**Learning Journal Template**

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**Course:** Software Project Management

**Journal URL:** [Github Link](https://github.com/abhijitbanerjee05/SOEN-6841-Software-Project-Management.git)

**Dates Rage of activities:** 03.03.2025 – 16.03.2025

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**Key Concepts Learned**

This week, I delved into two crucial aspects of software project management: Project Monitoring & Control (Chapter 7) and Project Closure (Chapter 8). These topics are particularly relevant in ensuring that a project remains on track and concludes successfully.

* Project Monitoring & Control introduced the Earned Value Management (EVM) framework, which integrates schedule and budget tracking to assess whether a project is progressing as planned. We explored baseline tracking, where the project’s initial plan serves as a reference point for measuring actual performance. Additionally, we covered how to monitor project risks, control scope changes, and handle deviations in schedule, budget, or performance metrics.
* Project Closure emphasized the importance of finalizing all deliverables before formally closing a project. Some key takeaways were source code version management, ensuring that all project documentation is archived systematically, and analyzing lessons learned to improve future project efficiency. The chapter also stressed the significance of measuring project success through predefined metrics, helping project teams refine their approaches in future endeavors.

One major realization from this week’s learning was that a project doesn’t end just because development stops—there’s a structured process to wrap up the work, review performance, and document insights that can benefit future projects.

**Application in Real Projects**

The concepts from these chapters have direct applications in real-world software development. For instance, in Agile teams, tracking project milestones against the baseline helps assess sprint progress and prevents deadline overruns. I now understand the importance of earned value analysis (EVA) in quantifying project progress based on cost and time, rather than relying on qualitative assessments.

Additionally, risk management strategies are crucial when working with evolving technologies. In my own projects, I have faced instances where unexpected technical issues or resource constraints led to timeline shifts. Now, I can implement corrective action measures like reassigning tasks, modifying project scope, or using available slack time to absorb delays without disrupting critical milestones.

The project closure process is also essential, particularly in collaborative projects where multiple developers contribute. Archiving source code versions, ensuring all deliverables meet quality standards, and documenting lessons learned can streamline future iterations or related projects. This will be particularly useful in projects like my microservices-based search and discovery system, where versioning and retrospective analysis will help refine deployment and scaling strategies.

**Peer Interactions**

Discussions with peers this week were enlightening. One of my teammates shared their experience in managing scope creep in a real-world project by strictly enforcing change control mechanisms. We also debated whether small schedule deviations should trigger immediate corrective action or be addressed at a later stage. The consensus was that context matters, and minor deviations might be acceptable if the overall project goals remain unaffected.

**Challenges Faced**

One challenge I encountered was understanding resource leveling and its role in preventing project delays. The balance between underutilization and overutilization of team members seemed difficult to achieve in theoretical examples. Another issue was interpreting Earned Value Analysis (EVA) formulas for cost and schedule variance—I’ll need to revisit those concepts and practice applying them to sample projects.

**Personal Development Activities**

* Read case studies on project failures due to poor monitoring, helping me understand the long-term consequences of ineffective tracking.
* Practiced EVM calculations using sample project data, improving my ability to interpret cost and schedule variances.
* Explored project management tools like Microsoft Project and Jira, learning how they assist in tracking project milestones, resource allocation, and risk management.
* Watched webinars on Agile project monitoring, gaining insights into how modern teams track progress dynamically while maintaining flexibility.

**Goals for the Next Week**

* Deepen my understanding of schedule optimization, focusing on reducing unnecessary slack and improving resource utilization.
* Practice applying EVM in a small project, calculating and interpreting budget and schedule variances to improve decision-making skills.
* Explore more project monitoring tools, such as Trello and Monday.com, to understand their advantages and limitations.
* Research effective project retrospective techniques, ensuring that lessons learned are not just documented but also acted upon in future projects.