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| **Course:COMP1611 Project Management** | **2022/23** | **Coursework ID:** | **Contribution:  70% of course** |
| **Coordinator: Mr Richard Johnson** | **Release Date: Monday**  **23/1/2023** | **Deadline Date:  Friday 24/3/2023** | **Return Date:**  **Tuesday 18/4/2023** |
| **This coursework should take an average student who is up-to-date with tutorial work approximately 35 hours** | | | |
| **Learning Outcomes:**  Have an understanding of the prime objectives of project management Ability to plan and implement an information system project Critically assess ways in which Stakeholders can be identified and managed to maximise the chances of a successful outcome  Determine how projects can be linked to relevant business objectives  Examine different communication channels and how they help with successful project delivery | | | |

# Scenario -- Diamond Business Offices

The following information was gained from an interview with the Managing Director (MD) of Diamond Business Offices. They provide complete office solutions for businesses which has become a fast growing sector in the last five years: Diamond has 120 centres in 15 countries, employing 850 staff. However, the competition is diverse: there are similar companies to Diamond, small companies running suites of offices, and hotels offering training, conference facilities and, increasingly, office facilities.

You are a member of a team performing a study for Diamond with a view to improving its overall customer service provision.

Diamond leases its properties over long periods and makes its money by providing added value services to businesses. As the company expands choosing the right locations is critical – local transport and infrastructure can have a big impact. Also important are good communications (including good mobile network coverage) and secure modern IT – high-speed internet is a must as customers expect to work from any base. Understanding the tax position of companies, commercial and employment law, data protection law, and health and safety law in every location is most important. Diamond is affected by both economic recessions and growth at local and international levels – currency exchange rate fluctuations and taxation laws impact both Diamond and its customers. It is also important to keep an eye on the political situation as impending legal changes can impact customers’ choice of location and the services that Diamond can provide.

Apart from offices, customers are offered many added-value items. These can include staff such as secretaries, interpreters, receptionists and technical support; or facilities such as audio-visual equipment, video-conferencing, catering and high-quality printing. Customers, with an increasing choice of suppliers, are becoming ever more demanding in the additional services that they require; this can be a key factor in securing business for a business centre.

Diamond spends significant time and resources recruiting and training staff so that customers can walk in off the street and find a fully functioning office. However Diamond is experiencing skill shortages in particular locations, but in some areas there is demand for flexible work to suit women with families returning to work. As many customers are not local, language skills are particularly important and many of their UK staff (and potential recruits) only speak English well. The MD is encouraging staff to take recognised language qualifications through free training sessions; indeed she wants to have 40% of staff speaking a foreign language within the next 2 years.

Room bookings are handled by individual centres each using an Access database application. As the organisation has become increasingly internationalised, local variations have developed resulting in inconsistency of information. The lack of interface with the accounting software (managed centrally for each country) requires re-entry of data leading to data errors, often resulting in delays in dealing with customers.

The MD is concerned that these issues are impacting her business. The MD’s ultimate vision is to improve capabilities of staff; ensure that the accounting process runs smoothly, ensure that staff are in a position to continually update and improve the services offered, and ensure that a customer can enquire, book, and pay for rooms, staff and services in 10 minutes anywhere in Europe, 24 hours a day, and 7 days a week – and she has let it be known that within the next 18 months this should be true for 90% of all bookings. The MD feels that this vision will reduce the amount of time any property remains unoccupied, and in the long-term increase the number of bookings. The current Diamond Business Offices website is limited to information provision only – the MD has always felt that the personal touch has been vital to the success of the business and the problem with online booking is that you cannot possibly cope with all the idiosyncratic needs that any particular customer may have, however several large customers, who are seeking to reduce their own costs and drive down paper usage, are now demanding internet booking of rooms and services.

Each of the 120 Business Centres has a manager and at least 2 booking staff who handle all room and service bookings through their customised Access database. In the smaller centres, these staff may take-on several other roles such as sales, customer liaison and support; in larger centres, they may be specialists. Most booking staff feel pressurised by their high workload but are concerned that the MD’s plans threaten their jobs.

Each country has its own Head Office with a country manager to whom all the Business Centre managers’ report. Each Head Office has a finance manager who is in charge of the accounting for that country – depending on the size of the Diamond operation in that country they could have between 2 and 20 accounts staff responsible for re-entering booking and purchase data. Generally the senior accounting staff welcome the changes proposed though junior staff are concerned about the change in their role.

**Project Management Questions**

1. At this moment the nature of the project is somewhat undefined – describe what you believe will be the key features of the project and why you believe them to be so. (12 marks)
2. Who are the major stakeholders impacted by the MD’s vision? Using the stakeholder quadrant given in lecture 3 consider where all of the major stakeholders should be out in the quadrant. For 3 of these stakeholders, determine their likely attitude and then decide on a set of appropriate actions (2 per stakeholder) that you can take to maximise the chances of those stakeholders actively participating in your project. (12 marks)
3. Testing will be a major issue with the project – who needs to be involved in this and why? (8 marks)

1. List out 5 critical risks associated with the project and recommend what actions that you should take to minimise their impact. These risks should relate to the case study – avoid generic risks that may apply to any project (e.g. software may not work as required). (10 marks)
2. Communication is another very important aspect of project management. What steps would you take to ensure that all stakeholders received the right level of communication during the project and what form should that communication take? (8 marks)