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| **Project Management – OPIM 5270 - Individual Paper – In the Shoes of a PM** |
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| The city of Trillium is building a new library. You are the project manager for the project. The stakeholders are very interested in the selection of the scheduling technique that will be used to monitor the project through to completion.  The Project manager, city manager, architect, general contractor, and head librarian have agreed to the following criteria for the process of selecting the scheduling approach:   * Shows duration of tasks * Includes milestones * Shows the flow of work (task dependencies) * Shows the sequence of events * Can depict which tasks can be undertaken at the same time * Can show how far tasks are from completion * Identifies critical resources being used * Tracks the critical path   The city manager favors using simple PowerPoint slides, as she’s been successful with that tool to manage city projects in the past. The librarian likes the PERT approach (she has a sophisticated Excel tool designed for this) due to its accommodation of probability. The architect knows of the Critical Chain Method as being easy to use and understand. The general contractor mentioned the use of Wrike (an online project management tool) as something his team is exploring for this project.  **You are the project manager. What method would you advocate to use as a scheduling tool to monitor project progress, and why? It will help to compare and contrast the methods proposed with what you would use.** |
| **Limit your paper to two pages, beginning on the next page.**  **Format: Arial – 11 pt. 1 ½ line spacing.** |

Rubric

20% Submitted on time

5% Format

5% Grammar

30% Method Comparison / Contrast

30% Advocacy Support

10% Demonstration of Critical Thinking

A project schedule helps to determine a realistic time for project delivery, resources required, track project activities, and list out milestones. It is a dynamic process and must be changeable with changes in real-time. It can be done in different methods but is better to select the one that would cover all required criteria in a project. The tool/approach must show the task duration, milestones, task dependencies, sequence of activities, possibility of task-pipelining, percentage of task completion, variations in the critical path & identify the use of critical resources.

The more complex the project is, the more factors and criteria come into the picture for scheduling. Building a library is almost a big project and I would consider all the above-mentioned factors for efficient scheduling. As a project manager, I would advocate using the Wrike project management tool, which is straightforward, multi-featured, and has an easy-to-use interface to deal with all the above-given criteria. I would present the below comparison to the stakeholders as to how the tools suggested by them are meeting the scheduling criteria.

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| **Criteria/Tools** | **MS-PowerPoint** | **PERT** | **Critical Chain Method** | **Wrike Tool** |
| **Task Duration** | **✔️** | **✔️** | **✔️** | **✔️** |
| **Milestones** | **✔️** | **✔️** | **✔️** | **✔️** |
| **Task Dependencies** | **❌** | **✔️** | **✔️** | **✔️** |
| **Sequence of events** | **❌** | **✔️** | **✔️** | **✔️** |
| **Pipelining/parallel tasking** | **✔️** | **✔️** | **✔️** | **✔️** |
| **% task completion** | **✔️** | **❌** | **❌** | **✔️** |
| **Critical resource identification** | **❌** | **❌** | **❌** | **✔️** |
| **Track critical path** | **❌** | **✔️** | **✔️** | **✔️** |

Different pros/cons of each tool mentioned by the stakeholders will be conveyed to bolster my aforementioned decision as below:

**PowerPoint**:

The city manager will be conveyed that although the MS-PowerPoint tool gives good flexibility in designing on our own and can be well used in project presentations, it requires more manual effort in creating/updating project scheduling decks periodically due to its static nature. Such frequent manual interpretation may also lead to working errors and project schedules must be updated from time to time. It does not allow us to check task dependencies and sequences of events over time and we cannot track the critical path nor identify critical resources.

**PERT**:

Program Evaluation Review Technique is one of the methods used in project scheduling to calculate realistic times for a particular task and involves network diagrams that help in showing critical paths. From these network diagrams, we can have a clear picture of the sequence of events, the dependencies of each task, and variations in the critical path of a project. These can also be used for showing milestones. However, the librarian would be informed that when there are many tasks in a project, the network diagrams become complex. The formulas used in her excel sheet would have a great advantage in calculating realistic times for the project but is also a complex job when compared to some other tools available in the market and when we try to implement the crashing concept, this approach is not applicable. Furthermore, PERT charts do not have the flexibility to identify the critical resources being used and track the completion percentage of a task which might stand as an impediment to scheduling.

**Critical Chain method:**

I would first support the architect that this is a good tool for project scheduling as it takes the availability of limited resources and non-working hours into account while making a project schedule. It helps to change the project schedule and goes with the consideration that task completion does not take much time as long as people believe and detect problems proactively before they affect the project. However, I would make him realize that this approach does not give us the opportunity to track the percentage of task completion in a project and identify critical resources. Although this approach lacks to meet the same criteria as PERT, we can use this model while crashing and it also gives us a reasonable time estimate by deterministic approach rather than a precision time estimate (by PERT). However, it can be used by integrating it with other tools that have a greater advantage than solely using this method.

**Wrike**:

Wrike project management tool is a multi-lingual multi-enterprise integrated system that enables to track dates & dependencies in projects, manage resources, track deadlines, schedules, and other workflow processes (Wrike, n.d.). It has some main sections to monitor the project progress such as the Gantt chart (which is used to track tasks, define inbound and outbound dependencies, define the task-task relationship, identify the sequence of events, track the completion percentage of a task, and show milestones), Workload View (which shows the workload of a particular resource from different projects), Table view (where we can enter different deliverables and sub-deliverables and define a particular start-date, end-date), Board View, Files View, Dashboards, and Calendars (Wrike monitor task progress, n.d.). The tool automatically updates its visualizations which is errand free. It can also integrate other features/platforms to track critical paths, identify critical resources, and depict which task can be undertaken at the same time. Due to its multiple features & integrability, we can meet all the criteria by using the Wrike tool for scheduling. We can also work on the Wrike tool offline, and the data is restored to the team once we go online. It is also useful to teams who work remotely from different places and is supported in Android/iOS platforms as well. Wrike might be costly when compared to other tools, but its advantages are something that makes it worth spending.