS features and functions.
- **Time** refers to the amount of time planned to complete the RMS implementation project.
- **Cost** refers to the financial and other resources required to complete the project.

Figure 1: Project Management Constraints

Quality is generally about the robustness of the features and users' perception about the reliability, availability, and performance (in the responsiveness sense) of the system.

Although the triple constraint triangle is created by scope, time, and cost, quality is also a constraint that is positioned in the middle of these three elements. Quality is in the center of the triangle because changes to scope, time, or cost can impact the quality of the project. (Quality refers to the degree to which the product or service characteristics fulfill the requirements.[11]) Simply stated: *Did the RMS perform as specified?*

Using a house-building analogy, scope management lets the project manager control what is included, and, just as importantly, what is excluded. If the original scope of the house is 4 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms within a 2,500-square-foot floor plan, then increasing the scope of the house to build a 24-room mansion is definitely out of scope.

Project scope is interrelated with time and cost. When the scope of the project increases, the time to complete the project and the cost often increases. For example, if an agency was implementing a $500,000 RMS and then the scope of the project was increased to include a $100,000 Automated Field Reporting module that enabled officers to complete their reports in their patrol vehicles, the overall cost would increase ($500,000 + $100,000 = $600,000). When one of these three elements (scope, time, and cost) is adjusted, it will affect the other two elements.

8. Project Management Institute, 2008, *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge, 4th Edition* (PMBOK® Guide), Newtown Square, Pennsylvania, 214. Hereafter, PMBOK® Guide, 4th ed.

9. Ibid., 71.

10. Project Management Institute, 2004, *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge, 3rd Edition*, Newtown Square, Pennsylvania, 8.

11. PMBOK® Guide, 4th ed., 437.

Understanding this framework is helpful when evaluating competing demands and limited resources. Any one side of the scope/time/cost triangle cannot be changed without affecting the others.

For instance, an agency that is managing an RMS project makes a decision to significantly add to the project scope. While implementing the system, they decide to purchase smartphones for field personnel to access the new system. The addition of smartphones could certainly add an important means of accessing the RMS. Increasing the *scope* will affect the *time* needed to complete the project (it would take longer) and the *cost* (it would cost more). If the addition of scope was not effectively managed, the *quality* of the project could also be adversely affected. **Always remember that scope, time, cost, and quality are all related.**

With the competing demands of scope, time, cost, and quality, organizational support and a project plan are essential.

How to Succeed

Organizational Support

No project manager is an island. To be truly successful, effective project managers need support from their entire organization and all affected stakeholders (those involved in or affected by the project).[12] This support needs to come from the project's **executive sponsor** (the person who formally authorized the project, allocated resources, and assigned the project manager) and members of the project team on whom the project manager relies to effectively execute critical project tasks.

Clearly defining role, responsibility, and authority is an essential element of support needed for project success. Throughout the organization, the **project decision-making structure** should define and communicate a clear escalation path from first-level supervisors up to executive management. The accidental project manager needs ongoing and clearly communicated support from the top. This includes providing the needed training to the project manager and the project team so they can successfully execute their work, and seriously considering making the project management role a full-time assignment if the project scope and complexity justifies it. Support also includes collaborating with the project manager to set project goals, objectives, deliverables, timelines, etc., that the project manager can realistically deliver.

Training and Employee Development

Training and employee development are central elements of effective organizational support. The benefits of a project management training program can include the following:

- Improved morale, because employees are empowered with the skills needed to do their jobs effectively
- Improved project performance, because employees can learn from others' successes and failures
- Improved collaborative performance, because the trained team is focused on project success

Training and employee development is an investment[13] in the success of your project.

Training and professional development are the responsibility of both the organization *and* individual professionals. Fortunately, some organizations are able to provide the accidental project manager with needed training; however, if this is not possible, then the accidental project manager should take action to address his or her own training needs. This self-directed learning is within the sphere of an individual's control,[14] and a reasonable part of ongoing professional development. The following elements of a project management training plan are intended for individuals. The basic three-step plan noted here follows the K.I.S. (Keep It Simple) principle often used in public safety.

Individual three-step plan:

1. **Assess** their current skill level (baseline assessment).

2. Plan and take **action** to improve project management skills (training plan action).

3. **Evaluate** the outcomes of training (evaluation of training results).

At the individual level, if you, the accidental project manager, do not have the necessary skills to fulfill your project management role, then it is incumbent upon you to identify solutions and **take timely action** to fill the skills gaps.

Remember: You were chosen for this position based on your proven ability in other facets of your work. **This is a great opportunity to learn, grow, and improve.**

12. Law Enforcement Tech Guide, "stakeholders" defined, 271.

13. Kaplan, Robert S., and David R. Norton, 1996, *The Balanced Scorecard: Translating Strategy into Action*, Boston: Harvard Business School Press, at Chapter 6, "Learning and Growth Perspective."

14. Covey, Stephen R., 1990, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, New York: Free Press.

Assess Skill Level

Assess your skill level to meet your responsibilities as project manager. If you think that you lack the necessary level of knowledge, skill, and ability, taking instructor-led project management training is one option. Individuals may seek out project management training offered through local and state government, universities, and organizations.

The Law Enforcement Tech Guide: How to plan, purchase and manage technology (successfully!) is a public safety project management reference resource providing clear and concise direction regarding how to effectively manage projects. *The Law Enforcement Tech Guide* was designed to be a tool that public safety project managers can use from the beginning through the end of their projects. The guide was produced by SEARCH with funding from the COPS Office.

Free printed copies can be ordered from the COPS Response Center via 800.421.6770, AskCopsRC@usdoj.gov, or ordered online at http://cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/ResourceDetail.aspx?RID=243. They can also be viewed or downloaded from the COPS Office website at http://cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/ResourceDetail.aspx?RID=243 and the SEARCH website at www.search.org/files/pdf/TECHGUIDE.pdf. Consider providing copies for the entire project team. This will help ensure that everyone has the same roadmap for project success. Additional project management training resources are provided at the end of this *Issue Brief*.

Plan for Training

Mentoring programs that offer effective project management training will partner accidental project managers with experienced project managers. Seek out professional mentors who have managed similar projects—they can provide valuable, real-world guidance and support. Consider reaching out to other agencies that have completed similar projects for mentoring support and guidance. This approach is similar to the Field Training Program (FTP) in police departments: After completing academy training, officers are partnered with experienced senior officers for several months of on-the-job field work. This affords new officers (or project managers) the opportunity to demonstrate their professional competency while under the guidance of experienced professionals who provide needed direction and support.[15] This leads us to the third element of training and employee development—**evaluation**.

15. California Commission on Peace Officer Standards Training (POST), "Field Training Program Guide" at http://post.ca.gov/field-training-program-guide.aspx, accessed June 2011.

Evaluate Outcomes

Evaluating outcomes in a consistent and methodical manner is central to performance improvement.[16] Employees who participate in training programs should assess the programs' value. Evaluations can take two forms:

- **Training outcome-based –** For example, an employee successfully completed a project management certificate course at a local university, or project management training at a city, regional, or state training facility.
- **Operational outcomes –** For example, the project manager effectively managed the project budget or schedule.

The key with evaluation is to assess what *worked*, what *did not work*, and then move forward toward ongoing *professional skill improvement*.

Tools

In addition to organizational support, training, self-directed learning, and mentoring, using a set of **foundational project management tools** can support project success.

These foundational tools include the following:

- **Project decision-making structure** (the document that identifies project roles, responsibilities, and authority)
- **Project risk management plan** (the document that defines how to plan for and manage risk)
- **Project charter** (the document that formally authorizes a project, provides the project manager the authority to move forward with project activities,[17] and contains the project purpose, description, scope, objectives, and other important elements)
- **Project communications plan** (the document that identifies the who, what, when, and how of project communications)

The purpose for developing and using these four foundational tools is to help project managers more effectively manage the risk relating to the triple constraints—scope, time, and cost—and consequently, quality. These all become part of the project plan.

Tool 1 – Project decision-making structure: Project success depends on user involvement, the appropriate level of project management, and a sound structure for project planning and decision-making. Without these essential elements, even the most well-intended project initiative is likely to fail, as it would be designed without

16. Sink, D. Scott, and Thomas Tuttle, 1989, *Planning and Measurement In Your Organization of the Future*, Norcross, Georgia: Industrial Engineering and Management Press.

17. PMBOK® Guide, 4th ed., 434.

strong leadership, effective management, proper planning, and the needed end-user support, input, and commitment. Public safety projects require significant involvement and buy-in at all levels.

The public safety organizational leader must support the project from financial, personnel, and business perspectives. Users must be willing to use the technology once it is in place. Technologists must understand the technical environment and successfully support the automated systems.

The four steps to create a project decision-making structure[18] are:

1. Identify the executive sponsor and final decision-maker.

2. Identify the stakeholders (all those affected by the project).

3. Identify a decision-making structure (what the reporting and decision making structure is).

4. Define and communicate the roles, responsibility, and authority for all those involved in the project.

Identifying all stakeholders is vital, and failing to identify important stakeholders introduces risk to the project. Few members of a law enforcement or public safety agency know all of the steps in the business process for the types of systems this paper targets. When attempting to identify project risk, this lack of knowledge can cause the project manager to overlook a section of the organization that is directly involved in the business process. It may be necessary for the project manager to "walk-through" the business process to identify each of the stakeholders and then solicit assumptions from them. For example, the project manager may need to follow a police report from point of origin (officer) to final disposition.

Tool 2 – Project risk management plan: A project manager must understand the risks to project scope, time, and cost, and then choose the appropriate mitigation strategy. This is an ongoing process for the duration of the project. For low-risk projects, there is much less need for formal project management planning and processes, while for high-risk projects there is a greater need. The project manager and executive leadership (sponsors who authorize the project, provide resources, and make the final decisions) should work together at the beginning of the project to determine how much risk there is, and then decide what project management actions are most necessary to respond to and/or mitigate them.

The project manager should ask the project team to identify potential "bad things" that could happen during

18. For tips on developing an effective project decision-making structure, refer to Chapter 1 of the *Law Enforcement Tech Guide*.

the course of the project. Encourage team members to share stories from other agencies, attendance at conferences, or even first-hand experiences. In a public safety project, the project team often includes the agency leadership (chief, sheriff, and upper management), users (patrol officers, fire services, paramedics, emergency communications, investigators, records clerks, crime analysts, community policing experts), and technical staff.

Identification of assumptions is a foundational step in the planning process that starts during project charter development and continues through the process of risk planning. Identifying and clearly articulating assumptions is very important because you want to plainly lay out what you assume to be true, **and** the reality that it has not been confirmed as fact.

Assumptions are factors that for planning purposes are considered true, real, or certain without proof or demonstration.

Source: PMBOK, 4th Edition, 419

There are many assumptions that can impact interoperability technology projects. For example, an effective decision-making structure is critical in supporting the operational use of an Inter Subsystem Interface (ISSI) connecting multiple regional radio systems in a large urban area. One assumption of this interoperability technology project may be that the existing governance agreement provides an adequate decision-making structure.

Testing this assumption might result in discovery of an insufficient agreement and call for the development of a Memorandum of Understanding that specifically addresses how each stakeholder is going to use the ISSI. The result of this process is the foundation for improved project coordination and continued governance development.

The objective is to be proactive about identifying and managing potential risks and to develop contingency plans to mitigate or avoid them. Preparing for potential risks helps ensure that the agency's response is planned, measured, and controlled. The project team must realize that all risks

cannot be identified at the start of the project. The objective is to plan to manage the identified risks, and prepare to respond to the unknown risks.

> The level of project risk and risk tolerance should guide the level of project management planning. (Risk tolerance measures the willingness of project decision-makers to accept the consequences of adverse project outcomes.) In short, if the decision-makers do not need a firm project completion date or cost estimates, then the amount of related project planning can be reduced.

The four-steps to create a project risk management plan are:[19]

1. Identify the risks (What bad things could happen during the project?)

2. Categorize and quantify the risks (If these bad things happen, what will be the impact and how severe will it be?)

3. Determine your tolerance level for risks (Are the risks to be avoided, are there ways to minimize the negative impact, or are there certain risks that can be tolerated?)

4. Create a response plan (If the risks become a reality, what is the plan of action?)

Tool 3 – Project charter: Project managers more effectively manage project scope, time, and cost by using foundational project resources such as the project charter.

The project charter includes the project purpose or justification, measurable objectives, high-level requirements, high-level project description, high-level risks, summary milestone schedule, summary budget, project approval requirements, assigned project manager, responsibility and authority level, and the name of the executive sponsor or other person(s) who authorize the project. The project charter is developed in cooperation with all stakeholders, signed by the executive sponsor, and communicated to all stakeholders.[20]

The project charter helps define the foundation for the *project scope statement*, which summarizes what is included and what is excluded from the project. This helps project managers avoid *scope creep*—the situation in which additional functions or features are added to the project, often increasing the overall cost and time to complete it. Furthermore, law enforcement and other public safety agencies are experiencing significant numbers of staff turnover; individuals are retiring, promoted, or transferred to other assignments. This rotation of personnel makes the project charter and subsequent project documentation extremely important, as individuals assuming the role of project manager may have no other source to learn what the project is, its status or where it is going.

Tool 4 – Project communications plan:[21] A major priority during your project should be to keep the lines of communication open among not only all project team members and the decision-making structure, but also with all end users and interested parties. When developing a project communications plan, consider the following:

- **Who** needs to be updated on the project status?
- **What** do they need to know (general information, technical updates)?
- **How** should the communication occur (in-person, email, memorandum)?
- **How** often should the communication occur (daily, weekly, monthly)?

A general rule is to plan to communicate with all those who can affect the project and those who are affected by the project.

SEARCH provides model templates for each of these tools for download at www.search.org/products/.

Summary

Consider the Return on Investment (ROI)

There are investment costs (time, money, effort) associated with using project management methods, tools, and processes. These costs often include the time used for project planning, project management software tools, personnel training, and the ongoing costs of managing projects. Remember that an over-investment in project management may not add value to the project. This over-investment could be detrimental if there is too much focus on project management processes, which could delay getting the required work done. The important point about project management is to balance the appropriate application of project management knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to each project.

Benefits of Using Training and Tools

Increased job performance: The blend of effective training, organizational support, and the use of appropriate resource tools will yield increased job performance by those assigned as accidental project managers. This is an ongoing process. With continued organizational support from the executive

19. For tips on how to develop an effective risk management plan, refer to Chapter 12, "Create a Risk Management Plan," in the *Law Enforcement Tech Guide*. Clear, step-by-step instructions are provided.

20. For tips on how to develop an effective project charter, refer to Chapter 3, "Develop the Charter," in the *Law Enforcement Tech Guide*.

21. For tips on how to develop an effective project communications plan, refer to Chapter 13 of the *Law Enforcement Tech Guide*.

leadership, and a process of evaluation to ensure consistency of performance improvement over time, an *accidental* project manager can be transformed into a *planned* project manager.

Decreased risk: The objective of effective risk analysis and management is to decrease the probability of negative project outcomes.[22] There are many risks associated with failure to provide the project manager with the necessary training, tools, resources, and support—fulfilling these needs, in turn, reduces the risks. Project risk management includes the process of conducting risk management planning, identification, analysis, response planning, and monitoring and control of the project.[23]

Take-away Points:

1) Public safety first responders assigned to the accidental project manager role often possess many of the necessary skills.
2) The *Law Enforcement Tech Guide* is a straightforward, practical resource for accidental public safety project managers.
3) Success is within reach, given the right amount of project planning, risk mitigation, mentoring, organizational support, training, and self-directed learning.

The "accidental" project manager is a reality of the multi-tasked, multi-role, professional resource-constrained world in which we live. We are all called upon to do more with less. If you find yourself in this role, the proven ideas and resources provided by this *Issue Brief* can help you succeed. If you are a manager faced with the responsibility of assigning this role to someone in your organization, carefully consider the issues discussed in this *Brief* and provide the needed support to the accidental project manager.

Professional Development, Training, and Technical Assistance Resources

- SEARCH, The National Consortium for Justice Information and Statistics: SEARCH offers technical assistance to local and state justice agencies to develop, manage, improve, acquire, and integrate their automated information systems. SEARCH not only works with individual justice agencies (such as a police department that is implementing a new RMS, or a court acquiring a new case management system), but also works with multi-disciplinary groups of justice agencies to assist them in

22. The PMBOK® Guide, 4th ed. identifies risk as the probability of positive or negative events, 273.
23. *Law Enforcement Tech Guide*, 149–155.

planning for and integrating their information systems at local, state, and regional levels. For more than two decades, SEARCH assistance programs have provided both on-site and in-house, no-cost technical assistance to justice agencies throughout the country. SEARCH staff has considerable experience in assisting with project management activities. See www.search.org/products.

- U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office): The COPS Office is the component of the U.S. Department of Justice responsible for advancing the practice of community policing by the nation's state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies. The community policing philosophy promotes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime. The COPS Office does its work principally by sharing information and awarding grants to law enforcement agencies around the United States to hire and train community policing professionals, acquire and deploy cutting-edge crime fighting technologies, and develop and test innovative policing strategies. See www.cops.usdoj.gov/.
- Professional development programs at universities:[24]
  - The University of Washington, Project Management Certificate Program: www.pce.uw.edu/certificates/project-management.html
  - Rutgers University, Project Management Training Program: http://projectmgmt.rutgers.edu/
- City, county, or state project management training program:
  - New York City, Department of Citywide Administrative Services: www.nyc.gov/html/dcas/downloads/pdf/misc/ctc_projectmanagement.pdf
- The Project Management Institute has several resources available at:

  www.pmi.org

24. Provided as examples; no endorsement of these programs is being made or implied.

This *Issue Brief* is part of a series that SEARCH developed for the public safety/justice community in partnership with the U.S. Department of Justice, COPS Office.

Questions, comments, or feedback: Please contact SEARCH at www.search.org/about/contact/.

This project was supported by Cooperative Agreement #2007-CK-WX-K002 by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. The opinions contained herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice. References to specific agencies, companies, products, or services should not be considered an endorsement by the author(s) or the U.S. Department of Justice. Rather, the references are illustrations to supplement discussion of the issues.

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e03121439 June 2012