

Project Manager

Nature of Work

The position of project manager is sometimes the same as that of a general superintendent or project superintendent. The nature of a project manager's work is, therefore, very dependent upon the firm's organizational structure, the firm's size, and the number or size of projects the manager works with. He or she is an individual capable of overall management responsibility for delivering a construction project from its conception until it functions as it was intended. The project manager must be capable of establishing performance and delivery criteria for approval by the owner. If one's firm is involved in project design work, the project manager may be responsible for directing the production of basic design plans and construction documents. Estimating, start up, scheduling, actual construction, expediting, inspection, quality control, and total delivery of the project according to the established criteria are aspects of the project manager's job.

Education and Training

Most project managers have many years of experience as a construction superintendent. Generally, contractors have selected their project managers from among the superintendents or occasionally foremen who demonstrate leadership and working knowledge of construction operations. A college education is very desirable, although it is not necessarily essential for some firms. At many firms it has become a requirement, and a number of schools offer construction management degrees which combine construction procedures with administrative principles. A project manager must have a good understanding of construction methods, materials, scheduling, and blueprint reading, as well as knowledge in communication skills.

Advancement Potential

Project managers are usually considered top management, and often become principal officers of their construction firms. On occasion, project managers start their own company.