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Module 8.2 Assignment

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The Dangers of Change Approval Processes

The purpose of a change approval process within an organization is to better manage any changes that may be proposed to a product throughout the development process. The entire system exists to ensure that every single decision is thoroughly discussed and analyzed to meet the business demands as well as the customers demands. Through organized meetings and reviews conducted by other members of a development team, changes to a product’s system are properly documented and approved well before they are conducted. In the best case, this system helps promote proper business procedures to handle any changes that may arise during a development process. In the worst of cases, the change approval process can bring along its own series of issues that will need to be addressed by either the business or the development team. The risks involved with change approval processes can from two directions, either they are a result of the process itself, or they’re a direct result of the mismanagement of a change approval process.

For risks that are directly associated with the change approval process, they can come from a few different elements. According to dora.dev, some of the common pitfalls within the change approval process come from a reliance on a centralized change approval board, treating all changes equally, failing to apply continuous improvement, and responding to issues with the development process by adding even more process (*Capabilities: Streamlining change approval*). Risks associated with the change approval board can be due to the members of the board being too far removed from the development process that they don’t fully comprehend all possible effects that the changes they’re mediating could possibly bring. Treating all change requests to the same level of scrutiny and heavy analysis is thorough and sticking to the principles of the change approval process, but in some cases, it can be a detriment to the overall progression of a project. A team should be able to decide how much time to allocate for each change, depending on how major of an effect they could potentially have on the process. When continuous improvement isn’t applied to a process, it defeats the purpose of tracking the performance of a system. Also, adding more to a process that is already experiencing issues can do the opposite of improvement. It’s advised to instead “invest in making it quicker and safer to make changes” as a response to any stability issues that may arise. These are issues that are correlated to the process itself and can be mitigated through different methods depending on the organization.

When the risks are a result of poor management of the change approval process, that is when the source of the problem is the people involved. “Ignoring or mismanaging change manifests as costs and risks that play out on both the project level and organizational level” (Creasey, 2024). On the project level, the risks can impact the tools, technologies, and processes being used during development. The sources of these risks can come from either external factors or internally, and they can directly affect the ability of a development team to continue with a process until they’re resolved. This is why it’s crucial to have proper management of a change approval process, because there is inherent risk when it comes to applying changes to a process. There needs to be a proper assessment of the amount of risk that a proposed change can cause. “Risks can include the number of people affected, financial concerns, loss of productivity due to system or network downtime, resource allocation, and seasonal considerations, such as vacations, holidays, and weather. Impact analysis needs to be based on how many people are affected by the proposed change, and where those people are located” (Baruah, 2023). On the organizational level, the consequences can be even more detrimental than those on the project level. At this level, lack of management of a change approval process can lead to the loss of employees, a reduced quality of work, and a decline in productivity and morale of a team or multiple teams. There are ways to prevent this, and it’s through proper management of a change approval process. No aspect of the process should be ignored or have corners cut in its management, because this can either bring a project to a stop, or an entire organization to its downfall.

References:

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