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**COMP 361 – The Size of Projects That Require Project Management**

Systems developments projects range in size from small and informal, to very large and quite formal and any level in between. All projects aim to produce a successful outcome and complete their goals on time and on budget. There are also a variety of ways to go about achieving these goals. Yet no matter what approach is taken to the development of the system, what size of project necessitates the need for project management?

In my opinion, every project needs some level of project management. At the very least, all projects need some form of initial planning. Even for the smallest project, planning is necessary to make sure everyone is on the same page and working towards the same goals. As David Barrett writes in *Project Management for Small Projects,* a plan is one of the "key ingredients to small project success [1]." The problem should be defined, a time schedule established, and staffing considerations made. Even if the project is very informal, these aspects of the project planning phase should be discussed with a client and/or a supervisor. Without considering these tasks, a project will have unclear goals and possibly lead to a lack of success.

One other aspect that is necessary for all projects is a budget. Barrett states, "[D]o a budget! No matter how small the project [1]." This is to be sure that everyone is aware of the costs. This is especially the case for projects that are produced for third party clients. They may not be familiar with the typical project development costs, and they should always be aware of how their money is being used so that there is are no questions or problems down the line.

However, for very small or informal projects, not all phases of planning are necessary to implement. Specifically, a project schedule need not be produced if only one or two people are working on the project, as it can be very effective to collaborate quickly and easily, and begin work more quickly without wasting time producing a schedule. A manager or co-worker can quickly check in or meet with the people working on the project. In addition, if a project is only to take a few days or a week, then producing a schedule will take a larger percentage of the overall project development time.

Technical feasibility also not always need significant consideration because for small projects, the losses are also very small if the project turns out to be unsuccessful. Moreover, the feasibility concerns may have already been considered by management, without the need for research, since they are smaller and easy to deal with. This is not to say that feasibility considerations are always unnecessary, but they can usually be quickly considered without the need for formal documentation.

In summary, we turn again to Barrett, where he concludes, "All projects, regardless of size[,] deserve to be managed properly [1]." He echoes my sentiment that all projects require some level of management, even very small or informal ones. Without planning and management, any project is unlikely to succeed.

**References**

[1] Robert Barrett "Project Management for Small Projects," accessed December 7, 2009, <http://www.davidbarrett.ca/articles/project-management-for-small-projects.html>