



**How Payslip Skilled Implementation Professionals
Create Successful Customer Behavior
One Principle That Could Transform Every Project
Establish Expectations Before They Become Problems**

Great project managers don't wait for misunderstandings.

They prevent them.

At kickoff, establish:

- What success looks like.
- Who owns each decision.
- Expected response times.
- How changes will be handled.
- What happens if milestones slip.
- When concerns should be raised.
- How disagreements will be resolved.
- What each side can expect from the other.

Specificity builds credibility. It also builds confidence. The clearer the expectations, the fewer surprises, frustrations, and escalations.

Prevent Problems Before They Become Escalations

**Communication
Discipline**

Customer Challenges

Set Expectations Early

Unrealistic timelines, communication expectations, roles, decision-making, accountability

Communication Discipline

Customer Challenges

<i>Create Understanding</i>	<i>Questions asked too late, process confusion, “We never discussed that”</i>
Keep Momentum	Disengagement, lack of updates, capacity constraints
Lead Difficult Conversations	Personal attacks, resistance to change, disagreements, escalations

What To Do When Customers Cross Professional Boundaries

The Hidden Cause

People under pressure sometimes become emotional.

When deadlines, budgets and careers are involved, frustration becomes personal.

The goal is never to win the argument.

The goal is to return the conversation to solving the problem.

Better Conversation

Never react emotionally.

Lower your voice.

Slow your pace.

Acknowledge.

Redirect.

Better Language

“I understand this is frustrating.”

Pause.

“Let’s focus on what will move the project forward.”

or

“Let’s solve the problem rather than revisit personalities.”

or

“My goal is exactly the same as yours—a successful implementation.”

Fripp Principle

Calm is contagious.

The most credible person in the room is usually the calmest.

Don’t defend. Redirect.

2. Customers Demand Unrealistic Timelines

This may be the biggest opportunity.

Hidden Cause

The customer is usually describing the date they want.

Not the work required.

Better Conversation

Instead of saying

“That isn’t realistic.”

Say:

“Together, let’s work backwards.”

Now you’re collaborating instead of refusing.

Better Language

“If that is the desired launch date, let’s identify what has to happen each week to make it possible.”

Then ask:

“Which activities are flexible?”

or

“Which milestones cannot move?”

Now the customer helps build reality.

Instead of imposing the schedule...they own it.

Fripp Principle

People support what they help create.

Questions reduce resistance.

3. Customers Say They Understand...

Then ask questions much later.

Hidden Cause

People rarely understand as much as they think.

Many are embarrassed to admit confusion.

Better Conversation

Never ask

“Does everyone understand?”

Everyone says yes.

Instead after each talking point, ask

“What questions should we answer before we move forward?”

or

“What concerns might your team have after today’s meeting?”

Even better:

“What could prevent this from succeeding?”

Now you’ve invited honest discussion.

Fripp Principle

Ask better questions.

Receive better answers.

4. Customers Say

“We never discussed that.”

This is classic.

Arguing never works.

Wrong Response

“Actually, we did.”

That only creates defensiveness.

Better Response

“Let’s make sure we’re working from the same understanding.”

Then pull up previous decisions.

Better Language

“Here’s what we agreed on during our March meeting.”

or

“Let’s review the decision together.”

Facts.

No blame.

Fripp Principle

Specificity builds credibility.

Documentation reduces disagreement.

Don’t prove them wrong.

Help them become right.

5. Customer Disengagement

No replies.

No updates.

No movement.

Hidden Cause

Usually not lack of interest.

Competing priorities.

Better Conversation

Instead of

“Just checking in...”

(which everyone ignores)

Use

“What is preventing us from moving to the next step?”

or

“Which obstacle can we help remove?”

Now you’re offering assistance rather than chasing.

Another excellent question:

“What would make this easier for your team?”

6. Poor Communication

Repeated follow-ups.

Silence.

Prevention

Create communication expectations during kickoff.

Much of this can be prevented.

At the beginning say:

“To keep your project on schedule, let’s agree how we’ll communicate.”

Then establish

- Response expectations
- Meeting attendance
- Decision makers
- Escalation process
- Turnaround times

People cannot violate expectations that were never established.

7. Customer Doesn’t Understand the Process

Despite training.

Hidden Cause

Experts suffer from the Curse of Knowledge.

They think they explained it clearly.

The customer thinks they understood.

Neither verifies.

Better Conversation

Instead of asking

“Does that make sense?”

Ask

“Walk me through how you’ll explain this to your payroll team.”

Now you discover misunderstandings immediately.

This is the “teach-back” technique used in medicine because it works.

8. Customer Capacity Constraints

Better Conversation

Don’t ask

“When can you finish this?”

Instead ask

“Given everything already on your plate, what is a realistic commitment?”

Now they can answer honestly.

Follow with

“What support would help?”

9. Resistance to Change

This is rarely resistance.

It’s uncertainty.

People aren’t resisting software.

They’re protecting certainty.

Better Conversation

Instead of selling features...

sell confidence.

Ask

“What concerns your team most about this change?”

Then

“What would make them feel comfortable?”

Now you’re solving the emotional problem.

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