Top 4 Power Skills
Every Project Professional Needs

There is wide consensus among those surveyed on the top four power skills that help project professionals drive project success. These four power skills are consistently the highest-ranked across industries, regions and other factors.

COMMUNICATION
- Effective in explanation, writing and public speaking
- 71%

PROBLEM-SOLVING
- Ability to figure out what is wrong and resolve it
- 68%

COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP
- Ability to work with others across boundaries to make decisions
- 65%

STRATEGIC THINKING
- Ability to see patterns and alternative paths rather than complexity
- 64%

However, there are other important power skills project professionals should hone.

ADAPTABILITY
- 54%

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING
- 52%

INNOVATIVE MINDSET
- 52%

ACCOUNTABILITY
- 47%

EMPATHY
- 42%

DISCIPLINE
- 41%

FOR-PURPOSE ORIENTATION
- 35%

FUTURE-FOCUSED ORIENTATION
- 35%

So, what can organizations do to nurture these power skills?

1. Provide training and development on power skills that fulfill organizational objectives.
2. Bake them into your organizational DNA by hiring project professionals who possess these critical skills.
3. Have project management leadership model these power skills and consistently communicate their importance.

And how can organizations measure power skills?

- Reference customer feedback.
- Provide recommendations during supervisor or manager assessments.
- Evaluate power skills in formal performance assessments.
- Incorporate them as part of 360-degree survey feedback.
- Implement standardized testing.

Source: Annual PMI Global Survey on Project Management

Power skills are a difference maker.

Source: https://www.pmi.org/learning/thought-leadership/power-skills/power-skills-infographic
### PMI Power Skills Assessment

**Power Up Your Power Skills**

**Directions:** This assessment consists of a series of statements to indicate how frequently you demonstrate/use four of the most important power skills—Communication, Problem Solving, Collaborative Leadership, and Strategic Thinking—according to PMI’s Pulse of the Profession 2023 report. Please read each statement and assess yourself (or your team) accordingly, then complete the reflection on the next page.

**KEY:** 4 = Always  3 = Often  2 = Sometimes  1 = Seldom  0 = Never

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I tailor my communication style to each audience's needs</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I ask questions to check for understanding</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I keep communications as concise as possible</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I observe body language and adjust accordingly</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I spend as much time listening as talking</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I am mindful about the words I use when I speak to others</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. If I am not sure about something, then I make that clear</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. My team is committed to open and honest communication</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. My team’s communications are courteous and professional</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem Solving</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I am willing to make tough decisions when needed</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I prioritize risk identification and mitigation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I understand the implications of risks</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I work with my team to proactively prevent problems</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I follow up to ensure problem resolution has occurred</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. When decisions are taken, I ensure action steps are taken</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. As a team we advise each other of issues immediately</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. As a team we seek to develop creative solutions</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. As a team we understand the pros and cons of all alternatives</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collaborative Leadership</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I prioritize developing strong team relationships</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I engage team members in decision making</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I work and seek input across all areas of the organization</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I trust my team</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I provide insight into the thinking behind key decisions</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. My team is empowered to operate independently</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. My team is encouraged to take reasonable risks</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. My team operates transparently</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. My team deals with conflict constructively</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Thinking</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I consider the impact my decisions may have</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I understand why my projects are being done</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I understand the success criteria of my projects</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I prioritize the ability to deliver benefits to my customers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I collaborate with sponsors, customers, and others</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I adapt the triple constraint if it helps deliver project outcomes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. My team understands the project’s purpose</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. My team develops solutions that optimize benefits</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. My team is comfortable with complexity</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from PMI’s Power Skills Self-Assessment [https://www.pmi.org/learning/thought-leadership/power-skills/power-skills-assessment](https://www.pmi.org/learning/thought-leadership/power-skills/power-skills-assessment)
Reflection

1. What did you notice about your self-assessment? What was an ‘a-ha’?

_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________

2. What are your strengths?

_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________

3. Which power skill (or aspect of a power skill) would you like to work on?

_______________________________________________________________________________________

Takeaways

- Effective project management is said to be about ~70-80% soft skills.

- According to PMI, organizations prioritizing power skills (soft skills) are redefining success and equipping project professionals to thrive in our fast-pivoting world.

- For project professionals, power skills are critical. These abilities and behaviors facilitate working with others. They enable you to thrive in a fast-paced workplace. And they are a hallmark of high-performing teams. Power skills can distinguish project managers who merely manage tasks from those who empower, inspire, and instill trust in their teams and others. Indeed, a project leader’s power skills are often the difference between project success and failure.

- This assessment is designed to help you improve and grow — be it as a project leader, a teammate, or changemaker. Completing this assessment is only the beginning. Consider where there are strengths and where there are opportunities to improve your power skills and those of your team.

- Visit the PMI Power Skills Resource Hub to explore other related content.
  https://www.pmi.org/learning/thought-leadership/power-skills
### Action Plan

#### Project Management

Pick one project management (PM) activity that you would like to work on. Refer to page 5.

**PM Activity:**

<p>| | | |</p>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiation</td>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>Execution</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Closure</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**For:**

- [ ] Myself
- [ ] My Team
- [ ] Other

**My Goal:** By _________________ (date) I would like to

__________

because

__________

**Barrier:** A barrier might be _________________,

but I can get around it by _________________

__________

**These are the steps I can take to work on this goal:**

____________________

____________________

____________________

____________________

____________________

**I can get help/support from:**

____________________

____________________

---

#### Power Skill

Pick one PMI “power skill” that you would like to develop. Refer to pages 1-2.

**Power Skill:**

____________________

**For:**

- [ ] Myself
- [ ] My Team
- [ ] Other

**My Goal:** By _________________ (date) I would like to

__________

because

__________

**Barrier:** A barrier might be _________________,

but I can get around it by _________________

__________

**These are the steps I can take to work on this goal:**

____________________

____________________

____________________

____________________

____________________

**I can get help/support from:**

____________________

____________________
Project Management Phases

Initiation
- The Project Charter may begin during Initiation

Planning
- Project Charter
- File Repository
- Project Plan (PM software or Excel)
- Kickoff Meeting
- Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Execution
- Monitor Project Plan
- Status Meetings
- Standup Meetings
- Status Reports
- Engage Stakeholders
- Go Live

Closure
- Lessons Learned
- Survey
- Final Report/Presentation
- Celebration
- Archive
- Sign Off With Sponsor

Source: https://www.sdcoe.net/fs/resource-manager/view/76bd0699-7eef-4a71-8bbf-1fa193de4652

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