

**Hal Macomber**

## The Project Reformer's e-Tip of the Week

### 030: **Intentionally Build Relationships on Projects**

People on projects often come together as strangers. We can't be learning, collaborating, optimizing the project, or making commitments without a relationship built on trust, respect, appreciation, care for each other, and practices of commitment-making. The faster project team members become friends the sooner the project will be on track for success.

Building relationships is a matter of intentionality and a few simple practices. I see far too many situations where the urgencies of the project or another project get in the way of taking the steps to produce sufficient relationships to meet the challenges of the project. Whether you are a leader or team member see to it that you take time up front to build your team. What does that take? Try these five steps:

1. Explore each others' personal intentions and ambitions. Projects offer sufficient opportunities to take care of individual needs and desires. We just need to find out what they are. Then bring those intentions into alignment with the promise of the project.
2. Cultivate practices of commitment-making. At the very first opportunity begin practices of making promises in front of each other. This practice provides a factual basis for making assessments of trustworthiness and care for the team.
3. Make it your habit to acknowledge and appreciate team members. Become a mutual admiration society. High performing teams are characterized as environments where people are acknowledged at least once every seven days for the talents, efforts, and contributions each team member brings.
4. Foster an environment for healthy conflict. Encourage team members to express alternate views. Even in the face of agreement have someone create a different perspective.
5. Make the project setting a place where people can be their authentic selves without fear of judgement or mockery. Granting each other their legitimacy is the basis for the healthiest of relationships.

Simple practices? Yes. And powerful practices for enriching relationships.

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