

# Executive Project Management Recruiting

February 2008

Recession Psychology

Issue: 17



Mike

Most news media and market securities powerhouses say we're in a recession, and the thunder of exiting investors already echoes. When asked, most people respond with gloomy forecasts of future prospects. But in reality, what does that mean? Evidence exists that many prolonged economic downturns - read "recession" - come about through self-fulfilling prophecies. If believable pundits transform negative retail and durable goods data into predictions of economic disaster then millions of Americans respond with a strengthened faith that the sky is indeed falling. When this happens we will indeed be in a recession by virtue of collective consumer behavior. Fearful of perceived major losses, businesses and everyday people will postpone major purchases and stop projects or buying overpriced cups of coffee. The ripple effect thus takes its dreaded economic toll.

Having been through several recessions my concern focuses on the carnage that businesses unnecessarily wreak on themselves when talk of a potential recession reaches fever pitch. Fear of the unknown freezes hires, and in some cases downsizing. R&D budgets, cash reserves and investments in growth are curtailed. When that happens, major opportunities start sliding by.

If you consult any strategic planning resource you'll find that making and executing fear-based decisions typically does not lead to prosperous times. Few will quarrel that with high energy prices, a decidedly weak housing market and burgeoning unstable food costs, the country faces significant economic challenges over the next 12-plus months. But what actually do we have to outright fear?

Consider this: unremitting demand for highly qualified information technology professionals is possibly the highest it's ever been. Technology companies continue to develop products. These innovative companies are built upon fast agile development - they don't have time for recessions. Hundreds of new promised jobs from sustained economic development are rolling out. With this as a backdrop, a different view emerges. Should we possess intelligent concern? Absolutely. but, please, let's not indulge in self-fulfilling recessionary groupthink. Remember that the

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## Thinking Strategically



Some companies emerge from a recession stronger than ever. How? Make your company recession resistant - A recommended strategic action plan for recession resistant marketing.

1. NEVER STOP MARKETING! Marketing is a continuous, not an intermittent or sometimes endeavor.
2. Contact and reactivate past clients. Call them or send them a letter, but make sure you contact them.
3. Deliver consistent superior service to your clients. Create a WOW factor with your service.
4. Develop your 100 most desired clients list and plan an aggressive business marketing campaign to retain

"experts" are paid to guess and buying into a guess does not make it right. How many of you picked the Giants in the Superbowl?

This is not news to most people - the psychology of recession has always been a key factor in the economic health of our country. A half a century ago, when major recession fears rolled through the late Eisenhower years, Time magazine cited a major bank president's view: "Psychology," the national banker said, "is the joker in the economy's deck of cards." If we buy into fear, we can fashion a very real recession right out of an otherwise sound economy.

So that leaves businesses and individuals with the quintessential binary solution set: indulge in fear-based frenzy, or live in the moment and seize opportunities made possible by other people's bad decisions. We can choose to let other people's guesses dictate how we act or we can seize the moment pursuing new opportunities. If history proves anything, recent recessions have averaged eight months in duration. If you believe the 4th quarter business media oracles, then that means we're already a quarter of the way through. By the time we "officially" declare a recession we will be out of it. So go forth and invest in growth - your own and your company's. The experts will then be following you!

Sincerely,  
Mike Stallfus

## Opportunities

### Senior Project Manager

**Permanent position, salary to 100k in Atlanta**

A global FORTUNE 500 company with more than 55,000 plus people working together to support client operations in nearly 100 countries is looking for a Senior Project Manager. By providing business process outsourcing, human resources outsourcing and information technology solutions to world-class commercial and government clients, offers its associates vast opportunities to succeed.



This is a VIRTUAL position and can be worked from any where in the United States from your home or local office.

### **Description:**

- Drives the development of detailed project plans through interactive process with SMEs and Functional managers, translating WBS from SMEs into executable project plans.
- Responsible for supporting project initiation activities including the initial resourcing, setup and project kick-off.
- Responsible for ensuring that complex plans support the correct mix and level of resources are available to support the project execution.
- Mentors lower level Project Management resources in a teamed approach to understanding complex plan management.

existing clients and attain new clients.

5. Develop and implement an effective Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) Plan.
6. Develop and implement a contact strategy so you will gain "Top Of Mind Awareness" by being in regular contact with your clients and prospects.
7. Employ cross selling and up selling tactics to increase revenue from new and existing clients.
8. NETWORK! NETWORK! NETWORK! NETWORK!
9. Develop and follow a yearlong marketing activity plan.
10. Continuously test and evaluate your marketing tactics and strategies.

**The mission of Practical Solutions is to be the Pre-eminent Influence for the successful placement of Project Management Professionals.**

### **Strategic Hiring Interview Questions - Ask and Answer**

#### **Interview Question:**

How would you describe the term 'strategic thinking'?

#### **Answer Guide:**

Candidates should see strategic thinking as a process of learning and turning ideas into reality. They should see it as a tool to help a business or organization confront change, plan for and

- Responsible for managing the project work plan estimating process in adherence to Solutions Center standards.
- Tracks and provides guidance to Functional Owners on project performance against planned schedules (and milestones), hours and costs.
- Responsible for ensuring contractual deliverables in a given set of plans are completed against defined standards and quality reviews and formal acceptance and signoffs are collected (including final acceptance of project).

**Qualifications:**

- Successfully lead 2 or more large projects (standalone or within a program) from planning to completion.
- Or managed multiple medium sized projects (standalone or within a program) simultaneously.
- 10 years project management experience.
- Expert knowledge of project/contract administration means and methods

**Eeducation:**

A Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with a major in IS, IT, Engineering, Systems Engineering, or Related.

**IT Director - Medical Systems**

**Atlanta area, permanent to 100K, full benefits**

A growing medical technology company is seeking full-time IT Director in a local Hospital with experience. Candidate must be enthusiastic, organized, energetic, motivated and detail-orientated professional. Responsible for development, installation and support of health care information system software. Permanent position,

**POSITION PROFILE:**

- Reporting to the CFO, responsible for managing the IT department with 9 staff members
- Manage daily operations as well as major projects
- Serve as leader and problem solver, providing guidance and professional staff development

**ABOUT THE HOSPITAL:**

- 138-bed acute care community hospital
- MEDITECH facility running on Client Server 5.5

**ABOUT THE LOCATION:**

- Located just 20 miles east of Atlanta, in a growing community of approximately 12,000
- Several historical sites and an ongoing downtown revitalization program
- Offers a variety of affordable housing options from new construction to historic homes as well quaint bungalows, or maintenance-free apartments

**QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Ability to hold project teams accountable within a matrix organization

make transitions, and envision new possibilities and opportunities.

**Interview Question:**

Outline in broad terms how you would create a strategy for a public interest campaign.

**Answer Guide:**

A good candidate will list at least some of the following criteria: A clear defining of the goals and objectives of the campaign; identification of opponents; carrying out a SWOT analysis; imagining and playing scenarios; identifying primary and secondary targets; identifying allies; deciding what resources are required; devising tactics.

**Interview Question:**

As part of the above strategic campaign, why should you carry out a SWOT analysis?

**Answer Guide:**

Candidates should believe it is easier to make more effective choices after identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. A SWOT analysis can be applied to a position, an idea, an individual, or an organization and is essential for good decision-making.

**Interview Question:**

How should you go about identifying allies

- Ability to lead a project team comprised of diverse technical and business resources
- Proficient in MS Office, Project and Visio
- Excellent communication and negotiation skills, (both written and verbal)
- Ability to manage multiple vendors and contractors
- Strong analytical skills, attention to detail, problem solver
- Requires Bachelors degree in Business, IS, Healthcare, or related field
- Requires 8+ years of progressive IS experience, with at least 2 years of management responsibility in a healthcare environment
- Must have solid knowledge of MEDITECH HCIS with prior hands-on applications experience
- Good knowledge of infrastructure and network configurations is required
- PMP certification preferred

## Practical Solutions, LLC

Practical Solutions is an Executive Project Management search firm that specializes in identifying high potential individuals and matching them with opportunities that best allows success for ALL parties. Through individual attention to detail and needs PSS can find perfect fits with less time from both the candidate and hiring manager. Our commitment is quality, not quantify of placements.



Mike Stallfus is a recruiting professional with five years of experience in the Executive, IT, Project Management, and Engineering arenas. He has worked in both the public and private sectors as an engineer, programmer, designer, integrator, supervisor, project manager, department manager, and division director. He possesses the knowledge and background to find talent with critical skills in any technical venue.

Personal background includes a Bachelors Degree in Psychology and Electrical Engineering from the University of Toledo, and PMP from PMI. His professional career spans more than twenty years as a software/hardware engineer in robotics and embedded systems, system integrator for factory and warehouse systems, project manager on IT infrastructure and system integrations, functional manager for electrical control systems, and division director of IT development company. He has three kids, a wife of 35 years, and lives in Suwanee GA.. He volunteers as the VP of Certification and Education at PMI Atlanta, and loves playing the guitar.

as part of any good business or organizational strategy plan?

### Answer Guide:

Candidate should be flexible, be an influential decision maker on their own, and manage good relationships with co-workers. When groups with similar interests create strategic alliances, they are much more likely to achieve their goals. Allies may also be sympathetic insiders. A good candidate should understand these concepts. A sympathetic senior bureaucrat in the right organization who understands your project can also provide the most help. Finding such a person and fostering that relationship shows initiative.

### Interview Question:

What are the three most common reasons why change in management fails in most organizations?

### Answer Guide:

Candidate should understand the dynamics of change in any form of organization and be able to determine the problems of conflict and how they relate to the change. Candidate should be a problem-solver and handle dilemmas and/or conflicts effectively. They should recognize the potential problems

that may arise from a lack of attention and the inability or reluctance to change.

**Practical Solutions is dedicated to finding the right employee for your needs, one at a time.**

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