

**Rules for Project Managers**  
How to effectively work with Sponsors

	<b>Rule</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	<b>The bag of money and the baseball bat</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Find a sponsor with spending authority and organizational power</li> </ul>
2	<b>The passive conduit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Deliver the goods, establish and lead the team and manage the process –</li> <li>▪ Let the Sponsor make design decisions</li> <li>▪ The sponsor owns the objective and decisions</li> </ul>
3	<b>You get the sponsor you deserve</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sponsors respond differently to different input. Know:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How they want to communicate</li> <li>- Their openness of the dialogue</li> <li>- How reactive versus proactive they are</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
4	<b>In the absence of information...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ...executives still make decisions               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sponsors are pressed for time</li> <li>- Fast, informal communication wins over a pile of confusing reports</li> <li>- Executives make decisions on the basis of good information or bad data...your choice</li> <li>- Executives need to know two things:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Is the project OK or not OK?</li> <li>▪ If not OK, what do you need me to do?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
5	<b>Educate as well as inform</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sponsors have knowledge separate from the project environment               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Don't expect the sponsor to be an expert in project management</li> <li>- Take the time to educate the sponsor when needed on subjects that are outside his/her realm of expertise</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
6	<b>The level of help you get...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ... is inversely proportional to your delay in asking               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Don't be slow in sharing bad news with your sponsor</li> <li>- Push for contact to avoid delay</li> <li>- You may have to go around the system</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
7	<b>Show them the money</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Watch your language               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Good sponsors do not get into the detail</li> <li>- They need to know what the benefit is in business terms</li> <li>- Keep is simple and relevant to them</li> <li>- Know the relevant hot button</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
9	<b>"Beam us out of here, Scotty"</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Know when to kill a project</li> <li>▪ Know your risk management plan               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mitigation steps</li> <li>- Contingency Plans</li> <li>- Trigger events</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Document the plan and have it signed by the sponsor</li> </ul>
9	<b>No sponsor, no start</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Projects without effective sponsorship are at extreme risk of failure               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Never start a project without a sponsor</li> <li>- Your ability to get effective sponsorship decreases every day you go without it</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Adapted from Stanford Advanced Project Management and IPS Solutions**