Leadership in organizations and projects, IY2511, fall 2012, MBA part time

# D. Group assignment 2: “The role of the project manager”

*Readings: Tonnquist (you may also, if applicable, use DuBrin)*

*This is a group assignment. Discuss the assignment within your group folder, and write your analysis down by using relevant concepts from Tonnquist (perhaps also DuBrin). The recommended number of pages is 4-5. Don’t forget to make correct references to the sources you use! If you are uncertain of reference techniques, see* [*http://tuba.bth.se/lo/reference/index.asp*](http://tuba.bth.se/lo/reference/index.asp)*. Before you start to work with the assignment you should also take a look at this tutorial, which concerns plagiarism issues:* [*http://www.bi.hik.se/Refero\_eng/1intro.php*](http://www.bi.hik.se/Refero_eng/1intro.php)

*Choose one person within the group who will be responsible to submit your assignment. This person ticks the names of all group members when submitting the assignment. Name your file according to your group number and assignment number (example: ‘groupXassignmentY’). Don’t forget to also have your group number, assignment number and names of the members that have been active contributors, within the file. Submit the assignment by clicking on “Submit answer” and attach the file.*

*Deadline: 30th of November 2012*

*Good Luck!*

## Project management dilemmas

You meet with your old friend from the university, Ellen, who is the project manager of a large scale IT development project. This is her first assignment as a project manager, although she has long experience of working in projects of the same kind. Now, she has run into several difficult problems and she asks for your advice. The project is running late and Ellen fears that she will not be able to keep the budget. She has discussed the situation with her boss, but does not think that she got much support from him. She is expected to deal with the situation on her own.

The project aims at providing a financial system for a large international bank conglomerate. On the team, there are engineers and people with a banking background. Some of the work has been outsourced to other countries, and Ellen finds herself managing people she has never even met in real life. The issues she discusses with you are these:

1. Communication problems within the team. Engineers and banking people do not speak the same professional language or define problems in the same way, and misunderstandings are frequent. Ellen herself is an engineer, but has worked with the banking sector for some time, and thinks that she understands how it works, but still her team is not entirely functional in this regard. What must Ellen think about to make efficient use of all professional roles in the project?

Understandings:

1. Lack of domain knowledge among engineers.
2. Analysts don't have technical knowledge.
3. Communication problems between Ellen and the overseas consultants. Ellen thinks that her style of management is simple and straightforward, but again and again she finds that the outsourced part of the project runs into problems. She now has doubts in her communication abilities. Could it be that cultural issues get in the way? Or is it the fact that she has never met the people? How can this be dealt with? How can the sub goals of the project be communicated more effectively without personal meetings?

Understandings:

1. Is overseas team lack of expertise within the technical area?
2. How many are technical guys and business analysts work in overseas.
3. How often do you have meetings both status and technical?
4. Do you take minutes of meeting on both side and communicate across the teams on both sides?
5. Is there a problem with your local team with your communication?
6. Is there any time zone difference?
7. Is there a technical architect with in the overseas team?
8. Who is the one point contact for technical and domain related issues on both sides?
9. Both of the above situations have caused serious delays in the project and – as a result – budget problems. Ellen feels that she must resolve the problems immediately.

Ellen now turns to you for help. The first thing you do is to ask her more questions about the project. You need to know more to be able to help her. After this, you are able to give her some specific advice.

For the assignment, you

1. explain what questions you need to ask Ellen, and make assumptions as to what she answers.
2. given the additional assumed information from Ellen, give her specific advice on the issues above.

Explain you reasoning regarding the advice you give by using concepts/analytical frameworks from the course literature.