
How To Become A Project Manager

Are you inexperienced & new to Project Management and wondering how difficult it will be to get a job in PM?

Here are 4 Useful Tips to Help You!

The role of project manager can be rewarding and liberating. Many people who have worked in various industry sectors either on the job as a tradie or on the desk in an office environment have gathered many of the skills they need to become a successful project manager without even realising it.

But how do you convince an organisation to give you a go when you've not actually held a job as a Project Manager?

Well, here are 4 useful tips that the experts agree on:

1. First off get a qualification

In Australia this means you must aim for the *Diploma of Project Management*. Now, if you've not had any previous experience as a project manager you will have to step through the *Certificate IV in Project Management Practice* first before you can move into the Diploma program.

TIP: Look for providers who offer a *dual qualification program* that combines the Certificate IV Program with the Diploma. That way you are not repeating study you've already done and, you can complete the 2 qualifications in a much reduced time frame and with a significant cost saving rather than having to spend a year on one and then another year to 18 months on the other.

TIP: Make sure you double check you're enrolling in the most recent Australian Qualification. This means the course code needs to be BSB41513 for the Certificate IV or BSB51413 for the Diploma. Anything ending in an '07 is out of date and worthless.

2. Prepare an elevator speech on your knowledge of Project Management

Once you have gained the knowledge you need and, in the process, thought about how much project management practice (or bits thereof) you've actually gained in your career to date, you need to prepare a short, sharp pitch to make to a potential employer. You will probably only get 5 minutes of their time so make it count with a punchy, hard-hitting account of just how well you can and would manage their projects.

3. Re-write your CV to highlight PM-related work you've done in your career and design a cover letter format that highlights PM.

Once you've completed the qualifications you'll realise that many aspects of project management are simply good management practice and processes that you've probably

done many times on a day to day basis. What you must do now is to re-write your CV to focus on these skills, using the terminology common to PM. Then you need to direct the reader's attention to these skill-sets, the experience you've gained in other roles and the qualifications you've done, in the covering letter. Here you need to clearly and succinctly demonstrate how the work you've done previously relates to PM.

TIP: Some training providers will assist you to re-write a winning CV & cover letter at no additional cost. So check that your chosen provider will help you with this before you make the move to enrol in any project management study.

4. **Actively seek opportunities with your current employer.**

Now that you have the qualifications, experience is essential so, look for opportunities to volunteer for project-related assignments. So, volunteering to organise your tradeshow event or annual strategic planning day or even organising the Christmas party – anything that has a start and end date where you can demonstrate you newly acquired PM skills – get to it now!

Once you've completed your PM Qualifications, you will be pleasantly surprised to see how many of the processes and tasks you've already done in your career and you'll see you're not as 'new' to PM as you thought. The true talent comes when you can sell yourself and your previous experience to an employer!

NOTE:

The College for Adult Learning offers a dual program of study that will give you the Certificate IV in PM Practice and the required Australian industry standard Diploma of PM in one comprehensive program of study.

The experienced staff at CAL will also assist you to highlight you prior experience to ensure you promote yourself and your newly acquired skills to achieve the PM position you want!