

Task 4 - Post Project Evaluation

Engineering Project Management

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1 Introduction

In assignment 2, we investigated a variety of projects both successful and unsuccessful and examined the major factors that impacted its ultimate outcome. With the conclusion of assignment 3, we have an opportunity to reflect and evaluate what factors relate to our scenario. Overall, I believe that the project went smoothly, as most of our team members were proactive about finishing the work in a timely manner.

I believe that the project is likely to be successful due to the clear objective and goal from the beginning. The requirements are unlikely to change throughout the course of the project, providing additional stability and stakeholder satisfaction. The development of the smart-bin project is also predicted to cost approximately \$180,000 AUD, which is a relatively inexpensive cost, making the project less sensitive to budget overruns.

2 Communication

2.a Relation to Task 2

In assignment task 2, I analysed how companies like SpaceX and Dyson were affected by their method and quality of communication to their stakeholders. SpaceX's falcon 1 project suffered many initial setbacks, which would normally discourage shareholders and sponsors from offering further support. However, SpaceX managed to instill confidence in stakeholders despite this, by showing tangible progress with each failed launch attempt. They were able to retain many customers thanks to their strong communication and marketing skills. On the other hand, Dyson's Electric Car project suffered from a lack of proper communication with the stakeholders. They were promised the car would meet the requirements however, infrequent communication of technical and financial difficulties left the stakeholders, employees and the public in the dark about the true progress of the car, breaking their trust in the project's success, which contributed to the failure of the project.

In assignment 3, we came across several situations where communication with the stakeholder was crucially important to ensure that our deliverable met their standards. For the most part, we maintained frequent communication with our tutor about the different parts of our report, and worked to implement any feedback that was requested. However, we made some assumptions about the activity plan and network diagram that we didn't get a chance to discuss with the tutor.

2.b Situation Description

We had recently finished up our Work Breakdown Structure diagram, and had a discussion with the tutor about it. At the time, we felt confident that we implemented the feedback well and our diagram was perfect, so we agreed that we will not need another meeting with the tutor for a while. We moved on to making the activity plan and network diagram for the report, however, some of the tasks in the activity plan did not relate to the WBS. This was a crucial mistake, as the activity plan should include all work packages in the WBS. The activity plan being correct is also important for the validity of the network diagram and gantt chart, which could have implications for the rest of the project report. We discovered this fatal flaw very late in the process, which caused a significant amount of frustration within the team.

Upon realizing the mistake, our group convened an emergency meeting to reassess our approach. We identified the and re-evaluated our activity plan and network diagram. Despite the time constraints, we redistributed tasks to correct the errors and ensure that the revised proposal was as accurate and detailed as possible. This involved late nights and additional meetings to synchronize our efforts and incorporate last-minute feedback from our tutor.

2.c Expectations and Actual Outcomes

Initially, I expected our group work to be smooth and well-coordinated. We had clear roles, and everyone seemed committed to meeting deadlines and contributing effectively. I anticipated that our final proposal would be well-received due to our thorough planning and teamwork. However, the actual outcome diverged significantly from these expectations. The lack of timely feedback on our activity plan and network diagram meant that our foundational assumptions were flawed, causing delays and necessitating significant revisions.

2.d Actions Taken

My role for the project was to create the network diagram as well as gantt chart for the scheduling section of the project. I was unaware of the problems with the activity plan, therefore I copied the activities from it to create my network diagram. The other members in the group also failed to recognise this issue, and we continued to work on the tasks we were assigned nonetheless. In retrospect, the lack of action from any group member to briefly reach out to the tutor or teaching staff caused the situation to go unnoticed until very late.

I personally was in charge of the emergency meeting and kept meeting minutes and notes so that everyone could be kept accountable for their parts. I also volunteered to fix the network diagram and gantt chart. Looking back, I was too eager to get started on the diagrams. I should have communicated with my team, or read the lecture notes before commencing, to get a better idea of the requirements for my part. This could have potentially uncovered the flaws that we missed, saving us time and effort later on. I also was not involved too deeply in the parts of other team members, which caused me to have a shallow understanding of their parts. If I had a more thorough understanding of the whole project, I might have been able to spot the issue earlier.

2.e Learning for the Experience

This incident underscored the importance of seeking regular feedback throughout the course of a project. It significantly improves the quality of the project by identifying and correcting issues early, ensuring higher quality outcomes. Regular feedback fosters open communication, keeping all team members aligned and aware of project progress and expectations. This continuous exchange of information facilitates learning and growth, as team members can learn from their mistakes and successes, enhancing their skills and performance over time. Additionally, it ensures stakeholder satisfaction by keeping them informed and involved, thereby meeting their needs and expectations and reducing the risk of project rejection or dissatisfaction.

2.f Future Actions

To ensure that such issues are not encountered in the future, a routine for seeking feedback at critical milestones must be established. Scheduling regular meetings, such as daily stand-ups, weekly reviews, or bi-weekly retrospectives, facilitates consistent discussions on progress, issues, and next steps. Documenting feedback and the subsequent actions taken further aids in tracking progress and maintaining accountability. It is crucial to follow up on feedback, acting on the insights shared and communicating any resulting changes or improvements, demonstrating that feedback is valued and taken seriously. In order to do this, the team must make sure that everyone is involved when acknowledging feedback and no single person takes the entire blame (Clavel, 2024).

Furthermore, our group was excellent at meeting deadlines. All members would often finish their tasks ahead of schedule. This was crucial as it allowed us to be able to spend more time on fixing the parts of our report which were unsatisfactory. I learned that it is important to put in place a bit of buffer time in schedules to accommodate potential revisions and unforeseen issues. This helps manage risks effectively and ensures smoother project execution (McGuire, 2019).

3 Final Statement

In conclusion, I believe that our group was successful in ideating and planning a smart-bin project. We were able to learn from previous projects that we researched in assignment 2, and approach the group project with awareness of important factors that will dictate the success of the project. Attached below is the team's analysis of our performance.

	Muhammed I. Raja	Finn Witney	Ashwin Rajesh	Nuvin Pooliyadde	Geoffrey Cosmo	Mick Pile
The team shared a common purpose	5	5	5	5	5	5
Each member was willing to work towards achieving project objective	5	5	5	5	5	5
Team worked together on all aspects of the project	5	5	5	5	5	5
Respect was shown for others point of view	5	5	5	5	5	5
Differences of opinion were encouraged and freely expressed	5	5	5	5	5	5
All interactions among team members occurred in comfortable atmosphere	5	5	5	5	5	5
Rate From Scale of 0-5						
Team Comments and Discussion						
Team agrees to -						
We agreed on completing majority of the work in class, during tutorial sessions together.						
We agreed on splitting whatever work remained fairly amongst ourselves.						
We agreed to share progress on discord.						
We agreed to the project selection						
We agreed on discussing problems together and selecting the best possible solution.						
Team Disagrees to -						
Team disagreed to meetings outside of class, most preferred to split the work and work separately and discuss through messages on problems and progress, along with how each section would fit together.						
Team Disagreed to setting strict deadlines, we had a general idea of where we should be by the end of the week and we completed work up until that point.						
There were never any issues of falling behind so we never really needed to impose strict deadlines.						
We never agreed on a consistent format for the report, so the report is a little inconsistent in colour, font size, and font style.						

Figure 1: Team Analysis

Bibliography

- Clavel, M. (2024). *The most effective ways to follow up on your team's feedback*. <https://www.winningtemp.com/blog/the-most-effective-ways-to-follow-up-on-your-teams-feedback>
- McGuire, M. (2019). *The importance of Buffer Time*. <https://focusempowers.com/the-importance-of-buffer-time/>

4 Appendix

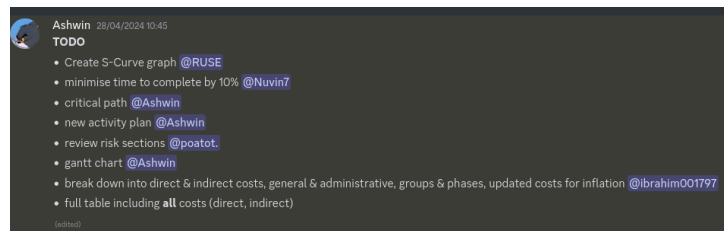


Figure 2: My role & actions within the team: meeting minutes

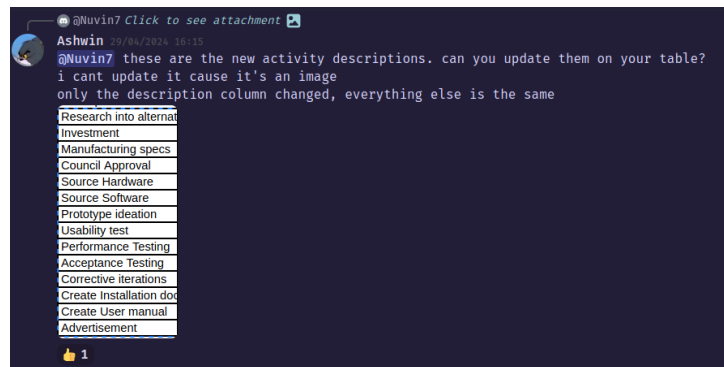


Figure 3: My actions within the team: updating the activity plan