



## Stanford Advanced Project Management Certificate

### Leveraging the Customer Relationship (XAPM213)

#### Sample Syllabus

##### **Primary Instructors:**

*Tom Kosnik, John Boose*

##### **Course Introduction & Populator Exercise**

Participants begin the course in a team competition to see whose pricing strategies are most effective. Lessons learned from this simulation go far beyond the intricacies of pricing, and they provide a useful foundation for topics covered in this course.

##### **Creating and Sharing Value with Customers**

Drawing on research described in *The Value Profit Chain* and *The Service Profit Chain*, this segment provides principles and approaches you can apply in your own project environment to enhance product and service value, to increase customer satisfaction and loyalty, and ultimately to improve revenue growth and profitability.

##### **1-to-1 Diagnosis of Customer Behavior**

When a customer makes a challenging request, or refuses to cooperate on a project initiative, it is important to diagnose before deciding what action to take. The 1-to-1 Diagnostic Framework has been developed over a 15-year period based on thousands of situations in which project managers, team leaders, sales people, and entrepreneurial leaders have had to understand the underlying reasons for a customer's behavior before responding.

In this session you will learn how the 1-to-1 Diagnostic Framework works and why it is so effective. Then you'll work in small groups to practice using the tool in the types of customer situations you face.

##### **Understanding Individual Differences in How Customers Think and Make Decisions**

In this session, you'll employ a model of behavioral styles to analyze differences in how customers think and make decisions. You will again work in small groups, practicing how best to interact with and persuade others who have different behavioral styles. Then, in a full group session, you'll discuss lessons learned and analyze the implications for leveraging relationships with your customers.

##### **Managing Customer Relationships across Gender and Culture Boundaries**

**Gender:** Believe it or not, men and women have been raised and socialized to employ different communications styles. A project manager's ignorance of these subtle differences inhibits his or her ability to communicate effectively, make decisions, and influence members of both sexes to take the appropriate steps to make a project successful.

In this session you'll discuss an article by Deborah Tannen, author of *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation* and *Gender and Discourse*. Then you'll identify ways to apply the insights you gain in handling customer situations.

**Culture:** Many projects involve communicating with customers from different countries and cultures. This session will expand your sensitivity and skill in dealing with cultural factors that can affect the outcome of a negotiation and the success of an entire project.



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#### **Negotiating for Mutual Gain**

Negotiations between project managers and customers are often complex, conflicted, and stressful. However, that need not be the case. By learning and practicing negotiating principles and methods that have been tested on the Harvard Negotiations Project, participants will develop skills that have proven useful across a wide range of negotiating

#### **Selling for Project Managers**

Although project managers are usually not sales people, they and their organizations can benefit from developing strategic selling skills. These skills will help them to:

- Build credibility as a project manager
- Determine how best to work with different stakeholders in both external and internal customer organizations
- Ask effective questions to gain a clearer understanding of customer needs and priorities.

This session will involve a discussion based on techniques from the best-selling books *SPIN Selling* and *The New Strategic Selling*. The participants will learn about selling inside the organization—how similar it is to selling to traditional external customers, and yet how some unique approaches may be appropriate. The session will be interactive, drawing on real experiences from the participants in the class, and applying principles discussed earlier in the course.