

SEVEN PERSONAL SKILLS TO SUCCEED AS A MANAGER

It is up to the infrastructure development manager to oversee every activity in compliance with the project requirements, while additionally keeping up a safe and effective workplace environment says **Dr Pratima Sheorey**, Director - Symbiosis Centre for Management and Human Resource Development (SCMHRD) in a conversation with **Elets News Network (ENN)**.

Infrastructure development is the backbone of the global economy; naturally, the project managers for these projects need to be competent and well-versed with the processes. Let's take a look at the 7 most prominent qualities that a manager must possess to succeed in infrastructure development and construction management.

Whether we talk about the development of private residential structures, business structures, or building bridges, infrastructure managers need to possess knowledge and skills related to the development and management of the built infrastructure.

It is up to the infrastructure development manager to oversee every activity in compliance with the project requirements, while additionally keeping up a safe and effective workplace environment. They likewise need to deal with the financial plans, create and manage deadlines, strategise and coordinate for feedback and updates with all the involved stakeholders.

Aspirants desirous of developing a career in infrastructure development and related industries must remain focused on the following 7 skills, along with possessing experience and the technical know-how:

1. Basic Technical Skills: Technical skills in the areas of engineering (civil, mechanical and electrical) will help students understand the ground details of projects and create innovative solutions, aligned with industry expectations and recent developments in the sector.

2. Contract Management: Given the multi-stakeholder nature of infrastructure projects, a single infrastructure project can have multiple contracts in force. A skilled infrastructure professional must possess the acumen to identify potential contractual defaults ahead of time, and recommend/prepare the most cost effective mitigation strategy. Thus creating water tight contracts and subsequently managing the contracts must come naturally to contract professionals.

3. Project Management: Infrastructure projects span across several years and are usually multi-stakeholder projects, including government, private investors and impact local citizenry. Thus effective project management skills are essential, such that time delays, resulting cost overruns and resulting risks can be managed, to minimize social and economic costs.

4. Financial Structuring: Due to the large scale of investments coupled with paucity of funds with the government, Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) based projects are likely to continue to be at the front and centre of Infra projects. Within PPP projects, new and



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innovative financing modules are emerging such as the Hybrid Annuity Model (HAM) in road projects, amongst others. Thus students need to stay abreast of financial innovations in the sector.

5. Risk Management : With large infrastructure projects, come higher risks. Risks such as construction risks, operational risks, change in force majeure, change in law, and other environmental risks need effective planning, mitigation and monitoring.

6. Communication Skills: The ability to concisely yet transparently communicate their requirements and ideas is another most significant skill that students must learn. Good communication skills ensure that no detail is lost in comprehension. However, when we talk about communication, it not only includes prowess in expressing oneself but also the patience to listen to what the client or other members of the team have to say.

7. Entrepreneurial and Leadership Mindset: Managing any project is like running a business. Each project that you manage will have its own set of challenges. So, having an entrepreneurial and leadership mindset is a huge advantage. **DL**