

**MAKE IT  
HAPPEN!**



**CASE**

**STUDIES**



# WHAT

# ARE PROJECTS?



An airport



A prom



A tournament



An IT upgrade

## These are all projects.

They come in different shapes and sizes and all have an impact on the world around us.

Every project needs a project team to keep a close watch on plans, budgets, people, quality of outputs and any issues that may cause a problem. Without one, projects are likely to fail. That could mean the late opening of an airport or, even worse a cancelled music festival.

A rocket launch





# WHERE

# ARE PROJECTS?

Just about every sector delivers projects, and that offers you opportunities to combine your job with your interests. Here's a flavour of just some of the sectors that deliver projects, with an example of how for each one.

## Media

You could be involved in creating new studios or sets for TV programmes, to make them more flexible for new filming technologies.

## Financial services

Project professionals in this sector are busy helping large organisations change the way they engage with their customers, to make it more efficient and relevant.

## IT

Nearly every company has an IT function; and with the speed of change in IT, project-based teams are there to create new or improve existing systems.

## Construction

In many ways building a house is a classic project; but innovation exists here as more planning and construction is done 'off-site' and project planning is needed to bring the materials to the right place at the right time, with the right experts on-site.

## Government

The government is responsible for making important decisions about national infrastructure.

## Engineering

Another classic sector for project management; building a train line or a tunnel requires intense planning, careful budgeting and a lot of stakeholder management (getting everyone in agreement).

## Retail

How does a retailer's products get from the manufacturer to the supplier to the store? Through good project management.

## Public sector

The NHS is one of the world's largest employers; with a large workforce and huge estate of buildings comes a need for renovation, construction, efficiency and innovation – project professionals are ideally-placed to do this in the best way.

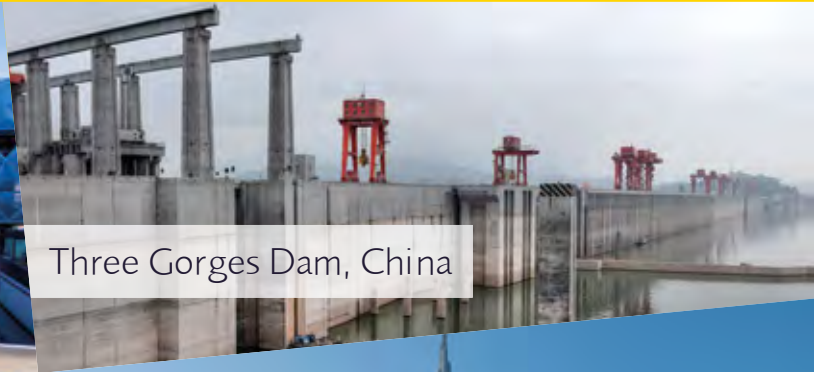
## Charities

Organisations that have to make every penny count; what better way to do that than by adopting project-based working?

...and as you'd expect, many more.



Elizabeth Line, London



Three Gorges Dam, China



2012 Olympics, London

Burj Khalifa, UAE



# WHERE

# IN THE WORLD?

These are the megaprojects that run in to **billions of pounds**, but the majority of projects are not this huge – some will be just down the road from you. You may even be sitting in the classroom of a project!



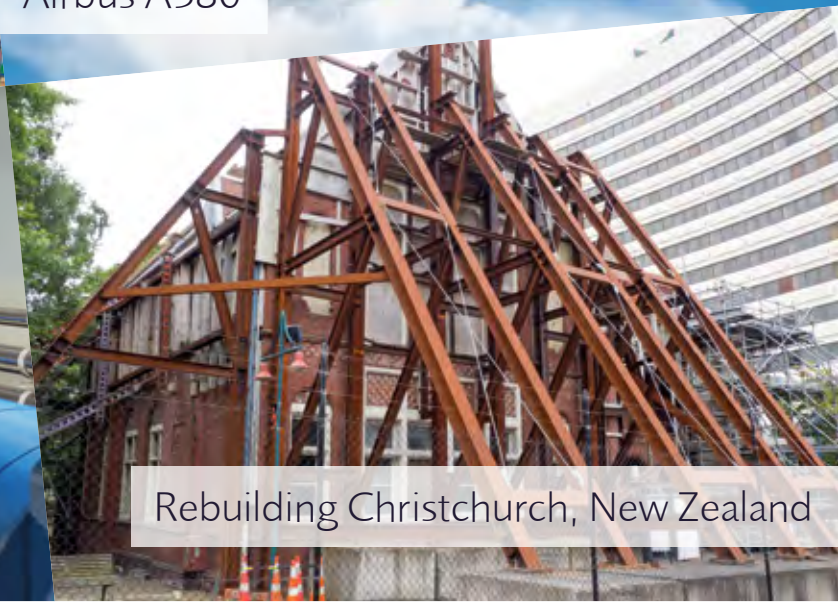
2020 Olympics, Tokyo



Airbus A380



Large Hadron Collider, Switzerland



Rebuilding Christchurch, New Zealand



# WHO ARE PROJECT MANAGERS?

So, what does a project professional look like?

They look like you.

Read these case studies to meet some real-life Project Managers...

## WILL BLACK ABERDEEN PROJECT MANAGER IN DECOMMISSIONING, SPIRIT ENERGY

### My Current Role

I work for an oil and gas producer. I run projects to enable the gas to be delivered to your hob or central heating from wells in the North Sea. This means making sure oil and gas platforms, that produce oil and gas out at sea, are safely decommissioned at the end of their life.

I manage up to 20 people in my project team, and several contractors. My projects run from two to five years, with budgets ranging from £10m to £300m.

### Skills & Attributes of a great PM

**Leadership skills** really matter because you're the focal point for your project. You need to be able to **create a strong team**, make people look up to you and trust you.

### Rewards and challenges of my job

No two days are ever the same. Because there are so many moving parts, it can seem impossible at first, but it's very **rewarding** when you make all those parts work together, as one.

The biggest challenge is kicking off of your project successfully by **winning support** from everyone involved. If they understand what you're trying to achieve, then everything is so much easier.

### My route into project management

I studied Electronic and Computer Engineering and was initially working as an engineer on a project which accidentally led to me taking on a PM role. I always say I was a good engineer but a much better PM. Then I then took some qualifications with the **APM**.

Even now, I'm training for a new qualification. There are always new things you can learn.



### Why I'd recommend project management

It's exciting and brings **new challenges**, and you can do something different every day.

### Advice for future PMs

Look out for projects to be involved in, whether small or large, add to your CV and use as a springboard for getting involved in more projects at work.

### Earning potential:

In my industry, anywhere between **£60k to £130k**.



## Skills & Attributes of a great PM

Project management needs so many skills but you don't need to be an expert in anything.

You're not the one with the expertise, you're the **coordinator**. You know everything, and you're directing what everyone in the team is doing too. You need to be **organised** and **proactive** and make sure people are doing things at the right time and in the right order.

## Rewards and challenges of my job

What I love about my job is the variety. I get a view of everything going on in the company and I get to have a go at everything too. But you do need to build your **confidence** quickly. I started my apprenticeship at 18, I was immediately in charge and running a project with a budget of £2m! It's pretty scary telling people who are experts in their field what to do. But you're the one who's got that information.

## My route into project management

I had no idea what I wanted to do after school. When I was 18, I didn't want to go to university, I

wanted to work. So, I went to work for the Girl Guides as an Event Assistant, and alongside that, I did a degree in Maths with the Open University. Then I applied for the BAE Project Management Apprenticeship Scheme, an APM-accredited five-year course.

## Why I'd recommend project management

It's a varied career. Once you've done a few years in one industry, you can move to another and see another bit of the world. You get to meet loads of different people and there's potential to **travel** - whether around the UK or abroad.

## Advice for future PMs

You need to have some **work experience** to consolidate your academic knowledge. You could do this by finding projects to **volunteer** with. I'm quite severely dyslexic and work experience also helped me in the written exams, because I could just describe what I'd done at work.



## Earning potential:

A salary for someone who has completed their apprenticeship or graduate scheme in a large company is around £30 to £35k.

## Top Tip:

Don't get so busy that organising other people that you forget to organise your own workload!





# HUW BARKER

## LONDON

### MANAGER - EMEA ADVISORY, EY

## My Current Role

My role is entirely project based and every client can be different. I work on projects that run from three weeks to three years! Depending on the client I'm working for, and what I'm doing, it can vary massively. My last project was for a large insurance company that had taken over another company, helping them make the technology and staff from both companies work together effectively.

## Skills & Attributes of a great PM

It's important to be organised and to be able to define a plan. You have to be confident in **decision making**. With experience, you gain people and **management skills**. That's critical to any project. You need to ensure that everyone is bought in and ready to accept change. You can create the perfect project plan, but if you don't effect change, then you won't ultimately have been successful.

## Rewards and challenges of my job

The best thing about being a PM is the challenge of having something quite defined to deliver and working towards that goal. To a degree, you're the master of how you do it. It's a fluid and **fast-moving environment** where everything can change in an instant.

The biggest challenge is the grenade that comes out of nowhere and blows everything apart. There are often ridiculously short deadlines, but that all just adds to the **excitement**.

## My route into project management

At university, I studied Business, Finance and Accounting. I joined a graduate scheme at an insurance company after university. After that, I naturally graduated towards project management and applied for a junior management role. I enjoyed the fast pace, being able to make change happen and being **future focused**. Then I took APM qualifications.



## Why I'd recommend project management

In project management, there's no box you have to fit into. It just depends on the type of industry you're in and what you're trying to deliver, rather than the role itself. So, you can suit that to your own interests - whether that's architecture, construction, graphic design. **Variety** is such a great thing. There's opportunity to get exposure to different areas and you're never still. With project management, you're **always learning**.

## Advice for future PMs

Every company will have some kind of project going on, so **find a way to get involved**.

## Earning potential:

Straight out of uni, a PM on a grad scheme could earn from £25k depending on the company. Once you get to Programme Director level, you could be earning a **six-figure salary**.



# AVIN MOHABEER CAMBRIDGE

AGILE PROJECT MANAGER, ARM HOLDINGS



## My Current Role

Arm Holdings create the Intellectual Property for around 90% of the mobile chips in the world. I look after a product team that develop and maintain the Human Resources system. This is a Reward Hub that manages the benefits for employees, including healthcare, pensions and more. It's my job to plan, design, develop and test the system. My role is IT-based, so I'll **manage** changes to the website or payroll.

I'm known as the 'scrum master' and I'm responsible for **leading a team** of 10 people made up of business stakeholders, administrators, developers and testers as well as third party suppliers and consultants.

## Skills & Attributes of a great PM

You need to be **goal-oriented** to hit targets and deadlines, and have **resilience**. It's important to have a grasp of the detail and bigger picture, so you need to be able to hover at 10,000 feet then hit the ground in moments.

It's important to be **person-oriented** and you need to be a team player. Leadership skills are vital. The team looks to you in a crisis to navigate uncertainty. Plus, **a can-do attitude** is essential.

## Rewards and challenges of my job

There are constantly new challenges and that's part of the fun. The biggest challenge is always **delivering to brief**. Sometimes you might have to redo something if it doesn't meet the requirements of the brief.

## My route into project management

I studied Business and IT at university and I had to deliver assignments which opened my eyes to project management. I landed a job as a Project Administrator out of uni. I enjoyed the variety. After that, I looked at certifications and took Prince2 and APM qualifications.

## Why I'd recommend project management

It's a great career for **stability** and is becoming regarded as a profession. Another reason is the variety. You can work on any project within an organisation, rather than just one narrow function. It **broadens your horizons** and gives you exposure to all parts of the business.

## Advice for future PMs

**Research the industry you want to work in**, whether that's IT, construction or something else. Then research the different kinds of certifications from professional bodies like the APM. And stay in education for as long as you can - it gives you a good grounding for your career.

## Earning potential:

I'm self-employed and work as a contractor, meaning I'm paid a day rate. In my industry, that can be anywhere between **£500 to £700 a day** for an experienced PM.





# SKILLS YOU NEED



So, you've decided that a career in projects looks interesting.

Now you'll need to reflect on the skills you have, and compare them with the key characteristics of a successful project professional.

## Organisation

The chances are that you are the one who sorts the evenings out or holidays with your friends.

You probably don't like uncertainty and you prefer to get things done today – after all, why wait until tomorrow?

## People skills

You are happy to get the job done yourself if you can, but it's no problem to get other people involved too, as they'll have different skills to you. Your gift is being able to bring the right people together at the right time for the right result. Project professionals are experts in making teams work effectively

## Resilience

Mañana is not in your dictionary, and nor is failure. If it can be done today, then do it. And your people skills will get others working in the same way as well so that together you'll succeed.

## Pride

If a job's worth doing, it's worth doing well. You may not phrase it like that, but you want everything you do to be the best it can be.

Remember, you are not expected to be an expert in projects on day one – you will learn the technical aspects on the job, but your attitude and soft skills are what will get you the gig.

# NEXT STEPS

## 1. Get motivated!

Money makes the world go round! That's what they say, but doing something you enjoy makes your world a truly happier place. Mix the two and your job becomes a very well-paid hobby.

If your motivation is travelling around the world, how about aspiring to get involved in megaprojects? So, rather than the Elizabeth Line in the UK, what about the Hong Kong to Macau bridge? Or the Etihad Rail project which plans to link UAE with Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain and Kuwait?

And if you're looking to work abroad, our insider tip is to take a look at the tax rates – you could be in for a pleasant surprise compared with the UK.

If you're more interested in socially-valuable projects in the developing world, how about a project like the Fael Khair Project, which saw schools in Bangladesh double up as cyclone shelters.

Once you've done your **research** on these astonishing projects, you can find out more about salaries – check out **APM's Salary Survey** which shows that some of APM members earn more than £100,000 a year.

## 2. Make It Happen!

Kickstart your career in Project Management and start building your CV by using our guide and running your own school project, from start to finish!

Our **Make It Happen! Student project guide and planning handbook** will help you achieve whatever project you have in mind; whether it's making sure the school prom is on point, creating a year book so legendary that Year 7's are dreaming about being you, or raising bags of cash for the charity down the road.

Step by step we'll help you plan your project, making sure you're thinking about the right things at the right time. While you're getting stuck in, we'll show you how you can use the skills you've gained and put them to good use in a career in project management – as you now know, people get paid to do this!





# THE COMPETITION

The Association for Project Management (APM) is the chartered body for the project profession. We have over 26,000 individual members and 500 corporate members, making us the largest professional body of its kind in Europe.

If you're older than 16 and like the idea of working in the project profession, you can join APM as a Student member – for free. It's a great way to build your project knowledge, and network with project professionals. It doesn't matter what subjects you're studying or whether you plan to take an apprenticeship or go to university.

**By signing up to the free student membership you will enter your school in the competition to win an in-school visit for a project management mentoring session as well as an iPad for yourself!**

To sign up head to: [www.apm.org.uk/student](http://www.apm.org.uk/student)

## GOOD LUCK!

