Discussion Thread 1

First, I want to correctly understand the definition of a ‘project manager’ so I refer to the course textbook (pages 8, 19, 23-29) (Kathy Schwalbe Ph.D., 2007). It says, as a project’s attribute, “effective project managers are crucial to a project’s success,” and “they meet with project sponsors, project teams, and other stakeholders to meet project goals.” It says that a project may be grouped with related projects within a program, managed by a program manager, whom provides leadership and direction for each of those project managers. It says the role of a project manager is “more effective if they are familiar with the nine project management knowledge areas and the various tools and techniques related to project management.” It goes on to say, “a project manager can have many job descriptions, which can vary tremendously based on the organization and the project.” Project managers need to have a wide variety of skills, such as application area knowledge of standards and regulations, project environment knowledge, general management knowledge, and human relations skills. It presents the importance of people skills and leadership skills, listed in (Table 1-3) Ten Most Important Skills and Competencies for Project Managers. Finally, it says that all project managers need to demonstrate leadership and management skills. They often take on the role both leader and manager. A leader focuses on long-term goals and big-picture objectives while inspiring people to reach those goals. A manager often deals with the day-to-day details of meeting specific goals. “Managers do things right and leaders do the right things.”

I chose a movie character as an example of a real project manager because many people may have seen the movie, “Armageddon (Bay, 1998).” The project manager was Harry Stamper (Bruce Willis), an owner/operator of a Deep-Core Drilling team. The project was to successfully do the most dangerous deep-core drilling operation, which was on an asteroid, to ultimately save the planet Earth. Harry led and managed the project and he let his future son-in-law, A.J. Frost (Ben Affleck), led the team. At the end, Harry sacrificed his life to complete the project successfully, saving the world and his team.

References

Bay, M. (Director). (1998). Armageddon [Motion Picture]. Retrieved from <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0120591/?ref_=nv_sr_5>

Kathy Schwalbe Ph.D., P. (2007). Information Technology Project Management (5th ed.). Augsburg College: Thomson Course Technology.