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The Project Reformer's e-Tip of the Week

017: Produce Coherence Among Project Participants

Projects are uniquely human endeavors. As such, we have the likelihood that the interests of the team members will be in conflict with one another, at one time or another in the life of a project. Those differences can lead to significant breakdowns on your project. Webster defines coherence as "becoming united in principles, relationships, or interests." Project leaders are responsible for producing that coherence.

Leadership in this blind-men-and-elephant world requires integrating disparate perspectives, not enforcing a dominant one. Our projects are poorly served by the belief, religiously defended, that leaders create meaning for their team, because they can at best only encourage some preconditions that might provoke an emerging coherence of shared meaning; acknowledging their own, personal blindness is the most prominent [precondition] among these.

Producing coherence is an everyday action. The project is always on the verge on shifting to incoherence. Each person's perspective can shift on a day-to-day basis as s/he engages with family, friends, co-workers, and the world. Vigilance is required to bring disparate perspectives and interests together in a synthesis. And, that synthesis undoubtedly changes as the project and peoples' lives unfold.

Quotation suggested by David A. Schmaltz, [The Blind Men and the Elephant, Mastering Project Work](#) . [No book for him!](#)

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