Software Project Management

Meti Dejene
tiimeekoo@gmail.com
Haramaya University

Chapter 1 - Introduction

What is a Project?

- A project is "*a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result.*"
- A project is temporary :
  - The temporary nature of projects indicates that a project has a definite beginning and end.
  - Temporary does not necessarily mean a project has a short duration.
  - A project's duration might be just one week or it might go on for years, but every project has an end date.
  - Projects are temporary, but their deliverables may exist beyond the end of the project.

- A project is an endeavor:
  - An endeavor refers to a focused and intentional effort or attempt to achieve a specific outcome.
  - As an endeavor, a project requires resources such as time, money, people, and materials to achieve its objectives.
- Every project creates a unique product, service, or result.
  - This is the deliverable for the project and the reason, why that project was undertaken.
  - Every project, by definition, has a unique purpose and creates something unique, even if the differences are subtle.
  - This uniqueness is what distinguishes a project from routine operations or repetitive tasks.

Project Attributes

- Specific Objectives
  - Projects are goal-oriented. They are initiated to achieve a well-defined specific objectives, which are often defined in terms of scope, time, cost, and quality.
  - An objective is an outcome toward which work is to be directed.
- Progressive elaboration
  - Progressive elaboration means developing in steps, and continuing by increments.
  - Projects often start with high-level plans that become more detailed as the project progresses.
  - This allows for adjustments based on new information or changing conditions.

- Constraints
  - Projects operate within constraints, often referred to as the "triple constraints" or "iron triangle":
    - Scope: The work to be done.
    - Time: The schedule or deadlines.
    - Cost: The budget allocated.
- Resource Dependence
  - Projects require resources such as people, equipment, materials, and funding.
- Stakeholder Involvement
  - Projects involve multiple stakeholders, including clients, sponsors, team members, and end-users, each with their own expectations and interests.

♠ Uncertainty and Risk

- Projects involve uncertainty due to factors like changing requirements, unforeseen challenges, or external influences.
- Risk management is a critical part of project management.

♠ Measurable Outcomes

- The success of a project is measured by its ability to deliver the desired outcomes within the defined constraints.

♠ Customer-Centric

- Projects are typically driven by customer or stakeholder needs.
- Delivering value to the customer is a primary focus.

What is Management?

Management is the process of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling resources (people, time, money, and materials) to achieve specific goals efficiently and effectively.

Key Functions of Management

1. Planning

- Planning is in essence thinking carefully about something before you do it and deciding in advance - what to do, when to do & how to do. It bridges the gap from where we are & where we want to be.
- A plan is a future course of actions.
- Planning is chalking out a future course of action & deciding in advance the most appropriate course of actions for achievement of pre-determined goals.
- Planning is necessary to ensure proper utilization of human & non-human resources, avoiding confusion, uncertainties, risks, wastages etc.

2. Organizing

- Organizing involves the determination of activities that need to be done in order to reach the company goals, assigning these activities to the proper personnel, and delegating the necessary authority to carry out these activities in a coordinated and cohesive manner.

3. Staffing

- Staffing involves manning the organization structure through proper and effective selection, appraisal & development of personnel to fill the roles designed.

4. Directing/Leading

- Influencing, guiding, supervising, motivating sub-ordinate so that they perform their activities in the most efficient manner possible, in order to achieve the desired goals.

5. Monitoring and Controlling

- "Controlling is the process of checking whether or not proper progress is being made towards the objectives and goals and acting if necessary, to correct any deviation".
- This is to ensure that the events do not deviate from the pre-arranged plans.
- Consists of establishing standards for work performance, measuring performance and comparing it to these set standards and taking corrective actions as and when needed, to correct any deviations.

What is Project management?

- Project management is *the application of knowledge, skills, experience, tools, and techniques to plan, execute, monitor, control, and close a project successfully.*
- Project management is the art of directing and coordinating the human and material resources throughout the project by using modern management techniques to achieve specific project objectives according to the project acceptance criteria within agreed parameters.
- A project manager is a professional responsible for planning, executing, monitoring, controlling, and closing a project.

Software Projects

- A software project is a specialized type of project focused on the development, implementation, or maintenance of software systems.
- Software projects are often include creating new software products, modifying or extending the capabilities of software products, or modifying the software infrastructure of an organization.

Software Project Management

- Software project management is the practice of planning, organizing, and managing resources to successfully complete a software project.
- It includes applying project management principles specifically to software development projects, addressing unique challenges such as changing requirements, technological complexity, and ensuring quality and timely delivery of the software product.

Software Project Manager

- A software project manager is a specialized project manager who oversees software development projects.
- They manage the development, deployment, and maintenance of software systems, ensuring that the project meets technical requirements, user needs, and business goals.
- In short, Software project managers take the overall responsibility of steering a project to success.

The 4 P’s of PM

- The 4 P's of Project Management (People, Product, Process, and Project) are a framework that helps in understanding and managing software projects effectively.
- Effective software project management focuses on these four P’s and the project manager must keep track of all of these P’s in order to maintain a smooth flow in the project’s development and achieve the target.

The 4 P's	Definition in Software Project Management
People	Refers to the team members, stakeholders, and users involved in the project.
	- Assembling a skilled and collaborative team (developers, testers, designers, etc.).
	- Managing stakeholder expectations and ensuring clear communication.
	- Understanding user needs and ensuring the software meets their requirements.
Process	Refers to the methodologies, workflows, and practices used to manage the project.
	- Choosing the right development methodology (e.g., Agile, Scrum, Waterfall).
	- Defining clear workflows for development, testing, and deployment.
	- Establishing processes for quality assurance, risk management, and change control.

Product	Refers to the final deliverable or outcome of the project, which in software projects is the software system, its features, functionality, and quality.
	- Defining the scope, requirements, and deliverables of the software.
	- Ensuring the product meets technical specifications and user expectations.
	- Delivering a high-quality, error-free, and scalable software solution.
Project	Refers to the overall management of the project, including timelines, budgets, and resources.
	- Creating a detailed project plan with milestones, deadlines, and resource allocation.
	- Monitoring progress, managing risks, and ensuring the project stays on track.
	- Closing the project successfully by delivering the product and conducting post-project evaluations.

How the 4 P's Interrelate in Software Project Management?

- People drive the Process, which produces the Product, all within the framework of the Project.
- For example, a skilled software development team (People) uses Agile methodologies (Process) to develop a mobile app (Product) while adhering to project constraints like time and budget (Project).

Role and Responsibilities of a Project Manager

Category	Responsibilities of PM
Planning	Define project scope, objectives, and deliverables.
	Create a detailed project plan, timelines, budgets, and resource allocation.
	Identify risks and develop mitigation strategies.
Execution	Lead and motivate the project team.
	Coordinate tasks and ensure smooth collaboration among team members.
	Manage resources effectively to achieve project goals.
Monitoring and Control	Track project progress against the plan.
	Monitor budgets, schedules, and quality standards.
	Address issues and risks as they arise.

Cont.

Communication	Act as the primary point of contact for stakeholders.
	Provide regular updates on project status.
	Facilitate meetings and ensure clear communication among team members and stakeholders.
Closure	Ensure all project deliverables are completed and approved.
	Conduct post-project evaluations to identify lessons learned.
	Document and archive project information for future reference.

Qualities of a Software Project Manager

A successful software project manager requires a combination of technical knowledge, leadership skills, and personal qualities. Key qualities include:

Category	Key Skills/Abilities
Technical Knowledge	Understanding of software development processes, methodologies, and tools.
Leadership Skills	Strong decision-making and problem-solving abilities.
	Ability to inspire and motivate team members.
	Conflict resolution and negotiation skills.
Communication Skills	Clear communication with both technical and non-technical stakeholders.
	Active listening to understand team and stakeholder needs.
	Ability to present complex information in a simple and understandable way.
Organizational Skills	Excellent time management and prioritization abilities.
	Attention to detail to ensure nothing is overlooked.
	Ability to manage multiple tasks and deadlines simultaneously.

Cont.

Adaptability	Flexibility to handle changing requirements and unexpected challenges.
	Openness to new ideas and approaches.
	Ability to work in dynamic and fast-paced environments.
Customer Focus	Commitment to delivering value to the customer.
	Focus on ensuring customer satisfaction with the final product.
Risk Management	Proactive identification and mitigation of risks.
	Ability to anticipate potential issues and develop contingency plans.
Emotional Intelligence	Empathy to understand team members' perspectives and challenges.
	Self-awareness to manage stress and maintain a positive attitude.
	Ability to build strong relationships with team members and stakeholders.

Project Lifecycle

- Projects typically progress through a series of stages/phases, known as the project lifecycle (aka process groups), to ensure they are completed successfully.
- The Project Management Institute (PMI) defines five process groups that form the foundation of project management and provide a structured framework to managing projects from start to finish.

1. Initiating

Purpose: The goal is to define the project at a high level and obtain authorization to begin.

Key Activities include:

- Identifying the Problem or Opportunity: Determining the need for the project.
- Defining Objectives: Outlining what the project aims to achieve.
- Conducting Feasibility Studies: Assessing whether the project is viable.
- Stakeholder Identification: Identifying key stakeholders and their interests.
- Developing Project Charter: Creating a document that formally authorizes the project and outlines its purpose, objectives, and high-level scope.

Outcome: A clear understanding of the project's purpose and formal approval to proceed.

2. Planning

Purpose: creating a detailed roadmap for how the project will be executed, monitored, and controlled. Key Activities:

- Scope Definition: Clearly defining the project's deliverables and boundaries.
- Work Breakdown Structure (WBS): Breaking the project into smaller, manageable tasks.
- Budgeting: Estimating costs and creating a financial plan.
- Resource Planning: Identifying and allocating resources (people, budget, materials).
- Schedule Development: Creating a timeline with milestones and deadlines.
- Risk Management Plan: Identifying potential risks and developing mitigation strategies.
- Communication Plan: Establishing how information will be shared among stakeholders.

Outcome: A comprehensive project management plan that serves as a guide for the team.

3. Executing

- **Purpose**: This is where the work gets done! The project plan is put into action, and deliverables are produced. Key Activities include:
  - Task Implementation: Completing the work outlined in the project plan.
  - Coordinating people and resources.
  - Team Management: Leading and motivating the project team.
  - Stakeholder Communication: Keeping stakeholders informed about progress.
- **Outcome**: Completion of project deliverables as per the plan.

4. Monitoring and Controlling

Purpose: This process group runs concurrently with the Executing phase. It ensures the project stays on track and deviations are addressed. Key Activities:

- Performance Tracking: Monitoring progress against the project plan.
- Quality Control: Ensuring deliverables meet quality standards.
- Risk Management: Addressing risks and issues as they arise.
- Change Management: Handling changes to the project scope, schedule, or budget.
- Budget Management: Tracking expenses and ensuring the project stays within budget.
- Reporting: Providing regular updates to stakeholders.

Outcome: The project remains aligned with its objectives, and issues are resolved.

5. Closing

- **Purpose**: This is the final phase, where the project is formally completed and closed.
- **Key Activities:**
  - Deliverable Handover: Delivering the final product, service, or result to the customer.
  - Obtaining formal acceptance of the deliverables and closing contracts.
  - Post-Project Review: Evaluating the project's success and identifying lessons learned.
  - Documentation: Archiving project documents for future reference.
  - Recognizing the team's efforts and achievements.
  - Resource Release: Reallocating team members and resources to other projects.
- **Outcome**: The project is formally closed, and stakeholders are satisfied with the results.