Project Planning Project (Setting Up a Project Plan)

Goal: Students will develop a project plan for an IT solution, including a work breakdown structure (WBS), task dependencies, resource allocation, and schedule.

1. Project Overview

- **Project Title:** Update website experience that promotes the value and economy of a town while also updating the cumbersome method of maintaining the content by the various divisions serves multiple constituents with both backend technology and front-end design by implementing a content management system.
- **Industry:** Marketing. The Town of Springfield Department of Economic Growth is looking to attract companies to expand in their area. The town was once a booming car manufacturing town hosting 2 different car factories. With those factories shuttered, the town is looking to bring in new jobs that match the education and training of their citizens.

  The town's community college and local university has been introducing new education paths for retraining to attract new businesses.

  Other benefits that a new company brings are investments in arts and music, employees from other locations to help start the company location (purchasing real estate) and infrastructure.

- **Business Problem:** *(What problem is the organization facing? Why is this project needed?)*
    - Current website serves 6 distinct areas of the organization and it shows! The website appears as the home page to 6 different websites. It actually is one website and should be presented as one.
        - Education
        - Culture and Events
        - Geology and Landscape
        - Distribution Access Points
        - Local Industries
        - Tourism
    - The content update of any page on the website is lengthy and cumbersome. These pages have a variety of updates needed with no consistent schedule. Currently when the content of a page has to be updated (i.e. image, schedule, text), the process is:

      a. Ticket submitted to Technical team with the information and which page(s), deadline

      b. Tech team updates the page

      c. Tech team requests a review from the person who requested the change and modifies per feedback.

      d. Once approved, the technical support team will publish the changes on a scheduled evening.

      e. This process can take a week or more depending on the tech teamwork load.

      f. The technical team is often requested to develop and write content or work with images that are not website or mobile friendly.

- **Project Objectives:** *(What does the client want to achieve?)*
  - Remove the responsibility from the technical team to write and manage on a daily basis the content of the website.
  - Deliver a cohesive story with one website and a clear design
  - Streamline the management of the update of the website
- **Expected Deliverables:** *(What are the final outcomes of this project? E.g., a new system, improved performance, reduced costs, etc.)*
  - Content Management System with specific design templates
  - Content Strategy Document
  - Search Engine Optimization Strategy Document
  - Training Session and Supporting Materials for technical and CMS user roles
- **Stakeholders:** *(Who is involved? E.g., CEO, IT manager, end users, external vendors, etc.)*
  - Key stakeholder - director of communications
    - Set goals for original redesign of website
    - Midway through project left, and replacement not tech savvy
    - Asked multiple questions at high level concept that can create a lot of "squirrel" moments
  - Technology Stakeholder director of IT
    - Agreed to a CMS (content management system to be managed by his team after implementation and training)
    - The team is nervous and scared to now be responsible for keeping the system and website up. Easy to blame on the old cumbersome website for so long

- ○ Current Website appears as 6 websites (one for each area of the organization)
  - ■ Some people like that and others not so much
- ○ Content Management System User Roles and Permissions
  - ■ Public Audience: Public viewing of the website. There will be no secure login only areas expected for the website.
  - ■ Content Author: Responsible for generating new content like blog posts, articles, website copy, images, and videos within the CMS interface. There will be multiple people filling this role. They will each have access to their own pages of the website. Each of the 6 divisions will have 2 content authors and 2 content editors to alleviate bottlenecks.
    - ● i.e Education Department will only have access to the content related to education
    - ● This will be in the appropriate business area. In the above example the education department
  - ■ Content Editor : Reviews and edits content created by authors, ensuring accuracy, quality, and adherence to style guidelines. Each of the 7 divisions will have 2 content authors and 2 content editors to alleviate bottlenecks.
    - ● This would also be in the appropriate business area to validate the author's modifications. In the above example also in the education department
  - ■ Content Approver:Has final authority to approve content before it is published on the website, often including higher-level management or compliance officers.
    - ● This role resides in the communication's team with 2 designated people who validate and ensure the consistency with language, imagery and message.
  - ■ CMS Administrator: Manages the overall CMS system, including user permissions, workflows, system updates, and technical configuration
    - ● This resides in the technical team
  - ■ Digital Asset Manager:Organizes and manages digital assets like images, videos, and documents within the CMS, ensuring they are accessible and properly categorize
    - ● This resides in the communication team and can be the same as the Content Approver or a different employee.

2. Project Scope & Constraints

- ● **Scope (In-Scope Features):** *(What is included in the project?)*
  - ○ Content Strategy Guidelines that include image standards
  - ○ Focus groups to understand the audience for our website

- ○ Implement a content management system with appropriate roles to remove the responsibility from our tech team to create and edit pages
- ○ Established content management system with appropriate roles
- ○ Training for technical team to support the content management system. This should include user manual materials and other supporting documentation
- ○ Training including supporting documentation for all content authors and editors for developing and approving content
- ○ Weekly project status updates to the Sponsor and key stakeholders
- ○ Website must load within 3 seconds or less
- ○ Contact form must display a warm message confirming message has been sent and when they can expect a response
- ○ A 504 page should be a user friendly page that directs the audience to a way to find what they are looking for
- ○ Analytics capabilities will be needed to understand user behavior, marketing campaign impact, traffic sources, and conversions (how many requests more information). We are open to additional recommendations.

  - ○ Search Engine Optimization Strategy

  - ○ 508 accessibility
  - ○ Mobile accessible first
  - ○ 8th grade reading level
  - ○ Simple and consistent website navigation
  - ○ Simplified search experience
- **Out of Scope:** *(What is explicitly NOT included?)*
  - ○ Content Development. We are not looking for the content to be written but will need a content strategy early so that the content can be re-developed for the go live.
  - ○ Provisioning of the server(s). This activity and cost will be covered outside of the project budget by the technical team.
  - ○ Implementation of search engine optimization strategy
- **Budget Constraints:** *(Any financial limitations? E.g., $50,000 budget)*
  - ○ Annual budget for ongoing hw and service costs $7000
  - ○ Project implementation budget $25,000
- **Timeline Constraints:** *(Required completion time? E.g., 3 months)*
  - ○ Looking to complete in 4 months prior to the Duff Spring Festival
- **Technology Stack:** *(Any preferred tools, software, or platforms? E.g., AWS, Jira, SAP, etc.)*
  - ○ We are typically a Microsoft shop and would prefer to remain in that space for the content management system

3. Work Breakdown Structure & Task Dependencies

- **Project Phases & Tasks:** *(Provide a sample task breakdown with estimated durations, e.g., Initial Assessment: 5 days, Development: 10 days, Testing: 7 days.)*
  - Discovery - 10 days
  - Planning - 5 days
  - Development - 20 days
  - Quality Assurance - 5
  - User Acceptance Testing - 10 days
  - Training - 3 days
  - Deployment Rollout - 2 days
  - Hypercare - 30 days
- **Critical Dependencies:** *(What tasks must be completed before others can begin?)*
  - Focus Groups during discovery to understand the content strategy needs
  - Content Strategy document provided within for 2 weeks of development to allow the communications team time to build out the content for the new website
  - Training for content authors and editors with enough time budgeted in project to allow them to create the content in new templates and publish
- **Key Risks & Mitigation Strategies:** *(Any common risks and strategies used in past projects? E.g., risk of scope creep, vendor delays, data security issues.)*
  - Delay in content development due to holidays and PTO
  - Multiple user focus groups each with distinct needs

    - Everyone has an idea of what their audience needs and doesn't want to be limited to design, vision, theme

  - Some identified content authors and editors are located in rural areas and are limited in their technical knowledge.

    - On site visits for training, advised workarounds if content can't be published due to dial up modem not working
  - When conducting meetings, leadership is often on laptops or phones and not listening/interactive.

    - Advise you state up front what you need from them and "rules" of the conversations/meetings.

4. Resource Allocation

- **Team Roles & Responsibilities:** *(Who is doing what? E.g., Project Manager, Developer, Business Analyst, UX Designer, QA Tester.)*
  - Project Manager
  - Business Analyst
  - UX Designer
  - Content Strategist
  - Developer
  - Network Specialist

- - QA Tester
  - UAT
  - Trainer
- **Resource Constraints:** *(Are there limitations on team availability? E.g., only 2 developers available for this project.)*
  - Network Specialist is fractionally available 5 hours a week due to other projects
  - Trainer will need a month's schedule notice for availability and won't be able to push out. Possible the other team members may have to backfill to conduct actual training
  - UX designer will need to be front loaded to accommodate another client project that will begin 2 months in.