



Sharkworld Assignment

Instructions

For Part A circle all the correct answers. For part B answer all 10 questions. My expectation for part B is that your 10 answers are all written down on two pages or less. In other words I expect you to submit 2 pages, not 20 pages. Please make sure you label the answers to questions 1 to 10 in Part B. Do not write your answer in essay format. Submit both parts of your assignment to the drop box using only 1 file. Make sure the file is of format .doc, .docx, or .pdf. No other file types will be marked. Each question is worth ½ mark.

A. Basic PM theory Questions related to Sharkworld

Question 1:

Which of the following characters is NOT a stakeholder?:

- ☐ Mr. Struwer
- ☐ Mrs. Cheng
- ☐ Your assistant
- ☐ Mr. Hua
- ☒ None of the Above



Question 2:

Which of these characters consistently demonstrates leadership when confronted with situations requiring adept emotional intelligence skills? Select all correct answers.

- ☒ Mr. Struwer
- ☐ Mrs. Cheng
- ☐ Your assistant
- ☐ Mr. Hua
- ☒ Mr Wu

Question 3:

In scene 21 of Sharkworld, you are given the work breakdown structure to study. In one of a very small handful of departures from PM theory in Sharkworld, this WBS is deficient in which ways?

- ☐ It lacks a logical taxonomy
- ☐ It lacks any references related to resource
- ☐ It lacks any references related to cost
- ☐ All of the above
- ☒ None. It is a fine example of a working document



Question 4:

The entire premise of Sharkworld is based upon your coming in to replace a project manager who allegedly took ill and as such could not fulfill his role. We see another example of a character allegedly taking ill as well in Mr Hua. As a project manager, when confronted with a situation where it appears an employee on your team is calling in sick excessively and you suspect it is owing to job pressures, you should as a first step:

- Call human resources. This is not your issue.
- Move this issue upstairs. Advise your manager that your efforts are being hampered by staff illness.
- Pull the employee quietly aside and confront them exercising compassion and emotional intelligence.
- Cover for the individual in the short term. The “no move” move is always the best move.
- Wait for a relatively stable phase for the employee, then e-mail them that you are advising management to deduct vacation days.

Question 5:

In scene 28 of Sharkworld when confronted with the necessity for building the schedule, you are given alternatives that allow you to complete the project in a shorter or longer time frame. Your decisions involve resource leveling. From theory, what activities should we look at first when deciding how to level resources in a project?:

- Those on the critical path
- Those not on the critical path
- The shortest lead time items
- The longest lead time items
- R & D items



Question 6:

In scene 38 of Sharkworld, you are put in a position whereby you must negotiate with Mr. Wu to try to find a resolution to the issue of these hammerheads arriving too early for the facility. You did many things correctly, but according to PMBOK theory there were still options in the toolbox to apply to get more concessions out of Mr. Wu. You might have tried some of these, but if not, which of these important strategies might you also have tried to apply?:

- ☐ Introduce a red herring
- ☐ Talk money last
- ☐ Focus on win-win
- ☐ Analyze in advance who has most at stake
- ☐ Stretch out negotiations

Question 7:

Prior to the outset of the game, we introduced the concept of team development. We discussed the possibility of focusing on star players vs. focusing on other team players in order to bring the project home in the strongest manner. In Sharkworld Mr. Hua is clearly a star, and yet despite our best efforts, he removes himself from the team. What does this example tell you about your team development efforts as a PM?

- ☐ Take a balanced approach. Put your efforts where you are likely to succeed. Have contingencies. Know your people.
- ☐ Focus on basic training skills and cater mostly to the more minor contributors.
- ☐ Even when resources are scarce, continue to make promises to your leaders. These people are just too important.
- ☐ Shizzle happens. Don't waste time and money on team development.
- ☐ Take more on. Do more for yourself. Rely on others only as a last resort.



Question 8:

In scene 58, you are presented with a very disappointed Mr. Wu. He complains to you of having overwhelming problems in both his personal and professional lives. And when it comes to his professional life, he largely blames you. You have a conflict with Mr Wu. We have a tendency as people to believe professional conflicts are related to the personalities of project managers – it is only human, but the reasons are typically not traced to this. In this case, the root cause is consistent with what the PMBOK indicates is the number one reason for PM's having conflict with their customers. It is:

- ☐ Risk Management
- ☐ Integration management
- ☐ Quality
- ☒ Scheduling
- ☐ Executing

Question 9:

Risk management in Sharkworld involved making a series of decisions in scene 19 when you wrote a letter to Mr. Struwer that had long reaching implications regarding safety, water permits, and staffing. Some of these decisions showed up in the scoring as far along as scene 63 of the 75 scene experience. If you were undertaking the same type of risk assessment for either Western or your real employer, how might you have improved the decision making process?:

- ☒ Made it a quantitative and qualitative decision in each case
- ☐ Put the most conservative contingency in place for the risk that is most concerning
- ☐ Checked with Al Gore's people to determine if there is any flexibility in schedules
- ☐ Determined what the local building code had to say about scaffolding instead of trusting your instinct.
- ☐ All of the above.



Question 10:

Earned value analysis is really only implied in Sharkworld via executing changes and taking risks that have known cost and time implications. Therefore while it is difficult to make calculations regarding the project outcome in hard numbers, we can suggest that if you did have Dr. Xianing arrested, made reasonable contingencies for risk, and carefully planned the Gantt chart changes for the early shark delivery, chances are the project you ran probably would have come in near budget and timing requirements. Positive cost and time outcomes in earned value analysis are reflected by:

- ☐ Negative cpi and negative spi
- ☐ Negative cpi and positive spi
- ☐ Negative spi and positive cpi
- ☒ Positive cpi and positive spi
- ☐ A cpi of 1 and an spi of 1

Question 11:

Integrated change management would have been required when the additional shark holding tank was agreed upon to be built. What types of documents are NOT necessary for a PM to see in writing before proceeding with change notices?

- ☐ Either 1) a new or updated purchase order or change directive from the customer or 2) written approval from the budgeted internal client
- ☐ Quotations from suppliers
- ☐ A record of agreed upon timing from either the internal or external customer
- ☐ A breakdown of your costs
- ☒ None of the above



Question 12:

During Sharkworld you hopefully avoided scope creep by effectively managing the conversation with Mrs. Cheng regarding further archaeological measures and by effectively negotiating with Mr. Wu for him to provide costs for the temporary aquarium. The PMBOK tells us that there is a best practice for avoiding scope creep. These Sharkworld scope creep possibilities presented themselves. Sometimes they don't. Sometimes you have to go looking for them and then mitigate quickly. That process is called scope verification. According to PM theory, when should you as a PM practice scope verification?:

- ☐ Before the charter is signed.
- ☐ After the charter is signed.
- ☒ After each project phase
- ☐ With each controlling measure
- ☐ At each enterprise environmental factor

Question 13:

Sharkworld is an international multi-cultural project experience. Which of the following statements regarding multi-cultural projects is NOT accurate?:

- ☐ Moving forward, more projects will necessitate having PMs with multiple language skills.
- ☒ Co-located teams are NOT as effective as remotely located teams.
- ☐ The local culture may have more influence on the outcome of the project than the project manager's style.
- ☐ Different cultures have different traditions for negotiation and conflict tolerance.
- ☐ Project managers must be open minded to be successful.



Question 14:

Project Management Leadership is about setting clear expectations. During your first conversation with Mr Hua, you had the opportunity to show that you were a stronger leader than your predecessor. You did this by setting expectations. When a project manager is in a situation where most of the project team does not report to him/her as in Sharkworld, what becomes an even more important skill set than leadership for setting the tone and communicating the vision on a project?:

- ☐ Dictating and bullying
- ☐ Influencing and sound decision making
- ☐ Following
- ☒ Public speaking and credit taking
- ☐ Managerial liaison and record keeper

Question 15:

Sharkworld did not have to be crashed if you negotiated effectively with Mr. Wu to get money for the temporary holding tank. Project crashing means?:

- ☐ All is lost. Dust off the resume.
- ☐ A little reckless risk taking
- ☐ The project is way ahead of schedule, so it is time to sleep a bit before the closure phase.
- ☐ You are running into some roadblocks
- ☒ You have to take time out of the critical path. The inherent direct costs associated will hit the project. There may be offsetting indirect costs that might help to soften the blow.



Question 16:

Mr. Struwer was all about time management. If you deliver your projects late consistently at your place of business, which of the following problems becomes a concern for your management team:?

- ☐ Fewer projects are executed
- ☐ Decreased annual revenues are achieved
- ☐ Inability to properly forecast revenue
- ☐ Lack of confidence and support from financiers and industry
- ☒ All of the above

Question 17:

At the Sharkworld closeout party you might have learned that the next project was in Brazil and that you needed to mobilize for it. Let's say you did not have Dr. Xianing arrested, or some of your other risks were realized. Well, you are late and you did not get invited to manage the new construction in Brazil. If that happened to you in Sharkworld and as a consequence Spector Install will not be working on the project, then we can assume that Spector Install has a particular type of cost associated with not working in Brazil. It is referred to as?:

- ☐ The cost of doing business
- ☐ The lost cost
- ☐ An opportunity cost
- ☒ A sunk cost
- ☐ A Brazilian Gazillion



Question 18:

It is standard practice in large companies that employees are trained to conduct themselves ethically in all their business dealings. Near the end of Sharkworld, evidence is presented that clearly indicates Dr Xianing is sabotaging the installation. However, dismissal of Dr. Xianing will result in financial losses for the project that could potentially jeopardize the success of the installation on Spector Install's bottom line. Project Managers presented with such circumstances are best served to?:

- ☒ Raise the issue to management
- ☐ Contact the legal department
- ☐ Contact the authorities
- ☐ Confront the subversive individual
- ☐ Keep it quiet and protect the bottom line

Question 19:

At the meeting at Zhong Investments with Mr. Wu where you argued for more costs associated with the building of the extra holding tank, a "deal" was made between you and Mr. Wu. There was an offer of services, an acceptance of this scope of change, and an amount for materials and labor was agreed upon. You and Mr. Wu are both bound by the laws of the project contract which we would assume are Chinese. Assume American laws were in place, rather than Chinese for a moment. Both you and Mr. Wu are of sound mind and have the legal capacity to enter into a contract lets assume. But nothing was written down at the end of the meeting. And now, after the tank was built, Mr Wu is refusing to pay. Even though it was never written down, did you and Mr. Wu actually enter into a binding contract for the holding tank and must he now pay up?:

- ☒ Maybe. As long as there is no clause in the original contract that says the supplier must execute all changes.
- ☐ No way. Not in writing. No contract.
- ☐ You cannot have an American contract on Chinese soil and vice versa. No contract.
- ☐ There is no contract but you can lien the job.



Question 20:

It was implicit in Sharkworld, but when you are a new project manager brought in part way through a project what is the first document the PMBOK recommends you seek out and have amended?:

- ☐ The Scope statement
- ☐ The Charter
- ☒ The Risk Register
- ☐ The Lessons Learned
- ☐ The Change Register

B. Comprehensive and Reflective Questions

Question 1 :

In scene 26, you have a conversation with Struwer regarding Chinese culture. You are advised that the civil servant Mrs. Cheng will be easier to work with if you are up on your Chinese culture. The user guide for the game showed you where to access the internet where you could find relevant documents to prepare for a discussion on Chinese culture. Did you take advantage of this? Do you believe this decision impacted your score? What conversations have you typically prepared for in advance for your roles in the work place, or even in academia? Why?

Question 2:

PM theory usually references five ways to handle conflict: confront, compromise, smooth, avoid, force. Which of these five did you use most frequently in the game? Do you believe this decision reflected in your score? Which one do you use most often in your life – notably in your work experiences?



Question 3:

Based upon what you learned about your boss Mr. Struwer, what can you say about your stakeholder strategy for handling him? Did you ever stray from it, and did that impact your experience? How? Do you have a stakeholder strategy for your boss typically? Do you always use it?

Question 4:

In scene 39 you have to resolve the planning issues due to the early delivery of the sharks. What would your strategy have been if Spector Install had not been able to secure a change notice for the modification to scope? Recall from Project Management theory that crashing a project involves looking at the critical path, crashing the least expensive items first, and trying to understand if there are any offsetting indirect costs that might work to your advantage. In your experiences in the work place, have you proceeded by checking the budget and selecting items that were least costly, or have you simply seen what you could do with the timeline to “make it work”? Crashing is often a pressure packed experience for the client. What was missing in Sharkworld for ensuring this went forward smoothly?

Question 5:

In scene 19 you write an e-mail to Struwer outlining certain risks and the position you are taking to mitigate them. PM theory dictates that there are 4 general ways to deal with risks: share, transfer, accept, or minimize; Which option did you select when dealing with the scaffolding problem? What about ensuring Mr. Hua would not leave the project? When presented with similar situations at your place of work, which of the four options have you generally drawn from? Why?

Question 6:

In the introductory presentation before the game started, we reviewed the importance of understanding what other people are thinking as a PM. Which of the following characters did you have the toughest time predicting what their position might be in a given situation: Mr. Struwer, Mr. Wu, Dr. Xianing, or Mrs. Cheng? Why would you say that was? Was there any relationship to their role? Can you draw any conclusions about who might be the toughest reads for you in the work place? How can you apply that knowledge?



Question 7:

Subject Matter Experts can at times pose unique challenges for PMs. Recall our introductory video clips related to Dilbert as well as the cat herding video. In Sharkworld, Prof Xianing was just such an individual. He is a unique personality and very ego driven. In your opinion, what more might have been considered in the management of Prof. Xianing? At Western, in your work place, and in all world beating engineering companies, less extreme, but necessary to manage versions of Prof. Xianing also exist. What similar situations have arisen in the past and how have you applied negotiation, conflict resolution, and other PM core competencies to achieve workable situations for either Western or your company when dealing with unique personalities?

Question 8:

In scene 66, Mr. Wu tells you that Prof. Xianing has gone mad. You have an ethical dilemma on your hands. If you advise to fire Prof. Xianing, you will deliver the project on time, but you will lose on your budget. If you decide to work with Prof. Xianing despite his subversions, you will most likely deliver the project late. Why did you decide to handle it the way you did? The PMBOK in numerous process diagrams references “enterprise environmental factors” (political situation, competition, risk tolerance, etc) as inputs in weighing such decisions. What was it about Spector Install corporate culture that made you handle it the way you did? Would you have handled it the same way at Western or your place of business? Why or why not?

Question 9:

In the introductory slides prior to commencing the game, we reviewed human resource management and how often it can be seen that working with the perceived “lower” performers on the team can provide beneficial results in excess of working with the stars on the team when it comes to overall project delivery. You had one chance to influence the mix on your team when you replaced Mr. Hua. Did you select a great technical fit, or a great personal fit? What motivated you in making your selection? In your opinion, does Western or your place of business spend enough time developing all types of excellence on its project teams?



Question 10:

Sharkworld is a multicultural project management experience. Conflict occurs in the game and you can see that characters in the game at some points react to conflict in different ways. Can you identify classic examples of different conflict management strategies that the characters employ or attitudes that they exhibit? Different companies take different views upon conflict. How would you describe the perspective on conflict in the workplace your most recent company had? What about Western? Do you as an employee feel comfortable in participating in this aspect of the corporate culture? Are you sure you understand all the implications of how conflict is perceived at place of business?