Career Sheet: Project Manager

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I am a seasoned Project Management professional with a strong track record structuring and delivering successful EU-funded innovation projects. I was involved in over 40 bid preparations, covering every aspect from technical and business writing through to financial and administrative planning, and I was involved in the coordination of multiple projects from across all EU funding streams, including Horizon Europe, H2020, FP7, CIP-ICT-PSP, Erasmus+ and LLP.

I am an engineer by training with a Master of Science (MSc) in Information Networking (MSIN) – Information Networking Institute from Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, PA, USA and a Bachelor in Computer Science (BSc Eng, 5-yr course) – Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information Technology, - from the University of Oradea, Romania. Currently I am a Project manager at 21c Consultancy.

OVERVIEW OF THE JOB

On the creativity side, I try to explain technical terms in layman's terms while creating compelling communication material and organizing high impact large and small scale educative, scientific and/or dissemination activities, including numerous international expert groups meetings, conferences, workshops, and hackathons. On the non-creative side, I am involved in the writing of research and innovation proposals, including the admin and financial part. In the relationship with our stakeholders, I often like to go the extra mile and help a partner or a collaborator. It is always nice to put into our projects the human touch not only the scientific touch.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU

I am convinced that each and every single person that I meet during my undergraduate and graduate studies as well as in my career so far has inspired and influenced me in one way or another. There is not a specific person but a blend of all the colleagues and collaborators. Thanks to all of them I am where I am today.

TYPICAL WORKING DAY

The first thing I do after sitting at my desk is to check and answer emails and then start the actual work. This might be planning for a new proposal or working on a communication and dissemination task from a current project.

STUDY & CAREER PATH

I studied Computer Science, a male-dominated environment. Being mostly surrounded by men I learned how to survive in a world dominated by them. Maybe I was lucky to be always around smart and polite colleagues or maybe because girls were in minority, we were more appreciated by our colleagues. If it would be to start all over again I wouldn't change my career path. The engineering background gave me outstanding analytical and organisational skills. These skills help me manage internal and external stakeholders, quickly resolve problems and create effective project processes. I love working in multicultural environments in which team building and collaboration are key.

KEY SKILLS

Problem-solving is important as sometimes you will need to work under the pressure of time and analytical thinking will help. Collaboration with the team and with external stakeholders is also important. With a team that supports you and with reliable collaborators you can consider the job half done from the very beginning. Some basic project management skills are very welcomed to see how exactly to run a project in time and in the budget. Here we notice the time-management skill, if it's a deadline then respect it else next time your team/collaborators will not take your deadlines seriously. Furthermore, because social media is an important part of our everyday life this skill should also be noted. And last, but not least, a bit of creativity and adaptability within unpredicted situations are also needed.

CAREER PROSPECT

The tech background opens many doors like consultancy, programming, business development, project/product management etc. In all these jobs there is the opportunity to meet people from all over the world, each with a different culture, background, and language.

CHALLENGES

When deadlines are not respected further tasks and deliverables will be delayed. But this can be easily solved with setting intermediate deadlines.

YOUR ADVICE TO STUDENTS

I would encourage any girl wanting to enter the tech field to go for it if this is what she wants. Nothing can stand against a girl's or woman's determination and ambition!

YOUR ADVICE TO TEACHERS AND PARENTS

To unconditionally support the child as this will give her/him/them confidence and a healthy environment to grow and flourish. Trust your instincts as teachers/parents but also take into consideration the desires of the children. A small piece of advice from teachers/parents can make a huge difference and have a big impact on that child's future.

LEARN MORE

The most important part of my job is the European Commission's (EC) portal on funding and tender opportunities: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home

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