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Final Exam

CIS410

12/11/12

As the Chief Technology Officer of this company there are many issues to be faced and many questions to be answered about the new Sales Force Automation System. The CEO has only attended a single meeting and has made a forgone conclusion that the system will be an intelligent investment and successful reengineering project. First we must define what a reengineering process is as well as the purpose. Reengineering allows for new ways of carrying out work, enabled by new technologies and capabilities (Cash). Essentially, reengineering should create new opportunities for the company that increase the probability of making money now and in the future. Along with engineering, companies often go through a business transformation. This occurs when management must change strategies and processes in order to accommodate the new system. The process of evaluating and considering the new Sales Force Automation system will determine whether it will successfully be assimilated into the company’s IT.

The CEO only invited the IT and marketing managers to the meeting, which shows she does not have many departments to work with. Based off of the positions and departments invited to the meeting I am assuming the company is relatively flat; meaning it is a small to medium sized company. The size of the company is important because it relates to the flow of information as well as the ability to change rapidly and easily. The CEO displayed the flow of information is very fast and direct as she told the members of the meeting to integrate a new system in “Her” company. This ability to change demonstrates the company consists of very few organizational layers. Since the company has an IT and marketing department I am assuming the organizational structure is traditional. A traditional structure incorporates a small company and classifies the employees by the functions they perform, such as marketing, accounting, IT and so on. This type of structure facilitates a strict level of authority such as the CTO reporting directly to the CEO. This can be beneficial to a flat company because the information travels very fast in both directions. A strict relationship limits the amount of people each lower level reports to, which means the information can be dispersed easily. One disadvantage of a flat organization is the lack of control due to a lack of supervisors. A smaller company will not have as many managers as a larger company, which means each manager will be responsible for more employees.

As the CTO of the company, my position is managing the technology and any issues that may arise with said technologies. To initiate and manage the assimilation, I would begin with questions throughout our meeting with the CEO. My questions would first begin with asking the CEO for a summary of the new system and why she believes it would be so beneficial compared to the current system. If everyone in the meeting agreed she has a valid argument then the meeting would commence. From there I must perform several analytical processes to evaluate how the new system would impact the company’s current technologies. The first process is to perform a current technical feasibility analysis in order to understand the current system. This is accomplished by assessing the current technical inventory as well as the top ten technical issues. The technical issues often give a good point of reference for the areas where the new system may be able to improve upon. The CTO must fully understand all of the technologies the company owns in order to know what will change with the proposed Sales Force system.

Once the current technology is assessed I must understand the new Sales Force system in its entirety so it can be compared to the current system and perform an economical feasibility analysis. A Vision and Scope document would be beneficial at this point because it explains the executive summary, major features, and other crucial details of the Sales Force system so we may understand every piece prior to commitment. Once we understand the business side of the system we are able to perform an economical feasibility analysis. This study assesses the costs, benefits, risks and rewards of a potential system and will determine if the new system is a viable option or not.

Next, an analysis of the expected effort and time it will take to integrate the new system will help us understand a rough timeline of work that will be used to allocate budget and resources for the potential installation. This is very important because without the approved budget to work on the project the company is unable to hire the resources needed to implement the system. Once the timeline is created, the company is able to set a release date and milestone dates along the way. Milestone dates consist of the expected dates for requirement gathering, design, development and testing completion leading up to the projected release date. This will track the performance of the project as well as provide a constant update of any issues that may arise. Lastly, as the CTO I must consider the future of the new system. Key questions would consider how long we expect it to last and how much we intend to grow in years to come. Asking these types of questions could prevent installing this system and replacing it with yet another system down the road.

The CEO is using an action control system to assimilate the new system by taking action on the rest of the company in order to achieve a desired outcome (Cash). She is trying to make the employees use the new Sales Force Automation system to achieve a potentially beneficial outcome of increased revenue and decreased costs. This could be beneficial if the Sales Force Automation system is successful because the CEO is able to affect the work everyone in the organization accomplishes by changing the basics of their system. This control system works because the company is small enough that it can easily adapt to the changes and the result can be distributed throughout the company.

The company uses tools similar to the Sales Force Automation system in order to create profits in the form of selling goods or services. The IT architecture should align with the corporate strategies in a way that will increase the likelihood of making money now and in the future (Cash). The CEO’s level of urgency in integrating the new system could display the high level of uncertainty in the current IT architecture. Uncertainty can mean the organization is unsure what tools should be used to optimize performance (cash). When this happens, the organization may choose many different tools until they find one that works the best. Constantly using the guess and check method for systems and applications can become a costly habit. Aligning the architecture with the company’s mission and vision is a very important business process, especially for a small organization.

A reengineering process can be a lot like changing two tires on a car while the it is traveling at a very high speed. Needless to say, it is a very risky maneuver because the company cannot afford to stop their operations to integrate the new Sales Force system. They must be able to continue on with their business as usual while making a complete restructure of the core technologies within the company. The CEO must realize the costs and workload required to perform such a complex process in order to successfully assimilate Sales Force into the company’s business model.

Before the CEO can make the decision to assimilate the Sales Force system she must think about the scope of the project. The scope defines the range of which the new system will change or replace the current system. This will give the company the ability to calculate things such as a rough estimate of the labor costs as well as the effort needed to complete the project. The CEO must also consider the current and future budget in regards to the projected scope of the project. The installation expenses and monthly bills for the new system would increase their operating costs while the assimilation is in progress. The time it takes to perform the development, system integration testing and file load transfers could potentially create down time of the current system, which could cause the company to lose money. All of this must be considered for the current fiscal year as well as the duration of years to come. If the project takes two years to complete, then the budget for employees must be allocated appropriately throughout that time period.

The CEO must also consider the work expectancy of the new system. Without reliable evaluations and comparisons of the new and current processes there would be no way to determine if the assimilation would prove to be beneficial. For example, if the Sales Force processes are not less than or equal to the current time per transaction, then the company would be losing money with the use of the new system. Also, the Sales Force system would increase the cost of training and could potentially cause employees to quit because they are unfamiliar with the new system and are afraid of change. This would increase the hiring costs and training costs for those new employees.

In conclusion, the results of the analysis and evaluations would result in either a confirmation of the CEO’s initial reaction or a denial of the new system. If the results prove the system is not an intelligent investment then the project would be moved to the side and no work would be done. If the studies predicted the Sales Force system was feasible and potentially beneficial, then the work would begin with getting the budget approved for the allotted timeline. The budget must the completed before anything can begin to take off and once the budget is approved, the team must be assigned and commit to the projected release date they have set. From there the team must begin developing and integrating the new system. Once the system is complete and ready for production, an extensive amount of testing should be performed to ensure the system is not going to crash as soon as it is fully installed. Ideally, the reengineered system would begin to function properly and more effectively. The company would begin to see increased productivity and higher profits because of the new processes and technologies used to carry out their business operations.

Works Cited

Management of Information Systems by Professor Barker: (CASH)

**CLASS PARTICIPATION FORM**

I feel that I deserve the following participation score:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_95\_\_\_\_\_ out of 100.

Rationale: (Failure to complete invalidates the above score)

I believe I have earned a 95% for participation through my attendance, attentiveness and hard work throughout the semester. I missed less than three classes and was never late to a class. On days I was absent, it was because of important meetings at work I was required to attend. While I was in class I was very attentive and often participated in class discussions. Although I did not read every assigned chapter, I was always familiar with the discussions from the prior class period. I was the main contact for our strategic assessment client, which meant I set up meetings within our group as well as with Chad Rimpsey of Kickoff for Kids. I would reach out to Chad Rimpsey and gather any and all information we needed through numerous emails, one on one lunch meets and setting up conference calls for our team to discuss the requirements for our assessment. Lastly, I accomplished all of the assignments and class work while working forty hours a week at Humana and taking two other classes.

The reason I am not giving myself a 100% is because I did not have perfect attendance and I did not always come to class having read the chapters, which meant I was not able to participate in class discussions. Also, I submitted one case report late because I prioritized other class assignments higher than the report.