



Project management: the theory

- 1) Read the text about project management quickly. The paragraphs have been printed in the wrong order. With a partner, agree on the correct order.

I
1 After the analysis stage has been completed and the team is working on program design, the project manager needs to keep in touch with all aspects of the task. If a regular program of reviews and checks is scheduled, then possible problems or risks can be identified at an early stage. However, perhaps the most important aspect of the project manager's job is "people management." He or she has to make sure that all the team members know exactly which task they are responsible for, that they are all motivated and work together successfully in a team. He or she should not try to do all the work, but delegate the specialised tasks to the specialists.

II
From the start, success depends on the skills of the project manager. He or she has a lot of tasks to carry out. Firstly, there must be a successful liaison with the customer, the future user of the product. The development team must start off with a clear understanding of the customer's requirements. In the initial or specification stage, they must draw up a list of specifications and, on the basis of this, a task list of things to be done. The project team must also understand the details of the business or production processes which the computer program is going to automate. A misunderstanding at this stage can result in disaster later.

III
The final stages, testing, documentation and training, are just as important as the initial ones. The

software must be tested and integrated into the real-life processes at the customer's workplace. Documentation must be complete and easy to follow, with a "help" function, printed manuals and a hotline service. Staff must be trained in using the new software. And then, on the day when the system goes "live", it must function properly!

IV
In the case of a big project, it is essential to identify key requirements, and to set up a schedule which allows the different parts or modules of the project to be delivered over a period of time. A quality assessment is essential, too, to be sure how quickly, correctly or well the program will have to function. Is there any margin for error?

V
In the analysis stage, the team works out how to avoid such disasters and to achieve these functions in a program. But at the same time, the customer wants an estimate of the time and costs involved. The project manager is responsible for working out schedules, estimating costs and, of course, calculating risks and covering these with contingency plans. There are a number of project management software programs available, and it is advisable to use one of these. It helps to deal with initial problems, and also allows all members of the team to stay in touch with developments at all times.

Comprehension

- Write a list of the stages of a project as mentioned in the text.
- Find words or phrases in the text which have the following meanings:
Aufgaben ausführen • der zukünftige Benutzer • in Kontakt bleiben • Risiken identifizieren • Geschäfts- oder Produktionsverfahren • Anforderungen • Endstadium • Pflichtenheft • Alternativplan
- What makes a good project manager? Add your ideas to the suggestions and rank them according to importance. Then compare your lists to the other groups' ideas.
 - a university qualification in IT
 - experience in programming
 - budgeting skills
 - leadership skills
 - ability to delegate (i.e. the ability to give tasks to other people)
 - ability to work under stress
 - experience in the field in which the customer is active
 - good nerves
 - communication skills
 - ability to do any task required by the project
- Have you worked on projects of the type described? If yes, what kind of projects did you work on? How successful were they?

The expressions below will help you:

I think ... is / are more important than ... – No, ... is / are the most important.
In my opinion, a project manager must have ... – No, I think ... is / are more necessary for the job of project manager.
I don't agree. He or she must have ..., but ... is / are not necessary at all.