



PROJECT  
EXCELLENCE

**The Project Excellence Model**

English Version

## What is Project Excellence?

The term Excellence comes from the Latin word **excellere**, which stands for exceptional or outperforming. In the world of project management, “Project Excellence” refers to those projects that stand out from other projects through their exceptional performance:

- Excellent projects are professional, innovative and well thought-out in how they apply the principles and methods of project management.
- They reflect on and learn from their own approach, methodology and results.
- They deliver exceptional results which meet or surpass the expectations of all interested parties.

- The community can learn from excellent projects. In an ideal case, their experiences also enrich the entire project management discipline.
- Excellent projects create sustainable values and take environmental interests into consideration. Not only do they benefit the organisation, but also the society as a whole.

Projects that deliver exceptional results are not necessarily excellent. **Excellent Projects must display top performance in the management of the implementation, as well as in the results.** Thus, the results must follow from the approach.

## The Project Excellence Model

To determine the excellence of projects, GPM developed the Project Excellence Model in 1996. The inspiration came from the **EFQM-Excellence Model**, which determines the quality of the management systems in organisations. The basis for the current version is the **EFQM-Excellence Model 2013**, where the essential elements were modified and specified for projects.

Central to the Project Excellence Model are nine main criteria, which fall within two assessment areas:

### Enablement Criteria for the Project Management:

**Leadership, Objectives and Strategy, People, Partners and Resources**, as well as **Methods and Processes** are factors that make exceptional results not only possible, but also repeatable. Each of these enablement criteria is further detailed in three sub-criteria.

### Results criteria for the project results:

The success of a project is not only determined by the level of **objectives fulfilled**, but also by the **satisfaction of customers, people** as well as **other interested parties**.

The Project Excellence Model now has numerous fields of application: on the one hand, it serves as an assessment model for the excellence of projects within the German Project Excellence Award of the GPM and the International Project Excellence Award of the IPMA. On the other hand, project managers can use the model as a guideline for their own project management, and carry out a self-assessment of their projects. Organisations apply the model for internal project competitions and use it systematically to further develop the company-wide project management.

## Overview of the Project Excellence Model

Nine main criteria fall within two assessment areas. The maximum number of points that can be reached is 1,000, with 500 points each for the enablement criteria and the results criteria.

Enablement Criteria	Points	Results Criteria	Points
<b>1. Leadership</b>	100	<b>6. Customer satisfaction</b>	150
a. Leaders are role models of excellence		a. Customer perception	
b. Leaders engage with stakeholders		b. Performance indicators	
c. Leaders ensure flexibility			
<b>2. Objectives and strategy</b>	100	<b>7. People satisfaction</b>	100
a. Dealing with stakeholders		a. People perception	
b. Dealing with objectives		b. Performance indicators	
c. Strategy for the project management			
<b>3. People</b>	100	<b>8. Satisfaction of other interested parties</b>	100
a. Dealing responsibly with people		a. Perception of other interested parties	
b. Enablement		b. Performance indicators	
c. Empowerment			
<b>4. Partnerships and resources</b>	100	<b>9. Objectives fulfilled</b>	150
a. Partners and suppliers		a. Project success – Results	
b. Financial resources		b. Project success – Performance	
c. Materials, knowledge and other resources			
<b>5. Methods and processes</b>	100		
a. Project management methods			
b. Communication und social processes			
c. External interfaces and processes of projects			
	<b>500</b>		<b>500</b>

## 1. Leadership

Excellent projects have leaders who form and fulfill projects consistently with a view to the future. They strengthen a culture of excellence and lead by example with authenticity. They are flexible and ensure that the project acts with foresight and reacts in good time to guarantee continuing success.

### 1a. Leaders are role models of excellence



Leaders in projects are role models for a culture of excellence in the project and beyond.

### 1b. Leaders engage with stakeholders



All leaders in a project personally engage with internal and external stakeholders and consider their interests in the project.

### 1c. Leaders make flexibility possible



Leaders in a project ensure that the project is flexible and that changes will be managed effectively.

## 2. Objectives and strategies

Excellent projects define their objectives on the basis of sound analysis with an understanding of their interested parties and their requirements. They develop an approach that integrates these interests and derive their plans and processes systematically from this approach.

### 2a. Dealing with stakeholders



Stakeholders are identified early and their expectations and requirements are both investigated and formulated. All stakeholders are continually communicated and interacted with in an appreciative manner.

Changes in the requirements and expectations are suitably considered in the project cycle.

### 2b. Dealing with objectives



The project objectives are developed on the basis of comprehensive and relevant information. They are conveyed, recognised, checked and adjusted.

Project objectives, organisation objectives and stakeholder interests are all in balance. Competing interests are dealt with appropriately.

### 2c. Project management strategy



Methods and processes for the approach in the project management are developed to suit the project objectives while considering own capabilities and restrictions.

### 3. People

Excellent projects respect and appreciate their people. They recognise their potential and skills, as well as promote their development.

They create a culture where they are enabled and motivated to apply their knowledge and abilities for the success of the project.

#### 3a. Dealing responsibly with people



The skills and capacities that are necessary to fulfill the project objectives are identified.

People are deployed accordingly. The dialogue with people takes place systematically and transparently.

Legal and moral responsibilities for people, especially work safety, are carried out consciously.

#### 3b. Enablement



The knowledge and abilities of people are promoted and further developed. In the process, personal interests, career development and self-development are supported.

#### 3c. Empowerment



People work in an environment that allows them and motivates them to apply their skills, talents and creativity for the success of the project.

They act in coordination, are involved and empowered towards taking initiative.

### 4. Partnerships and resources

Excellent projects plan and steer external partnerships, suppliers and own resources to support efficiency and ensure project success.

They are aware of their influence on the environment and the society, and steer it responsibly.

#### 4a. Partners and suppliers



Partners and suppliers are steered and supported towards sustainable benefit.

The cooperation is based on mutual trust, respect and openness.

#### 4b. Financial resources



Financial resources are deployed and steered towards sustainable success.

#### 4c. Materials, knowledge and other resources



Materials, knowledge, information and other resources are deployed and steered towards sustainable success.

## 5. Methods and processes

Excellent projects identify the methods and processes critical for success. They reflect on them and make adjustments when necessary.

### 5a. Project management methods



Methods and processes of project management for initiating, defining, planning, steering, closing and accompanying measures are continually evaluated, optimised as well as professionally and innovatively applied.

### 5b. Communication and social processes



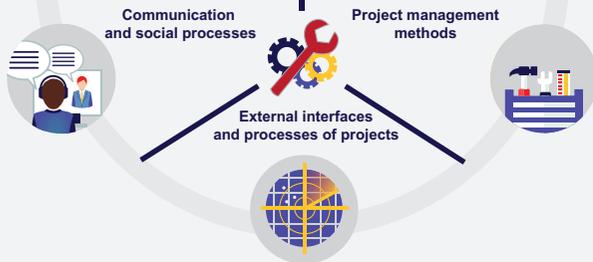
Methods for communication and dealing with social processes are continually evaluated, optimised as well as professionally and innovatively applied.

### 5c. External interfaces and processes of projects



External interfaces and processes are analysed, evaluated, checked and adjusted when necessary.

## OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGY

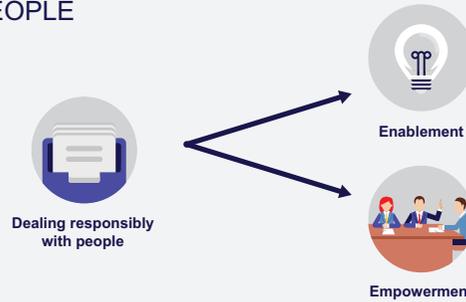


## METHODS AND PROCESSES

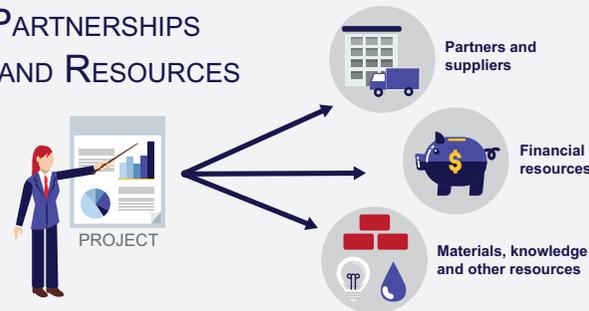
## LEADERSHIP



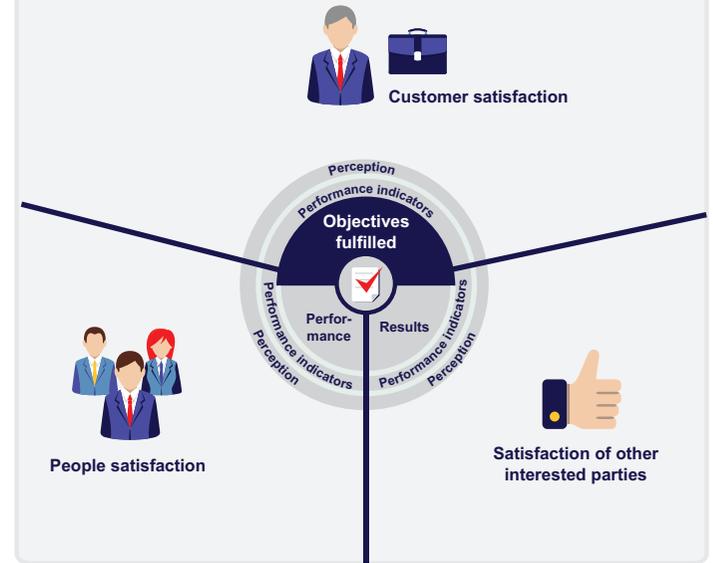
## PEOPLE



## PARTNERSHIPS AND RESOURCES



## RESULTS



## 6. Customer satisfaction

Excellent projects do not only fulfill the requirements, but go further by creating enthusiasm, satisfaction and recognition on the side of their customers.

Based on the requirements and expectations of their customers, they develop a set of performance indicators. They monitor the progress of the project using these indicators and reveal positive trends or continually good results.

They understand how the values that they fulfill are positioned in comparison to similar projects, and use this data, if relevant, to adjust their own approach.

### 6a. Customer perception

The customers perceive the project management and the project result as excellent.

### 6b. Performance indicators

Key figures and measurements can be used to prove the satisfaction of customers without asking them directly.



## 7. People satisfaction

Excellent projects are not just carried out, but create enthusiasm, satisfaction and recognition on the side of their people.

Based on the requirements and expectations of their people, they develop a set of performance indicators. They monitor the progress of the project using these indicators and reveal positive trends or continually good results.

They understand how the values that they fulfill are positioned in comparison to similar projects, and use this data, if relevant, to adjust their own approach.

### 7a. People perception

The people perceive the project management and the project result as excellent.

### 7b. Performance indicators

Key figures and measurements can be used to prove the satisfaction of people without asking them directly.



## 8. Satisfaction of other interested parties

Excellent projects also create added value and satisfaction with other interested parties such as their partners, suppliers, those affected, and the society.

Based on the requirements and expectations of other interested parties, they develop a set of performance indicators. They monitor the progress of the project using these indicators to reveal positive trends or continuously good results.

They understand how the values that they fulfill are positioned in comparison to similar projects, and use this data, if relevant, to adjust their own approach.

### 8a. Perception of other interested parties

Other interested parties perceive the project management and project result as excellent.

### 8b. Performance indicators

Key figures and measurements can be used to prove the satisfaction of other interested parties without asking them directly.



## 9. Objectives fulfilled

Excellent projects fulfill the planned project objectives and can prove the project success on the basis of the results, as well as the efficient approach.

### 9a. Project success – Results

The project objectives have been fulfilled and can be proven on the basis of objective criteria.

### 9b. Project success – Performance

The project approach was efficient and adjusted – the performance can be proven on the basis of objective criteria.



## Project assessment based on the Project Excellence Model

### Assessment

In the assessment of a project, all sub criteria are examined with the help of assessment tables, each of which represent fundamental principles of excellence.

In the process, assessors look for proof and evidence of excellence. It is about finding a suitable assessment of the performance of the project, compared with the requirements of the assessed project and the performance of other projects, as well as the current and recognised status of project management as a discipline.

On the basis of the assessment tables, a percentage value is generated for each sub criterion. The average percentage of the sub criterion is then multiplied by the maximum possible score of its higher-level criterion. The sum of the scores of the nine criteria equals the total score.

### Maximum scores of the criteria

#### Enablement criteria

1. Leadership	100
2. Objectives and strategy	100
3. People	100
4. Partnerships and resources	100
5. Methods and processes	100

#### Results criteria

6. Customer satisfaction	150
7. People satisfaction	100
8. Satisfaction of other interested parties	100
9. Objectives fulfilled	150

**Maximum total score: 1,000 points**

### Assessment tables

Criterion 1, Leadership, is collectively assessed with Assessment Table A, which includes all three sub criteria.

For all other enablement criteria, Assessment Table B is used to check whether the methods and measures of each sub criterion are sound and systematically applied, according to the PDCA logic (Plan-Do-Check-Act).

The results criteria are assessed with Table C, also for each criterion. Not only is the level of objective fulfillment assessed, but also whether these were continuously checked or whether the successes can be attributed to the approach of the project management.

(See next page for assessment tables)

### Definitions

#### Proof

Proof is provided when the depiction in the application documents or the portrayal of the project manager seems credible to the assessors and they decide to accept these as proven.

#### Evidence

Evidence is provided when the applicant can demonstrate the situation on the basis of documents or other facts. Evidence is generally preferable to proof.

The assessors should be committed to questioning depictions and requesting evidence.

### Assessment Table A for ENABLEMENT criterion 1: Leadership

1a: Leaders are role models of excellence	1b: Leaders are committed to stakeholders	1c: Leaders ensure flexibility	%
Proof and evidence - could serve as a role model	Proof and evidence - could serve as a role model	Proof and evidence - could serve as a role model	90
Extensive proof with evidence	Extensive proof with evidence	Extensive proof with evidence	80
Some proof and evidence	Some proof and evidence	Some proof and evidence	70
Some proof	Some proof	Some proof	60
No proof	No proof	No proof	50
			40
			30
			20

### Assessment Table B for ENABLEMENT criteria 2-5

PLAN: Sound approach	DO: Systematic implementation and application	CHECK: Examination	ACT: Optimisation	%
Proof and evidence - could serve as a role model	Proof and evidence - could serve as a role model	Proof and evidence - could serve as a role model	Proof and evidence - could serve as a role model	90
Extensive proof with evidence	80			
Some proof and evidence	70			
Some proof	Some proof	Some proof	Some proof	60
No proof	No proof	No proof	No proof	50
				40
				30
				20

### Assessment Table C for RESULTS criteria 6-9

Level of fulfillment	Objectives fulfillment is linked to the approach	Continuity of results	Comparisons with other projects	%
Project objectives surpassed	The approach was an extraordinary success factor	Continuously outstanding results	Excellent benchmark results presented	90
All project objectives fulfilled	completely	Overall good results and positive trends	Good benchmark results presented	80
All essential project objectives fulfilled	substantially	Continuous monitoring of results carried out	Benchmarks to other projects carried out	70
Project objectives only partly fulfilled	partly	---	---	60
No comparisons possible	No link recognisable	---	---	50
				40
				30
				20

**GPM German Project Management Association®  
(GPM Deutsche Gesellschaft für Projektmanagement e. V.)**

GPM is the leading professional project management association in Germany.

GPM operates the largest network of project management experts in continental Europe with currently more than 7,000 members and 350 member companies from all industries, universities and public institutions. Established in 1979, GPM is mainly focussed on developing, systemising, standardising and further distributing the application of project management in Germany.

For further information, please visit [www.gpm-ipma.de](http://www.gpm-ipma.de).



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