How to manage research impact assessments

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Learning outcomes

- Discuss the role of a project manager in managing processes

- Discuss the role of a project manager in managing people, focusing on getting 'buy-in' from everyone involved

- Learn from each others' experiences in managing projects

Outline

- Roles of a Project Manager

- Managing processes

- Managing people

- Your top tips!

Roles of a project manager

- Budget
- Timeline
- Managing team
- Monitoring risk
- Client liaison
- Task planning
- Engaging participants
- …and many more!

Roles of a project manager

Processes

- Budget
- Timeline
- Task planning
- Monitoring risk

People

- Managing team
- Client liaison
- Engaging participants

Managing processes

Time

	2014			2015											
	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14	Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15	Jul-15	Aug-15	Sep-15	Oct-15	Nov-15	Dec-15
Case study selection	▓														
Case study scoping	▓	▓													
Case study data collection															
Document and literature reviews		▓	▓	▓	▓										
Setting up interviews		▓	▓												
Conducting interviews			▓	▓	▓										
Finalising case studies					▓	▓									
Team meetings on case study progress		▒		▒		▒									
Cross-case analysis and synthesis															
Synthesis workshop							▒								
Analysis								▓	▓	▓					
Reporting and dissemination															
Writing up										▓	▓	▓			
Production													▓	▓	
Publication and dissemination															▓

Money

10%

5%

2%

Risk

Risk

IDENTIFY

ASSESS

TAKE ACTION

REGULAR REVIEW

IDENTIFY

ASSESS

TAKE ACTION

- What are the risks to your project?
  - Time?
  - People?
  - Resources?
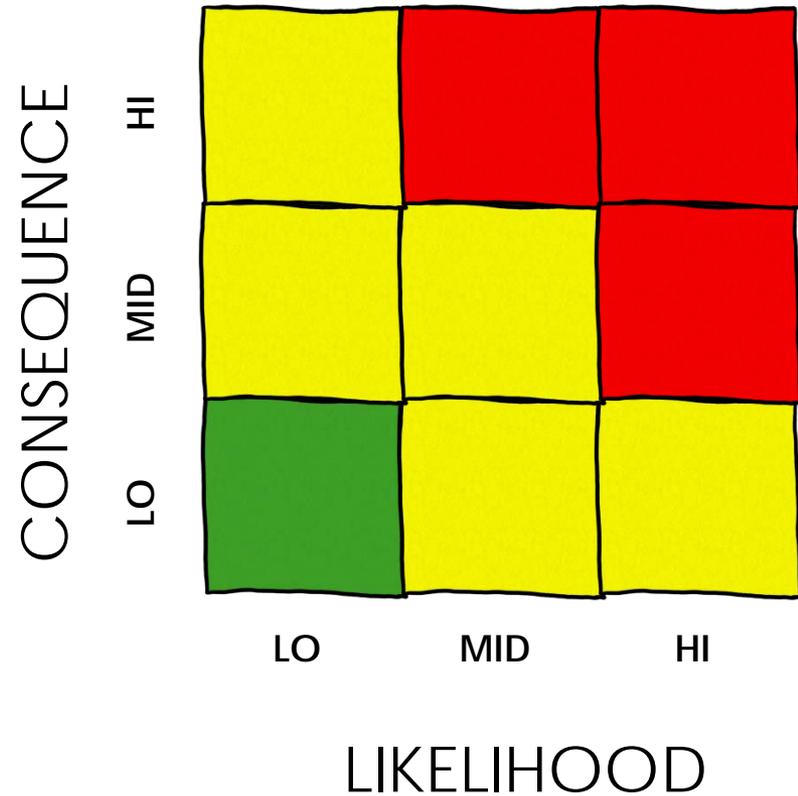 - Data?

- Think about both internal and external risks

IDENTIFY

ASSESS

TAKE ACTION

CONSEQUENCE

HI

MID

LO

LIKELIHOOD

LO   MID   HI

IDENTIFY

ASSESS

TAKE ACTION

- **Before** the evaluation begins
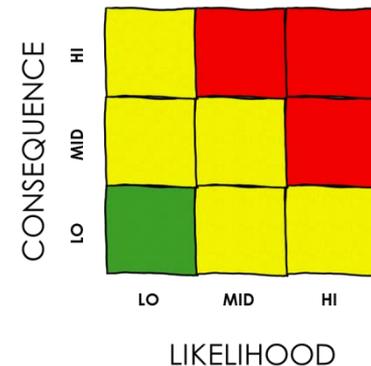
- **During** the evaluation

- **After** the evaluation – learn from experience

AVOID – ACCEPT – REDUCE – FALLBACK

Learning activity 1

- Think about the top 3 risks to your project

- Where do they fit in the 'consequence – likelihood' matrix?

- Think about:
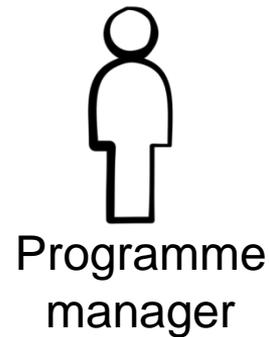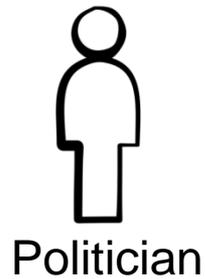 - Are there early warning signs?
  - What action might you take?

AVOID – ACCEPT – REDUCE – FALLBACK

- 5 minutes

Managing people

Who is involved?

Administrator

Researcher

Funder

Politician

Practitioner

CEO

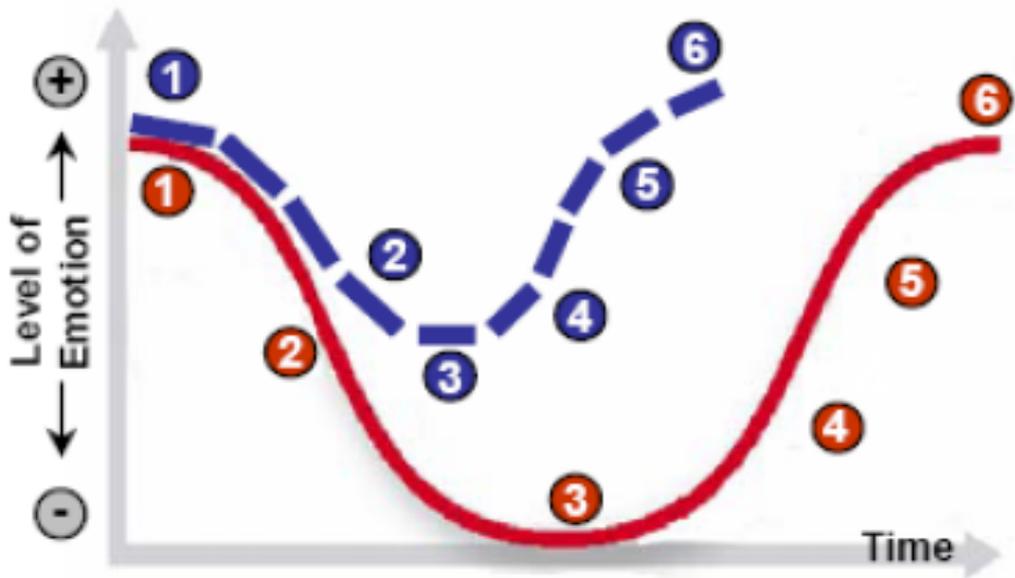Programme manager

Managing people is not always easy

Learning activity 2

- What is the most difficult situation you have faced when managing people during a project?

- Discuss around your tables…

- Think about:
  - Were there particular causes?
  - At what time in the project did it happen?

- 5 minutes

The project 'mood curve'

Typical curve
Ideal curve

① Uninformed optimism
② Informed pessimism
③ Danger zone
④ Hopeful realism
⑤ Informed optimism
⑥ Rewarding completion

Managing the 'team'

Perceptions of evaluators

- Evaluators hold a powerful position

How can we create the right perceptions?

- Communicate purpose

- Demonstrate value

- Understand context

- Evaluate fairly

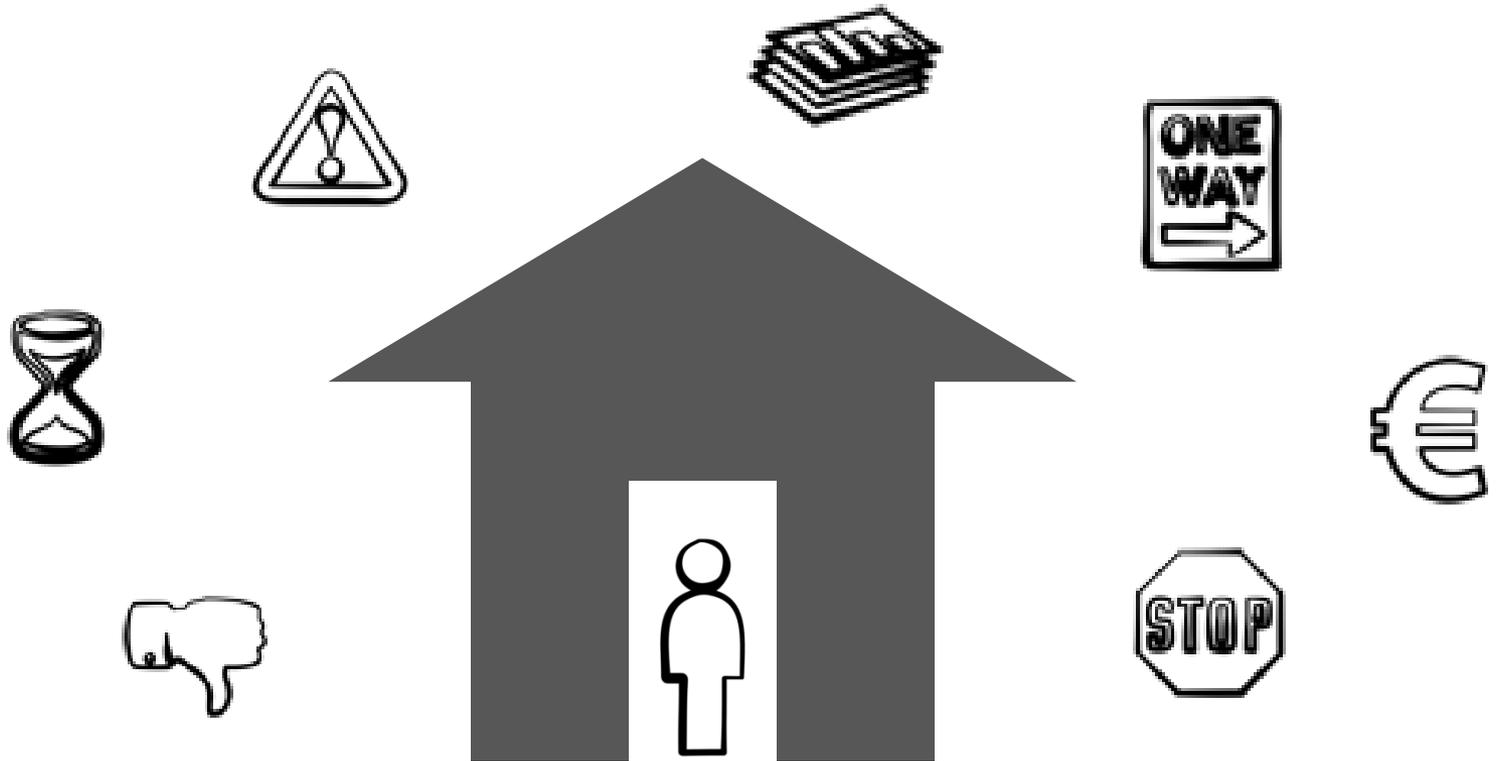- Maintain involvement

Communicating purpose

Analysis

Allocation

Advocacy

Accountability

Demonstrating value

- What are the benefits for the people you are evaluating?

- What can you do to help maximise these?

Understanding context

- What are the external pressures on the people you are evaluating?

Evaluating fairly - perception & reality

- Make sure that no one is at a disadvantage

- Choose frameworks and tools carefully

Maintaining involvement

- Keeping people informed of:

  - Progress

  - Changes to plan

  - Interim findings

Project vision

vision : /ˈvɪʒ(ə)n/
2 [*mass noun*] the ability to think about or plan the future with imagination or wisdom:

- Helps to communicate a project with a common voice

- What should you include?
  - The most important things you want people to know about your project…

Example project vision

To improve the effectiveness of research funding through an evidence based approach.

Example project vision

To improve the effectiveness of research funding through an evidence based approach.

This will be done by analysing the kinds and levels of impacts that mental health research produces, and exploring characteristics associated with impact.

Learning activity 3

- Develop a project vision for your own research impact assessment

- Present it back to your table

- Discuss the impression it creates for:
    - The team involved in the project
    - External stakeholders

- 5 minutes

What are your top tips for project management?

- Discuss the role of a project manager in managing processes

- Discuss the role of a project manager in managing people, focusing on getting 'buy-in' from everyone involved

- Learn from each others' experiences in managing projects

Key messages

- Project managers have a varied role, managing both **processes** and **people**

- Often the emphasis is on process, meaning that people can be overlooked

- Effectively managing people can be challenging but is essential for the success of a RIA

- There are a number of ways you can encourage buy-in

Further reading

- Project Management Institute (2013). *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK Guide): 5th Edition*. Pennsylvania, US: Project Management Institute

- Great Britain: Office of Government Commerce (2002). *Managing Successful Projects with PRINCE2*. London, UK: UK Government

- Cabinet Office (2009). *Directing Successful Projects with PRINCE2*. London, UK: UK Government

- The Essentials of Managing a Project Team – http://www.dummies.com/how-to/content/the-essentials-of-managing-a-project-team.html

Thank you!

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