

**Big projects need big hearts, and this idea is at the centre of what makes difficult projects succeed.**

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The 'big heart' comprises four human qualities: humility, experience, leadership and stamina.

#### Humility

Humility is about listening to stakeholders, understanding what they say and acting on it. It is about acknowledging that your idea might not work without modification – that others may have a better way of achieving your objectives, because they know more about some of the challenges. Without humility, the project will fail – during delivery or in benefit realisation.

#### Experience

The second big-heart quality is experience. Experience is worth a thousand tools and templates. It sounds like an obvious point to make, yet all the companies we interviewed agreed that experience is fundamental to sound intuition and judgment. Experience tells you what feels right and what feels wrong. Of course, no decision on a program ever gets made without there being some logic to it. Experience is the short cut to the right logic.

#### Leadership

The third quality, leadership, means that sometimes you take decisions that people don't like, and still carry the day. Good project leaders don't just make tough decisions, they carry people with them. They do this through their belief. In combination with humility, belief provides energy to align the team so that everyone pulls in the same direction.

#### Stamina

Stamina is our final big-heart quality. A global project only works if everyone works with you, not against you. However, keeping people with you throughout a project is hard work. It is not enough to say "we agreed this; we need to move on". Each obstacle and objection must be tackled with the aim of keeping the team as one – the project won't be successful otherwise.

Everything written here is anecdotal. But if right, the message to project sponsors is clear. Find a project manager with feelings.

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