

Friday, September 17, 2007

Planning for mega success

Step Five focuses on developing, implementing team's project plan

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

In the last article in this series, we introduced Magic Megaphone Step Four, MegaMagic. In that step you make a wish list of all the superlative remarks you want people to offer about your project's success.

Such sounds of success don't come from conservative, cautious thinking. Rather, the MegaMagic comes from thinking big -- no, from thinking "WOW." Step Four gives you permission to envision the most ideal possible outcomes: what you really want to hear your MegaTargets say about your project.

But MegaMagic reactions won't happen just by dreaming. You have to plan for them. That's Step Five, the last step in developing a Magic Megaphone for your project. We call it your MegaPlan.

Earlier in this series you downloaded a blank Magic Megaphone template from our Web site. With Step Five, you ask your team to re-read the accolades you all listed in the template under MegaMagic. Your MegaPlan -- the column to the left -- will be the specific tasks, actions and tactics you must complete before you will ever hear those "WOW" sounds of project success.

Remember the three Magic Megaphone principles: Keep it simple; 85 percent is OK; Think "WOW."

Use these questions to prompt team thinking. To keep things simple, answer in bullets, not sentences and paragraphs:

- What actions must we take before we would ever hear our MegaTarget say such great things about our project?
- How will our MegaTarget experience the MegaBenefits we listed?
- Other than communication tactics, what changes must be made for the project to achieve breakthrough success?

Your team will likely list many possible changes and actions. That's the beauty of brainstorming. Giving everyone permission to free-associate ideas could lead to one tactic that might otherwise be overlooked, and that one tactic could be the tipping point for your project's success.

But don't fret about developing a list of all the possible things you could do if you had unlimited time and resources. A 100 percent perfect list is neither possible to attain nor desirable to pursue, unless you want to drag out your project planning for days and days.

The whole point of the Magic Megaphone is for you to grab a plan in hand in 60 minutes flat. So when your team thinks the list is about 85 percent complete, you're almost finished.

What completes the MegaPlan is asking which of the listed changes and tasks are most important. Rank them from the most important to the least important according to their influence on your MegaBenefits and your MegaTarget. Then, select the three or four tasks to which you want to concentrate full team attention.

Where appropriate, line up MegaPlan actions and changes with specific MegaTargets. Assign each MegaPlan task to a specific team member and set a completion date for each task. Develop a buddy system for the team so that one team member monitors another's progress.

Regularly reassemble the project team, weekly if necessary.

The Magic Megaphone process can help you launch a project successfully by making sure it doesn't become stuck during that first critical team meeting. If it can work at a company as huge as Intel Corp., across a worldwide network whose team members are often conference-call attendees, it can work face-to-face in your small business.

In the next article, we will introduce you to MegaSuccesses -- how the Magic Megaphone worked and earned "WOWs" for different project teams in many varied businesses.

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." Visit magicmegaphone.com.