

PURPOSE DRIVEN CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT



One of the ironies we've seen in 40+ years of work in Business Development Education, Customer/ Stakeholder Engagement, Coaching, and Professional Development is the confusion professionals have between their Goals in the role of Program or Project Manager and their Purpose in Program Management. It's not really surprising that many also confuse their role identity with their self-identity. Learning the difference between purpose and goals in Program Management requires something new; while learning to separate role identity from self-identity requires unlearning something old.

Let's take a moment to understand the latter of these two in order to better understand the former. Our self-worth as an individual is not determined by our success or failure in our roles in life, whether or not we choose the roles or others assign them to us. This is not an easy psychological principle to learn, accept, and apply. Once a professional successfully learns to separate the two, the individual learns how to risk in the new role, learns the lessons of failure in the new role, and therefore grows professionally as well as personally.

However, there is no psychological growth without pain and without the investment of discomfort in learning to successfully fail and learn, there is no long-term benefit.

A second significant, personal and professional growth step that Program Manager professionals learn is to separate Goals in Program Management from Purpose. Having personal and professional goals with complementing plans is fundamental to success in any role in life. One of the more frequently quoted insights from MBDi is that if you don't have goals and plans you're probably going to be a part of other people's goals and plans.

There is an abundance of material available on the internet on personal and professional goal-setting and planning. If you'd like any from our website you are welcome to visit MBDⁱ Insights page.

Learning and applying the purpose in Program Management is another step in self-awareness and professional growth. Purpose is external to our needs as well as our expectations and is focused on others. In its simplest definition, purpose is the reason for which something is done.

The purpose of Program Management is to meet the strategic objective that improves an organization's performance; to focus and meet the customer/stakeholders goals. It is helping them define the issues, allocate projects, meet the stakeholders goals and the organization receive a benefit from engaging with the Program Manager professional.

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This last point is critical to the maturity and professional growth of individuals to succeed in the role of Program Management: psychologically mature professionals put their purpose ahead of their goals. They look to serve others and assist them in the fulfillment of their goals. By doing so, they earn invaluable trust and respect of the prospects; thus, allowing them to gain a preferred advantage in their business relationships.

The highest degree of trust and respect is that which is developed between individuals, which far overshadows any trust that one has in a company, organization, or product.

That's why learning and mastering purpose-driven customer engagement is critical. By being purpose-driven and purpose-focused you ask that the prospect give you the opportunity to earn their trust and respect. By doing so, you ask the customer to first buy you—your character, principals, values, and ethics. That's a lot to put on the line up front early in a customer relationship. To be comfortable taking that step, you must be well-anchored in yourself. To anchor this point with participants in our professional development programs, we tell them not to ask the customer to buy you if you wouldn't buy yourself.

Maturing to this level allows you to be purpose-focused in customer engagement, allowing for win-win business relationships.