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01/26/2025

CSD-380

Module 3 Assignment

Version Control

Version control is a very important part of managing documents and software development projects. By using version control, you can make sure that changes are tracked, previous versions are preserved, and that everyone is working on the latest version of the project. There are endless amounts of websites where I was able to obtain information on the guidelines and principles of version control, but a few of them stood out to me.

The National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health or NCCIH focuses on a structured approach, advocating for version numbers that progress logically, such as starting drafts at 0.1 and final versions at 1.0. It also mentions the importance of documenting creation and revision dates and maintaining a cumulative list of changes. (NCCIH. 2013.) Similarly, PM Study Circle focuses on tracking changes meticulously, maintaining an audit trail that records who made changes, when, and what those changes entailed. This makes it so you have accountability and helps to avoid confusion by identifying the most current version. (Usmani, PM Study Circle. 2023.) Rebel's Guide to PM complements these perspectives by providing a quick definition of version control, practical steps for implementation, and linking version control to broader project management practices, such as configuration management. (Harrin, Rebel’s Guide to PM. 2023.)

When comparing these guidelines, they showed both shared priorities and unique approaches. While the NCCIH adopts a rigid version numbering system, PM Study Circle emphasizes the necessity of knowing the latest version to prevent errors. Rebel's Guide to PM provides practical advice for beginners and ties version control to overall project management strategies. Despite some differences, all three sources underscore the importance of organization, transparency, and efficiency in version control practices. However, some traditional methods, such as the specific numbering system proposed by NCCIH, may be less applicable in modern software environments that rely on automated version control tools.

Based on these reading, I have come up with my own list of essential guidelines for version control. First, tracking changes is essential to maintain an audit trail of who made changes, when, and what they were. Second, documenting creation and revision dates is critical for understanding a document's history and identifying the most recent version. Third, ensuring awareness of the current version prevents confusion and inconsistencies. Fourth, using a clear and consistent version numbering system aids in distinguishing between drafts and final versions. Finally, keeping a cumulative list of changes offers a comprehensive view of a document's evolution, providing context for current revisions.

I chose these guidelines because I feel as though they promote effective management of documents and software development projects by fostering organization, transparency, and accountability. By incorporating the best practices from NCCIH, PM Study Circle, and Rebel's Guide to PM, we can build robust version control processes that support successful project outcomes. Version control isn’t just a technical tool, but it can also be seen as a key part of keeping teamwork smooth while making sure that projects are able to move forward.

Sources:

[Version Control Guidelines](https://files.nccih.nih.gov/s3fs-public/CR-Toolbox/Version_Control_Guidelines_ver2_07-17-2015.pdf)

[Document Version Control: Examples and Best Practices | PM Study Circle](https://pmstudycircle.com/document-version-control/)

[Document version control made easy (with examples)](https://rebelsguidetopm.com/how-to-do-document-version-control/)