



Sponsor Role

Who is a Sponsor?

A Sponsor may originate at any level within the organization. Within the State, a Sponsor may champion the project as a whole or a key component. Additionally, a variety of terms are used to describe Sponsor roles.

- The **Business Sponsor, Managing Sponsor or Program Sponsor** is responsible for the business side of change. This entails ensuring the final products meet the goals of the program and satisfies business needs, and that the require business change occurs and is adopted.
- The **Technical Sponsor, Project Sponsor or Operational Sponsor** champion the technical work associated with the project. They support the project PM in the technical components of the project and are usually only project oriented and do not remain with the change effort through the entire program.
- The **Executive Sponsor** is the final decision maker or tie-breaker and frequently is at the top of the organizational pyramid. The executive sponsor is connected to the project but not usually immersed in its details.
- The **Primary Sponsor** can be any of the above, but he or she is the primary contact for the Organizational Change Manager and will work closely with the Organizational Change Manager for the duration of the project.

In the subsequent guidance, the Value Management Framework focuses predominantly on the role of the Primary Sponsor.

What is the sponsor's role in a project?

The Sponsor acts as the representative of the organization in the project, and plays a vital leadership role.

He or she manages the relationship between the project and relevant parts of the organization with a stake in or role to play in the project. Often a manager or executive, the Sponsor is primarily concerned with ensuring that the project delivers the agreed business benefits and has overall accountability for the project.

The roles and basic responsibilities of the Project Sponsor are essentially:

Identify and be able to explain the business need, problem or opportunity.

Ensure that the business need is valid and appropriately prioritized. This may include taking ownership for an emerging idea and shepherding it through to project initiation, or ensuring that the project is properly launched.

Own the business case and be a champion for the project.

This may entail selling and marketing the project throughout the organization or, as priorities, business needs, costs and benefits change, ensuring that the project remains a viable business proposition. This also may encompass addressing issues and problems that are beyond the authority of the project manager or ensuring that changes to the project are properly managed.

Establish the project team.

This may include hiring the project manager or working with the project manager to identify the appropriate team. Look for experience, knowledge, skill, intelligence and energy to ensure your team has the resources needed to bring the project to successful conclusion.

Be the link between the project, the business community and management decision making groups.

This involves serving as the intermediary between and translator for the organization and the project manager/project team.

The **three primary roles** of sponsors as defined by Prosci are:

- **Participate actively and visibly** throughout the project
- **Build a coalition** of sponsorship and manage resistance
- **Communicate directly with employees**

A Sponsor must take an active and visible role in the project, he or she should not be overburdened with too many projects in addition to daily work.

How to use these Guides:

The Sponsor can access specific guidance for each project phase related to his or her role as a sponsor. These can be found on the Value Management Office website under Guidance and Information in each of the project phases.