4th edition

PROJECT
MANAGEMENT

A practical guide to planning
and managing projects

Stephen Hartley

will not be as pronounced as in the example provided. Rather, it should serve as a model reminder to always consider each competency not in isolation, but rather as a subset of a greater plan to deliver the project on time, on budget and in scope.   1.1

Review questions

1.1 What is meant by the term 'project management'?
1.2 How does project management differ from project leadership?
1.3 What are the four variables/constraints forming the initial project boundary?
1.4 How do methodologies assist in the planning and management of projects?
1.5 What are the benefits in following a life-cycle approach to project management?

Case study

The last thing everyone wanted was yet another project. But why would this executive meeting be any different from the last one, the one before that and all the other meetings the managers had sat through?

After all, it wasn't as though they didn't have enough to do already with their operational work, not to mention the fire-fighting and other daily priorities that kept on popping up. To say everyone was simply over-loaded was an under-statement, though it didn't seem to register with the CEO as she walked in to the Monday meeting.

Bypassing anything resembling a meaningful agenda, Barbara launched straight into the new projects she had for the organisation to implement. Devoid of any prior discussion with her managers about the feasibility of any of these alleged projects, her executive managers knew only too well that these ideas (at best) would more than likely drift off into a state of inaction within a month or two as the CEO would subsequently find newer projects to over-write the last lot.

As the managers listened (or perhaps pretended to), Chris, the facili-ties manager and the newest member of the executive management team, opened his notebook and readied himself to take notes. He tried hard not to get caught up in the euphoria that Barbara projected about her projects as she explained her ideas to everyone. What surprised Chris, though, was the lack of any details about the projects, apart from a vague

> There was no description of what the project's objective was, its justification, what it was going to deliver (apart from kudos for Barbara, it seemed) or how much funding was needed, let alone how long the project would take or who would be involved.

sentence or two about what Barbara wanted done. How odd, he thought.

There was no description of what the project's objective was, its justification, what it was going to deliver (apart from kudos for Barbara, it seemed) or how much funding was needed, let alone how long the project would take or who would be involved. Chris knew this was the information everyone needed if they were going to be involved in any constructive dialogue with their CEO.

Chris sat quietly as the other managers tried to question the CEO, with little success. Appearing to grow ever-protective of her projects, Barbara became increasingly defensive as she allocated projects around the room. Any backbone the executive management team had walked in with was being quickly eroded as project files were tossed in front of them.

Somewhat bemused, if not a little disillusioned, Chris continued watching and waiting patiently for his turn. It turned out that Chris was swamped with four new projects in addition to his current operational workload, which was nowhere near up to date. So his reality was that very little would get completed any time soon, projects or not.

As he and the others prepared to leave the meeting—all equally deflated and frustrated—Chris recalled something one of his former bosses had instilled in him:

An idea is simply that—an idea. So don't go calling it a project unless you have done some preliminary investigation as to what is required, how much will it cost, how long will it take and who will do the work. If you can answer those questions, you have yourself a project. If you can't, all you have is another thought bubble crowding someone's to-do list.

Chris knew his boss was right then, and he was right now. The whole meeting had been unproductive; it had been wasted on fast-tracked ideas unencumbered by any attempt to reality check. Chris knew it was so simple to correct this enthusiastic sponsorship of one's own ideas, but like the other managers, he felt unable to speak up.

Questions

1. Why do you think the CEO's projects can't yet realistically be classified as projects?
2. What is wrong with escalating thought bubbles, ideas and suggestions to project status in order to get them up and running?
3. Over and above the suggestions Chris's boss made, what other advice would you give the managers with regard to assessing the projects put forward by Barbara?
4. How would you describe Barbara's management and leadership style? Justify your answer.
5. In the above scenario, what stage of the project management life-cycle would you say Barbara and her managers are in, and is it the right stage? Justify your answer.

Review questions

2.1 Define strategic management and its relationship to project management

2.2 What are the challenges involved in trying to balance operational work with project work?

2.3 What are some examples of possible justification criteria in selecting projects?

2.4 What role does governance play in project management?

2.5 Explain how project organisations can demonstrate maturity. Why is this important, and what are some of the possible benefits accruing from the maturity model concept?

Case study

Everyone thought they were pretty good at what they did; the only problem was that everyone did something quite different in the way they planned and managed their projects.

To an outsider, it looked as though each business unit and their franchised project management knowledge base were secretly and securely archived in the nearest basement. And whatever the project footprint actually was, it seemed to be well and truly hidden in an apparent cloak of invisibility.

As the contracted project management consultant, Justin was justifiably frustrated at how the organisation was even able to operate in the project management space, let alone promote itself as a centre of project management excellence.

So where to start?

Justin began by reviewing as much project management collateral as he could locate (given the basement mindset he had already encountered). Finding a meagre paper trail, he then selected key managers and staff to interview, circulated his questions in advance and proceeded to elicit as much information as he could from each of the one-hour sessions. Finally, he invited himself in to the boardroom and attended a number of operational and strategic meetings (as a silent observer) while making extensive notes on what transpired.

Back at his desk, Justin laid out all the corporate promotional literature, project documents, interview records, meeting minutes and anecdotal information he had collected wandering the corridors and lunch room during his first week onsite. As he reviewed what he found, he made the following notes:

- Projects sprang up randomly and were quickly endorsed with little if any apparent justification process or criteria.
- There was no attempt to classify (or scale) each project or to position it within the strategic plan.
- Projects resided in their operational location with little consideration given to possible organisational-wide commitments and challenges.
- Existing standard operating procedures were the sole repository of any attempt to apply best-practice project management principles and practice.
- Various generic governance protocols (applicable to the not-for-profit sector) were apparent; however, issues of oversight, independence, accountability, performance management and reactive risk management were evident.
- The documented audit trail for each project was minimal, with much produced spontaneously on the fly as the project was delivered.
- As Justin reread his comments, he felt comfortable describing the project management maturity of the organisation as being at Level 1 on the five-point maturity scale. While he was confident in this analysis, he still marvelled at how some of the projects he had reviewed had actually been deemed successful by the organisation, despite their ad hoc practices, little opportunity for professional development, reactive performance and siloed self-interest.

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Questions

1 What factors would have triggered the organisation to engage a project management consultant in the first place?

2 What recommendations do you think Justin should put forward and how would each one benefit the project and the organisation?

3 Is it really such a major issue that standard operating procedures are used 'exclusively' in planning and managing projects? Justify your answer.

4 Justin identified a number of governance issues impacting the organisation's project management practices. How could each of those cited be improved and what would be the direct benefit to the project and the organisation?

5 What might the organisation look like when it achieves Level 2 project management maturity?

(Your authority to take this action might also help you determine whether you are in fact the project manager and not just a project or team 'leader'.)

Critical reflection 3.3

You have just read that stakeholder management isn't exactly the same as stakeholder control, although the distinction between the two can be slight in some cases (you will find this distinction in all the PMBOK knowledge areas in this text).

- What evidence do you have that your project stakeholders are being managed effectively?
- What evidence do you have that your project stakeholders are being controlled effectively?
- Is there a discernible difference between your two answers (after all, control is a subset of managing)?
- How do you feel about this distinction: is it justified or simple semantics, playing with words?
- What improvements could you make in both managing and controlling your project stakeholders?

Review questions

3.1 Define what is meant by the term 'stakeholder management'.

3.2 Why is it important to identify the stakeholders in any project?

3.3 What information would a stakeholder plan contain?

3.4 What are examples of different stakeholder engagement strategies?

3.5 Why does the process of stakeholder management need to be controlled?

Case study

The simple truth was that Marty didn't like that many people.

Okay, so he was an introvert—not that that should have had any direct bearing on how he engaged his project stakeholders. After all, he could socialise, knew lots of people and generally felt comfortable contributing to the meetings he attended.

With limited frontline experience, Marty was nominated for this project given his policy credentials and attention to detail. And as head of his state government policy unit, Marty certainly got things done. Of course with a stable team of only three, there was very little dissent as everyone seemed to get along just fine, which certainly created a productive working environment.

As Marty prepared for his first stakeholder meeting, he knew exactly how he would engage with, manage and control this cohort of project stakeholders. Not only did he need to work with the government ministers, advisers, the governance committee, project board, different department heads across the state and industry bodies; he would also be dealing with senior managers, consultants, SMEs and junior staff from different departments—in short, a dynamic mix of roles, egos, agendas and influence.

Over dinner the previous night, his partner Ellen had tried to help by encouraging Marty to map out who this diverse pool of people were—to which Marty had tersely replied, 'I need to know a whole lot more than just who they are.' Realising that Marty had missed the point, Ellen politely suggested he try the following:

- Record who they are.
- Understand what role they play.
- Confirm their level of involvement.
- Identify the information they need.
- Develop a targeted communication strategy.

Once Marty came to realise how his fear of engaging with these 'powerful' people could be broken down into just a couple of steps, he felt more at ease. All he needed was a couple of columns on a page where he could record the points Ellen had suggested. A quick Google search produced myriad designs for stakeholder management, communications management and stakeholder engagement.

With a little 'poetic licence', Marty created his own design and went to work filling in the blank columns and rows with what he knew about each stakeholder. It wasn't long before Marty knew that he actually didn't know a whole lot about the people at all. Sure, he could make something up or try to guess the information but he knew he

> . . . much of the information would be gathered progressively throughout the project, given that some stakeholders came and went as the project progressed.

was only kidding himself if he did that. But if he didn't have the necessary information to profile these people, what would he do?

As he discussed this dilemma with Ellen, Marty realised that much of the information could be gathered by reviewing past project documentation (project plans, communication plans, risk registers, lessons learned logs) with which these stakeholders had been involved, accessing their position descriptions, direct interviews, informal conversations and/or as part of the initial and ongoing project meetings he had scheduled. After all, much of the information would be gathered progressively throughout the project, given that some stakeholders came and went as the project progressed.

As the night wore on, Marty knew he could in fact begin the process of identifying, engaging, managing and controlling these stakeholders.

Questions

1   What is the connection between stakeholder management and project success?
2   Why does Marty think that simply identifying project stakeholders isn't enough in order to ultimately engage, manage and control them?
3   Planning for stakeholder management implies that ad hoc communication will not work. Justify this assertion.
4   Why does Marty think stakeholder management is a process over time and not a point in time?
5   What information would Marty capture in a stakeholder management matrix?

Case study

The conference had been in the planning phase for some months. However despite it being the sixth international conference the institute had held, the organising committee was falling further and further behind in getting the event planned. And the problem wasn't the lack of commitment, the lack of time or the lack of delegates wanting to attend (given that prior conferences had historically produced a staggering number of speakers and delegates).

The chair of the organising committee (Ian Keenan) sat in his office rewriting the agenda he wanted to get out before Friday's meeting. As he reread his notes, he realised that both he and the committee had missed some key information regarding how they were approaching the planning and management of the conference and that they would have to go back to square one if they were to make this conference a success. While the committee had access to the planning files from last year, Ian had always been reluctant to rely solely on this information as the past was not always a good predictor of the future. However, he now knew that the committee had done exactly that: it had copied the brief template from last year and simply updated the information where needed.

Clearly his committee needed to put together some type of document (and process) that captured not only what the conference was actually about, but more importantly what the board's and CEO's expectations were, and how these would be managed and controlled proactively once the project was underway. While he was confident that his event coordinator would ensure the conference timetable would go to plan (once finalised), Ian still had reservations about whether the members of his team fully understood what they were taking on.

Ian decided that he needed a scope management plan that captured not only what the project scope was and wasn't, but also how this information would be gathered, validated, managed and controlled throughout the project. Scope inclusions and exclusions were obviously important, as it was crucial to effectively limit what the conference project would actually deliver. Ian had discovered that

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past conferences had not matched the expectations of some stakeholders with regard to the expertise of the speakers engaged, the format of the breakout sessions and registration procedures. Even something as simple as free membership vouchers being placed in conference satchels when they should have been offered as prizes had caused some dismay and disappointment.

And given the difficulties in getting hold of the CEO, membership manager and marketing coordinator, Ian knew that extended face-to-face meetings with these people would be hard to schedule. What he needed was an array of different techniques to gather the all-important detail on what they actually required and then lock it in. Sadly, getting clients and other stakeholders to accept handover on any project, let alone an international conference, was never going to be automatic.

With a prior working history with these conference stakeholders, Ian realised he would need to have in place a formal, documented change-control process before the project got underway. While this wasn't intended to restrict any opportunities for innovation or continuous improvement, the last thing Ian wanted was navigating heated arguments later in the project that may lead to budget blowouts, extension of time (EOT) and other variations being refused when the scope changed without any consultation, documentation or authorisation.

Questions

1   Why was documenting a scope management plan an important issue for Ian and the committee in shaping the project's over-arching objective and ultimate success?
2   Why is it important to cite the exclusions in all scoping documentation?
3   What requirement-gathering techniques could Ian access in the context of his stakeholder availability?
4   How could Ian and his committee work throughout the project side by side with their clients and stakeholders to ensure handover wasn't jeopardised?
5   What scope creep triggers should Ian watch out for throughout the conference project?
6   Given that the project (should) produce innovation and continuous improvement over time, why does the scope need to be controlled?
7   How can Ian both manage and control the scope changes when they first appear?

Review questions

5.1 What is the value behind having a schedule management plan?

5.2 What information does WBS capture and how does this help scheduling?

5.3 Activity duration and resource estimates are often not precise calculations. What techniques are available and how would you defend your choice of technique?

5.4 What is the difference between the critical path and critical chain methods?

5.5 Explain why project schedules have to be developed, tracked, reported and controlled throughout the project?

Case study

Three months in, the superintendent (Mike Miller) for Blackwood Coal had an inkling the company's $100 million coal plant project was behind schedule. It was an inkling that would soon bear fruit as the project laboured under poor scheduling, poor work performance and poor management.

With the tender awarded in November 2016 and a scheduled start onsite of February 2017, all parties had agreed to the practical completion (PC) date of February 2018. Even when Blackwood Coal brought forward the start date to December 2016, the contractor (DWI Mineral & Mining) accepted the accelerated start date, not to mention the $18 million advance they requested to cover pre-start and mobilisation expenses. The PC date was also revised to December 2017. While DWI appeared only too happy to start earlier and get some much needed cash flow, Mike could see little evidence, if any, of his investment in terms of the contracted performance three months later (25 per cent into the schedule with 18 per cent of the budget spent). And Mike's concerns were not allayed as he stared at the high level, baseline Gantt chart the contractor had issued back at contract award (which was effectively now three months out of date).

The problem was compounded by DWI only issuing schedule updates for the next two-week look-ahead (without the critical path), which left Mike wondering what he wasn't being told, why and what was happening to the PC. He realised he had reservations about how the 'work', as per the

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design and construct (D&C) contract was being delivered technically and managed professionally. Having engaged a reputable contractor, he had assumed, at least on some level that, as the company's representative, he would be involved in the ongoing monitoring, reporting, adjusting and controlling of the schedule (in addition to administering the variation protocol). While acknowledging the rights and obligations of DWI under the bespoke D&C contract, Mike continued scouring through the contract and his file notes from the pre-award negotiations, trying to find any meaningful, practical reference to defining his role and involvement in proactively 'managing' the schedule. A qualified engineer, Mike had always known that the clauses pertaining to the 'work' were very brief and open-ended—particularly those relating to performance reporting.

With DWI struggling to meet key dates and finding no solace in his desk audit of all the documents, Mike called his team into his office to try and put together a blueprint that would ensure PC was met without being seen to be helping the contractor. After three hours, the team came up with the following suggestions:

- A common project management software platform for improved schedule diagnostics.
- Specifying the level of detail used for WBS.
- All logical relationships visible in Gantt charts.
- Critical path and PC in all Gantt charts and reports.
- Identification of who owns the schedule float (client or contractor).
- Identification of time-based control thresholds that would trigger reporting and intervention.
- Comparison of actual performance against baseline performance.
- Assessing project progress, status and forecast information.
- Inclusion of PC on all Gantt charts and reports.
- Updated schedules reviewed prior to meetings.

As Mike reviewed these great ideas, he remained committed to building the relationship with the DWI project manager in seeking to influence the 'usefulness' of the information Blackwood received.

Questions

1 How would a schedule management plan have helped Mike's project from day one?
2 Does Mike have the right to dictate to DWI the level of decomposition in presenting reports to Blackwood?
3 Should Mike adopt the suggestion that critical path and PC be in all Gantt charts and reports, and why?
4 What is the value of updating the Gantt chart and re-circulating this to all stakeholders?
5 Would assessing progress, status and forecast data have helped Mike 'co-manage' the schedule more proactively?

some tasks to shorten the project duration by changing the path to parallel (where technically able); you may also incur more rework, increased costs and greater risk (among other impacts).

Review questions

6.1 How would a cost management plan address the challenges of managing project costs within the internal financial procedures and accounting codes of the organisation?

6.2 What are some of the challenges involved in estimating project (resource) costs, and how can these be overcome?

6.3 What benefits do budgeting processes bring to projects, and what weaknesses do they possess?

6.4 What does traditional budgeting fail to report and control in project management?

6.5 How does EVM provide for schedule and cost performance reporting, analysis and forecasting?

Case study

Helen loved the spreadsheet she had inherited. Her predecessor had developed it over many months as the finance officer for the company. Not only did it track all the operational costs; it also showed the original estimates, monthly actual-to-date (and percentages) and consolidated year-to-date.

She thought the best parts were the graphs that brought to life rows and columns of fairly boring numbers that filled each page. Colour-coded legends and labels all combined to display either an-over budget, under-budget or on-budget result. As she pored over the file, Helen was confident that she wouldn't be asked to make any changes in her role as project finance officer—after all, projects spent money, just like the operational side of the business.

At the first project kick-in meeting, her project manager, Ron, asked Helen how she would track all the project costs. Helen was ready for this question and quickly put up her PowerPoint display of the spreadsheet.

Thinking Ron would share her enthusiasm, she was shell-shocked to discover that he wasn't happy at all and she clearly wasn't comfortable with the barrage of questions she was now getting about measuring the project's performance over time (whatever that meant), not just the money budgeted and spent.

Ron had worked on previous projects where he had encountered considerable delays and cost overruns. While it was important to know what money was available and how much was spent at any given point in time, Ron had come to appreciate the importance of also knowing what the money spent 'actually' bought in terms of project delivery. And while this type of information was historical (as it was based on previous performance up to the reporting date), Ron also realised the value of a window of performance forecasting to help him get the project from the reporting date up to the scheduled finish date.

> Ron knew he needed to adjust Helen's spreadsheet to build in the missing project-specific financial information and that he would need to educate the team on the calculations, analysis and application of the information.

As the meeting progressed, Ron knew he needed to adjust Helen's spreadsheet to build in the missing project-specific financial information and that he would need to educate the team on the calculations, analysis and application of the information.

The longer the meeting went on, Ron came to realise that his team also had a history of relying heavily on historical data when estimating with little effort made to contextualise and update the estimates for each project's cost baseline. And with the accepted practice of always using top-down budgeting to get the project up and running, Ron quickly understood the endemic fixation his team had with its reliance on traditional budget tracking and analysis in their projects.

With a team comprising staff from both the public and private sectors, Ron became increasingly bemused as he listened to the feedback and arguments he received during his presentation. Some of his team had only ever been measured on what they spent—as any part of their budget not fully accounted for was likely to be reduced in the following year. Others had little, if any, experience of bringing a project in on time or on budget, as both extra time and additional money were always found in the end. Others were worried about the increased transparency of having to track, report and control both costs and the schedule from start to finish.

It was clear to Ron that the concepts of scope, schedule and cost, and the intricate interdependencies between all three, had largely escaped his project team. As he took over the meeting again, Ron flagged the following key points:

- Cost management is more than merely reporting money spent.
- Reporting formats needed to be agreed.
- EV would become the cost-control standard for the project.

Ron also knew he would have another battle outside of this meeting, as he would need to convince the finance department that this project and future projects would need a different cost-management procedure and tools over and above what already existed operationally.

Questions

1 Why is Ron convinced that cost management is different from managing operational costs?
2 What additional estimating techniques would Ron like explored and why?
3 What are the major weaknesses in simply comparing budget to AC at each reporting date?
4 What is behind Ron wanting to know the SV and CV?
5 Is EV the panacea for replacing proactive schedule and cost management? If not, why not?

Review questions

7.1 Define the term 'quality' and explain its relevance to project management.

7.2 What intrinsic value does quality planning have for your project?

7.3 What role does quality assurance play in dealing with the associated quality costs?

7.4 What systematic tools and techniques are applicable in reporting direct and indirect quality costs?

7.5 How is quality control different from quality assurance?

Case study

Marsha and Noel thought they had a winning idea in wanting to self-publish their first e-book. Not only would it leverage off the plethora of books on gardening, nutrition and organics, but all their friends had given it a glowing endorsement.

Their book, *Going Green: Reinventing Our Community Street by Street*, did come with a catch, though—neither Marsha nor Noel knew anything about publishing. So they decided to go online and invite specialists in the field to submit an expression of interest (EOI) for the technical side of things—editing, designing and publishing the e-book while at the same time ensuring Marsha and Noel would be delighted with the result (the basic tenet of quality management).

Their friends had suggested that they put together some form of document that helped clarify what it was they actually wanted—especially given their emotional attachment to the book and their collective expectations and assumptions. However, they were both so immersed in 'greening their community' that they didn't quite get around to doing it. Over the next couple of weeks, they received over 60 global responses and then spent another two weeks trying to sort through all the information they had received, most of which was unintelligible to them both.

As they sat in their lounge room wading through the EOIs, Marsha remarked that she couldn't understand any of the points, as most were just vague statements, while others seemed like techno-babble, particularly the following:

- KDP intake systems
- custom media solution

- comprehensive guidance
- flexible and attractive cover options
- NCX navigation
- powerful book building website
- expert editorial team
- Apple-approved aggregator
- exciting new technologies
- innovative software platform.

Feeling bewildered, Marsha and Noel decided to set their personal self-interest aside and adopt a more strategic approach to ensure that their publishing objectives would be met. Having defined their objective, they set about drafting a project brief detailing what they wanted.

> . . . they wanted to know what 'real-time' processes the successful contractor would have in place to deliver on this guarantee.

At this stage, as they had no idea of *how* it would all come together, they limited their notes to *what* they wanted and the features they thought the e-book should have. No doubt they would get some further ideas from the reissued EOI; however, they felt they needed to put down some form of initial and tangible benchmark against which subsequent offers, engagement and e-book delivery could be assessed. They knew that if they got this early documentation right, the later stages of this project might be less stressful and produce the very result they wanted.

They also realised that they would need some mechanism to guarantee that whoever they engaged actually lived up to their objectives, not to mention the technical aspects of putting the e-book together and getting it up on the web. While they could rely on the contract they would put together, they wanted to know what 'real-time' processes the successful contractor would have in place to deliver on this guarantee. After all, they didn't want to spend all their time chasing up broken promises. Nor did they want to end up with an e-book they wouldn't accept, which meant they had to devise some means of monitoring and controlling the contractor's quality from start to finish, while at the same time being open to new ideas, fresh approaches and some degree of innovation—particularly if technology and/or the market changed.

Marsha and Noel now realised that without an equally great focus on the quality processes, activities and documentation behind the book, their 'potentially' great book could actually result in very little result.

Questions

1 In support of Marsha and Noel's refocus on their strategic publishing objectives, what would their quality management plan look like?
2 What steps should Marsha and Noel follow in assuring the contractor's performance and result?
3 How do you suggest Marsha and Noel should control the project quality to ensure compliance and acceptance?
4 What would be some indicators that Marsha and Noel were open to new ideas, proposed changes and other forms of continuous improvement.

Review questions

8.1 Why is HRM planning fundamental to the success of the project?

8.2 What information and decisions must be factored in to acquiring the project team?

8.3 How does the project manager help their team develop throughout the project?

8.4 Should conflict be viewed as a positive force in a project and how should it be dealt with?

8.5 What is the role of the performance review in contributing to peak project performance?

Case study

Trevor was all they had. Old school and trading on past glories with a couple of preferred suppliers (mates really), Trevor was not the ideal choice to manage this renovation project. Project management had changed from being all about technical mastery to now knowing how to manage the delivery of the project—on time, on budget and in scope. Times had changed, but sadly Trevor hadn't.

A qualified carpenter and registered builder, Trevor had always been a 'hands-on' kind of guy, never afraid of getting in and getting the job done, even if it meant doing the work himself. So technically, his work couldn't be faulted—although it was known that he sometimes took unnecessary shortcuts (which had so far not come back to bite him). However, outside of his limited technical range, Trevor always struggled to engage, influence, direct and manage both his stakeholders and team members, as expected of a competent and practising project manager.

So Leanne, the CEO of Aged Care Renovations (his employer), faced a dilemma. Having just won the $800,000 contract to refurbish a residential wing at the local retirement village, she knew this project was politically sensitive, commercially crucial and community conscious, so there could

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be absolutely no slip-ups. Not only did Trevor need to manage the project, he needed to be the public 'face' of the project. As she sat in her office, Leanne was hesitant to act.

Following his appointment and juggling his operational property management role, Trevor was tasked with pulling together his team for this project. With everyone literally drowning under their own operational priorities and direct reports, it proved to be an ongoing nightmare as no one really had the time, nor in some cases the skills, to take on yet another 'conveyor belt' project. However, with a bit of begging and pleading, Trevor pulled together something resembling a team, although it was more likely a bunch of uncommitted conscripts than a productive team.

With no recognised learning and development background (apart from his trade qualifications), Trevor failed to realise the challenge he faced in not only bringing his team together, but also identifying the assistance they would need to get ready to take on this project. While he had enrolled in different training courses over the years, Trevor's stock-standard response to any training was that he knew everything and the trainer was an idiot who couldn't teach him anything. Yes, Trevor certainly wasn't the perfect role model for his team.

With marginal social skills, Trevor knew he would struggle with getting to know his team on both a personal and professional level (though he would never admit this). He didn't really understand any of this new age 'psycho-babble' around personality profiles, team roles and other profiling psychometric tools, and couldn't have cared less about getting his team to play off each other's strengths and weaknesses.

Trevor also realised that, given the real operational and project conflicts under which his team would be working, he would have to work hard to motivate, if not reward, his team (where appropriate) through some form of performance-review process. Privately, Trevor had no idea what any of this meant or involved, as in his day you were lucky to have a job, and performance was expected if you wanted to keep your job, no matter what level it was.

As Leanne reflected on Trevor's appointment, she realised that her own reputation and that of the company was at stake.

Questions

1 What behaviours do you think Trevor has to change and model to be an effective project manager?

2 Could an HRM plan have helped Trevor to manage, if not mitigate, the human resource issues he knew the project faced? If so, how?

3 What steps could Trevor have taken to develop his human resources (over time) into a highly conforming and performing team?

4 How could Trevor accommodate the different personalities on his team to enable them to maximise the team's effectiveness?

5 How could Trevor identify the learning and development needs of his team to ensure they each had the prerequisite skills and knowledge to perform their project work?

6 What performance-management techniques would you recommend that Trevor adopt in measuring his team's performance?

Case study

When Margot was handed the correspondence registers for both the client and training company, she knew immediately that her skills as a quality management auditor would be sorely tested in walking through this project.

It wasn't the lack of documentation that had her concerned; rather, it was the copious pages and pages of letters and emails reflecting 'he said, she said, they said'; minutes of meetings that failed to articulate, let alone summarise, the key points, decisions and actions required; monthly reports that offered little in the 'way forward' and a number of variation claims that she would have rejected outright as simply non-compliant, according to the contract she had seen.

The (training) project involved the development, delivery and evaluation of national project management training for a regional local government council. The accredited Diploma of Project Management qualification had been signed off by all the key stakeholders: the CEO of Australian Land Corporation (Carol), training manager (Anthony) along with Suzanne from VET Pro (the training provider). Margot had been called in six months into the 24-month project after a number of recurring and potentially caustic issues had become apparent between Anthony and Suzanne over their respective interpretations of the project's requirements.

In reviewing the registers, Margot realised that most correspondence was more 'tit for tat' with far too much grandstanding as opposed to any meaningful attempt to honestly resolve the root cause of the unresolved issues (and, by association, their implications for the project's delivery).

Collectively, the communication issues related to:
- meetings held with no prior warning or agenda circulated
- a preoccupation with face-to-face meetings that resolved little, if anything, during the talk-fest format
- frequent absences of key stakeholders from meetings (or any other 'update' activity)
- the requirement that all meetings adopt PowerPoint as the presentation medium
- outside of meetings, excessive reporting requirements that had little to do with what was actually learned and, more importantly, what applied in the workplace as a result of the training
- the continuing illusion that a constant stream of (ambiguous) paperwork implied productive performance
- an undue focus on negative feedback while ignoring the positive comments provided

- pressure to change the learning materials following feedback from each cohort completing the modules
- questionable protocols for the collection, dissemination and security (notably privacy legislation) of the information to relevant stakeholders.

Strictly speaking, as an auditor Margot was not onsite to tell both parties how to communicate with each other in an open and transparent way. However, she felt compelled to take off her audit hat and subsequently encouraged both parties to engage an independent communications expert who would sit them down, talk through their issues and formulate a viable approach to enable both to co-develop a common and equitable communication protocol for the project. After all, much of the confusion, ambiguity and heated debate had more to do with differences in expectations, language and terminology than evidence-based, actual reporting. If these crucial differences could be resolved, Margot believed that both Anthony and Suzanne could find a constructive way to balance preventative and corrective communication where demanded and reinforcement where warranted.

> ... much of the confusion, ambiguity and heated debate had more to do with differences in expectations, language and terminology than evidence-based, actual reporting.

Questions

1 Why is it crucial to keep open all channels of project reporting between Anthony and Suzanne at all times?
2 What components of a communications management plan would be useful in this situation and what obstacles would it resolve between the two parties?
3 How would creating a meeting agenda template, an effective meeting protocol and a meeting minute template address the concerns identified by Margot?
4 For this training project, what communication documents (and/or tools) would you recommend and why?
5 What would an appropriate performance reporting template look like for this project and how would it focus attention on the critical learning outcomes from the qualification?
6 How would you advise Anthony and Suzanne to work together to control how they communicate with each other?

- incident reports
- material data safety sheets (MSDS)
- probability distribution
- sensitivity analysis
- risk standards
- contingency plans
- expected monetary value analysis
- interviewing techniques
- risk registers
- quantitative analysis
- qualitative analysis
- SWOT analysis
- cause and effect diagrams
- process mapping.

Case study

Migrating to the new software platform was always going to present some challenges for the business. Not only were there localised, operational issues across the state; there was also the staggering amount of 'illegal' software loaded on most PCs throughout the offices. Not to mention that this decision had been announced from 'above', with little, if any, meaningful consultation.

George, the newly 'anointed' third project manager in as many months, continued reading through the project mandate (written by the executive) and the project delivery plan (written by the original project manager), although he was yet to locate the project management plan itself and its component parts—notably the risk-management plan.

Categorised as a Level 4 project, the mandate had provided some indication of the 'high-level' risks this crucial project would face, although without going into the necessary detail as to how they would be managed. With the budget approaching $1.5 million, disparate stakeholders more than likely wanting to protect their fiefdoms, political sensitivities, dated infrastructure and the obsolete XP platform, George knew he was well and truly in trouble after his first week in the role.

It wasn't that the risks were all that hard to identify in the first place; it was the culture of the organisation that seemed to be his biggest impediment. As a recipient of recurrent government funding, the bureaucratic business had always survived by not rocking the boat and clearly by not taking too many risks. The notion of proactively managing risk through an embedded process, let alone having a resident risk champion on board, was totally foreign to everyone who worked there. George also realised that not all the potential risks to this project would in fact be negative, as the opportunities presented by this major upgrade should be identified, promoted and capitalised on.

George now knew what he needed to do, and it wasn't going to be popular with everyone. Within the hour, he had drafted out a risk-management planning document ready to send to the project's key head office and state-wide stakeholders, contractor supervisor and their SMEs, while also informing everyone that they were now foundation members of the project's risk-management team—and attendance would not be optional.

> . . . regular meetings would need to be held, with risk added to the agenda. Scalable templates needed to be developed to help identify, analyse, respond, control, monitor and review risk; all project performance reporting would now incorporate risk and schedule impact updates; and . . . the practice of shared risk ownership would be clearly defined, allocated and communicated from now on.

An integral part of the planning document was the 'on the ground' process George wanted followed as this migration project evolved through the different phases of development, testing and rollout, and the decision gates and required approvals that would need to be in place. This involved more than singularly filling in a risk register template, or worse still finding an example (probably with the help of Google) and simply copying and pasting in the information. Ideally, George wanted a fully endorsed ICT governance standard to be adopted, but he realised that this was outside his remit on the current project.

George was proposing that regular meetings would need to be held, with risk added to the agenda. Scalable templates needed to be developed to help identify, analyse, respond, control, monitor and review risk; all project performance reporting would now incorporate risk and schedule impact updates; and, perhaps most importantly, the practice of shared risk ownership would be clearly defined, allocated and communicated from now on.

Conscious of only lip service being paid to his ideas, George further proposed a series of state-wide risk-management workshops to walk everyone through not only the process and documents, but the level of discussion, detail and analysis warranted. The last thing he wanted was risk-management discussions and registers littered with 'lame' risk events like legacy systems, coding errors, a lack of user input, incomplete requirements, testing failure, contractor disputes, time delays and budget blowouts. What George and his team needed to know was how the project uncertainty and the resultant impact (good or bad) would be managed proactively.

Questions

1 How will a risk-management plan change the endemic culture in both the business and the project?
2 What are 'real' examples of both negative and positive risks in George's project?
3 How would you scale and prioritise these risks to enable a targeted response?
4 What existing controls and 'new' treatment strategies could George expect to see in the risk register?
5 Why is the notion of shared responsibility for risk so important to George?
6 Should George feel completely at ease once risk treatment has been assigned?

Case study

Acting in the role of contracts manager for the first time (during the usual manager's maternity leave), Sharon was mulling over what the most challenging part of the tender documentation was: the legal, commercial or technical sections. While it was often the legalese that made it such a chore, she also realised that she hadn't always understood the commercial investment required by the project, although the technical section was, after all, a breeze as she had been team leader for the in-house contract administrators for over seven years.

With this tender in its final preparation stage before release, Sharon knew she was responsible for ensuring everything was correct prior to publication. Historically, some previous tenders had gone out with the wrong attachments, addendums hadn't been issued, clauses had been copied and pasted from other (unrelated) contracts to cut down on the preparation time and certain privacy conventions were not always followed with existing preferred suppliers.

> Sharon wanted this procurement activity to focus more on building relationships, collaboration and value-adding, and less of the short-term, narrow focus her predecessor had adopted in seeking to resolve operational job requests through a simple lowest cost quotation system.

With her organisation electing to go to the market for external expertise to construct the pathways, associated infrastructure, signage and landscaping throughout the parklands, Sharon wanted this procurement activity to focus more on building relationships, collaboration and value-adding, and less of the short-term, narrow focus her predecessor had adopted in seeking to resolve operational job requests through a simple lowest cost quotation system.

Traditionally, the company had always provided suppliers with a detailed specification that spelt out exactly what they wanted, how they wanted it and what the allocated budget was. The cold reality was that this hadn't always worked out, as their internal designs didn't always comply with the local council's permit, zoning and approval processes. So this time the opportunity existed to provide a scope of work only (along with a draft contract and response templates), and not the specification, while also amending the tender to allow for non-conforming responses.

Sharon now needed to ensure that her evaluation panel tweaked the selection criteria (and changed the weighting) to take this significant change

into account as they now needed more than construction workers. They needed suppliers with ideas, innovators with vision who would challenge the traditional notion of what parkland could look like, and designers and builders who could make the impossible a living reality for the community.

While the company had always nominated the type of pricing contract for its projects, Sharon decided to leave it open for this tender. Feeling satisfied with her changes, Sharon called her team together and canvassed the options in releasing the tender, who would be dealing with the inquiries and putting together the evaluation matrix. They also discussed the merit of holding a supplier information session after releasing the tender to answer all the questions people would have. However, they still had one big-ticket item to address: once awarded, how would they effectively manage and control the contractor's performance throughout the project and did the standard-form contract attached to this tender sufficiently provide the company with that level of protection? Sharon clearly wanted more, as she issued highlight markers to her team along with a copy of the proposed contract. She then asked them to read through every clause on every page and mark up any reference to the following:

- contractor's performance (including progress claims)
- performance reporting
- contractor breach.

To everyone's surprise, all that was found were clauses related to 'the contractor warranting', 'monthly reports' and 'progress claims within five working days'—all of which could be collectively described as being ambiguous, vague and open to interpretation. As everyone left, Sharon decided to pull the tender until these clauses actually said something that could be contractually enforced.

Questions

1 How would developing a procurement management plan address some of the historical issues faced by Sharon?
2 What are the risks involved in getting potential suppliers to provide the specification?
3 What would be appropriate selection criteria (and weighting) for this tender evaluation?
4 What recommendation would you give Sharon as the 'correct' contract pricing model to accept?
5 Is Sharon being unrealistic (or even paranoid) in wanting to tighten up the contractual performance clauses with a bespoke contract?

- What changes do you need to make, who will be involved and what benefits will accrue from making these changes?

Review questions

12.1 What is meant by the term 'project integration management'?

12.2 What role do the proposal and the project plan have in integrating project processes?

12.3 How is *managing* the work different from *controlling* the work?

12.4 Explain how a formally integrated change-control process benefits the project.

12.5 What lessons can be learned during the project close-out stage?

Case study

The room where the meeting was being held was impressive: oak table, high-back swivel chairs, muffins, gourmet coffee and a panoramic view of the city. Who wouldn't be impressed?

The answer would be most, if not all, of the people in the room, who waited patiently for the project manager (Claire) to arrive. Not only had they finally completed the project (albeit over budget and behind schedule), but they had all been told to attend this post-completion walk-through to review the project from start to finish. Clearly the mood in the room was a mix of fatigue, fragility and possibly fear, as the project had been far from successful.

Running late as usual, Claire finally arrived laden with an assortment of coloured folders and proceeded to distribute them to the nine people seated around the table, keeping one for herself. As expected, once the folder landed in front of each person, they opened it up, curious to see what bad news it contained. To their surprise, the folders contained nothing but a blank piece of A3 paper with a large, bold heading at the top of the paper. Still curious, everyone started to look at the person's folder beside them and discovered that they all had a similar blank piece of paper—although the headings were different.

Now intrigued, they listened as Claire started the meeting. The first thing she did was write the names of the ten people in the meeting down

on the board and then asked each person to call out what heading they had in the folder. Claire added integration management to her name on the board and wrote down the other nine knowledge areas, then assigned them as her project team called out what was in their folder. After a few minutes, the names of the entire team was on the board together with their allocated knowledge area.

As Claire still hadn't explained what was happening, the questions started firing from the floor. As she waited for the unanswered questions to abate, Claire wondered whether this idea of hers was going to work at all. After all, her project team had been pulled together (actually inherited would be more accurate) pretty quickly, and Claire would be the first to admit (not publicly though) that everyone including herself had little experience in project management prior to being put on this project. While everyone had survived the journey, the journey itself was a challenge from the start, with no processes (let alone unified ones), pretty dismal documentation, siloed self-interest, functional conflicts, and no agreed framework, method, techniques or tools to help plan and manage the project. Claire was nothing if not honest.

> . . . the journey itself was a challenge from the start, with no processes (let alone unified ones), pretty dismal documentation, siloed self-interest, functional conflicts, and no agreed framework, method, techniques or tools to help plan and manage the project.

Gathering her thoughts, Claire began by turning on the overhead projector and opening the single slide she had prepared. She asked everyone to read through the following points:

- creating the project proposal
- developing the project management plan
- directing and managing the work
- monitoring and controlling the performance
- performing integrated change control
- closing down the project.

Before anyone could ask a question, Claire made the following statement:

> You each have a folder pertaining to one of the ten project manage-
> ment knowledge areas and a blank piece of paper. Please transfer
> all six process headings from the slide to your A3 sheet, spacing

them out evenly down the page. For the next 30 minutes, you are to reflect quietly and privately (no talking) about how the knowledge you have been given could be integrated far more effectively and efficiently than it was on our last project. This activity is all about us as a team and organisation learning lessons from what we did and coming up with 'blue sky' ideas and innovative ways of improving how we plan and manage our project through a unified, consistent and cohesive approach to everything we do on a project. In 30 minutes, you will each have 15 minutes (yes, it will be a long meeting) to share your suggestions. They will not be discussed, just shared, and your input will be recorded and circulated to everyone else tomorrow. Over the next week, you are to review everyone's suggestions and amend your own ideas and bring to the meeting your complete suggestions on how to integrate your knowledge area. Please refrain from sharing ideas with each other, as I particularly value your personal insight at this stage. Our collective wisdom will be added in later.

With that, Claire closed the meeting and left the room with her project team looking bewildered and lost.

Questions

1 What do you think Claire is trying to achieve with the tasks she has set her project team (and herself)?
2 How do you feel about Claire's approach to communicating what was happening and what she wanted?
3 Can you suggest any ways in which Claire could have improved this meeting and got the same, if not a better, outcome?
4 Choose one of the ten knowledge areas yourself and complete the same exercise her team was asked to do. See whether you can come up with some 'blue sky' ideas on improving how that knowledge area gets integrated into your next project.
5 If one of the team had asked Claire to clarify why integration was so important, how do you think she would have answered?
6 What would a unified, consistent and cohesive approach to a project actually look like, and what benefits would it deliver to different stakeholders?