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Troubled Projects**Good Help is Hard to Find**

Is your organization recruiting the right project managers to fit its needs?

Chances are good that your organization is confronting the same project management talent shortage that many others across the globe are facing today. "There simply are not enough qualified candidates," says Patrick McGuire, division president of Surrex Project Solutions in El Segundo, CA, USA.

Coupled with a shrinking number of experienced project managers is a tendency for companies to rely on ill-informed recruiters to find the right person. Mr. McGuire says a recruiter can look for the key words on a resume — like the Project Management Professional (PMP®) credential, for example — but won't have the advanced knowledge of how the candidate will be able to apply their past knowledge and experiences to the projects at hand.

Surrex uses a recruitment tool they invented called Knowledge-Experience-Education-Personality (KEEP). It takes into account professional credentials, experience on previous projects, education level, and the potential for a good fit between the project manager and the projects needing to be managed.

Mr. McGuire says that Surrex then has the organization's senior project management staff go through candidates' KEEP analysis. These existing team members have more knowledge than a regular recruiter and can also determine if a given candidate's experience matches the organization's needs. Since every company has its own culture, it's important that a project manager be able to mesh with their teams and corporate culture, especially when working on a large-scale, multi-million dollar project.

For organizations without an analysis similar to Surrex's KEEP, PMI offers two online tools — PMI's [career framework](#) and [Career Headquarters](#) — that can help organizations do things like reach qualified candidates and create an internal project management career path. While Career Headquarters has resume-searching and job-posting capabilities, the career framework tool takes aim at other organizational recruitment goals:

- Introduce a formal job ladder
- Create and use consistent, organization-wide job descriptions
- Streamline hiring practices
- Clearly define expectations for all project professionals

Kathi Kroop, president of the [PMI Human Resources Specific Interest Group](#), says that professional credentials can also be a sign that a potential hire knows "a common set of terms in a global economy." Having the PMP credential is a way for candidates to show employers — with just three letters — that they have a certain level of knowledge and experience.

For example, the PMP represents 35 hours of specific project management education, a minimum of three years' professional project management experience, and the passing of a rigorous multiple-choice exam. But Ms. Kroop does caution that looking for credentials isn't the only way to finding the right project managers for your organization. "They have to be able to apply their knowledge as well," she says.

Aside from seeking credentialed candidates, and using tools similar to the KEEP methodology and PMI career framework, recruiting project managers can often involve networking and attending industry events. And there are ways to position your company, Ms. Kroop says, to be in the right place to meet the right candidates. "The recruiter should be at [PMI chapter meetings](#) and going to the [congresses](#)," Ms. Kroop says. "Social networking is still the number one way to find candidates."



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