

Friday, August 13, 2007

Step Four: Plan desired results

Don't be prudent or timid when determining reaction to the project

Sacramento Business Journal - by [Nick Montoya and Roger S. Peterson](#)

The last article in the Magic Megaphone project management series described Step Three -- how to identify your MegaTarget. Your MegaTarget is the person, group or department most influential or important to your project's success.

Now, Step Four will show you the real magic that flows from the Magic Megaphone and how this simple process helps launch a project the right way in 60 minutes flat.

To get the most out of Step Four of the Magic Megaphone, remember the three Magic Megaphone principles we introduced in the first column:

- Simple is better
- 85 percent is OK
- Think Wow!

If you are worried about a stuck project, stop for a moment. What would wild success sound like if you could hear it?

Imagine your project has been completed and you have presented the results to colleagues in the conference room. Among them is your MegaTarget. After you present, they thank you politely, you smile and leave the room.

But after you leave the conference room, you escape to a secluded spot (almost like Superman's phone booth) and turn yourself into an ant that can crawl back into the conference room undetected. Now, you can actually hear what your MegaTarget and colleagues are saying about your project and how it turned out.

In your wildest dreams, what would you really like to hear them say about the project's success?

This isn't a silly exercise; this is strategic in every sense. We need a new strategy for projects. We have become accustomed to mediocrity. In an e-global marketplace, mediocrity will never be heard. You need a Magic Megaphone to be heard.

As the famed city planner Daniel Burnham said, "Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood." We agree. If you don't imagine the greatest possible accolades, one thing is certain - you will never hear them from your MegaTarget.

We call those ideal praises the Mega-Magic, Step Four in the Magic Megaphone process.

Step Four really excites and motivates project teams. You will quickly see the change in their faces and hear it in their voices. They come alive. Projects become downright fun. Did it ever occur to you that you are entitled to have fun with every project? No law says you can't.

The MegaMagic step helps project teams break an old habit about defining project results -- being timidly prudent. Attention readers: We are shouting through a big megaphone right now. The Magic Megaphone is not about being timid about anything. No small business can afford to be timid.

Breaking the timid habit requires project teams to think differently about the possibilities. You have to think of the best possible outcome. The best outcome is a project that is so successful your MegaTarget is speechless.

Make that almost speechless. You want your MegaTarget to be so impressed that he or she says "WOW!" at the beginning of every comment made about your project.

Ask each project team member to contribute one reaction he or she would love to hear the MegaTarget say. List each statement in quotation marks because you are "quoting" your MegaTarget's reactions, right? And start each quotation with the word "WOW!" Call it the Discipline of Wow.

Use these guidelines in listing your MegaMagic Wows:

- Be bold and idealistic. Don't be a wimp.
- Do not be influenced by past disappointments.
- Use motivational words.
- Make sure your MegaMagic comments are tied to your MegaTarget.

When you think your list is about 85 percent complete, you are done. Any remaining reactions aren't worth listing if you list wow comments first.

Admittedly, we all want to hear the sounds of MegaMagic from our MegaTargets. It is one thing to construct such a dream list. But it is another thing to make it all happen.

And that is Step 5, the MegaPlan, the focus of the next article.

Nick Montoya and Roger S. Peterson are co-authors of "The Magic Megaphone: How to get your projects unstuck and back on track in under 60 minutes." Reach them at magicmegaphone.com.