

Learning Journal – Week 5,6,7

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Course: SOEN-6841 Software Project Management

Journal URL:

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Key Concepts Learned:

This learning journal entails the studies done over the course of past three weeks, because one of them was reading week, and the week before that was the midterm exam. Consisting of the new concepts, I learnt chapter 6, which is Project planning. Apart from that, the midterm exam consisted of the chapters beginning from the semester, i.e., chapter 1 to chapter 6. Hence a complete revision of the same from the reference book as well as the presentations were done.

- Chapter 6 – Project Planning – This chapter covered the fundamentals of project planning, like Work breakdown structure, components of software planning, precedence graphs and critical path. Focus was put on project planning in agile and how iteration changes the schedule and the course of planning.
- Revision of chapters 1 to 6 – For this, from February 18th to 21st, I took handwritten notes from the reference book and studied them. This facilitated my repeated revision and helped me remember all the concepts from each chapter. Focus was put on chapter 3 and function point analysis, as it was a difficult part of the syllabus in my opinion.

Application in Real Projects:

Project planning is an extremely important function in the success of a project. From supplier management to resource management, each step must be carried out flawlessly. Some applications of planning in real projects are:

- Resource Allocation: Project planning ensures resources are allocated effectively, including team members, hardware, and software requirements, maximizing efficiency and productivity.
- Time Management: Project planning establishes timelines and milestones, helping teams manage their time effectively to meet project deadlines and ensure timely delivery.

- Risk Management: Project planning identifies potential risks and uncertainties, allowing teams to develop mitigation strategies and minimize disruptions to the project workflow.
- Scope Definition and Control: Project planning defines the scope of the project, outlining deliverables and features, and provides mechanisms to control scope creep, ensuring projects stay on track.
- Budgeting and Cost Estimation: Project planning includes budgeting and cost estimation, ensuring financial resources are allocated appropriately and that projects stay within budget constraints.
- Task Dependency Management: Project planning identifies task dependencies and relationships, helping teams sequence tasks and ensure that work is completed in the correct order to avoid delays and bottlenecks.

Peer Interactions:

- Pitch - After the pitch presentation on Thursday, me and my group discussed how we could do better in future presentations. We came to the conclusion that while it was not bad, it could have been better.
- Midterm – For the midterm, there were a lot of discussions and question and answering occurring between me and my peers as we solved each others doubts. One of these was when we tried to understand Function point analysis and COCOMO thoroughly. It required a lot of understanding and time to completely grasp it.
- Project – For the project, the task is to submit next 5 documents. We had a meeting to discuss the direction we wanted to take the project in, and we divided the tasks among ourselves. Currently I am completing the Solution proposal document.

Challenges Faced:

The challenges faced were mostly related to the midterm. As mentioned earlier, chapter 3 was particularly tough and it required a lot of understanding to grasp the time effort calculation concepts like COCOMO, Delphi and function point analysis. Moreover, the challenge of time management introduced itself as the midterm grew close. In chapter 6 specifically, the tasks related to project planning are vast. Hence, I had to focus on chapter 6 to thoroughly understand every single task that comes under project planning. In summary:

- Midterm – Time management was crucial. Note taking took quite a while and that had to be handled by either studying more or reducing the amount of notes.
- Chapter 6 – It was challenging to completely understand every single task that project planning encompasses.
- Chapter 3 – Function point analysis and COCOMO were the challenges of this chapter and required effort to grasp.

Personal development activities:

As mentioned earlier, all the syllabus till date was studied for the exam. Apart from this, for personal development, I solved some sums from the 3rd chapter, although the exam was not going to feature any sums. Chapter 6 was studied and then revised for the midterm.

In terms of the project, I am writing a Solution proposal, and hence I am trying to completely understand the whole project, and what it would have as features if it were developed.

Goals for the Next Week:

In the upcoming week, I plan to finish the project documents and submit them. Apart from that, I plan to study chapter 7 and 8 and figure out what would be the challenges in that chapter. It is my goal to read the chapters before the lectures so that I can participate in class.