

The Resource Management Recipe

By Tracy Gibson

Resource Management is like baking a cake, and there is a recipe that must be followed.

Have you ever tried baking a cake from scratch, and the results could have made you feel like a competitor on “Nailed it”? You’re not alone – in most of these failed baking attempts there was a part of the recipe that was missed, mis-understood, or you had the wrong ingredients, or missed directions. Resource management is a lot like baking a cake—if you misread the recipe, use the wrong ingredients, or don’t have the proper tools, the final result won’t taste right!



The goal is to follow a "full proof recipe" to stand up your resource management process and deliver value!

Why This Matters

In many organizations with any sort of resource management function, there are many shared challenges. Recent studies show that resource managers are still working to show and deliver value. Understanding this is crucial because there has been an emphasis on the tools we use, which are incredibly important. Like in the kitchen, we do need a good working reliable oven. Sometimes the oven is extra fancy! However, regardless of how wonderful, impressive, and capable the oven is, if we do not follow the recipe (with the correct ingredients and directions) exactly, it will impact the quality and value of the cake.

Three Key Components for Success:

1. **The Recipe:** Skillsets + Resource Requests = A Solid Staffing Confirmation

- What it is: This formula combines the available talent with project needs to confirm who will work on what.
- Why it matters: Even with good "ingredients," you need the right "directions" to bake successfully.
- How to do it:
 - Skillsets (Ingredients): You need an updated, accessible, and maintained database of skillsets – like an organized spice rack or pantry.
 - Resource Requests (Directions): There must be a function to capture detailed requests for needs, including dates, rates, deliverables, and project specifics – like preheating the oven and mixing ingredients.
 - Pro Tip: Resource management expertise helps when you need to substitute a skill or negotiate a direction, much like substituting an ingredient in baking.

2. **The ingredients:** Quality of Data: Substitutions

- What it is: There cannot be cake without the ingredients (Data) needed to make the cake!
- Why it matters:
 - Skillsets: Like the beauty and ease of an organized pantry and spice rack, your data should be contained within an updated, accessible, and maintained database.
 - Quality of the data "ingredients" is mission critical because it directly impacts the final outcome. If you use the "wrong ingredients," the final result won't taste right.
 - Value of the "cake" (the resource management process's outcome) will be negatively affected if the "ingredients" are not used correctly.
- Fundamentally, the "quality of data" is paramount for effective resource management. Without the necessary ingredients, or if they are of poor quality, the "cake" can become "inedible," leading to gaps in the value a resource manager can provide.
- Pro Tip: Resource management expertise becomes vital when there's a need to "substitute a skill," much like a baker might substitute an ingredient. To have a clear understanding of your "ingredients" (data + skillsets) allows for informed substitutions when the ideal skill isn't available.

3. **The Kitchen:** Tools and Software

- What it is: These are the essential tools, software, and even the "kitchen crew" and "oven" needed to make the cake.
- Why it matters: Regardless of how fancy your "oven" (tools) is, if you don't follow the "recipe," the quality will suffer. Missing any part of the "kitchen" (tools, gadgets, or people) will lead to an "inedible cake" and gaps in the value a resource manager can provide.
- In essence, effective resource management requires both a clear formula (the recipe) for matching skills to needs and the right supporting infrastructure (the kitchen) to consistently deliver value.

To recap: To fully deliver value the resource manager must have the formula for staffing established. Skillsets + Resource Requests = A Solid Staffing Confirmation.

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Resource Manager with over 14 years of experience aligning talent, projects, and organizational goals. She specializes in optimizing workforce planning, improving operational efficiency, and fostering high-performing teams. Tracy is passionate about elevating the role of resource management as a strategic driver of business success. She brings a people-first approach to balancing capacity and demand, ensuring projects thrive and employees feel supported. Tracy authored this article to share some insights she thinks you will find useful.