

Project Management Services

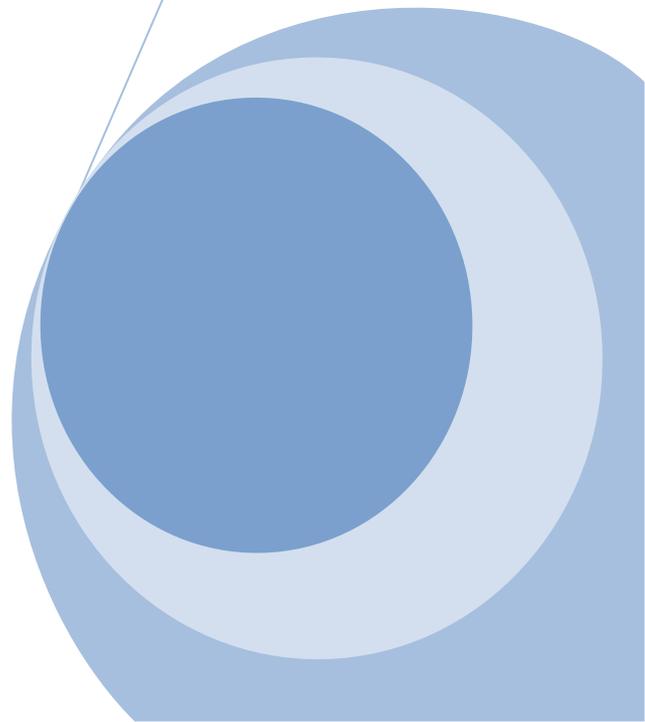
Extracted notes from article in Property Week

"Every project is unique, of course, and the cost will depend on the mix of usage and the client's requirements and the standard and finish of the base building; but a typical fit-out from shell and core [where the developer has not put in a raised floor and suspended ceiling] can be in the range of £80/sq ft to £150/sq ft. It is clear that occupiers should find ways of protecting their interests."

"The overwhelming view is that the best way of doing that is by having an independent professional to manage the fit-out contract. Occupiers should get a third party to represent the client's interests,"

"They should have a contract administrator or a project manager who can act as a conduit between the client, the agent and the contractor. While the tenant will have to pay him, it could mean cutting between 20% and 30% of the fit-out cost."

Rupert Lee-Uff MRICS
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Building Project Manager: Job description and activities

Building project managers have overall responsibility for the planning, management, coordination and financial control of a construction project.

It is their responsibility to see that the clients' wishes are adhered to and that the project is completed on time within the budget agreed. The project manager may be involved from the initial conception and design of the project, through its construction, to its completion.

Tasks include:

- Representing the interest of the Client
- Providing independent professional advice
- Ensuring at all times complete financial transparency with the project
- Liaising with and supervising the work of the other professionals involved in the project
- Making sure the aims of the project are met at all times
- Ensuring that quality standards are adhered at all stages of the construction project
- Keeping track of progress and ensuring that the project is on time and on budget
- Maintaining records of expenditure, accounting, costing and billing
- Control of main contractors variations and valuations
- Ensuring compliance with CDM, COSHH and other Client compliance responsibilities

Even though the sums involved may be significant, unrepresented clients are frequently led into contracts on very basic terms, often simply by an exchange of letters, for works that are vague and without the client having a detailed understanding of what is (and what is not) included. It is often found late in the project that items that the client thought were included are not and 'open book' does not guarantee value for money. Where contracts are more detailed, these are often prepared by the fit-out contractor on their terms and, when dispute occurs, the client has inadequate contractual protection.

Like all building works, fitting out projects should be managed independently by a project manager/team appointed by the client. The project manager will have the sole interests of the client at heart and will not be influenced by maximising profit from the works.

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The project manager should be appointed at the earliest stage possible – preferably before any decisions are made as to whether to acquire a building or re-plan existing space and should be involved throughout space audit, feasibility and acquisition stages as well as being able to offer advice in respect of budget costs, procurement routes and programme.

Once the project brief is determined, the project manager will co-ordinate the detailed space planning, design and specification, contractor selection, tendering and appointment as well as ensuring that all necessary consents are obtained (including planning and building regulations and landlord's approval) and manage furniture and IT integration.

Rupert Lee-Uff MRICS

Project Manager
Contract Administrator