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Key Concepts

Being able to put your thoughts on a diagram and explain every step of the way is beneficial to yourself and anybody that is looking at your project because being able to know the beginning, the process, the reasoning, and the result laid out in a clean way could persuade them that your project is worth doing. Determining what model or diagram to use at the beginning of the project is important because it can either help reduce any troubles very early on or create some if there is not enough effort put into it. A fishbone diagram is one of my personal favorite models to use at the beginning of a project because with this you can see how everything does or does not come together and even when something might be wrong or there is a weak link within the diagram there is a chance for you to be able to correct it and adapt it to the rest of the fishbone and using the diagram itself to correct it. Using a fishbone and SWOT analysis at the same time can cover most of the point a project could see early on because while the fishbone diagram covers the steps and process of a project the SWOT clearly shows you the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats a project could face and with these two done correctly you can safely assume that your project is off to a good start and even some of the early planning done as well.

Learning how to gather your thoughts for a project and present it though are sometimes not enough for a major project and there is a more in-depth analysis needed to properly understand the full scope of the project. Using a sprint plan and a systems requirement checklist can put the size of the project more into perspective because even if not everything is shown the wide scope of things can be put in to show what needs to get done and some of example of how it will be done. Having user stories and scenarios thought out in advance of anything taking place can help put everybody in each person’s shoes for a little bit and think about what every single person’s job/task might entail. Using an activity diagram for these user stories can be a little bit of an overlap but with the activity diagram you can see the order in which steps are taken, extra processes within these steps and the possible contingencies if things go wrong at the same time.

Object relationship diagrams are useful for department-to-department type of planning and can show the basic process that each would do. With an object relationship diagram and a data flow diagram you will be able to see the processes of each of the departments and also put in more data in case one either fails to do a task or what the back up plan would be in case a step in the project falls through.

Putting together a project small or large is like putting together a puzzle with pieces that each need their own task in order to have the ability to put on the other puzzle pieces. When creating any of these diagrams there should always be some reasoning behind the process or department being there since at some point they will all be interconnected in some way or another. While not every single operation is as important to the next you should treat it as if they were because (for example) if something that we don’t think about every day like garbage collection in the streets happened consistently and flawlessly then it would take almost no time for it to affect every single person in the street because there would be pile up of trash. Using less of a real world example even having one person in a large group project not do their end of the project could significantly affect everybody even if there are dozens of people working on it.