

Attributes of a Good Assurance Provider

Independent

- Be able to work without fear or favour
- Keep a professional distance from the project team
- Having the strength to stand by evidence based findings and defensible recommendations however they are received

Empathy

- Establishing common understanding with projects based on experience gained from having been there
- Empathy doesn't mean agreeing always, but recognising and acknowledging their challenges
- Having empathy will help ensure recommendations contribute to the project's success

Listen

- Hearing the meaning behind the words, not just the surface – active listening
- Ask open ended questions
- Be ok with silence during conversations, to allow the other person to gather their thoughts
- Be prepared with what information to elicit from the person

Questioning Mind

- Curiosity is important
- Question things, don't take things at face value
- Look for the substance behind the information provided



Communication

- Communication needs to be nuanced recognising the shades of grey in a situation
- Deliver the hard messages in a way that is accepted and acted on
- Avoid jargon and shortcuts in terminology
- Simple and straightforward is best

Humility

- Approach a project without prejudging, without impatience or condescension
- Being humble can help reduce resistance to having an assurance review
- Demonstrate capability while not acting arrogantly
- A sense of humility creates genuineness

Pessimism

- Be able to see the negative consequences of the project's actions
- Consider the different permutations of a scenario to help ensure bases are covered
- A black hat view helps to highlight potential issues before they arise

Perspective

- Exposing analysis to trusted outside thinking ensures findings and recommendations are defensible and evidence based
- Asking "so what" is critical
- Understanding what recommendations are material to a project's success ensures the assurance review adds value and not just ticks boxes

