Learning Journal - I

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Course: SOEN 6841- Software Project Management

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Dates Range of activities: 11/09/2024, 13/09/2024 – 15/09/2024 16/09/2024

Date of the journal: 11/09/2024

Key Concepts Learned:	Application in Real Projects:	Peer Interactions:	Challenges Faced:	Personal development activities:	Goals for the Next Week:
Projects have four stages: Initiation defines the purpose, objectives, and scope. Planning creates detailed plans for budget, timeline, and resources. Monitoring and Control measures progress. Closure releases resources and reviews lessons learned that help assess whether we over or under estimated.	In a software project, resource planning and budgeting involve purchasing software licenses and allocating developers to different modules. Monitoring can track features implemented or LOC. Lessons learnt can be assessing how many person-months a feature took as opposed to the initial estimate.	Discussed with my classmate who worked as a project manager about how these steps are applied in real life projects. It involves many rounds of meetings and consensus and thorough analysis before finalising any decision.	To think software development away from project management. Reviewing more project case studies that is not for software will help.	I was unfamiliar with closure stage, so, I researched it online, exploring various examples. This helped me understand closure's importance for continuous improvement.	Review more project case studies.
Project charter is an artifact from initiation phase that outlines the project's purpose, objectives and scope. Gives a direction and foundation to the project's timeline.	The project charter is used to pitch in a new project idea and to prevent misunderstandings by setting clear expectations, thus, gaining stakeholders' trust. However, developing a comprehensive charter demands a thorough understanding of the project which may be unclear at the beginning.	I discussed with the same classmate about the effort involved in drafting a project charter compared to other phases. The charter is crucial for conveying ideas, while the subsequent phases focus on implementing those ideas.	Initially, I kept overlapping the points for objective and scope in project charter.	Reading through Case study of chapter 2 helped understand what to include in scope and objective. Also, drafted project charters for a few projects pitch-ins on the internet.	Take more use cases and create charter for it.
Experience-Based Estimation relies on historical data and	Any Software projects usually involve the following steps: building UI,	-	Had trouble understanding what	Read the chapter in textbook	Re-read this topic in

expert judgment by analysing similar projects. Example: Estimation by analogy and expert judgement (Function point analysis)	database, server, allowing for experience-based estimation. However, differing contexts among similar projects can lead to inaccuracies in these estimates. A software can also be thought of different modules or features so we can use function point analysis.		input, output and boundaries and calculation of UFP in function point analyses		text book for more understanding
Algorithmic Cost Modeling uses mathematical equations to predict costs based on project parameters. While structured, it requires estimating parameters, which may introduce inaccuracies as it still relies on experience.	Software projects can be measured in terms of size (LOC), number of tables in database, number of server points globally, etc. However, as a project progresses these values can change as requirement changes.	Discussed with the same classmate on how to decide the estimation technique to use. This purely depends on the complexity of the project. Software projects are easier to quantify as opposed to others.	Could not understand the real advantages of using COCOMO 2 over COCOMO in a software project.	Read the chapter in textbook. Looked at internet examples of how calculations were done in COCOMO.	Re-read this topic in text book for more understanding.

Final Reflections:

Overall Course Impact:
This course deepened my understanding of project management, emphasizing the four stages and the project charter's role in defining clear objectives to gain the trust of the stakeholders and to set the foundation and motivation behind the project proposal. I learned about cost estimation techniques, balancing experience with facts, and the inevitability of estimation deviations, highlighting the need for mitigation strategies. Uncertainty of estimation decreases as the project progresses.

Application in Professional Life:
The knowledge gained can be applied to manage software projects. For example, in leading a software development project, I can use the project charter to align stakeholders and apply Function Point Analysis for accurate size and cost estimates. Understanding project closure will facilitate effective release of unused resources and documentation of lessons learned. Lessons learned is important for continuous learning and enables us to take better decisions in future projects to improve as a software manager.

Peer Collaboration Insights:
I learned how theory applies to real-life projects, emphasizing that careful consideration of various factors is crucial, as poor judgments can lead to costly modifications later. Each project is unique, requiring thorough analysis of its complexity before making any decision.

Personal Growth:
I gained a clearer understanding of project management processes, recognizing that it is not straightforward and that project managers play a critical role in a project's success.