

# Essential Upskills - Solar Project Management Series

*A Live Skills Accelerator for Project Managers, APMs, and P.E.s*

**Email us at [info@generationsolar.us](mailto:info@generationsolar.us) to learn more about operations workshops for your team.**

## Summary

A four-part series of live, interactive workshops that will build technical knowledge, reduce errors, and build foundational career skills. Focused on utility-scale and commercial solar operations teams.

## Workshop 1

### Stop Hoping, Start Scoping

*Understanding Solar EPC and Subcontractor Contract Scopes of Work, Change Orders, and Handoffs*

---

Solar project construction often involves a dozen or more different contractors, from geotechnical engineers to electrical testing and commissioning providers. Managing who is responsible for what, and when, is a challenge. Any gaps in the plan can lead to costly, last-minute budget overruns, or worse, significant schedule delays due to poor planning.

In the drive to get the job done, project managers are often under pressure to perform work that wasn't planned or budgeted for - commonly known as "scope creep." In this workshop, we'll talk about how to avoid scope creep by clearly communicating internally and externally.

## Outcomes

Everyone who attends the workshop will...

1. Understand the most common places where scope is defined in EPC contracts, engineered drawings, EPC bids, and common solar subcontracts.
2. Understand what change orders are and how to use them to protect against out-of-scope work or inefficiencies caused by others.
3. Understand the most common sources of confusion about scope and scope creep on solar projects.
4. Be able to use communication tools like handoff sequences and scope matrices to avoid miscommunication about scope requirements.

## Workshop 2

### Beneath the Surface

*Managing Subsurface Risks as a Solar Project Manager*

---

Many of the risks to solar projects emerge from where the sun never shines - bedrock, gravel, unstable soils, fat clay, high groundwater tables, methane... The list of subsurface challenges is a lineup of common reasons for projects failing to go according to plan, leading to behind-schedule and over-budget projects.

In this workshop, we introduce the most common subsurface geotechnical risks that project managers will encounter, along with how they can be spotted and managed.

## Outcomes

Everyone who attends the workshop will...

1. Know the most common red flags for subsurface issues
2. Know the basics of where to find information in soil testing reports such as geotech and pull test reports
3. Understand common contractual risks related to subsurface conditions
4. Know common methods for addressing or avoiding subsurface issues.

## Workshop 3

### Labor of Love

*How Project Managers Impact Labor Budget Performance*

---

At the core of solar project managers' duties is a responsibility to make sure that construction activities can go smoothly. Yet labor costs are the most common direct source for over-budget projects. While project managers are not always on-site, their decisions have massive impacts on field teams. In this workshop, we introduce the foundational methods for understanding and managing labor risk in solar construction projects. Using case studies of projects that went off track, we discuss warning signs and how to avoid the root causes of inefficient labor.

## Outcomes

Everyone who attends the workshop will...

1. Understand core labor concepts including efficiency, "runway," production rates, and lean construction methods.
2. Understand labor resource planning tools and techniques
3. Know how to track progress on site, evaluate labor efficiency, and revise project schedule.
4. Know how to identify and prevent the most common resource-related threats to efficient field operations

## Workshop 4

### Take the Money Off the Table

*Negotiate Better Deals with Integrity*

---

Almost everyone at your company negotiates. Some negotiate directly with clients. Others negotiate with vendors, partners, and even within teams. Yet most solar professionals have never been taught how to negotiate well, with integrity, and in a way that creates win-wins for everyone involved. As a result, most teams leave huge amounts of value on the table. Lost revenue and margin, reduced efficiency, and unnecessary frustration with roles and responsibilities are common results of poor negotiation.

## Outcomes

Everyone who attends the workshop will...

1. Know key principles of negotiation and how to apply them to solar business challenges.

2. Practice negotiating in one of the following scenarios:
  - a. Negotiating a contract with a construction subcontractor
  - b. Negotiating for a change order with a client
  - c. Negotiating a purchase order with a material supplier
3. Leave the workshop with a plan for how they will apply their negotiation skills to upcoming company goals.
4. Have a personalized “Negotiation Cheat Sheet” to refresh their memory prior to important meetings.

Email us at [info@generationsolar.us](mailto:info@generationsolar.us) to learn more about workshops for your team.