

How to Fold a Piece of Paper

The Logistics Business is in the fortunate position of being invited to Project Manage the implementation of many of the warehouse solutions we plan. This enables Clients to remain focused on managing the day to day business and ensures that our ideas fully translated into practice. From our own point of view it also helps ensure that our solutions remain practical and achievable.

When considering the implementation stage of a project Clients often ask what skills are needed (often in the hope they may have someone internally that can do the job). This is not an easy question to answer as great Project Managers really count when something goes wrong (as it always does) and it is the type of problem that determines the skills required to fix it. Some regard Project Management as making a plan and then making sure it is followed but we would call that Programme Management. This is part of the Project Manager's responsibility and some projects are big enough to need a full time Programme Manager but a Programme Manager does not need to have experience or knowledge of the equipment or systems being implemented. A Project Manager does. Maybe not in great detail, but enough to get involved in solving the myriad of problems (some large some small) that any project will throw up and to do so in such a way that ensures focus is maintained on the overall aims of the project.

So a Project Manager needs a wide variety of skills and, most importantly, experience. If the project involves physical infrastructure (say, racking a new warehouse or building an automated handling system) then one skill a good Project Manager should definitely have is the ability to fold an A0 drawing properly.

It may seem trivial but if you are wanting to test someone to see if they have Project Management experience ask them to fold a drawing. If they cannot fold one down to A4 size with the title block showing, the chances are they don't have as much experience as they make out. If they can then we cannot guarantee they will do a fine job but it's a good start.