

# How to be a great Project Manager

Kelsey Assel, MBA, PMP



# Kelsey Assel – who am I?

- Wife & Mother
- Product Management Senior Advisor at Cigna
- Lifelong learner



# Origin Story

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- Me: “I want to be one of the very best Project Managers”
- My boss: What is “the best” in the eyes of our peers?
- Me:



So let's find out!

# The Process

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- **Send a survey**
  - **Format:** Google Forms & MS Word
  - **Content:**
    - Demographic information
    - What skills make a great Project Manager?
    - What qualities make a great Project Manager?
    - What tactical activities do great Project Managers perform?
    - What shortcomings do you see among individuals who don't become great Project Managers?
- **Analyze survey results**
  - Review survey responses and categorize them
- **Find interesting data points**
- **Share with you**

# Roadmap for Today

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- Respondent **Demographics**
- Highlights of **survey responses**
  - Skills
  - Qualities
  - Tactical Activities
  - Shortcomings
- **Takeaways** and recommended **actions**

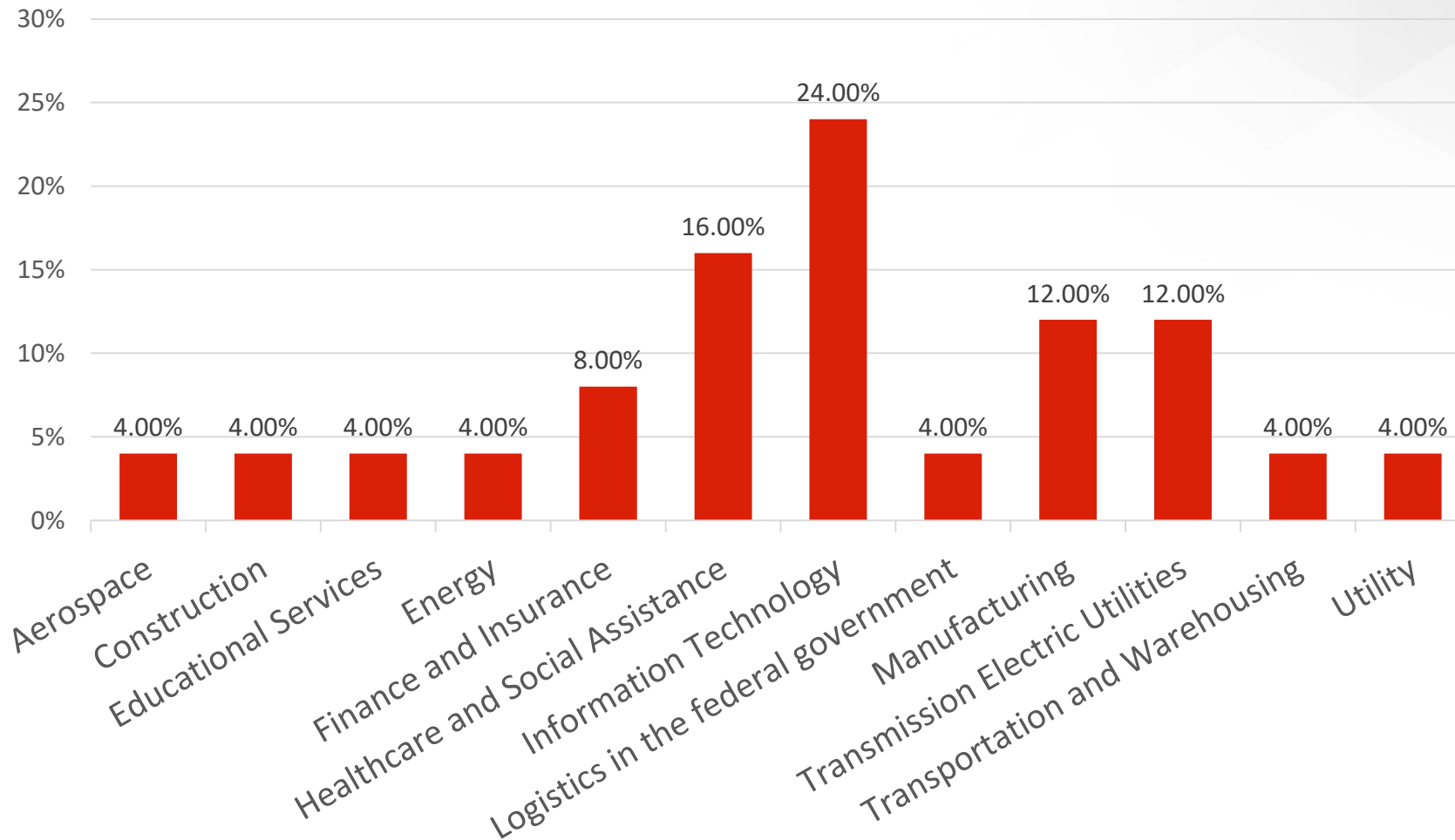
# Respondent Demographics

# The Survey Respondents

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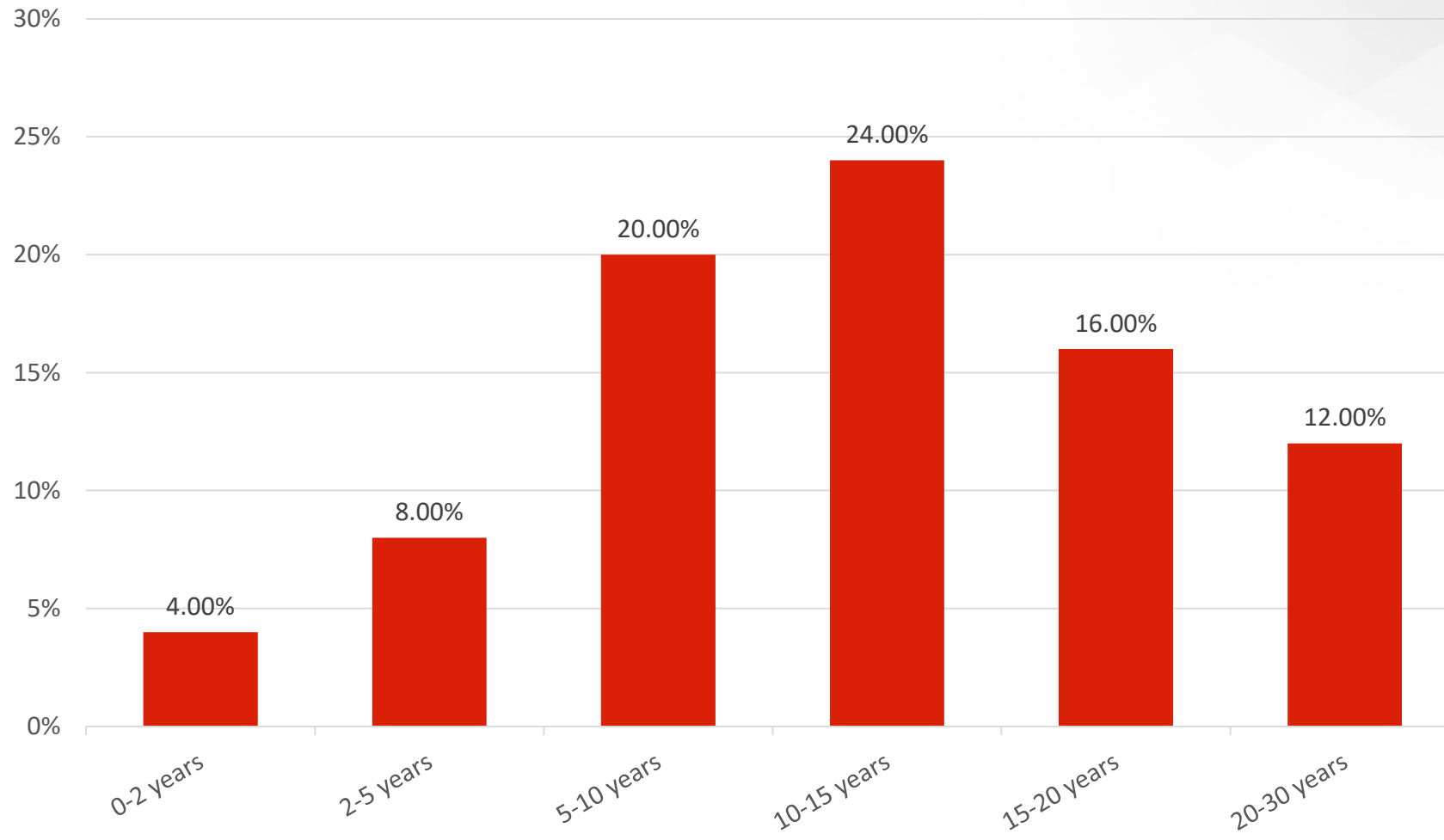
- Project Managers
- People who work *with* project managers
- Methods to gather survey respondents:
  - Reached out to PM Advisory Board at SIUE
  - Asked PM Advisory Board to forward to their colleagues
  - Reached out to my colleagues
  - Posted on personal social media asking for responses

# The Respondents - Industry





# The Respondents - Experience



# The Respondents - Certifications

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- PMP – 60%
- Other certifications listed:
  - Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe) Agilist
  - SAFe Product Manager/Product Owner
  - SAFe Lean Portfolio Management
  - Certified Scrum Master
  - Professional Scrum Master Certification
  - Certified Fluid Power Hydraulic Specialist
  - Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL)
  - Professional Security Management Certification
  - Certificate in Production and Inventory Management
  - Certificate in Integrated Resource Management

# How to be a Great Project Manager

## Skills

*“Skills” are core abilities that are necessary to complete a project – in short, a skill is what someone can do.*

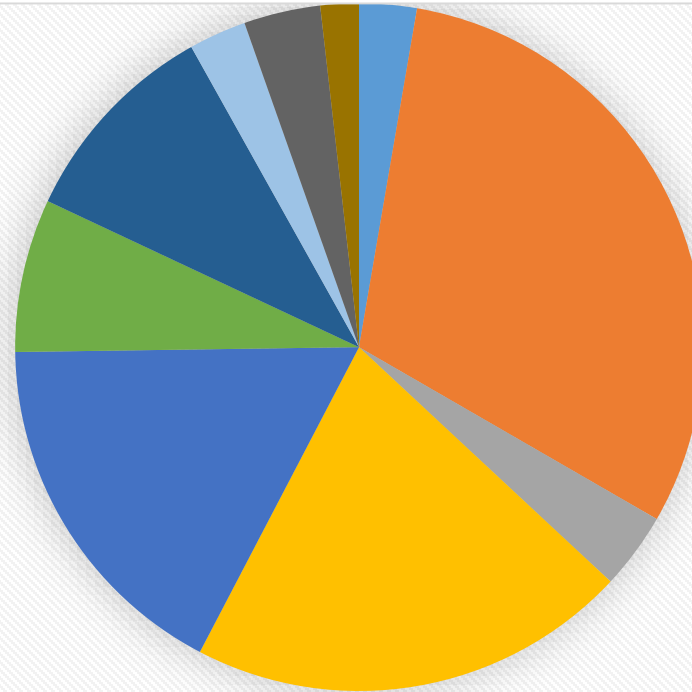
# Skills – What do you think?

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*“Skills” are core abilities that are necessary to complete a project – in short, a skill is what someone can **do**.*

- Skills that successful project managers use to complete projects are:

# Skills



■ Administration Skills

■ Organizational Skills

■ Strategic and Business Skills

■ Skills - Other

■ Soft skills

■ Technical Project Management

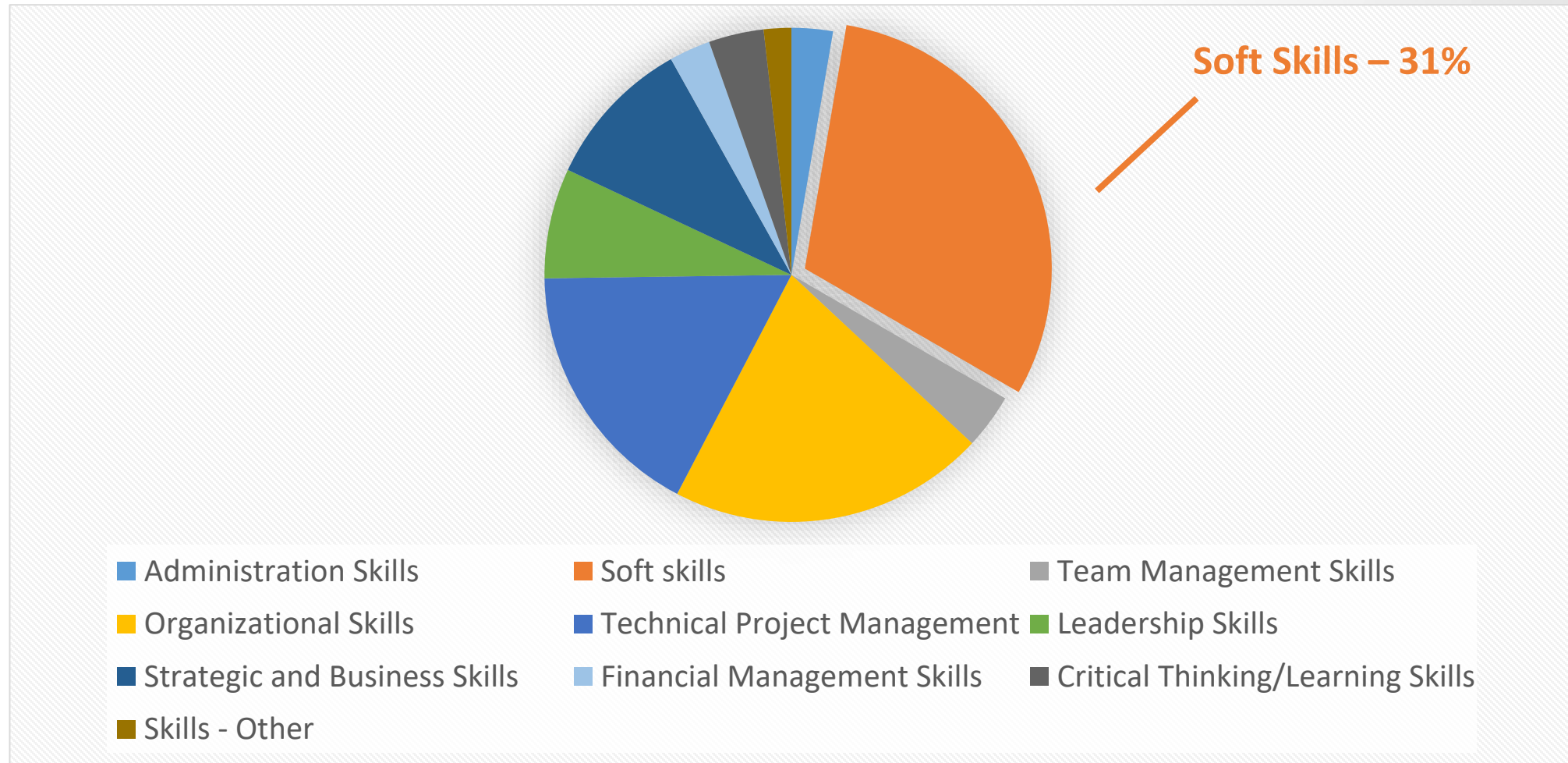
■ Financial Management Skills

■ Team Management Skills

■ Leadership Skills

■ Critical Thinking/Learning Skills

# Soft Skills

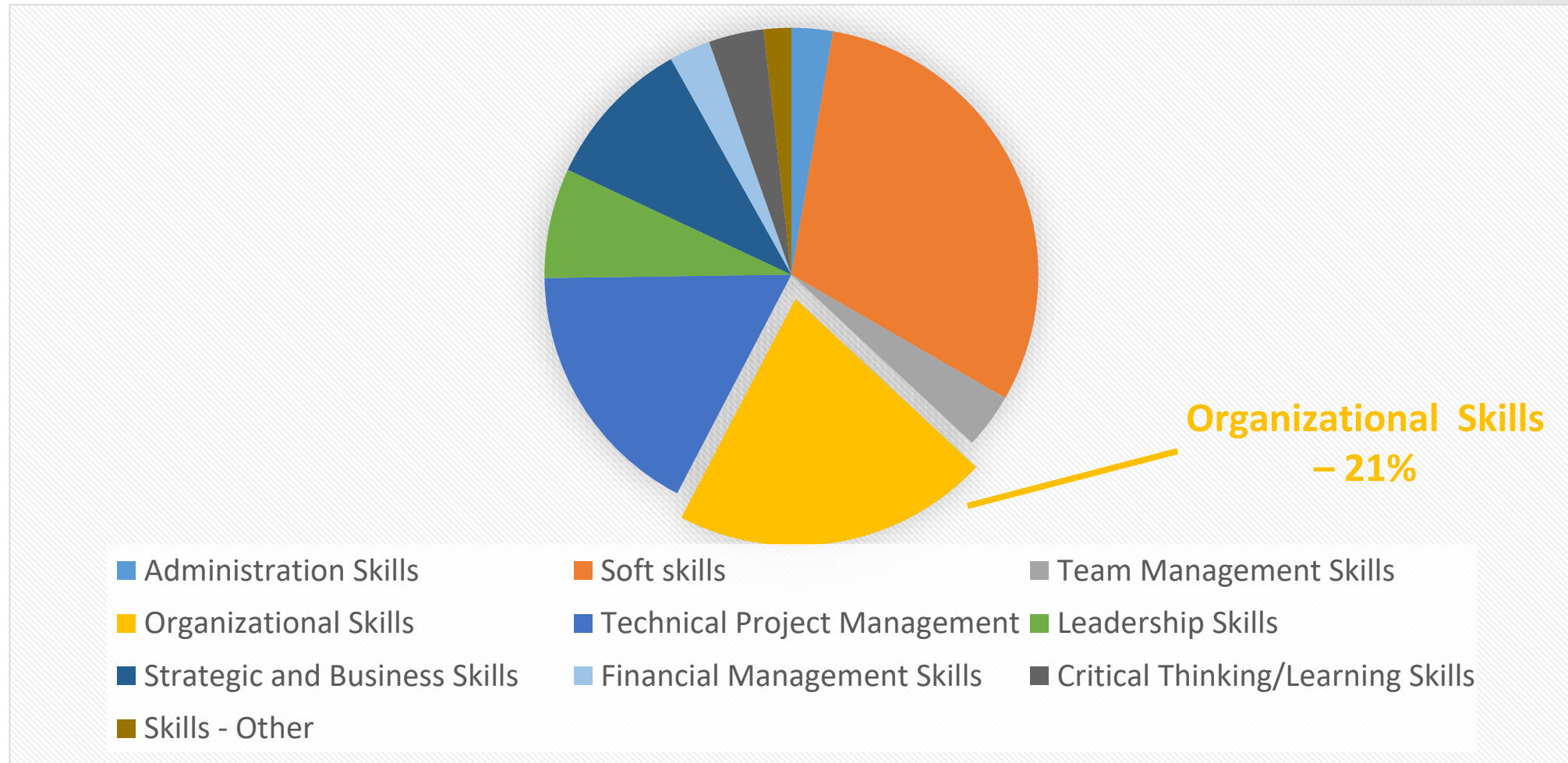


# Soft Skills Examples

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- Being able to read a room
- Active Listening
- Emotional Intelligence
- Communicating with all levels of an organization

# Skills – Organizational Skills



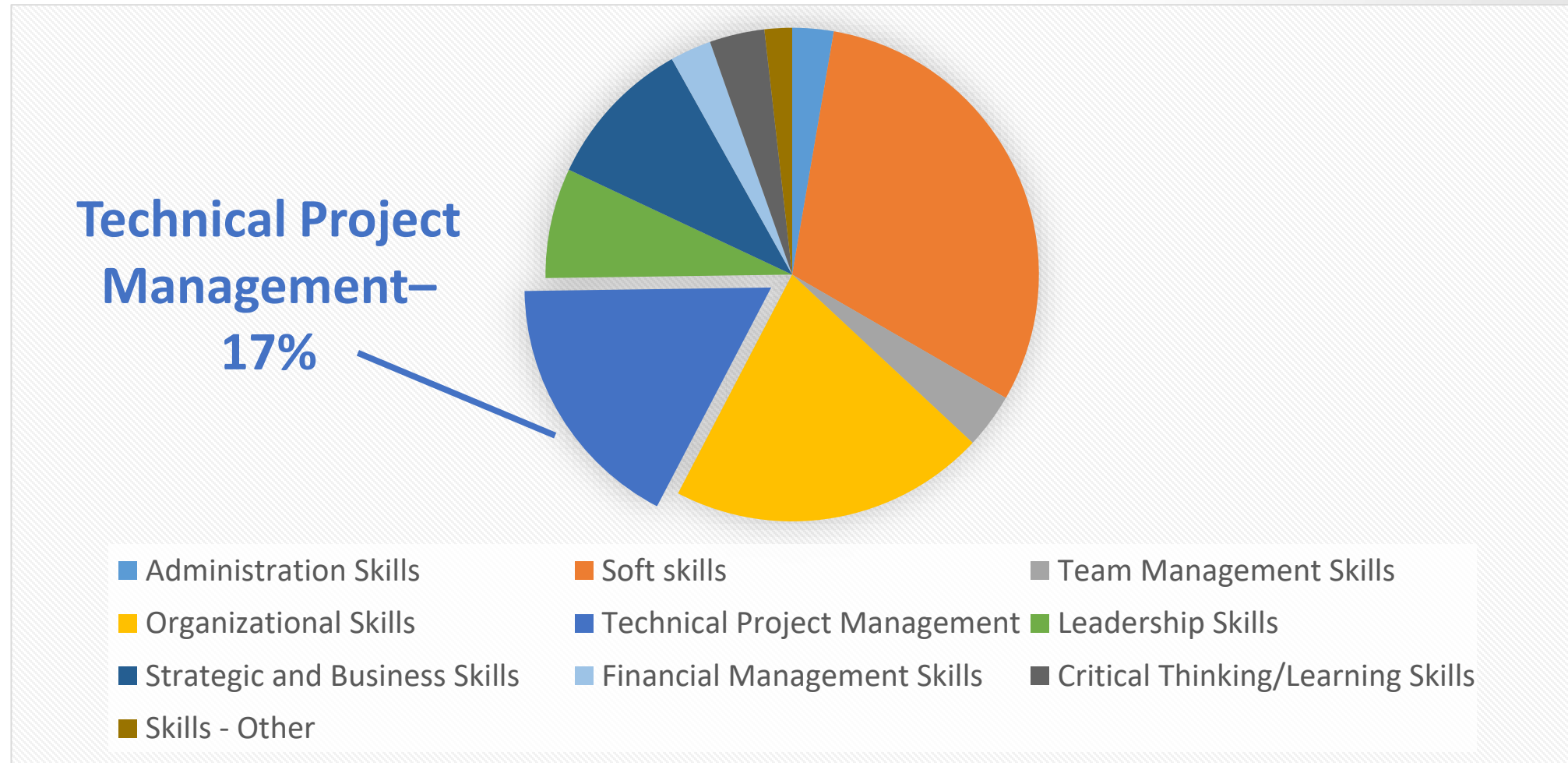


# Organizational Skills Examples

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- Attention to detail
- Problem solving skills
- Time management skills
- Multi-tasking and compartmentalizing

# Technical Project Management Skills



# Technical Project Management Skills Examples

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- PM Basic Knowledge
- Understanding the project and planning for successes and pitfalls
- Documentation
- Ability to utilize project planning software for multiple planning methodologies
- Domain specific knowledge

# How to be a Great Project Manager

## Qualities

*“Qualities” are attributes or characteristics possessed by someone.*

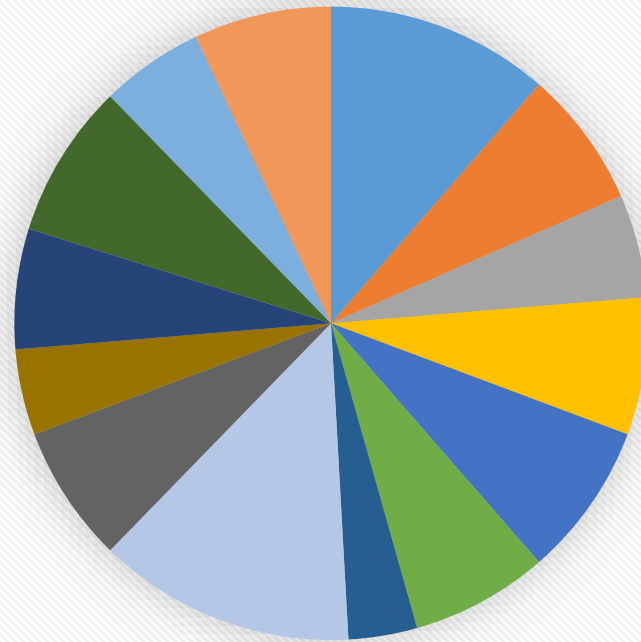
# Qualities – What do you think?

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*“Qualities” are attributes or characteristics possessed by someone*

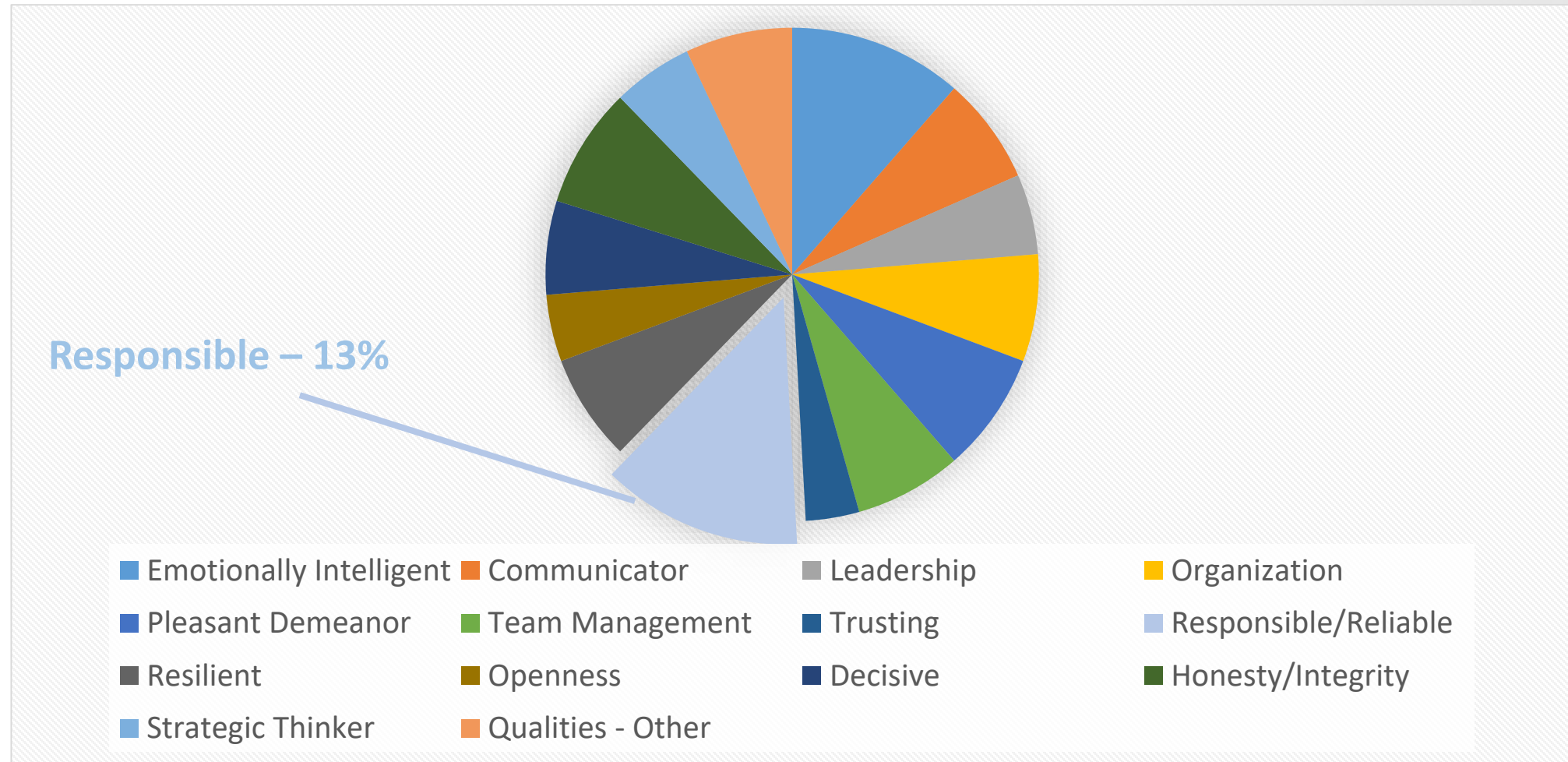
- Qualities that successful project managers have are:

# Qualities



- Emotionally Intelligent
- Communicator
- Leadership
- Organization
- Pleasant Demeanor
- Team Management
- Trusting
- Responsible/Reliable
- Resilient
- Openness
- Decisive
- Honesty/Integrity
- Strategic Thinker
- Qualities - Other

# Qualities



Responsible – 13%

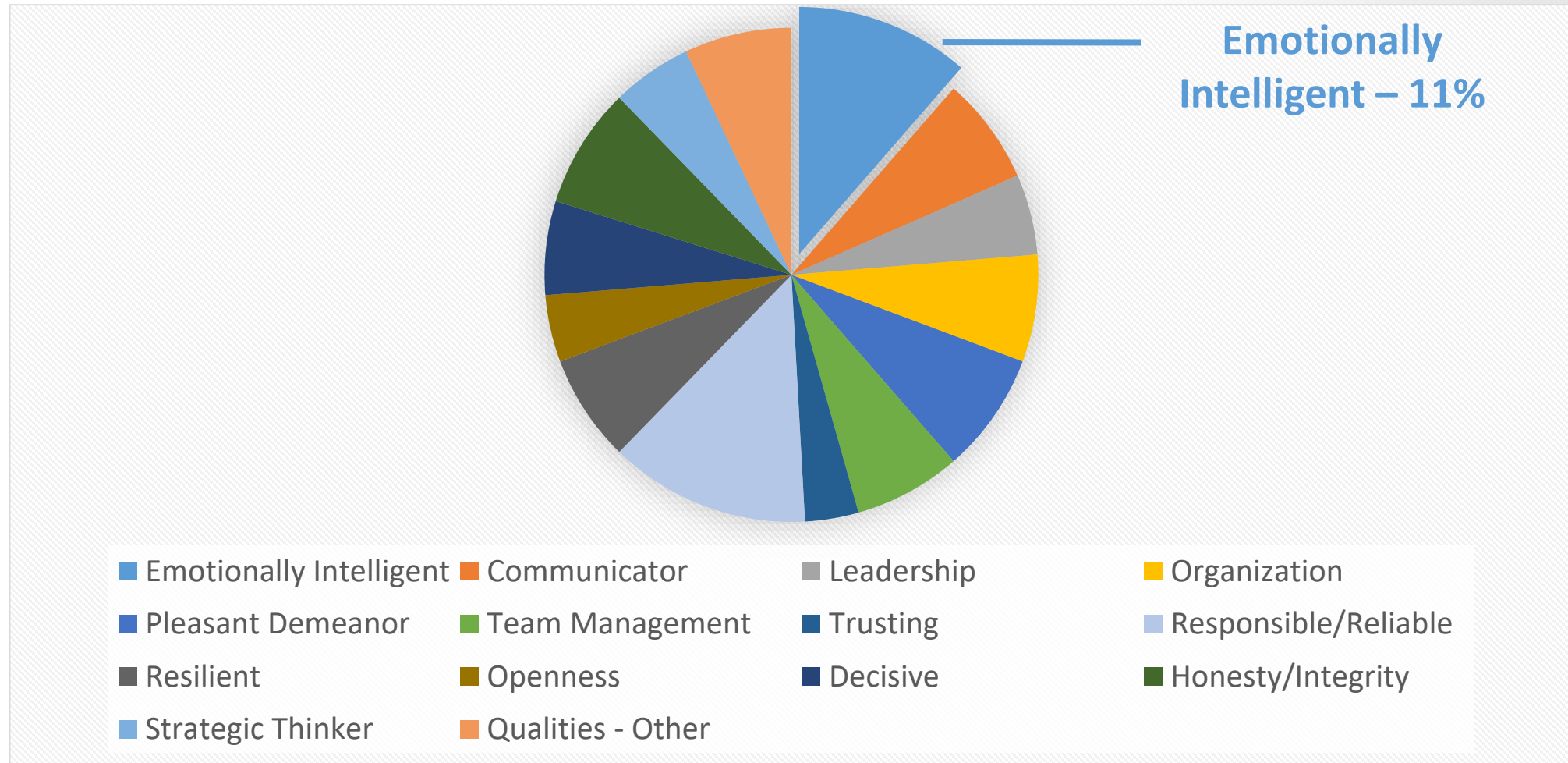
# Quality - Responsible Examples

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- Action Oriented
- Timely
- Do what you say you will do
- Consistent
- Mean what you say ... say what you mean



# Qualities

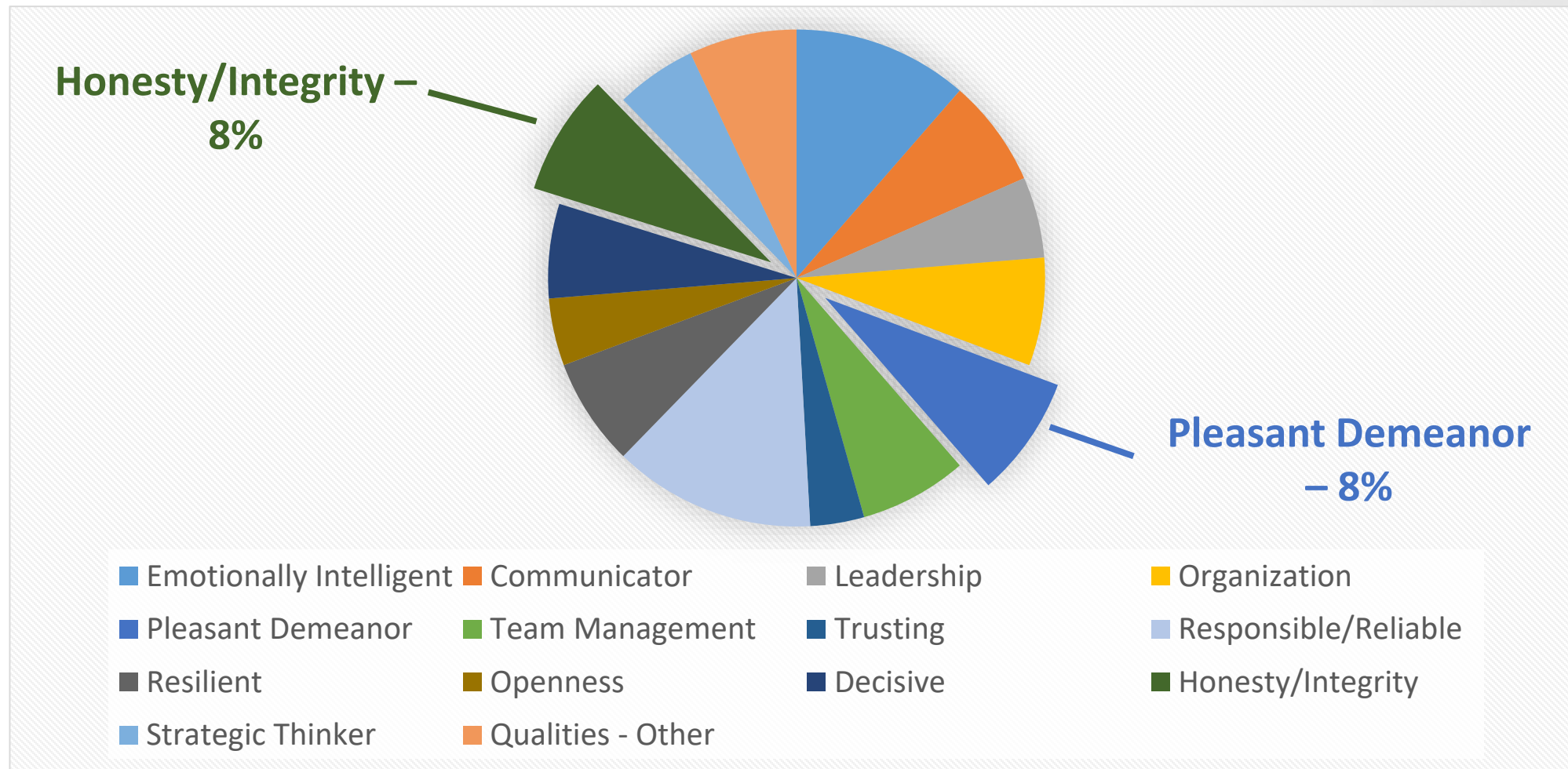


# Qualities – Emotionally Intelligent Examples

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- Socially perceptive
- Self Awareness
- Being able to read a room
- Empathetic

# Qualities



# Qualities – Honesty/Integrity and Pleasant Demeanor Examples

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- Honesty/Integrity
  - Honesty in all dealings
  - High Integrity
  - honesty/integrity/transparency
- Pleasant Demeanor
  - Generosity
  - Patient
  - Energetic, inclusive and positive personality and approach to work
  - Friendly
  - Collaborative

# How to be a Great Project Manager

## Tactical Activities

*“Tactical Activities” are concrete actions that result in implementing a project.*

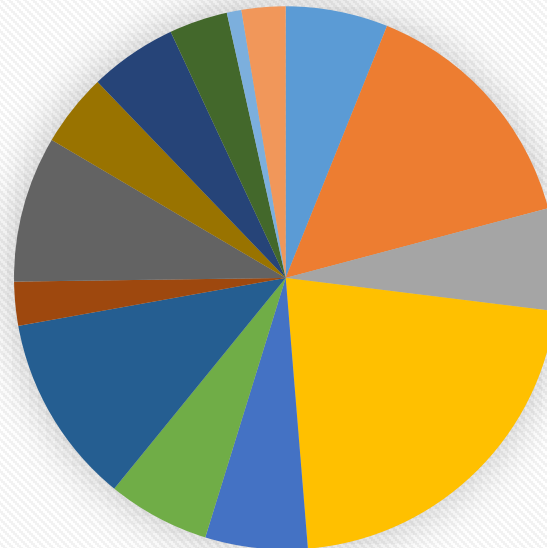
# Tactical Activities – What do you think?

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*“Tactical Activities” are concrete actions that result in implementing a project.*

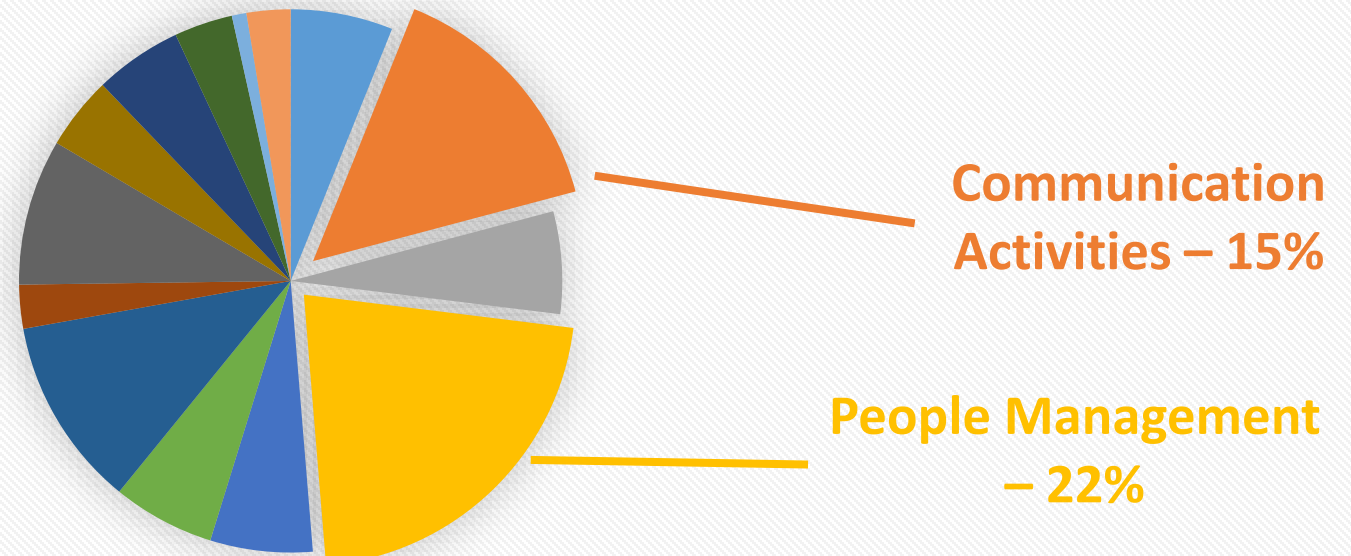
- Tactical Activities that successful project managers use to complete their projects are:

# Tactical Activities



- Reporting Activities
- People Management Activities
- Scheduling Activities
- Facilitation
- Strategic and Business Activities
- Communication activities
- Financial Activities
- Resource Management Activities
- Risk Management
- Monitoring Activities
- Planning activities
- Work Breakdown Structure Management
- Leadership Activities
- Documentation/Data Activities
- Tactical Activities - Other

# Tactical Activities – People Management and Communication



- Reporting Activities
- People Management Activities
- Scheduling Activities
- Facilitation
- Strategic and Business Activities
- Communication activities
- Financial Activities
- Resource Management Activities
- Risk Management
- Monitoring Activities
- Planning activities
- Work Breakdown Structure Management
- Leadership Activities
- Documentation/Data Activities



# People Management and Communication – Examples

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- People Management Activities
  - Create an Organizational Breakdown Structure
  - Create a Responsibilities Assignment Matrix
  - Manage conflicts/negotiate solutions
- Communication Activities
  - Asking for opinions and inputs more than giving direction
  - Regularly scheduled communications with core team, leadership, and stakeholders
  - Acknowledge and communicate successes (both individual and team)

# Tactical Activities – Scheduling and Leadership Activities



# Scheduling and Leadership Activities– Examples

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- Scheduling Activities
  - Holding people accountable for deadlines
  - Maintain schedule and complete admin work to ensure project compliance
  - Creating obtainable milestones
  - factoring in risks when setting timelines
- Leadership Activities
  - Setting goals and aligning actions to achieve them
  - Establishing, remaining consistent in direction, and always promoting the goals of the project
  - Lead when decisions need to be made

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# How to be a Great Project Manager

## Shortcomings

*“Shortcomings” are qualities or traits that you see in people who don’t succeed in the Project Management field.*

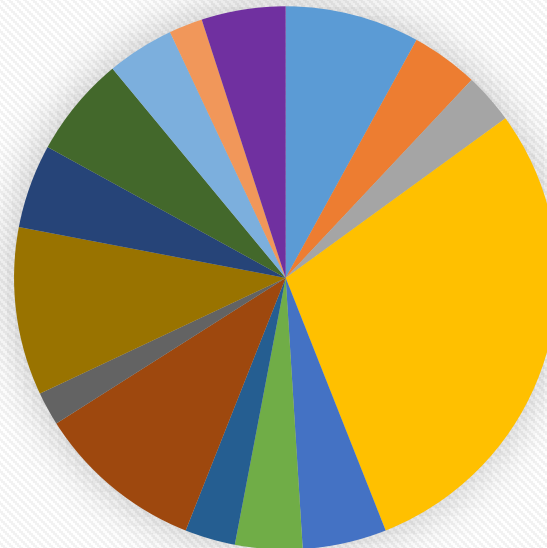
# Shortcomings– What do you think?

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*“Shortcomings” are qualities or traits that you see in people who don’t succeed in the Project Management field.*

- Some shortcomings that I see in people who don’t often succeed in Project Management are:

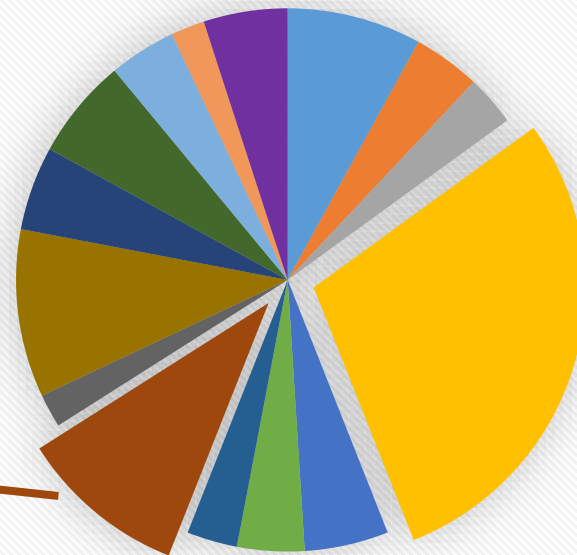
# Shortcomings



- Lack of Responsibility/Reliability
- Poor Meeting Facilitation
- Poor Emotional Control
- Poor Interpersonal/Communication skills
- Too rigid/Not adaptable
- Poor Leadership Skills
- Poor Scope Control
- Poor People Management
- Concerned with personal advancement
- Poor Planning/Schedule Management
- Micromanaging
- Subject Matter Ignorance
- Poor Goal-Setting/Management
- Poor Critical Thinking Skills
- Lazy

# Shortcomings

Poor People Management  
– 10%



Poor Interpersonal/  
Communication Skills -  
29%

- Lack of Responsibility/Reliability
- Poor Meeting Facilitation
- Poor Emotional Control
- Poor Interpersonal/Communication skills
- Too rigid/Not adaptable
- Poor Leadership Skills
- Poor Scope Control
- Poor People Management
- Concerned with personal advancement
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# Poor Interpersonal/Communication Skills; People Management - Examples

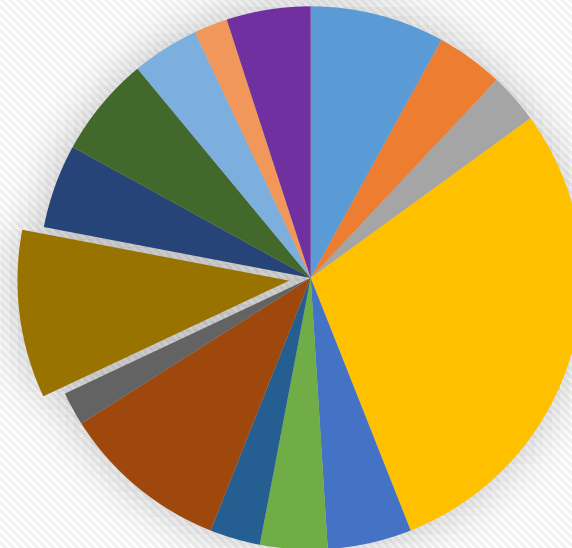
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- Interpersonal/Communication
  - Can't read a room
  - Poor verbal communication
  - Brash/rude people skills
  - Play (negative) politics and do it poorly
- People Management
  - Not good at listening to team's input
  - Out of touch with team members
  - Failure to celebrate/acknowledge milestones



# Shortcomings – Poor Planning/Schedule Management

**Poor Planning/ Schedule Management - 10%**



- Lack of Responsibility/Reliability
- Poor Meeting Facilitation
- Poor Emotional Control
- Poor Interpersonal/Communication skills
- Too rigid/Not adaptable
- Poor Leadership Skills
- Poor Scope Control
- Poor People Management
- Concerned with personal advancement
- Poor Planning/Schedule Management
- Micromanaging
- Subject Matter Ignorance
- Poor Goal-Setting/Management
- Poor Critical Thinking Skills
- Lazy

# Poor Planning/Schedule Management- Examples

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- Don't spend enough time planning the project
- Poor analytical skills and [in]ability to plan ahead
- Time management. Everyone's time is important. Don't waste others time. Don't have meetings just to have meetings. If it's not needed then cancel it. When it is needed; manage the time so it's productive for everyone.
- Overscheduling key players

# Takeaways

# Takeaways – Interpersonal Communication

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- **Soft Skills** were the most popular skill response (31%)
- **Communication** (15%) and **People Management** (22%) were the most popular Tactical activities response.
- **Poor Interpersonal/Communication Skills** (29%) were the most commonly indicated Shortcoming
- The second most popular Quality response was **Emotional Intelligence** (11%), and 8% of the responses related to having a **Pleasant Demeanor**

What does this mean?

# Takeaways – Interpersonal Communication

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We can have degrees, certifications, and years of experience – but none of that matters if we don't **build healthy relationships** with our teams.

*To effectively communicate, we must realize that we are all different in the way we perceive the world and use this understanding as a guide to our communication with others.*

*- Tony Robbins*

# Takeaways – Interpersonal Communication

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- Books
  - *How to Win Friends and Influence People* by Dale Carnegie
    - 4.21/5 on Goodreads app
  - *How to talk to Anyone* by Leil Lowndes
    - 3.73/5 on Goodreads app
  - *PeopleSmart: Developing your Personal Intelligence* by Mel Silberman
    - 3.62/5 on Goodreads app

# Takeaways – Trustworthiness

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- **Responsibility** (13%) was the most popular response for Qualities that make a great Project Manager.
- **8%** of the responses for Qualities of a Great Project Manager mentioned being **Honest**, or having **Integrity**.
- **Lack of Responsibility** received 8% of the responses for Shortcomings that inhibit someone from being a great Project Manager.

What does this mean?

# Takeaways – Trustworthiness

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We can have a great **plan** and identify all of the **dependencies** and **risks**, but none of that matters if our stakeholders don't **trust** us.

*“It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it.”*

- Warren Buffett

*“When the trust account is high, communication is easy, instant, and effective”*

-Stephen R. Covey



# Takeaways – Trustworthiness

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## 7 ways to become Trustworthy

*according to an article I read on Experience Life by Life Time, so take this for what it's worth*

1. Be Transparent and Accountable
2. Keep Confidences
3. Set and respect boundaries
4. Be Vulnerable
5. Have discussions – In Person
6. Serve Others
7. Show Your Gratitude

<https://experiencelife.lifetime.life/article/7-ways-to-become-trustworthy/>

# Takeaways – Technical/Organizational Skills

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- **Organizational Skills** (21%) and **Technical Project Management Skills** (17%) were very popular responses for skills that make a great Project Manager.
- 7% of the responses for Qualities of a Great Project Manager pertained to **Organization**.

What does this mean?

# Takeaways – Technical/Organizational Skills

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As Project Managers, we support our teams by bringing **order** from **chaos**. They bring the subject matter expertise, and we **pave the way** for them to do their job with as little distraction as possible.

*“For every minute spent in organizing, an hour is earned.”*

*-Benjamin Franklin*

*“Men admire the man who can organize their wishes and thoughts in stone and wood and steel and brass.”*

*-Ralph Waldo Emerson*

# Takeaways – Technical/Organizational Skills

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- Books
  - *Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK)*
  - *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen Covey
    - 4.15/5 on Goodreads app
- Websites
  - PMI.org

# Takeaways – Planning/Scheduling

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- One of the most popular responses for Shortcomings that make a Poor Project Manager was related to **Poor Planning and Schedule Management** (10%)
- 11% of the survey responses for Tactical Activities that Great Project Managers do pertained to **Scheduling Activities**

**What does this mean?**

# Takeaways – Planning/Scheduling

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As Project Managers, we can **support** our teams by doing something they don't often have the time/skillset to do: **plan**.

*“By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail.”  
-Benjamin Franklin*

*“If you don't know where you are going, you'll end up someplace else.”  
-Yogi Berra*

# Takeaways – Planning/Scheduling

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## • Books

- *Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK)*
- *Project Management for the Unofficial Project Manager* by Kory Kogon, James Wood, and Suzette Blakemore
  - 4.08/5 on Goodreads app
- *Project Planning, Scheduling & Control: A Hands-on Guide to Bringing Projects in on Time and on Budget* by James P. Lewis
  - 3.74/5 on Goodreads app

## • Websites

- PMI.org

# Bringing it all together

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- **Most recommended:**

- Skills: Soft Skills
- Qualities of PMs: Responsible
- Tactical activities: People Management
- Shortcomings: Poor interpersonal communication

- **Takeaways:**

- Focus on having excellent **interpersonal communication skills** and earning your team's **trust**. Use your **technical project management skills** to **plan** and **organize** the project work so that you can drive your project to delivery.



# Limitations

# Limitations

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- **Survey respondents**

- Small sample size
- Sample size not representative of the population

- **Recommendations**

- Gather a team of diverse individuals with wide contact bases to conduct this survey, allowing for a larger, more diverse sample size
- Send the survey to an entire department/organization of PMs

**Questions?**

# Appendix A – The Survey

# The survey – Pages 1 & 2

## Crowd Sourcing a Great Project Manager

We all have different interpretations of what constitutes a "Great" Project Manager based on past experience, education, and personal preferences. What if we combined the interpretations of many project managers to discern the most popular qualities and skills?

\* Indicates a required field

### What is your name?

Please include your name here.

### What is your Job Title? \*

- Executive
- Management
- Program Management
- Senior Project Management
- Project Management
- Analyst
- Consultant
- Retired
- Other

If you answered "other" above, please specify by typing in the space below:

If you answered "other" above, please specify by typing here.

### What is your employment type? \*

- Full-time
- Part-time
- Self-employed
- Freelance

- Contract
- Internship
- Apprenticeship
- Seasonal
- Retired
- Not Employed
- Other

If you answered "other" above, please specify by typing in the space below:

If you answered "other" above, please specify by typing here.

What Organization do you work for? Please type it in the space below:

Please specify your organization here.

### Select your Industry: \*

- Food Services
- Hospitality Services
- Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting
- Waste Management Services
- Arts, Entertainment and Recreation
- Educational Services
- Construction
- Information Technology
- Finance and Insurance
- Healthcare and Social Assistance
- Public Administration

# The survey – Pages 3 & 4

- Manufacturing
- Scientific Services
- Real Estate, Rental and Leasing
- Transportation and Warehousing
- Retail Services
- Other

If you answered "other" above, please specify by typing in the space below:

If you answered "other" above, please specify by typing here.

How long have you been working as a Project Manager, or in a Project Management adjacent role? \*

- Less than 2 years
- 2-5 years
- 5-10 years
- 10-15 years
- 15-20 years
- 20-30 years
- 30+ years

Do you hold any professional certifications? (i.e. PMP, PMI-ACP, etc.) \*

- Yes
- No

If you answered "Yes" to the question above, please specify the professional certifications you hold in the space below.

If you answered "Yes" to the question above, please specify the professional certifications you hold here.

**What skills, qualities, and tactical activities make a "Great" Project Manager?**

In the below open-ended questions, you'll be asked to list skills, qualities and tactical activities that are crucial for someone to be a "Great" Project Manager.

For the purposes of this survey, please refer to the following definitions:

"Skills" are core abilities that are necessary to complete a project – in short, a skill is what someone can do.

"Qualities" are attributes or characteristics possessed by someone.

"Tactical Activities" are concrete actions that result in implementing a project.

Please list up to five SKILLS that you consider to be crucial for someone to be a "Great" Project Manager. Remember, for the purposes of this survey, skills refer to the core abilities that are necessary to complete a project – in short, a skill is what someone can do. (If you include more than five skills, only the first five will be included in the analysis.) \*

Please list up to five SKILLS that you consider to be crucial for someone to be a "Great" Project Manager here.

Please list up to five QUALITIES that you consider to be crucial for someone to be a "Great" Project Manager. Remember, for the purposes of this survey, a quality is an attribute or characteristic possessed by someone. (If you include more than five qualities, only the first five will be included in the analysis.) \*

Please list up to five QUALITIES that you consider to be crucial for someone to be a "Great" Project Manager here.

Please list up to five TACTICAL ACTIVITIES that "Great" Project Managers do regularly. Remember, tactical activities are concrete actions that result in implementing a project. (If you include more than five tactical activities, only the first five will be included in the analysis.) \*

Please list up to five TACTICAL ACTIVITIES that you consider to be crucial for someone to be a "Great" Project Manager here.

Finally, please list up to five SHORTCOMINGS that you often see in people who don't succeed in the Project Management field. (If you include more than five shortcomings, only the first five will be included in the analysis.) \*

# The survey – Pages 5

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*Please list up to five SHORTCOMINGS that you often see in people who don't succeed in the Project Management Field here.*

**May we reach out to you for further information about the responses you included above? \***

Yes

No

**If you answered "Yes" to the question above, please include your email address below.**

*If you answered "Yes" to the question above, please include your email address here.*

**Thank you for taking this survey, your time is appreciated!**

# Appendix B- Raw Survey Responses



# The Survey – “What is your job title?”

Responses	
Project Management	Project Management
Management	Senior Project Management
Senior Project Management	Other
Management	Senior Project Management
Program Management	Other
Consultant	Retired
Program Management	Program Management
Management	Project Management
Senior Project Management	Other
Program Management	Analyst
Management	Program Management
Other	Project Management
Senior Project Management	

# The Survey – “Select your Industry”

Responses	
Healthcare and Social Assistance	Healthcare and Social Assistance
Finance and Insurance	Information Technology
Manufacturing	Information Technology
Finance and Insurance	Information Technology
Aerospace	Manufacturing
Logistics and logistics project management in the federal government	Other - Retired. Formerly worked in energy and also IT
Transmission Electric Utilities	Information Technology
Transmission Electric Utilities	Construction
Transmission Electric Utilities	Educational Services
Information Technology	Other - Utility
Transportation and Warehousing	Information Technology
Healthcare and Social Assistance	Manufacturing
Healthcare and Social Assistance	

# The Survey – Skills – Page 1

## Responses

1-Meeting Facilitation Skills  
2-Be able to deliver difficult news  
3-Communication Skills  
4-Work in nuanced settings  
5-Organizational Skills

Relationship building, self-awareness, being able to read a room, attention to detail, organized

structure, organization, communication, pm basic knowledge, Driver

Communication skills, Interpersonal skills, Problem Solving skills, Time management skills, stakeholder skills

Communication skills  
Team-building skills  
Planning skills  
Negotiation skills  
Systems Thinking

Skills:  
- Comprehension of the fundamental technologies, techniques, risks, outside impacts, operations and interaction of these factors of the system or item being developed in the project  
- Ability to anticipate, understand and react to the impact of changes on the outcome of the project.  
- Ability to delegate authority for completion of tasks and trust subordinates to do their jobs  
- Ability to comprehend large volumes of information, simplify their impacts and implication, and reduce them to actionable direction for the project and its people.  
- Ability to make individuals feel important, trusted, and valued and thereby deliver their best efforts and products toward the end-state

Communication, Organized, Customer Centric, Quality centric,

# The Survey – Skills – Page 2

## Responses

COMMUNICATION, strategically analyze a project and plan it for success, drive results, sense of urgency, being the best support for your team and believing in your team

Communication

Understanding the project and planning for successes and pitfalls

Supporting the team

Drive results

Communication, Negotiation, Leadership, Financial Management, Time Management

Writing, Documentation, Communication, Memory, Networking

-planning (includes scheduling, estimating & forecasting)

-problem solving (manage issues and identify creative solutions)

-budgeting (includes managing costs to stay on budget)

-risk management (includes identifying, managing, and mitigating risks)

-ability to utilize project planning software for multiple planning methodologies

N/A

Effective communication, Time management, Risk Management, Problem Solving, Microsoft Office

Problem Solving, Communication, Risk Management, Leadership, Time Management

Effective communicator, team management, problem-solving, technical writing, adaptability

# The Survey – Skills – Page 3

## Responses

Active listening  
Communication  
Leadership  
Risk management  
Problem solving/critical thinking

Effectively Listen  
Precisely Communicate  
Manage Time  
Set, Limit, Define, and Adhere to Expectations

Communication, Change Management, Leadership, Emotional Intelligence, Stakeholder Management

Task Switching  
Quick Comprehension/ Quick Learner of the Subject Matter  
Communicating with all levels of an organization  
Organizational Skills  
Extreme proficiency with Microsoft Office Products

Communication, Leadership, Organization, Critical Thinking, Data Analysis

Listening and hearing what others have to say; domain specific knowledge/SME; multitasking and compartmentalizing; communicating (both a skill and quality) to appropriate audiences appropriately

Listening, Communication, Education, IT

Communication, Organization, Leadership, Financial, Technical

Motivate  
Communicate  
Lead  
Negotiate  
Adapt

# The Survey – Qualities – Page 1

## Responses

1-Responsible  
2-Thick Skin  
3-Detail Oriented  
4-Socially perceptive

Relationship building, self-awareness, being able to read a room, attention to detail, organized

Leadership, communication, coaching, leader, Listening

Unflappable, curious, resilience, tenacity, generosity

Team player  
Open-minded  
Understanding  
Patient  
Action oriented

Qualities:

- Honesty in all dealings.
- Genuine desire to help the team succeed by knocking down barriers, providing encouragement and showing trust and respect.
- A humble and open attitude that promotes an atmosphere of direct and frequent communication and which seeks input while demonstrating understanding of the value of others' opinions and recommendations.
- Ability to anticipate, understand and react to the impact of changes and outside influences on the outcome of the project.
- Energetic, inclusive and positive personality and approach to work

Timely, Efficient, Team Player, Preservers, process oriented

Giving trust and caring of your team members, being transparent and autonomous, being able to make a decision without knowing the outcome, keep the end goal at the forefront of your mind to lead a project to success

# The Survey – Qualities – Page 2

## Responses

Decision making  
Keeping the project scope in line as the end goal  
Transparency  
Leverage past mistakes and turn into a win (Lesson Learned)

Communicator, Analytic, Responsible, Empathetic, Planner

Friendly, Collaborative, Organized, Curious, Consistent

- Communicator
- Leader
- Adaptable
- Critical Thinker
- Organized

N/A

Honesty, Open-minded, Motivator, Accountable, Reliable

Focused, Motivator, Strategic, Integrity, Accountable

Skilled motivator, high integrity, accountable, patient, results driven  
Strategic partner – business as well as IT partner  
Ability to work in and lead others through times of ambiguity  
Inspires others to act  
Accountable  
Has integrity

# The Survey – Qualities – Page 3

## Responses

Servant Leadership  
Attitude qualities: Humble with ability to set project demands  
Mean what you say ... say what you mean  
Do what you say you will do

Friendliness, trustworthy, respect, open-mindedness, collaboration.  
Political Savvy  
Accountability or Ensure People are held accountable  
Thinking 5 steps ahead for risk or dependencies  
Being a reality check for statements, risks, deliverables  
Story Telling

Transparency, Honesty, Integrity, Motivator, Manage Conflict

emotional intelligence; proactiveness; effective communicator; honesty/integrity/transparency; flexibility

Empathy, Listening, Patience, Persistence

Honesty, Patience, Confidence, Problem Solver, Empathy  
Organized  
Problem solver  
Listener  
Proactive  
Empathetic



# The Survey – Tactical Activities – Page 1

## Responses

1-Create reports that provide information the customer needs  
2-Do what you say you're going to do  
3-Translate the status updates into language the customer/stakeholders understand  
4-Communicate expectations to the team  
5-Take responsibility for mistakes or missed action items

create task lists, following up on task lists, asking good questions, holding people accountable for deadlines

Plan, create a team, identify all responsibilities, stakeholder management, communication

Planning, resourcing, budgeting, task assembly, task management, escalation management

Creating a WBS

Creating an OBS

Creating a RAM

Developing the logic network

Resolving resource constraints

- Establishing, remaining consistent in direction,, and always promoting the goals of the project
- Being frequently and clearly present, actively engaged with the project, and approachable by the project personnel
- Setting goals and aligning actions to achieve them
- Asking for opinions and inputs more than giving direction
- Simplifying communications and “flattening” the organization

Status updates, meeting minutes, action items, requests for information, document control

Maintaining daily/weekly communication across the project team, making strategic decisions that benefit the team and business as a whole, giving the extra for your team members, promoting high moral amongst the team

# The Survey – Tactical Activities – Page 2

## Responses

Regularly scheduled communications with core team, leadership, and stakeholders,  
Willingness to stop and listen/help outside of the core business hours if necessary. (Shows the commitment to the health and positivity of the team)  
Doing what it takes to keep Team moral high  
Lead when decisions need to be made  
Acknowledge and communicate successes (both individual and team)

Keep open communication with project team and leadership, manage project financials to ensure no overspend or underrun, maintain schedule and complete admin work to ensure project compliance

Run efficient meetings (set agenda, keep people on track, drive action items), know when to check in on progress and when to "escalate" at-risk items, Setting and following standard procedures for project activities

- run efficient meetings
- create & maintain project plans
- manage conflicts/negotiate solutions
- indirect influence/manage to achieve results
- build & manage a team (both direct reports and matrixed resources)

Plan ahead  
Keep plan flexible  
Be data driven  
Consult with SMEs  
Collaborate often with team and stakeholders

Creating obtainable milestones, attention to detail, planning, cost-benefit analysis, factoring in risks when setting timelines

Planning, Monitoring, Leading, managing risks, stakeholdering

Create measurable goals, manage timeline, manage budget, create readouts, task delegation

# The Survey – Tactical Activities – Page 3

## Responses

Project planning and execution  
Creating measurable goals and objectives  
Risk analysis and mitigation  
Financial management  
Effective status reporting

Self-Management (schedule; meetings; organization)  
Communication!! (Communication; communication; communication)  
Take advice from the project team. They're the experts in what they do, the PM is the expert in putting it all together.

Planning, teambuilding, stakeholder management, risk management, business analysis  
Know the subject matter to define the plan with the team members  
Be first to offer up to drive / document decisions and solutions  
For tough issues or decisions, have 1/1s with meeting participants ahead of time to secure alignment so that it is not the first time attendees are seeing the content.

Tell the why behind the project, Lead Effective Meetings, Consistent Messaging, Assigning and Managing Task, Identify and Manage Risk  
create an effective team environment; "protect" the team; communicate, communicate, communicate! (that is 1 thing - just do it well and do it a lot); engage constituencies proactively and often; re-evaluate and reprioritize; being honest and open.

Scheduling, Resource allocation, Presentation

Financial Management, Project Tracking, Stakeholder Management, Team Building, Risk Management  
Communicate with the team - internally and externally  
Track the schedule  
Manage the budget  
Plan  
identify/address risks

# The Survey – Shortcomings – Page 1

## Responses

- 1-Don't commit to something then fail to do it
- 2-Poor meeting facilitation - not sending out an agenda or action items before/after
- 3-Blaming others for mistakes/problems
- 4-Reacting emotionally to criticism
- 5-Committing to timelines without asking the team first

No people skills, can't read a room, can't build relationships, poor verbal communication

too tactical, no soft skills, adaptability to environment, follow the book

Meekness, inability to control scope, Team and stakeholders and deadlines.

Too worried about their personal gains (i.e. advancement, promotions, looking good to the boss)

Don't spend enough time planning the project

Try to do it all themselves

Don't listen to their project teams

Don't get to the root causes and/or act to resolve them

- Disinterest in people's time and instilling a feeling of their value to the effort
- Lack of understanding of the technology or business of the project's subject matter
- Inability to set clear, persistent, and achievable goals
- Over-monitoring and micromanaging people and their work products
- Loss of trust by the PM's supervisor as well as subordinates

Lack of Planning, documentation, processes, communication, and cost exposure.

Not listening, not communicating or having a fear to ask a question first, need to think first then act

# The Survey – Shortcomings – Page 2

## Responses

Do not listen

Poor communication

Afraid to fail (Failure is only failure is you do not learn from it)

Inability to manage multiple things concurrently, poor communication skills, poor analytical skills and ability to plan ahead, brash/rude people skills

Not delegating, Too focused on details (instead of delegating them), not communicating, micromanaging

-poor interpersonal skills – impacts ability to resolve conflict, build a team, manage people, and negotiate successfully

-poor communication skills

-overly rigid; PMs need to be able to adapt to changes throughout a project, whether due to organizational change, market impacts, cost pressures, scope changes, etc

-lack of critical thinking skills – PMs need to be able to listen actively, understand issues, perform research and being able to make informed decisions and provide direction during uncertainty

-lack of business acumen – PM's must understand the business to make prioritization decisions, identify risks and their impact and make trade offs.

Lack of listening

Not looking at the big picture

Out of touch with team members

Lack of understanding foreseeable risks

Not good at listening to team's input, reactive more than proactive, lack of transiency to team and leaders, taking things too much to heart, unorganized

Lack of organization, poor communication skills, poor leadership

Unorganized, not able to adjust quickly, lack of communication, lack of accountability, scope creep

Lack of big picture knowledge – can't see how the details fit into the overall strategy of what need to be accomplished

Poor relationship management

Hesitance to be transparent and speak the truth about the health of their initiatives

Self-focused vs stakeholder or team focused

Poor time management

# The Survey – Shortcomings – Page 3

## Responses

Arrogance. The PM is in charge of the project, but is probably not the expert in each detail in getting things done. Take input from those experts, and make decisions that work.

Listening. The PM is in charge, but needs to effectively listen as well as effectively communicate.

Time management. Everyone's time is important. Don't waste others time. Don't have meetings just to have meetings. If it's not needed then cancel it. When it is needed; manage the time so it's productive for everyone.

Not enough time spent teambuilding. Not enough time selling and getting buy in from team on the "why's" of the project. Overscheduling key players. Not securing solid buy in from stakeholders. Failure to celebrate/acknowledge milestones.

Only asks for status does not probe team members for more information

Biased notes that do not reflect the true problems or organizational mission

Poor communicator, ineffective meetings, lack of technical understanding, lack of motivation, holding others accountable.

Play (negative) politics and do it poorly; don't take responsibility for themselves, their decisions, or their team; lazy - not proactive; dishonest; tear people down, not build them up.

Listening, Patience, Understanding key players

Poor Communicator, Disorganized, Deficient in Technical Knowledge, Poor Stakeholder Management, Lack of Scope Control

Poor communication skills

Poor listener

Poor social skills

Rigid

Passive

# Appendix C – Data Tabulations

# The Survey – Skills Tabulation

Category	Total	Percentage
Administration Skills	3	3%
Soft skills	34	31%
Team Management Skills	4	4%
Organizational Skills	23	21%
Technical Project Management	19	17%
Leadership Skills	8	7%
Strategic and Business Skills	11	10%
Financial Management Skills	3	3%
Critical Thinking/Learning Skills	4	4%
Skills - Other	2	2%



# The Survey – Qualities Tabulation

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Category	Total	Percentage
Emotionally Intelligent	13	11%
Communicator	8	7%
Leadership	6	5%
Organization	8	7%
Pleasant Demeanor	9	8%
Team Management	8	7%
Trusting	4	4%
Responsible	15	13%
Resilient	8	7%
Openness	5	4%
Decisive	7	6%
Honesty/Integrity	9	8%
Strategic Thinker	6	5%
Qualities - Other	8	7%

# The Survey – Tactical Activities Tabulation

Category	Total	Percentage
Reporting Activities	7	6%
Communication activities	17	15%
Planning activities	7	6%
People Management Activities	25	22%
Financial Activities	7	6%
Work Breakdown Structure Management	7	6%
Scheduling Activities	13	11%
Resource Management Activities	3	3%
Leadership Activities	10	9%
Facilitation	5	4%
Risk Management	6	5%
Documentation/Data Activities	4	3%
Strategic and Business Activities	1	1%
Monitoring Activities	3	3%

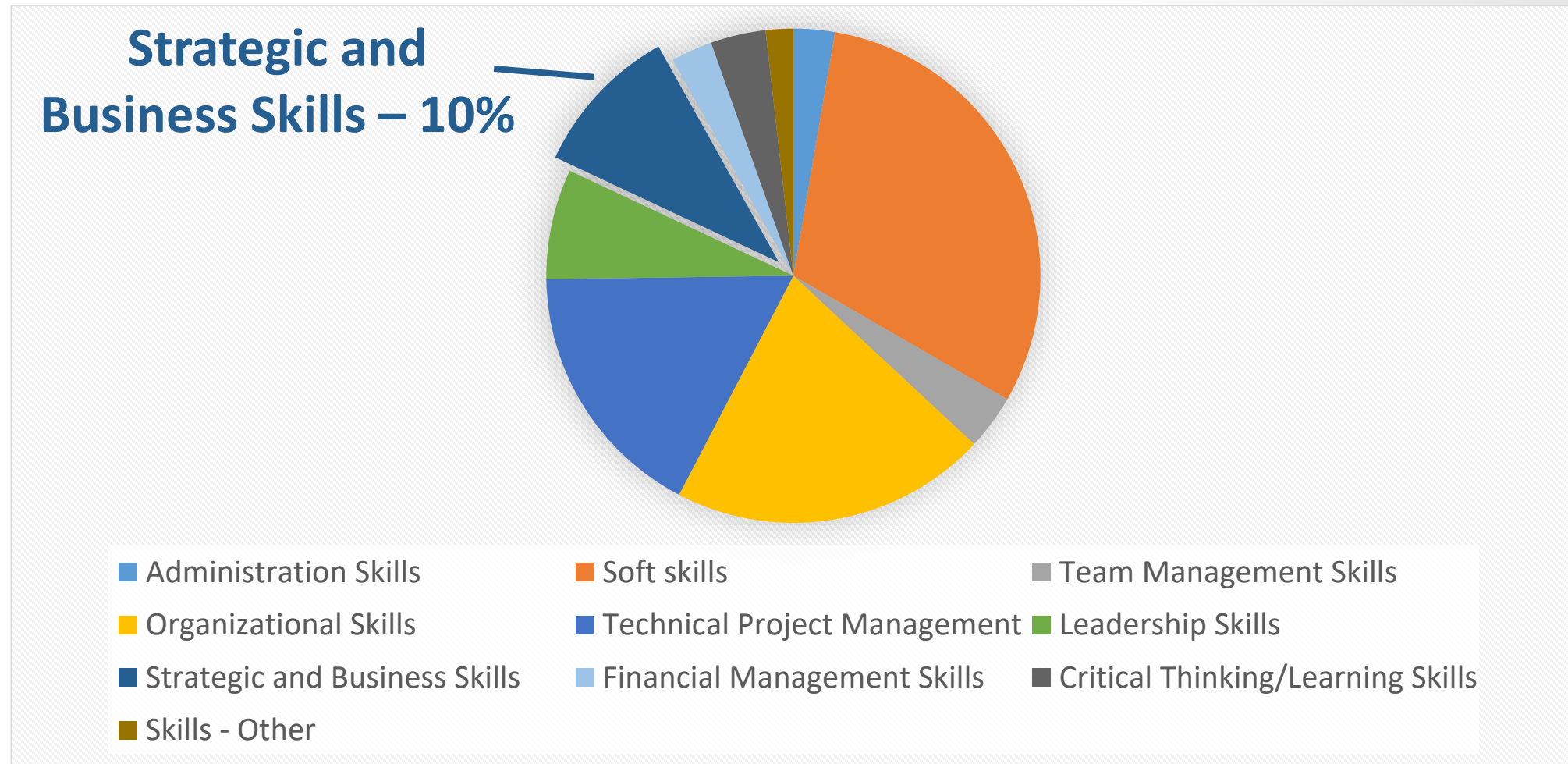
# The Survey – Shortcomings Tabulation

Category	Total	Percentage
Lack of Responsibility/Reliability	8	8%
Poor Meeting Facilitation	4	4%
Poor Emotional Control	3	3%
Poor Interpersonal/Communication skills	29	29%
Too rigid/Not adaptable	5	5%
Poor Leadership Skills	4	4%
Poor Scope Control	3	3%
Poor People Management	10	10%
Concerned with personal advancement	2	2%
Poor Planning/Schedule Management	10	10%
Micromanaging	5	5%
Subject Matter Ignorance	6	6%
Poor Goal-Setting/Management	4	4%
Poor Critical Thinking Skills	2	2%
Lazy	5	5%
Shortcomings- Other	1	1%

# Appendix D – Examples of responses continued

# Skills

# Strategic and Business Skills

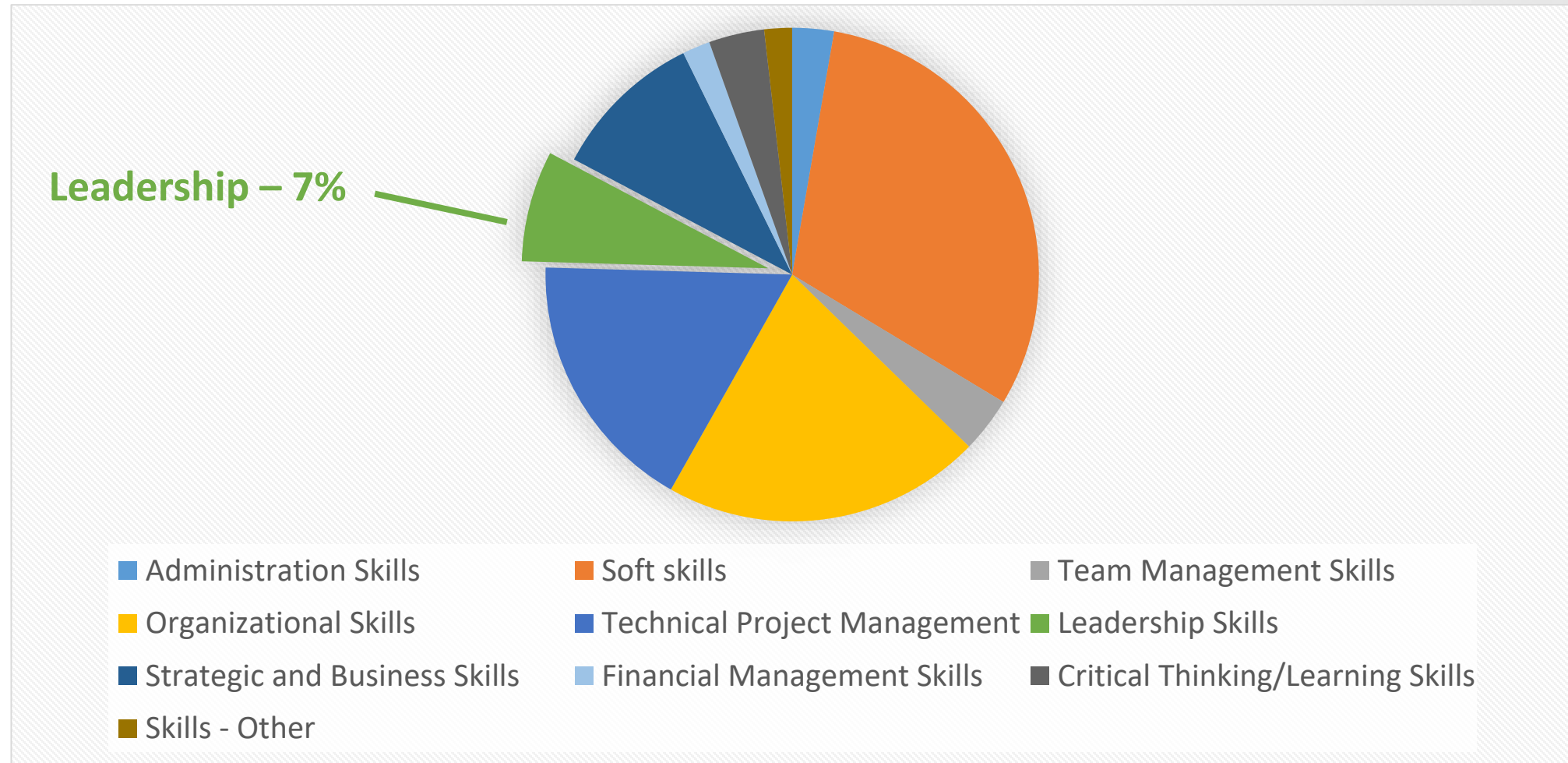


# Strategic and Business Skills Examples

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- Set, Limit, Define, and Adhere to Expectations
- Drive Results
- Negotiation Skills
- Comprehension of the fundamental technologies, techniques, risks, outside impacts, operations and interaction of these factors of the system or item being developed in the project
- Strategically analyze a project and plan it for success

# Leadership Skills



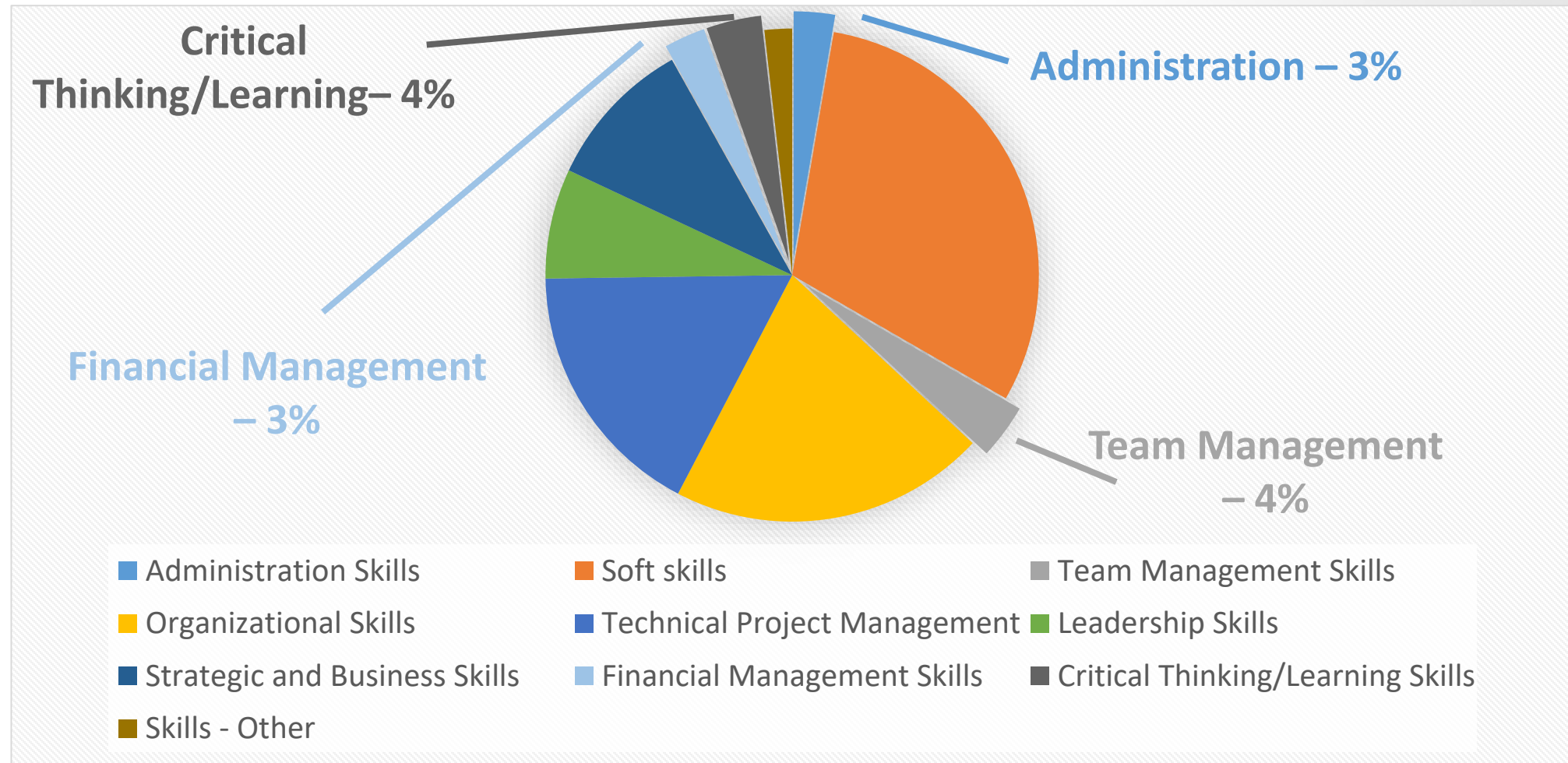


# Leadership Skills Examples

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- Ability to delegate authority for completion of tasks and trust subordinates to do their jobs
- Leadership

# Skills



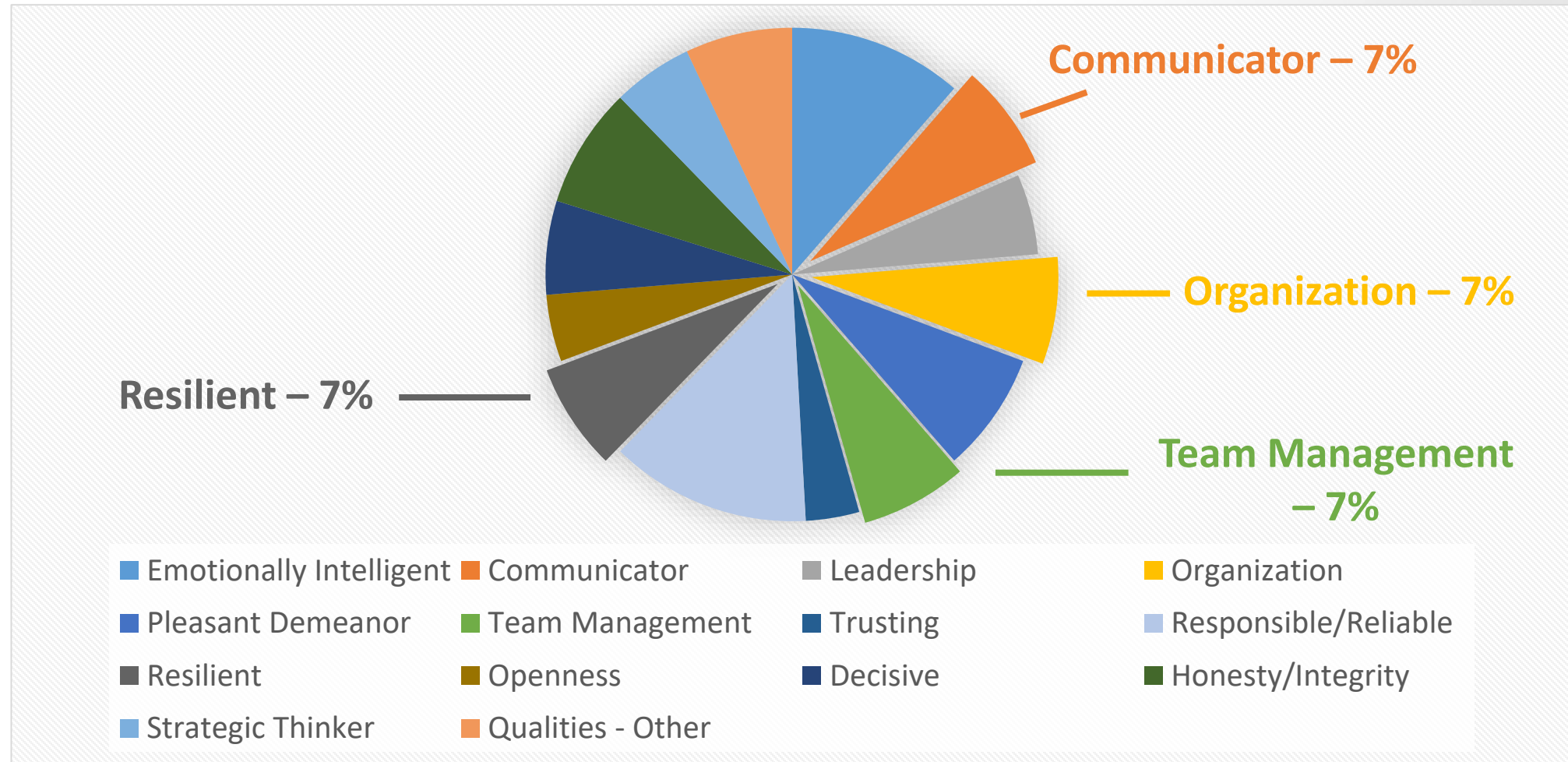
# Skills Examples

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- Administration
  - Meeting Facilitation Skills
- Team Management Skills
  - Team-building skills
  - Being the best support for your team and believing in your team
  - Supporting the Team
- Critical Thinking/Learning Skills
  - Quick Comprehension/Quick Learner of the Subject Matter
  - Critical Thinking
  - Adapt

# Qualities

# Qualities – Medium Frequency

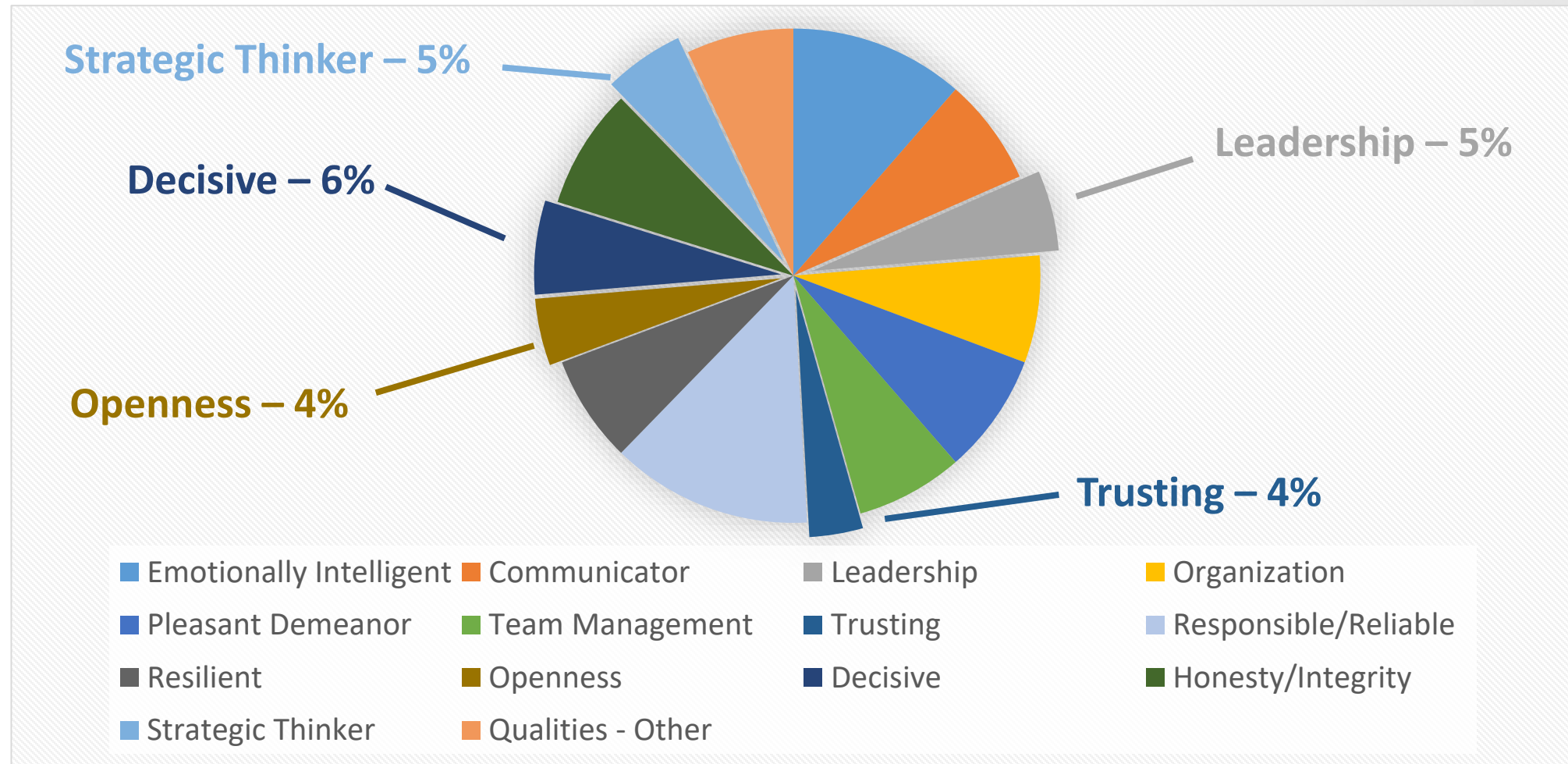


# Medium Frequency Qualities – Examples

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- Communicator
  - Relationship Building
  - Story Telling
- Organization
  - Detail Oriented
  - Process Oriented
- Team Management
  - Genuine desire to help the team succeed by knocking down barriers, providing encouragement and showing trust and respect.
  - Manage Conflict
- Resilient
  - Persistence
  - Ability to anticipate, understand and react to the impact of changes and outside influences on the outcome of the project

# Qualities – Low Frequency



# Low Frequency Qualities – Examples

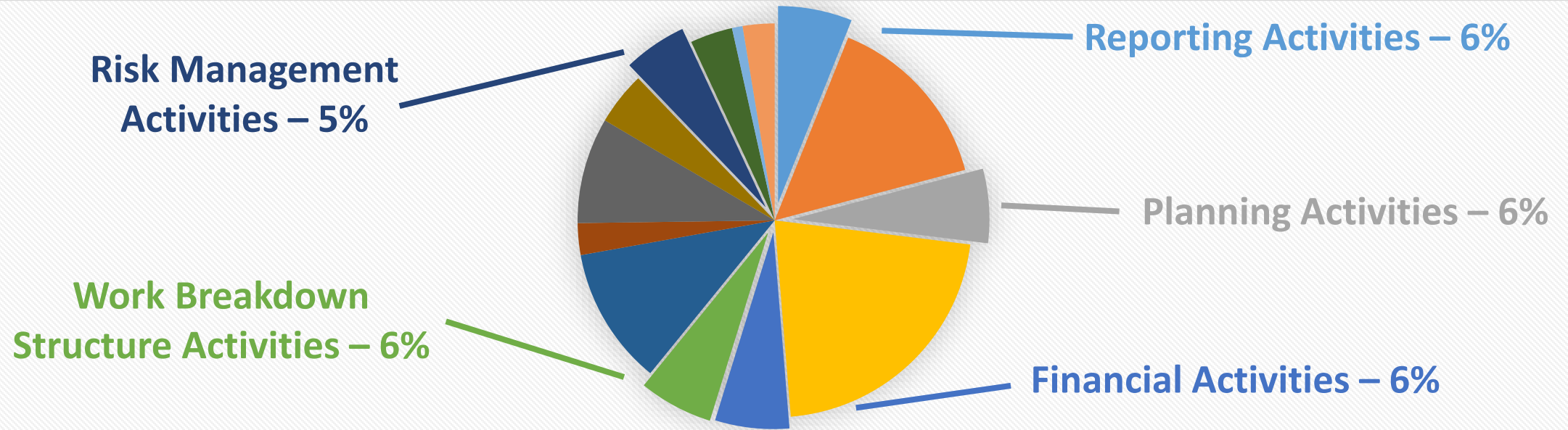
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- Leadership
  - Inspires others to act
  - Servant Leadership
- Trusting
  - Giving trust and caring of your team members
- Openness
  - Open-Minded
  - Curious
- Strategic Thinker
  - Strategic
- Decisive
  - Ability to work in and lead others through times of ambiguity
  - Decision Making



# Tactical Activities

# Tactical Activities – Medium Frequency



- Reporting Activities
- People Management Activities
- Scheduling Activities
- Facilitation
- Strategic and Business Activities
- Communication activities
- Financial Activities
- Resource Management Activities
- Risk Management
- Monitoring Activities
- Planning activities
- Work Breakdown Structure Management
- Leadership Activities
- Documentation/Data Activities
- Tactical Activities - Other

# Medium Frequency Tactical Activities – Examples

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- Reporting Activities
  - Translate the status updates into language the customer/stakeholders understand
  - Create reports that provide information the customer needs
- Planning Activities
  - Setting and following standard procedures for project activities
- Financial Activities
  - Manage project financials to ensure no overspend or underrun
- Work Breakdown Structure Management
  - Create Task Lists
  - Assigning and Managing Tasks
- Risk Management
  - Identify and Manage Risk

# Tactical Activities – Low Frequency



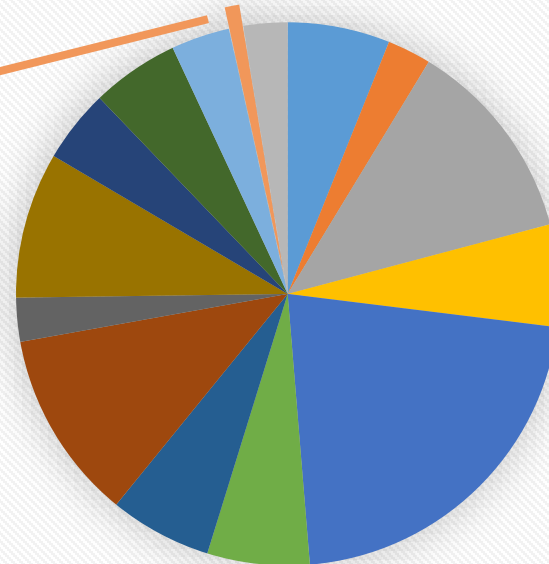
# Low Frequency Tactical Activities – Examples

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- Documentation/Data Activities
  - Be first to offer up to drive / document decisions and solutions
- Facilitation Activities
  - Run efficient meetings (set agenda, keep people on track, drive action items)
- Monitoring Activities
  - Project Tracking
- Resource Management Activities
  - Resolving resource constraints

# Tactical Activities

Strategic and Business Activities – 1%



- |                                       |                                     |                                  |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ■ Reporting Activities                | ■ Gain Trust                        | ■ Communication activities       |
| ■ Planning activities                 | ■ People Management Activities      | ■ Financial Activities           |
| ■ Work Breakdown Structure Management | ■ Scheduling Activities             | ■ Resource Management Activities |
| ■ Leadership Activities               | ■ Facilitation                      | ■ Risk Management                |
| ■ Documentation/Data Activities       | ■ Strategic and Business Activities | ■ Monitoring Activities          |
| ■ Tactical Activities - Other         |                                     |                                  |

# Strategic and Business Activities– Examples

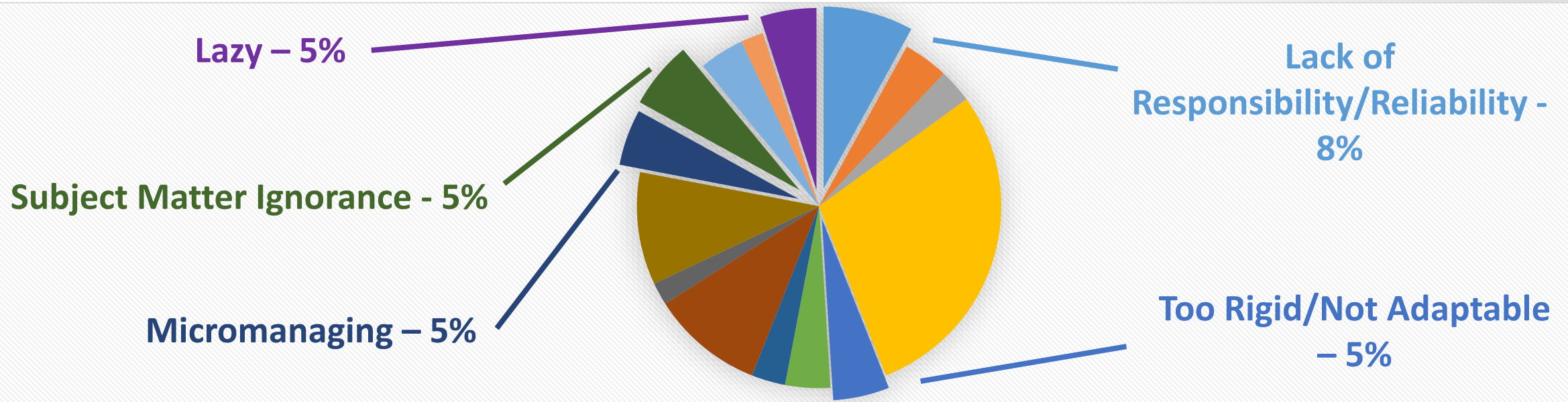
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- Business Analysis

# Shortcomings



# Shortcomings – Medium Frequency



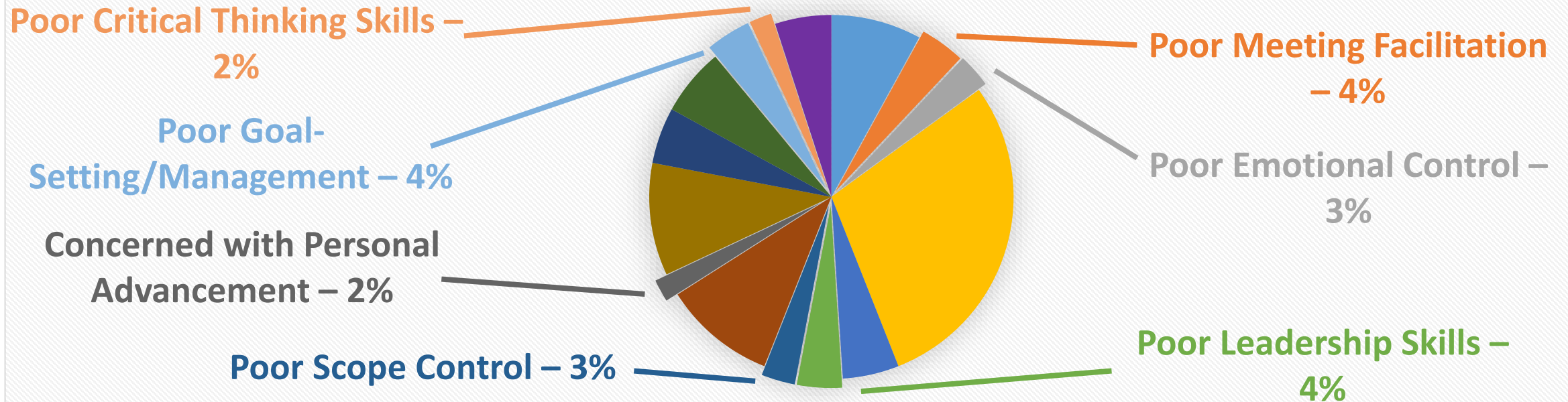
- |   |                                 |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ■ Lack of Responsibility/Reliability      | ■ Poor Meeting Facilitation     | ■ Poor Emotional Control              |
| ■ Poor Interpersonal/Communication skills | ■ Too rigid/Not adaptable       | ■ Poor Leadership Skills              |
| ■ Poor Scope Control                      | ■ Poor People Management        | ■ Concerned with personal advancement |
| ■ Poor Planning/Schedule Management       | ■ Micromanaging                 | ■ Subject Matter Ignorance            |
| ■ Poor Goal-Setting/Management            | ■ Poor Critical Thinking Skills | ■ Lazy                                |

# Medium Frequency Shortcomings – Examples

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- Lack of Responsibility
  - don't take responsibility for themselves, their decisions, or their team;
- Too Rigid/Not adaptable
  - overly rigid; PMs need to be able to adapt to changes throughout a project, whether due to organizational change, market impacts, cost pressures, scope changes, etc
- Micromanaging
  - Too focused on details (instead of delegating them),
- Subject Matter Ignorance
  - Lack of understanding foreseeable risks
- Lazy
  - lazy - not proactive

# Shortcomings – Low Frequency



- Lack of Responsibility/Reliability
- Poor Meeting Facilitation
- Poor Emotional Control
- Poor Interpersonal/Communication skills
- Too rigid/Not adaptable
- Poor Leadership Skills
- Poor Scope Control
- Poor People Management
- Concerned with personal advancement
- Poor Planning/Schedule Management
- Micromanaging
- Subject Matter Ignorance
- Poor Goal-Setting/Management
- Poor Critical Thinking Skills
- Lazy

# Low Frequency Shortcomings – Examples

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- Poor Meeting Facilitation
  - Biased notes that do not reflect the true problems or organizational mission
- Poor Emotional Control
  - Reacting emotionally to criticism
- Poor Leadership Skills
  - Committing to timelines without asking the team first
- Poor Scope Control
  - Lack of Scope Control
- Concerned with personal advancement
  - Too worried about their personal gains (i.e. advancement, promotions, looking good to the boss)
- Poor Goal-Setting/Management
  - Inability to set clear, persistent, and achievable goals
- Poor Critical Thinking Skills
  - lack of critical thinking skills – PMs need to be able to listen actively, understand issues, perform research and being able to make informed decisions and provide direction during uncertainty