



**100 COMMON SENSE RULES  
FOR LEADING AND MANAGING ASSET UNITS**



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# 100 COMMON SENSE RULES FOR LEADING AND MANAGING ASSET UNITS



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## **REFERENCE FOR THIS DOCUMENT**



## COMMON SENSE IN INTEGRATED ASSET MANAGEMENT

### *"Common Sense Is Not So Common" – Voltaire*

Common sense is the ability to make simple, sound decisions based on what is obvious or easy to understand. It involves using practical reasoning to determine what is safe, smart, or reasonable in everyday situations.

Complex concepts such as **assets**, **asset life cycle**, **sustainable value**, and **integrated asset management** can be better understood using common-sense metaphors. Here are some examples:

### ASSET (TOOLS)

Think of an asset as a well-stocked toolbox, where each tool serves a unique purpose in building or fixing something. For instance:

- **Natural resources** (e.g., timber and stone) provide raw materials.
- **Physical assets** (e.g., a hammer and nails) help you assemble and secure structures.
- **Intellectual assets** (e.g., a measuring tape) ensure precise planning.
- **Financial assets** (e.g., your budget) enable you to purchase new tools.

Together, these assets work to create a strong, lasting structure, much like they collectively build long-term, **sustainable value**.

### PHASES OF AN ASSET LIFE CYCLE (LIFE CYCLE OF A HOUSE)

#### **Planning:**

Imagine drawing up blueprints for a house. You decide what kind of house you want, how many rooms it should have, where it will be located, and how much it will cost. You ensure it meets your needs and is safe. Similarly, in asset management, this phase involves identifying needs, conducting analyses, and preparing necessary documentation before beginning.

#### **Acquisition/Procurement:**

This is like shopping for the materials to build your house, buying bricks, wood, tools, or hiring builders. It could also involve purchasing a pre-built house, ensuring proper delivery, set-up, and understanding its systems. Careful planning and budgeting are crucial to fitting everything into your existing "neighborhood."



## **Operation and Maintenance:**

The longest phase—this involves living in and maintaining your house. Regular cleaning, fixing leaks, and upgrading rooms keep it functional and enjoyable. Similarly, assets require ongoing maintenance to remain effective and valuable over time, preventing breakdowns and maximizing longevity.

## **Decommissioning, Disposal, and Replacement:**

When your house becomes too old or damaged to live in, you might sell it, demolish it, or repurpose it into something new. This phase involves safely dealing with the old house and planning for what comes next, like building a new home.

## **SUSTAINABLE VALUE (GOLDEN GOOSE)**

Imagine you own a golden goose that lays eggs (financial success). If you take good care of the goose—feed it well and maintain its nest—it will continue laying golden eggs for years. However, neglecting the goose in favor of immediate rewards will eventually stop the flow of eggs.

**Sustainable value** means balancing economic, social, and environmental needs to ensure ongoing success, benefiting both present and future generations.

## **INTEGRATED ASSET MANAGEMENT (GRAND ORCHESTRA)**

Picture a grand orchestra where each instrument—violin, flute, drum—represents an asset. The conductor (management) ensures every musician plays their part at the right time, harmonizing with others. The symphony's score (regulations and standards) guides the performance. When all instruments play in sync, the result is a beautiful concert (sustainable value) that delights the audience (society and the environment) while securing the orchestra's future success.

## **COMMON SENSE RULES**

A common-sense rule for leading and managing assets is a practical, experience-based guideline designed to promote sound judgment and effective decision-making.

This document provides **100 common-sense rules** for managing asset units, organized into **15 categories**.

These rules balance technical expertise with human insight to ensure assets are managed **efficiently, ethically, and sustainably**. They are rooted in fundamental principles like **safety, integrity, collaboration,**



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and **resourcefulness** while remaining flexible enough to adapt to real-world challenges.

Each rule empowers leaders to navigate complex scenarios by combining logical thinking, clear communication, and proactive problem-solving. The ultimate goal is to foster long-term value and organizational success.

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## PRINCIPLES AND VALUES (RULES 1 TO 14)

### **RULE NO. 1 - INTEGRATION:**

The principle of integration seeks to break down silos and ensure that all components of the asset unit work together harmoniously. This leads to greater operational visibility, enhanced decision-making, cost reduction, and more efficient achievement of asset unit objectives.

The asset unit manager regularly visits team members performing agreed-upon activities, whether during the design and construction phases for new assets or during operations and maintenance for existing assets. The manager knows every team member, supervisor, and manager by name—both internal and from contracting companies—and fosters integration by showing genuine interest in their work through direct interaction.

### **RULE NO. 2 - MOTIVATION:**

The asset unit manager understands what motivates team members, contractors, and service providers across the supply chain (e.g., compensation systems, fiscal policies, and corporate culture). They continuously update compensation and hiring strategies to adapt to changes that might impact internal and external performance.

### **RULE NO. 3 - LIFE CYCLE:**

The asset unit manager is well-versed in the life cycle of all assets and applies best practices tailored to each maturity phase—planning, acquisition, operation, maintenance, and retirement. Special attention is given to maintaining asset integrity, particularly for mission-critical functions.

### **RULE NO. 4 - RESPECT:**

The greater the respect the asset unit manager shows in labor relations, the fewer disciplinary issues arise. Regardless of the circumstances, asset management should consistently treat personnel with respect.

### **RULE NO. 5 - SUSTAINABILITY:**

The asset unit manager prioritizes long-term sustainability by considering economic, safety, health, environmental, and social factors. They aim to balance these elements while respecting all living beings and nature, adhering to best practices and regulations.

### **RULE NO. 6 - PROACTIVITY:**

The manager takes a proactive approach, anticipating needs rather than waiting for tasks to be assigned or crises to emerge. By continuously monitoring performance and utilizing management tools, they identify and address potential issues before deviations occur.



## **RULE NO. 7 - DATA-DRIVEN DECISIONS:**

Decisions are based on accurate, real-time data that measure asset performance. The manager uses data analysis and business intelligence tools to guide their decisions.

## **RULE NO. 8 - SENSE OF REALITY:**

While speed is important, it should never replace thoughtful, reality-based analysis for reliable management. The manager takes the time to understand the consequences of their actions—both professionally and personally—following the philosophy of “stopping to smell the roses.”

## **RULE NO. 9 - CLEAR OBJECTIVES:**

Even if the manager lacks technical expertise in specific areas, they must clearly define objectives and expected outcomes. Transparent management includes clear roles, responsibilities, and accountability processes.

## **RULE NO. 10 - HARD WORK:**

Success or failure is often influenced by luck, but competent managers who work hard are more likely to achieve positive outcomes. Not all successful managers are competent, and not all unsuccessful ones are incompetent; effort remains a crucial factor.

## **RULE NO. 11 - PRESERVATION OF UNITY:**

When a team member makes a mistake, the asset unit manager avoids taking isolated retaliatory actions. Instead, they ensure that laws, regulations, standards, and best practices are applied equally to all. This approach prevents disruptions to the unit's overall performance.

## **RULE NO. 12 - LEARNING FROM MISTAKES:**

The asset unit manager fosters a culture of learning from mistakes, recognizing that wrong decisions can occur. They are open to revising their stance when staff provide valid feedback or indicates errors. This culture encourages staff to voice concerns when they believe a decision may be incorrect.

## **RULE NO. 13 - DELEGATION:**

The asset unit manager leverages the strengths and competencies of their personnel to distribute responsibilities effectively, ensuring collective success.

## **RULE NO. 14 - HUMAN POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT:**

The asset unit manager recognizes that success depends on collaborative effort. They actively support team members' growth, help them develop



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their potential, and enable them to make meaningful contributions, resulting in efficient and successful outcomes.

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## STARTING AS AN ASSET UNIT MANAGER (RULES 15 TO 33)

### **RULE NO. 15 - INITIAL PLANNING:**

Problems often originate early in an asset's lifecycle. Proper initial planning is critical for an Asset Unit's success. Many failed processes or projects can be traced back to inadequate planning during the asset's early stages.

### **RULE NO. 16 - TRANSPARENCY:**

Cooperation depends on effective communication and early detection of deviations or failures. The manager must ensure that superiors, colleagues, and partners are kept informed and be the first to identify necessary changes in the Asset Reference Plan (ARP). Decisions should involve consulting partners, even when their role is minimal, as a lack of transparency can damage credibility.

### **RULE NO. 17 - CONVERSATION:**

Conversations aren't free, but they are essential for understanding personnel situations and technical or operational challenges. Avoiding discussions with key personnel introduces unnecessary risk.

### **RULE NO. 18 - ENGLISH LANGUAGE:**

Since most international meetings are conducted in English, effective communication in English is essential to avoid misunderstandings when collaborating with global companies.

### **RULE NO. 19 - TECHNICAL JARGON:**

An asset unit manager must understand the technical language used by their team and interfacing departments. This requires continuous learning in areas such as computing, data analysis, artificial intelligence, and economics.

### **RULE NO. 20 - NO TOLERANCE FOR MEDIOCRITY:**

While you can't oversee every detail, it must be clear to your team that mediocre work will not be tolerated.

### **RULE NO. 21 - BALANCING INTERESTS:**

Balancing individual and organizational interests are key. Experienced managers often encounter newer employees who may focus more on form over substance, making it critical to find the right balance.

### **RULE NO. 22 - PEOPLE FIRST:**

Skilled technicians, inspectors, operators, or supervisors contribute more to product quality than reports or reviews ever could.

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### **RULE NO. 23 - KNOWING THE TEAM:**

Many problems arise from personnel issues. Understanding your team's strengths and weaknesses enables better project management.

### **RULE NO. 24 - AVOID OVERWORK:**

Workaholics can pose risks if their excessive efforts are misdirected. Monitor workloads to ensure they don't exceed 1.25 to 1.5 times the norm and promote adequate rest.

### **RULE NO. 25 - STAY CLOSE TO THE WORKERS:**

Support negotiations at the lowest possible levels. Direct engagement with workers leads to better outcomes.

### **RULE NO. 26 - AVOID PASSIVE EMPLOYEES:**

Transfer employees who fail to observe, question, or analyze to other departments where their skills may be better suited.

### **RULE NO. 27 - AVOID UNNECESSARY WORK:**

Time is a valuable resource. Delegate only essential tasks and shield your team from pointless activities.

### **RULE NO. 28 - GET INVOLVED:**

Monitoring alone is insufficient. Active involvement ensures higher quality outcomes and sets a standard of excellence.

### **RULE NO. 29 - RECOGNITION:**

A simple pat on the back or verbal acknowledgment can serve as a powerful motivator for your team.

### **RULE NO. 30 - IDENTIFY INCOMPETENCE:**

Incompetent employees often hide their work to avoid scrutiny. Identifying and addressing these issues is critical for overall performance.

### **RULE NO. 31 - COMPLETE WORK ON TIME:**

Most tasks are not unique. Encourage your team to complete work on time and avoid unnecessary delays.

### **RULE NO. 32 - EMPOWER:**

Most people want to perform well. If they don't, it's often because they don't know how or aren't clear on what's expected of them. Provide guidance and empower them to succeed.



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### **RULE NO. 33 - ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL:**

When adding staff to a project, do so with care, like seasoning a dish. Add just enough to meet needs, but not so much that it disrupts efficiency or balance.

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## HANDLING REVIEWS AND REPORTS (RULES 34 TO 46)

### **RULE NO. 34 - WORK SYSTEM:**

The asset unit manager establishes structured systems with review teams and schedules. Once solidified, these systems become self-sustaining and provide substantial benefits. Ensure that reviews actively support decision-making processes.

### **RULE NO. 35 - COLLECTIVE KNOWLEDGE:**

As the number of reviews increases, knowledge transfer may decline. To counter this, presentations and graphics should be designed for easy reuse across various meetings, ensuring the entire asset unit operates with the same verified information.

### **RULE NO. 36 - OPEN BOOKS:**

Never withhold information from reviewers and auditors. Both their credibility and yours are on the line. Present all relevant facts transparently, without making excuses.

### **RULE NO. 37 - UPDATED DATA:**

External reviews are particularly valuable in critical situations or when results fall short of expectations. These reviews provide current technical and business data, enabling swift and effective responses from the asset team. Failing to maintain updated data should be a valid reason for a manager to step down.

### **RULE NO. 38 - EMPOWERMENT:**

Never publicly undermine the empowerment of trusted staff. Even when corrections or changes are necessary, ensure your team retains ownership of implementation to uphold their sense of responsibility.

### **RULE NO. 39 - LEARNING FROM REVIEWS:**

Post-mortem or after-action reviews are valuable learning opportunities for the reviewed team, not the reviewers. A review holds no value if the team fails to extract lessons from it.

### **RULE NO. 40 - MEETING SIZE:**

Work meetings should ideally involve about six participants. Larger meetings are better suited for information sharing. Research shows that groups exceeding 12 participants, often waste time.

### **RULE NO. 41 - CLEAR AND SIMPLE PRESENTATIONS:**

Reports should match the audience's level of understanding. Present data clearly and concisely, ensuring even those with minimal familiarity can grasp the information. Simplifying data respects, rather than insults, intelligence.



## **RULE NO. 42 - NOT JUST PAPER:**

Managers who depend solely on documentation are at risk of common managerial failures. Effective management requires active engagement with data and operations.

## **RULE NO. 43 - KEEPING INFORMATION CURRENT:**

Documentation is static and can quickly become outdated. Distinguish between "what should be," "what is thought to have happened," and reality. Continuously update documentation to reflect real-time knowledge.

## **RULE NO. 44 - MONTHLY AND ANNUAL REPORTS:**

Don't assume that key monthly insights can be fully captured in annual summaries. If senior management thoroughly understood monthly reports, they wouldn't request annual recaps.

## **RULE NO. 45 - REASONABLE USE OF ABBREVIATIONS:**

Overusing abbreviations and symbols can confuse leadership. Use them sparingly to ensure clarity and avoid unnecessary complexity.

## **RULE NO. 46 - AVOID EXCESSIVE PAPERWORK:**

Creating excessive paperwork can be easier than reducing it, but it's rarely efficient. Focus on documentation that will save significant time and effort in the future.

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## CONTRACTORS AND CONTRACTS (RULES 47 TO 54)

### **RULE NO. 47 – HIGH STANDARDS FOR CONTRACTORS:**

An asset unit manager is not a direct supervisor of contractor work but is responsible for ensuring that the work meets the Asset Unit's satisfaction. In shared risk-and-reward arrangements, the manager must ensure contractors uphold the highest standards. Contractors don't fail—project managers fail when they accept subpar quality or low standards.

### **RULE NO. 48 – PROJECT MEASUREMENT SYSTEM:**

A recognition bonus is an effective tool to encourage discipline in both contractors and clients. The evaluation score reflects the project's status and the managerial competence of both parties. A Performance Measurement System (PMS) should verify these scores.

Mediocre evaluations call for management intervention to analyze and address underlying issues. Consistently high PMS scores indicate strong project management. However, if actual performance doesn't align with PMS evaluations, management must investigate the reasons for the discrepancy.

### **RULE NO. 49 – MORALE OF CONTRACTOR PERSONNEL:**

The morale of contractor personnel is critical to the success of the asset unit. Just as you wouldn't trust a car from a plant with unhappy workers or aircraft parts from a factory with demotivated employees, you should actively motivate all personnel involved in your projects or processes.

### **RULE NO. 50 – AVOIDING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:**

Maintaining a friendly and professional relationship with contractors is acceptable, but becoming personal friends can hinder achieving your objectives. If such a situation arises, separate personal relationships from professional obligations within the contract.

### **RULE NO. 51 – INTERFACE WITH CONTRACTORS:**

Remember that your contractor typically engages directly with your personnel. For each interface, you effectively dedicate at least one full-time contractor resource annually. Manage these interactions efficiently to optimize resource use.

### **RULE NO. 52 – QUALITY OF PERSONNEL:**

Contractors assess the quality of their counterparts within the Asset Unit and often select personnel accordingly. If they perceive your team as mediocre, they will assign less skilled personnel to your projects.



Ensure your team demonstrates competence to encourage contractors to do the same.

### **RULE NO. 53 – RESPECTING THE AGREED WORK PLAN:**

Contractors perform best when clients respect their agreed-upon work plans. Micromanaging or second-guessing the contractor's actions increases costs. While the client is technically "always right," frequent deviations from the agreed plan can lead to inefficiencies. Only intervene in the contractor's work plan when it is evident they may fail or when the costs of inaction are too high.

### **RULE NO. 54 – MEETING DEADLINES AND COSTS:**

The primary responsibility of an asset unit manager is to ensure client satisfaction. This requires delivering results on time (meeting deadlines), staying within budget (on-cost), and achieving agreed-upon outcomes. Success in these areas guarantees satisfaction for both you and the client.

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## ENGINEERS AND TECHNOLOGISTS (RULES 55 TO 59)

### **RULE NO. 55 – SIMPLE DESIGNS AND SOLUTIONS:**

Engineers often enjoy creating complex systems that attract attention. However, as an asset unit manager, ensure your engineers prioritize simple designs and straightforward solutions, even for complex problems. Simplicity enhances efficiency and reduces potential risks.

### **RULE NO. 56 – IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS EARLY:**

Problems often first appear in schedules or cost curves. Engineers, by nature optimistic, are frequently the last to recognize they're in trouble. Stay vigilant and address potential issues before they escalate.

### **RULE NO. 57 – SYNERGIZING:**

Your asset unit has significant resources, including in-house engineers, technicians, and contractors. Combining these resources creates a powerful collective of professionals. Leverage this synergy to address challenges and develop effective solutions.

### **RULE NO. 58 – INFORMATION AND INPUTS:**

Technical personnel and technologists working under specific projects or contracts depend on the asset unit manager for information and direction. Recognize them as internal clients who require your support. Often, these professionals have better access to top management than project managers themselves.

### **RULE NO. 59 – AGREED PLANS:**

Technicians are typically rational and willing to adapt if they trust your intentions. They'll support changes to previously agreed plans if they believe the adjustments improve their work through innovative practices or technologies. Be transparent and truthful in your communications.

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## HARDWARE AND EQUIPMENT (RULES 60 TO 61)

### **RULE NO. 60 – EQUIPMENT CHANGES:**

No hardware is specifically designed to meet every asset unit's unique needs. The people designing new equipment are unlikely to be familiar with its predecessors or their operators. Any changes—major or minor—will require time and effort for personnel to understand and manage. Be prepared to support your team during transitions.

### **RULE NO. 61 – OPERATIONAL RELIABILITY:**

Equipment often performs as it's constructed, not necessarily as it's designed. This disconnect can result from differences in engineering knowledge, manufacturing processes, or component quality versus design specifications. Applying operational reliability techniques is critical to understanding how equipment will behave under real-world conditions and estimating its lifespan.

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## COMPUTERS AND SOFTWARE (RULES 62 TO 65)

### **Rule No. 62 - COMPUTERS AND SOFTWARE DO NOT REPLACE HUMANS:**

Modern technology, such as advanced computer systems, is indispensable, but it cannot replace human analytical abilities and critical thinking. Rely on technology to enhance, not substitute, human decision-making.

### **Rule No. 63 - CONTINGENCY PLANS FOR SOFTWARE:**

Software continuously evolves, offering new functionalities. However, these updates often require reliable data inputs to function effectively. Before adopting advanced systems, ensure basic processes work well. Never eliminate a reliable software version without contingency plans in place, even if a newer version appears superior.

### **Rule No. 64 - DATA QUALITY:**

Simulations and field tests often validate knowledge, but poor-quality data in computerized models can create unexpected problems. Ensure data quality before relying on automated systems to avoid unreliable outcomes.

### **Rule No. 65 - MANAGING DEPENDENCY ON COMPUTERS:**

In the past, engineers and technicians relied on hands-on experience to solve problems. Today, most issues in computer systems require computers for resolution. While dependency on technology is inevitable, maintain a focus on fostering problem-solving skills alongside technical proficiency.

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## SENIOR MANAGEMENT OR DIRECTION (RULES 66 TO 71)

### **RULE NO. 66 – QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:**

Never assume you understand why Senior Management has made a particular decision. If you need clarification, ask. Their answers may surprise or even astonish you.

### **RULE NO. 67 – KNOWING THE COMPANY'S DIRECTION:**

Take the time to understand the Senior Management team and the overall direction of the company. Some leaders appreciate humor, but only if they're the ones telling jokes. Adapt your approach accordingly.

### **RULE NO. 68 – DECISIONS:**

Senior Management has the authority to make decisions, even if you disagree. Voice your concerns respectfully, but once a decision is made, focus on ensuring its successful implementation.

### **RULE NO. 69 – DECISION MAKING:**

Avoid escalating decisions to Senior Management that you are capable of making. Assume you have the authority to act unless there's a specific document outlining otherwise.

### **RULE NO. 70 – WORKING AS A TEAM:**

Your managerial team must operate cohesively. Leaders and supervisors should advocate for your Asset Unit's success and align with the decisions made within the unit. Their full support is essential to achieving your goals.

### **RULE NO. 71 – DECISION-MAKING INSTANCES:**

Understand the decision-making processes within your company. Be aware of individuals, including external stakeholders, who influence these decisions. Their collaboration could help secure approvals and ensure proposals are accepted.

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## PLANNING, BUDGETING, AND COST ANALYSIS (RULES 72 TO 79)

### **RULE NO. 72 – TIMELY RESOURCES:**

To meet deadlines, stay within budget, and manage risks effectively, ensure that the necessary resources are provided on time. Many challenges become manageable when the "rules of the game" are established early and maintained throughout the project.

### **RULE NO. 73 – COST ESTIMATION:**

Projects often exceed their budgets due to poor cost estimation rather than errors. While better estimates might slightly increase initial costs, they will improve your unit's reputation and ensure long-term industry success. Aim for accuracy rather than underestimating risks.

### **RULE NO. 74 – CONTINGENCIES:**

Problems can often be solved with enough time. Build sufficient contingency time into your schedules. If you fail to do so, someone else may take your place in the Asset Unit.

### **RULE NO. 75 – RESOURCE UTILIZATION:**

Older companies often tolerated surplus resources to push technological and operational boundaries. Today's companies operate with strict cost ceilings. Unused or surplus resources are no longer acceptable and must be utilized efficiently.

### **RULE NO. 76 – KNOWING RESOURCES:**

Familiarize yourself with the resources available in your Asset Unit and other units within the company. Other units are often willing to help if asked. It's surprising how much support you can receive by simply reaching out.

### **RULE NO. 77 – INFORMING AND COMMUNICATING THE PLAN:**

Budget-related information before approval should not remain a secret from your team. A well-informed team works better. Share the full vision of the Asset Reference Plan (PRA) or Asset Business Plan to foster alignment and transparency. Remember, failing to communicate is equivalent to withholding information.

### **RULE NO. 78 – COMPETITION FOR RESOURCES:**

Asset Units often compete for limited funds and resources. Instead of undermining other projects, highlight your project's merits and contributions. Focus on selling the value of your work rather than attacking competing programs.



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### **RULE NO. 79 – REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS:**

Every year seems like it will be the ideal year for budgets and schedules, but when it arrives, you may find yourself celebrating milestones toward retirement. Set realistic expectations to avoid unnecessary frustration.

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## THE CLIENT (RULE 80)

### RULE NO. 80 - KNOW YOUR CLIENT:

Always remember who your client is and what their objectives are. Consult with them whenever you plan to make significant changes to any asset under your responsibility.

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## CORPORATE MANAGEMENT INSTRUCTIONS (RULE 81)

### RULE NO. 81 – CHALLENGE THE RULES:

Corporate rules for asset management were written by employees like yourself. If the rules seem illogical or impractical, challenge them. Your feedback might lead to improvements or rewrites that benefit everyone.

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## DECISION MAKING (RULES 82 TO 84)

### **RULE NO. 82 - TIMELY DECISIONS AND SOLUTIONS:**

Mistakes made early in an asset's life cycle should be corrected promptly. Decisions made late in the asset's life often cannot fully reverse earlier errors.

### **RULE NO. 83 - LISTEN:**

Sometimes the most helpful thing you can do is simply listen. As a leader, avoid always solving others' problems for them—it can make you their worker instead of their boss. Listening often provides the clarity they need to find their own solutions.

### **RULE NO. 84 - INFORMATION FOR DECISION-MAKING:**

Avoid making decisions based solely on drawings or sketches. Ensure you understand the actual equipment, systems, and updated documentation, such as certified manuals or process guides. Relying on outdated or oversimplified diagrams often leads to wasted effort and poor outcomes.

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**ETHICS AND INTEGRITY (RULES 85 TO 86)**

**RULE NO. 85 - ETHICS:**

Transparency and honesty are essential to achieving goals. Concealing important information from your boss may offer short-term relief, but it will harm your reputation and long-term success.

**RULE NO. 86 - INTEGRITY:**

Integrity builds trust within your team. When subordinates trust you, they are more likely to follow your lead and work collaboratively toward shared goals.

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## PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND TEAMWORK (RULES 87 TO 91)

### **RULE NO. 87 – TEAMWORK:**

Success in Asset Unit projects depends on teamwork. Think of yourself as a coach, not a boss. Coaches must promote and facilitate key plays while empowering their teams.

### **RULE NO. 88 – ASK AND VERIFY:**

Never assume tasks have been completed or information is known. Always ask and verify. Even the most obvious tasks can be overlooked, especially in high-stress environments.

### **RULE NO. 89 – RESOURCES:**

Criticizing asset managers for requesting resources (labeling them as "whiners") reflects a misunderstanding of the job. Managing an asset unit often requires pushing for resources as working with insufficient support is rarely productive.

### **RULE NO. 90 – COMPLETE INFORMATION:**

A puzzle is impossible to solve with only one piece. When team members lack full information, they are more likely to reach incorrect conclusions. Share as much context as possible to ensure accuracy.

### **RULE NO. 91 – KEEPING EVERYONE HAPPY:**

The President, Directors, Managers, Project Managers, and clients all have their own priorities. Part of your job is to manage relationships and keep them satisfied while achieving your unit's goals.

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## HANDLING AND AVOIDING FAILURES (RULES 92 TO 100)

### **RULE NO. 92 - ANALYZE FAILURES:**

When a failure occurs, create a timeline of events and document all known facts.

Test theories against the facts, avoid jumping to conclusions, and ensure every deviation is explained. A rushed or inaccurate conclusion is a precursor to future failures.

### **RULE NO. 93 - DUPLICATE WHAT WORKS WELL:**

Mistakes offer valuable lessons, but so do successes. Identify and replicate what works well to improve future outcomes.

### **RULE NO. 94 - HIGH-RISK TASKS:**

Mistakes are part of learning, but failures are not acceptable. A failure is simply a mistake you cannot recover from.

For high-risk tasks, prepare contingency plans and alternative options to mitigate risks.

### **RULE NO. 95 - HISTORICAL FAILURE RECORDS:**

The history of failures is a valuable guide to potential issues.

No project or process is flawless, but preparedness and learning from the past are critical to success.

### **RULE NO. 96 - LEARNING BY DOING:**

Experience is valuable, but hands-on learning is even more effective. Knowing how something should work is no substitute for methods that prove it works in practice.

### **RULE NO. 97 - LEARNING FROM MISTAKES:**

Do not fear failure; it is a steppingstone to success. Focus on learning from mistakes and cultivate the skill of identifying who has also learned from them.

### **RULE NO. 98 - KNOWING THE RULES AND FACTS:**

One of the organization's early strengths was that everyone knew the rules, the facts, and the risks. Maintaining this awareness is crucial for sustained success.

### **RULE NO. 99 - ENSURING MISSION SUCCESS:**

Redundancy in equipment and infrastructure can be deceptive. If identical systems are built, failure in one often leads to failure in the other. Customize hardware and systems to guarantee mission success.

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### **RULE NO. 100 – ZERO EXCUSES:**

Never offer excuses. Instead, focus on presenting actionable solutions and identifying opportunities to create value.

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### **REFERENCE FOR THIS DOCUMENT:**

This document is an adaptation of the original “One Hundred Rules for NASA Project Managers”. Adapted for Leaders and Managers in the Context of Asset Units and Prepared in Spanish and English by José Luis Ortiz Volcán – Consultant, OptimaWell, and this latest revision is dated January 12, 2025.

“One Hundred Rules for NASA Project Managers” Lessons Learned were Compiled by Jerry Madden, Associate Director of the Flight Projects Directorate at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center.

Jerry collected the original 100 rules over several years from various unidentifiable sources. Later the rules were edited by Rod Stewart of Mobile Data Services in Huntsville, Alabama on January 1, 1995 and updated on July 9, 1996.

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