

### **Learning Journal 3**

**Student Name:** Amal Gupta

**Course:** Software Project Management

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**Key Concepts Learned:** The lecture on October 07, 2024 covered Chapter 6. The topic of this chapter was project planning. The most time-consuming task in project management is most likely project planning. From the very beginning of the concept to the delivery of the system, it is an ongoing process. As new information becomes available, plans must be updated on a regular basis.

- **Milestones:** Milestones are points in the schedule against which you can assess progress. For example, the handover of the system for testing.
- **Deliverables:** Deliverables are work products that are delivered to the customer. For example, a requirements document for the system.

Chapter 7 was also covered in the lecture on October 07, 2024. This chapter covered project monitoring & control. Project monitoring and control gives the project manager the ability to always keep track of the project's status and progress. Monitoring is the process of gathering enough information to gauge progress and ensuring that the project team is carrying out the plan as intended. Control is the process of taking corrective action when needed to make sure the project delivers everything it is expected to in terms of budget, time, and quality.

- **EVA:** By combining the time and cost restrictions, Earned Value Analysis (EVA) assesses the project's progress. EVA assigns a dollar value to each task or work package that makes up the project. By contrasting the actual value obtained from finishing a work with the planned value that ought to have been obtained from that task, EVA tracks progress. The project is in danger if the actual value obtained falls short of the planned value that ought to have been obtained. The project is in a good position if the actual value earned exceeds the planned earned value.

To conclude, reducing the gap between the plan and the actual situation is the act of control. Control is unavoidable as plans can never be flawless. Control detects plan modifications that can necessitate re-planning.

**Application in Real Projects:** Consider a real-world project example: the development of a ride-sharing application.

- **Project Planning:** The ride-sharing project team writes up the initial requirements, which include a budget and a schedule with monthly milestones.
- **Project Monitoring:** Sprint summaries are used to track work completion, and weekly progress is evaluated with developers.
- **Project Control:** A serious problem with the payment integration appears halfway through. To solve this, the project manager reallocates resources, modifying the budget and schedule while informing key stakeholders.

The team can iteratively create and deliver a reliable, superior ride-sharing application that satisfies stakeholder expectations and stays within the allocated budget and timeframe by adhering to this cycle of planning, monitoring, and control.

Some challenges of using project planning, project monitoring, and project control in real projects are as follows:

- Initial requirements may be ambiguous, or they may evolve regularly as a result of changing user needs or company objectives.
- Missed deadlines and poor decision making might result from incomplete or outdated information.
- Inflexible resource allocation can make project control challenging and cause delays when tasks require additional developers, testers, or other support.

The solutions for these challenges are as follows:

- Use agile methodologies that facilitate iterative development and frequent requirements reassessment. To make needs clear and obtain user input early on, employ strategies like user story mapping.
- Utilize dashboards and project management tool integration to automate reporting as much as possible. Establish regular reporting schedules to ensure stakeholders are aware of the most recent information.
- Maintain a buffer in both budget and resources for high-priority tasks. To increase resource allocation flexibility, try to cross-train team members so they can help in multiple areas when needed.

**Peer Interactions:** We had topic analysis presentation for our selected topic on October 21, 2024. So, I had several meetings with my teammate for topic analysis in which we worked on preparing poster and presentation for our selected topic. We also talked about different strategies to improve the clarity, appeal, and organization of our presentation. Moreover, we also must submit phase 2 of our project deliverable by November 10, 2024. So, we had several meetings to discuss about preparing documents for the next submission of our project.

**Challenges Faced:** Conducting research for our topic analysis was very challenging. We had to find relevant information to be included in our poster and presentation. To tackle this challenge, we conducted research using different sources such as textbook, internet, etc. Furthermore, we also faced some difficulty in preparing budgeting document for next submission of our project. Estimating the budget required for the entire software development lifecycle and breaking it down into categories was somewhat challenging. To solve this difficulty, we used different estimation techniques to estimate budget for our project.

**Personal development activities:** I was able to better understand project planning, project monitoring and project control thanks to the principles I learned. Examining the case studies helped me understand them better. It took a lot of research to gradually explore many topics and develop solutions for the project, which resulted in a comprehensive understanding of the project from a business viewpoint. While creating the poster for our topic analysis, I also learned about more creative poster making techniques.

**Goals for the Next Week:** I plan to move forward with our project's phase 2 deliverable as the deadline draws near. I plan to completely revise the earlier chapters to ensure a quick and comprehensive evaluation. I will also need to set up a meeting with my project colleagues to talk about any concerns with the upcoming project submission. I also intend to look at case studies that are comparable to those in our materials to enhance my understanding and prepare for the upcoming chapter in class.