Lab 9.2.3 Creating a Timeline

Objective

- Estimate timelines and resources.

Expected Results and Success Criteria

Before starting this lab, read through the tasks that you are expected to perform. What do you expect the result of performing these tasks will be?

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What would you expect to be the result of one phase or task of a project being delayed? Under what circumstances would the entire project be adversely affected?

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Background / Preparation

In this lab, you will create a timeline for the FilmCompany network upgrade project. The timeline should include the start and end dates for the phased installation method.

The project duration is part of the contractual agreement. To meet the deadlines of the customer, the network designer creates a project timeline. The availability of materials, the schedule of the contractor, and the schedule of the customer are all considerations in determining the start date and the completion date.

Developing an implementation plan and effectively managing the project time and resources is a highly regarded skill in the networking and communications industry. Developing an understanding of these project management issues is therefore an important outcome of this lab.

Step 1: List and prioritize the factors affecting the timeline

Note issues such as equipment and material availability, skilled personnel, and customer requirements that should be considered for the following factors when developing a project timeline. Consider the possibility that the project might not begin on the proposed start date.

Equipment order and delivery

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Service installation, such as WAN links

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Customer schedule, including available maintenance and downtime windows

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Availability of appropriate technical personnel

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Step 2: Complete the time details for each installation phase

The FilmCompany network upgrade is linked to the StadiumCompany network redevelopment. It would be efficient to align the FilmCompany stadium remote site work with that project. The StadiumCompany RFP states that the project must be completed during the off-season for the two teams. This requirement gives the project a timeline of four months, which can be also applied to the FilmCompany upgrade.

    a. On the table created in Lab 9.2.1 for Phase 1, fill in the Date information:

- Install Distribution and Core Layer equipment
- Configure new IP addressing & VLAN scheme
- Configure routing

    b. On the table for Phase 2, fill in the Date information:

- Upgrade the WAN connectivity
- Extend the network to the remote site
- Configure Access Control Lists & security

    c. On the table for Phase 3, fill in the Date information:

- Install and configure the wireless and associated mobility network equipment

Step 3: Consider customer-caused delays

Customers may make changes to the requirements during the installation of a project. When changes occur, the timeline is used to make adjustments to personnel and other available resources. The timeline documentation can also be used to show the customer how delays affect the project completion date.

Based on the timeline, write a project variation statement showing the possible delay in the project completion date if the FilmCompany decided at this stage to relocate an additional three production staff and their workstations to the stadium.

Step 4: Using project management software (Optional)

Project management tools such as Microsoft Project can be used to create a project timeline. This software can be useful for:

- Tracking the progress of the project
- Keeping the project on schedule
- Identifying milestones
- Tracking labor assignments and costs
- Alerting the designer if the project is falling behind schedule.

If this software is available, enter the resources and timeline for one phase of the Implementation Plan and examine the output.