

## *What does your job have in common with a mission to Mars? Actually, more than you might think.*

You're probably not tackling a project as dramatic as landing on another planet. But chances are you're being asked to do things differently. To pick up speed, upgrade quality, and lower costs.

You're not alone. “Faster-better-cheaper” is the market battle cry being sounded around the world. Organizations everywhere are in a competitive race—trying to do things quicker, improve output, and do it all for less money.

Let's look at a particularly fascinating example.

On July 4, 1997, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) landed the Pathfinder spacecraft on the surface of Mars. Perhaps you were one of the fascinated millions watching TV or logging onto the Internet to see the Sojourner rover roll onto the rugged terrain of the Red Planet. People the world over—young and old, from all walks of life—watched in wonder as the little machine explored the rocky surface for clues to the evolution of Mars and hints to whether life could have existed there.

While the Viking mission had landed two spacecraft on Mars back in 1976, there were several remarkable differences with Pathfinder. First, the Pathfinder mission was completed much faster—in three years instead of six. Second, Pathfinder was actually three spacecraft in one, with much better technology and engineering, and including the first robotic explorer to roam the surface of another planet. Finally, the Pathfinder mission was 15 times cheaper than the previous Viking mission.

Faster...better...cheaper.

How was the small band of JPL scientists, engineers, and support team members able to accomplish this feat? And why did this particular mission capture the imagination of hundreds of millions of people around the world? Several reasons. But according to Flight System Manager Brian Muirhead, the key success factor was *people*.

Pathfinder displayed creative engineering. It achieved scientific breakthroughs. But Brian is quick to point out that those innovations were possible only because of the people involved.

“Faster-better-cheaper” doesn't just happen. It takes an eye for innovation. A determined effort to discover new, more powerful approaches. We must become explorers...adventurers...more willing to experiment, and much better at managing risk.

We interviewed Brian Muirhead to study the success of the Pathfinder project. We spent days listening to him describe the spirit and creativity of the Pathfinder team. His insights are condensed here into 13 lessons which serve as living proof that “faster-better-cheaper” works in deep space as well as it does on Earth. Each lesson is followed by an example from Brian's experience, giving us direct insight into how this mission to Mars was so successful.

We invite you to start practicing the Pathfinder approach outlined here. You'll come to believe more in possibilities and less in limitations. You'll find the courage to stretch for great achievements. Finally, you'll become more innovative, and you'll create some of the most meaningful, exciting, and fun experiences of your life.