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Understanding Definition of 'Project Manager'

The industry has many definitions of what a Project Manager is and many partners within one project have Project Managers resourced to them. However, it is important to differentiate the term "Project Manager" as it relates to roles and responsibilities. While the term is loosely defined, the definition is clearly defined depending which "Project Manager" is being referred to on the project team.

■ **What is a Project Manager/Owner's Rep?** A Project Manager/Owner's Rep is a third-party advocate who is usually an outsourced representative and resource to an internal client-based project team. A Project Manager/Owner's Rep acts as the point of coordination for the client and all internal and external partners working on a strategic real estate project, including, but not limited to: Architecture/Engineering, General Contractor, Cabling, Security, Telephony, Technology, Furniture, Artwork, Audio Visual, LEED and the Move. This Project Manager/Owner's Rep provides the client with one touch point for all aspects of the project's progress. This seamless process promotes a highly efficient exchange of information, accountability and practical results. On many occasions, the Project Manager/Owner's Rep is brought on to be an outsourced role for internal client teams that have an in-house Real Estate and Facilities Team, but might need "as needed" help for a specific project. The Project Manager/Owner's Rep provides a multidisciplinary oversight that guides strategy, develops milestones and manages the implementation of myriad project details. Among its many



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services, the Project Manager/Owner's Rep acts as a catalyst to develop and retain strategic partners, tracks project performance and identifies value-engineering opportunities. The Project Manager/Owner's Rep is focused on maintaining the project's bottom line and achieving practical results. This is accomplished by introducing process efficiencies to the identification and documentation of client space require-

ments; the planning, coordination and management of construction; the oversight of the project team; the maintenance of budgets and schedules; and the ultimate completion of high-quality, cost-efficient real estate projects of all sizes and complexity levels.

■ **What does it mean when an Architectural/Engineering Team has a Project Manager on the team?** A Project Manager on an Architectural and Engineering (A & E) Team's staff is integral, but is quite different than a Project Manager, or Owner's Rep, as described above. When an

Architectural and Engineering Team has a Project Manager on its team, it usually means it has a Project Champion internally guiding its A & E team and their A & E contracted scope. That Project Manager does not generally manage and negotiate terms with the General Contractor, Security Vendor, Cabling Contractor, Move Team, etc nor does that individual manage those strategic partners or the overall project schedule and inclusive financial model/budget. Their Project Manager creates accountability within their A & E Team, manages to their contract terms and is well versed in working with a Project Manager/Owner's Rep.

■ **What does it mean when a General Contractor has a Project Manager on the team?** A Project Manager on a General Contractor's (GC's) Team is a day-to-day manager for the construction project itself – but accountability is limited in scope to that of the contracted construction contract. A GC's Project Managers primary duties are contract and scope management of the GC's subcontractors and trades. A GC's Project Manager is critical to the success of the project, but does not hold management oversight to the strategic team members on the project team, except for its internal team and its subcontractors/trades.

■ **What does it mean when a Furniture Dealer has a Project Manager on the team?** A Project Manager on a Furniture Team is a resourced team member who manages their internal furniture team responsible for the selection, specification, design, procurement and installation of the furniture assets for a project. However, it is different in terms and scope to the overall

Project Manager who plays the role as the Owner's Rep in that general accountability for managing the General Contractor, A & E Team, Security Vendor, Cabling Vendor and all other strategic partners will fall under the Owner's Rep/Project Manager.

■ **What does it mean when a Move Team has a Project Manager on the team?** A Project Manager on a Move Team is a designated resource either internal or external to the move company staff that will implement the project and the contracted scope of the moving company. Sometimes this is the Foreman, other times it might be the Operations Lead while, in some cases, it may be an outsourced third-party consultant. This role is critical to the success of the final stage of the project but the scope and responsibility is limited to that segment of the project, whereas the Owner Rep./Project Manager has the general responsibility and accountability of the entire project.

■ **What does this all mean for the project?** Collectively, the success of a project is determined by the collaboration of the strategic partners. Without the combined efforts of the entire project team, there will be gaps in the project's progress and outcome. A Project Manager/Owner's Rep is the "catchall" – that party that manages the day-to-day details and enables the strategic partners to focus on their contracted scope. The Project Manager/Owner's Rep manages the project's bottom line while achieving practical results. This streamlines the process by providing the client and the strategic partners who make up the project team with one touch point for all aspects of the project's progress.