



WEAPONS OF A PERFECT PROJECT MANAGER

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Introduction

As every child is special Every project is special and unique in terms of the problems that arise, while setting the priorities and resources assigned it , the environment in which it operates and the project manager's attitude and style used to guide and control project activities, since each project is meant for something. Therefore there is a need that the organizational structure for the project must be designed to fit within that project's operating constraints, budgets and time limits. The organizational structure implemented may not be the same structure used throughout the life cycle of the project due to changes in priorities available resources, project personal, laws and other contingencies. What kind of project management structure chosen, management must realize that a dynamic state of equilibrium between limited personal and financial resources and the objectives of the project will be necessary if project management is to be successful in their particular organization. Hence some of the operational definitions are discussed hereunder..

Projects: Any task activity within an organization could be labeled as a project, possessing unique characteristics and varying levels of importance to the organization. A project is defined as a planned undertaking of related activities to reach an objective that has a logical beginning and an end.

Project Management : It is defined as “ the application of a collection of tools and techniques .. to direct the use of diverse resources towards the accomplishment of a unique, complex , one time task within time, cost and quality constraints. Each task requires a particular mix of these tools and techniques structured to fit the task environment and life cycle, from conception to completion of the task.

There is a need for Employing project management, technologies minimizes the disruptive of routine business activities in many cases by placing under a single command all of the skills, technologies and resources needed to realize the project set. The skills required depend on each specific project and the resources available at that time. The greater the amount of adjustments a parent organization must make a fulfill project objectives, the greater chance exists for project failure, in order to avoid these kind of complexions.. The form of project

management will be unique for every project endeavor and will change throughout the project, since time dependent of these tasks..

Literature Review :

There are various studies carried out on Project Management has been studied from many different perspectives. Some Practitioners have studied project management tools and job functions (Frame 2003; Heldman 2003, Schwalbe 2004; Taylor 2004) that lead to successful managed projects, while academics have studied the impact of various socio-psychological factors on project management(Barki & Hartwick 2001; Beath ,1987; Birkhead , utherland & Maxwell 2000; Foster 2001 ; Keil & Robey 1999; Kirsch 1997; Yetton et al,2000) Schwalbe 2004) noted the importance of project management integration including project score management , project time management, project cost management, project quality management, project human resources management, project communications management, project risk management and project procurement management. Until that 1980s , project management tools , such as work breakdown structures and Gantt Charts, were used primarily to provide schedule and resource data to upper management (Schwalbe , 2004). However with improvements in automated project management software, many organization have found these project management tools.

Approaches :

Some of the approaches to managing project activities including Lean , iterative, incremental and phased approaches. Without going into methodology employed , careful consideration must be given to the overall project objectives, timeline and cost as well as the roles and responsibilities of all participants and stakeholders.

Traditional Approach

This is Traditional Approach, first it identifies a sequence of steps to be followed for completion. That is this is a step by step approach. In this traditional approach, five developmental components of a project can be distinguished and they are

1. initiation
2. planning and design
3. execution and construction
4. monitoring and controlling systems
5. completion

Initiation : the project management techniques related to the project initiation include

- a) Establishing the project initiation plan
- b) Establishing management procedures
- c) Establishing the project initiation team
- d) Establishing a relationship with the customer
- e) Establishing the project management environment and workbook.

Planning: The planning management techniques related to the project planning phase and will include

- a) Dividing the project into sub tasks.
- b) Estimating resources and creating a resource plan for their allocation
- c) Developing a preliminary schedule
- d) Describing project scope, alternatives and their feasibilities
- e) Developing a communication plan
- f) Determining project standards and procedures for their implementation
- g) Identifying and assessing risk

- h) Developing a statement of work
- i) Creating a preliminary budget
- j) Setting a baseline project plan.

Executing : The one of the important job of the project manager is to initiate the execution of project activities , acquire and assign resources, orient and train new team members keep the project on schedule and assure the quality of project deliverables.

- a) Managing changes to the baseline project plan.
- b) Monitoring project against the baseline project plan.
- c) Maintaining the project workbook.
- d) Communicating the project status.

Closing : In this stage, it is important to give information to all interested parties of the completion of the project. Also. All project documentation and records should be finalized so that the final review of the project can be conducted.

- a) Conducting post project reviews : This is done to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the project deliverables, the processes used to create them and the project management process.
- b) Closing the customer contract : The final activity is to ensure that all contractual terms of the project have been met.

Tools

Some of the major tools used in project management are

- 1) **Critical Chain Project Management** : Scientific and reason based method id Critical Chain Project Management(CCPM) is a method of planning and managing project execution designed to deal with uncertainties inherent in managing projects , while taking into consideration limited availability of resources , includes physical, human skills and management support, needed to execute projects. CCPM is an application of the Theory of Constraint(TOC) to projects. The goal is to increase the flow of projects in an organization. Finally projects are planned and managed to ensure that the resources are ready when the critical chain tasks must start , subordinating all other resources to the critical chain.
- 2) **Event Chain Methodology** : The sequence of event are considered in this Event Chain Methodology is another method wherein complements critical path method and critical chain project management methodologies. Event Chain Methodology is an uncertainty modeling and schedule network analysis technique that is focused on identifying and managing events and event chains that affect project schedules.
- 3) **PERT, CPM** :This method basically involves developing an estimated duration and labor requirements for each task. Interdependencies in tasks are identified so that tasks that cab be completed at the same time are identified. Boxes and arrows are used to diagram the total project task by task , including any interdependencies, in task and then a critical path is identified. A graphics representation called a Project Network or CPM diagram is used to portray graphically the interrelationships of the elements of a project an to show the order in which the activities must be performed. PERT planning involves the following steps. Critical Path: The Critical path is a powerful tool for project managers as it allows when dealing with the initial project plan as well as with changes to the project. Trade-off project scope with budget and cost with risk, giving sponsor and stakeholder choices while maintaining the feasibility of the project.
- 4) **Gantt Chart** : A Gantt Chart is a bar chart which displays planned and actual progress of a project against projected time limits. Gantt Charts are used to show calendar time task assignments in days, weeks or months. The Tool uses graphic representation to show start, elapsed and completed times of

each task within a project. Gantt Charts are ideal for tracking progress. The number of days actually required to complete a task that reaches a milestone can be compared with the planned or estimated number. The actual workdays from actual start to actual finish, are plotted below the schedule days. This information helps target potential timeline slippage or failure points. These charts serve as a valuable budgeting tool and can show resources allocated along with spent resources.

- 5) **Earned Value Management** : It is known as Earned Value Management(EVM) , technique used to track the accomplishment of a project and variances between planned and actual costs and time schedules. This tool allows the project manager to integrate scope, time and cost data. Data from EVM are used to develop charts that help the project manager and senior management to visualize how the project team is performing, with time and resource.
- 6) **PRISM or Project Integrating Sustainable Methods** : This is a process-based structure project management methodology that introduces areas of sustainability and integrates them into four core project phases in order to maximize opportunities to improve sustainability and the use of finite resources. The Methodology includes the management, control and organization of a project with consideration and emphasis beyond the project life-cycle and on the five aspects of sustainability.
- 7) **Agile Project Management** : A more advanced one is the Agile project management approach is based on the principles of human interaction management, founded on a process view of human collaboration. It is most typically used in software, website , technology , creative and marketing industry. This is totally contrasts sharply with the traditional approach. In the agile software development or flexible product development approach, the process is seen as a series of relatively small tasks, conceived and executed as the situation demands in an adaptive manner, rather than a completely pre-planned process.
- 8) **Lean Project Management** : Lean Project Management uses principles from Lean manufacturing to focus on delivering value with less waste, focuses mainly on the delivery with reduced wastage with respect to resources, which is scarce..
- 9) **Extreme Project Management** : In critical studies of project management it has been noted that several PERT based models are not well suited for the multi-project company environment of today. Most of them are aimed at very large scale, one time for such projects Extreme project management is used to touch multi-disciplinary tasks, unlike PERT.
- 10) **Benefit Realization Management** : This is also one of the latest trends in project management tools, where Benefits realization management (BRM) enhances normal project management techniques through a focus on agreeing what outcomes should change during the project and then measuring to see if that is happening to help keep a project on track. This can help to reduce the risk of a completed project being a failure as instead of attempting to deliver agreed requirements, the aim is to deliver the benefit of those requirements.
- 11) **Project Portfolio Management** : Suiting to the current generation and an increasing number of organizations are using, the innovative concepts of Project Portfolio Management(PPM) as means of selecting the right projects and then using project management techniques as the means for delivering the outcomes in the form of benefits to the performing private or nor profit organization, focus is more based on the suitable project selection , in order to reach the organizational goal..

Conclusions :

An organization's current practices , training, human resources and past experience can ensure that they will be able to deliver projects, on time , on budge and providing the desired functionality. However, projects carried out in public sector organizations are more likely to be delivered late, since stages it has to pass before it can really start. This is due to the increased oversight and numerous contingencies involved in those projects. Managers in such kind of organizations need to be aware of the difficulties, project managers face in these environment and strive to provide resources to overrun the obstacles of working in the public sector and some project are not at all taken up in future.

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